



2022-23 Annual Report



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Limited, serving the South West of Sydney and Macarthur regions, honour and acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country in the communities we serve, particularly the Darug Nation and Dharawal people recognising their deep connection to their lands, waters, and communities.

We pay our respects to the rich cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to the wisdom of Elders both past and present. We affirm that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples and esteemed Custodians of the Land in Australia. We recognise that the land upon which our workplaces are situated is the rightful territory of the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country.



Table of Contents

WELCOME

Message from the Chairperson	6
Our Organisation	8
Board of Directors	10
Partnerships and Collaborators	12

SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

Settlement Support Services	14
Client Stories	17
MiLivelihood Employment Support	20
Education and Training	22
Harmony Week 2023	25
Health and Well-being Services	26
Youth and Family Support	30
Our Staff and Volunteers	33

FINANCIALS

Financial and Corporate Governance Report	34
---	----

Message from our Chairperson

As we reflect on the past year, it is with immense pride and gratitude that I address you on behalf of the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre (WSMRC). This year, under the banner of “Bridging Communities - A Year of Resilience and Unity,” we have witnessed extraordinary accomplishments that have touched the lives of individuals, families, and communities in the South-West and Macarthur regions of Sydney.

Our guiding belief in the inherent worth and potential of every individual has been the cornerstone of our work. Through unwavering dedication, we have empowered and integrated migrant and refugee communities, enriching lives and fortifying the very fabric of our society.

The contents of this annual report serve not only to outline the details of our services, performance, and accountability but also to vividly depict the lived experiences of individuals we have had the privilege to support. Through stories as shared throughout this report like that of Mrs. G’s, Sarah’s, and Haidi’s, we witness the tangible impact of our programs and services on the lives of those in our community.

This focus on real-life experiences is paramount because it provides a tangible connection to the very heart of our mission. It allows us to see the transformation from isolation to empowerment, from despair to hope, and from unfamiliar beginnings to the pursuit of dreams. By sharing these narratives, we honour the resilience and strength of the individuals we serve, underscoring the profound difference our organisation makes in their lives. None of this would be possible without the tireless dedication of our staff, whose unwavering commitment to our mission is nothing short of inspiring. Their compassion, expertise, and dedication have been the bedrock upon which these accomplishments have been built.

I must also extend my heartfelt gratitude to our funding partners and community collaborators. Your belief in our vision and your generous support have been instrumental in driving our success. Together, we have created a powerful force for positive change.

As we look ahead, our vision remains clear: a community where empowered migrants and refugees seamlessly integrate, maintaining their cultural roots while fostering inclusivity. We are committed to ensuring that everyone in the South-West and Macarthur Regions of Sydney thrives harmoniously together.

With warm regards,

Ms Rola Hijwel
Chairperson



OUR VISION

“A community where empowered migrants and refugees seamlessly integrate into the broader society, maintaining their cultural roots, fostering inclusivity, and enabling everyone in the South-West and Macarthur Regions of Sydney to thrive harmoniously together.”



MISSION STATEMENT

Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Limited (WSMRC) is guided by an unwavering belief in the inherent worth and potential of every individual. We are dedicated to empowering and integrating Migrant and Refugee communities residing in the South-West and Macarthur regions of Sydney because we recognise that by doing so, we not only enrich individual lives but also strengthen the social fabric of our entire community.

Through practical, comprehensive support, provision of vital resources, and tailored opportunities for personal and professional development, we aim to unlock the full potential of every member, forging a harmonious and inclusive society that promises a thriving future for all.

OUR VALUES

Our values are what guides our actions and interactions. They are the essence of who we are and how we interact, work with and engage those in the community we serve.

Resilience

We recognise and value the resilience of our communities in responding to adversity and achieving their goals.

Quality

We believe in delivering the highest quality services and experiences that are responsive to need and expectations. We are committed to continuous improvement.

Trust

We value trust as a fundamental foundation for all of our relationships and interactions.

Collaboration

We believe that working together in a spirit of mutual respect, open communication, and shared goals allows us to achieve more than we could individually. We are committed to fostering a collaborative environment that encourages the sharing of ideas, diverse perspectives and resources.

Organisational Overview

The organisation is guided by a diverse and committed Board of Directors. They provide strategic direction, oversee policies, and ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

To efficiently address specific aspects of governance and operations, the Board has established several committees:



Finance and Audit Committee

This committee meticulously oversees financial reporting, budgeting, and ensures adherence to financial regulations.

People and Culture Committee

This committee is responsible for nurturing a supportive organisational culture and evaluating the impact of WSMRC's services and programs on its clients and staff. It focuses on enhancing the well-being and effectiveness of both the team and the beneficiaries.

Governance and Compliance Committee

This committee diligently monitors compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, upholding ethical operations.

STAFFING STRUCTURE

Leadership Team

- **Chief Executive Officer (CEO):** Provides strategic leadership and external representation.
- **Operations Manager:** Manages daily operations, with a focus on governance and risk management.

Program Management

- **Program Coordinators/Team Leaders:** Oversee service areas, ensuring alignment with WSMRC's mission.

Case and Social Workers

- Address client needs across various programs, offering personalised support to build trust and confidence.

Support Team

- **Administrative and Support Staff**
- **HR Specialists and Volunteer Coordinators:** Recruitment, onboarding, employee relations, and volunteer management for program integration.

SERVICE UNITS

The services unit structure is designed to provide a well-rounded support system for migrants and refugees. It covers five important areas:



Settlement Services (p. 12-13)

This helps newcomers get started in their new home. It includes language training, understanding local customs, finding a place to live, and getting access to healthcare.



Employment and Education Services (p. 18-22)

These services help people learn skills for jobs and also support them in furthering their education, which can lead to better opportunities in the future.



Community Engagement and Cultural Integration (p. 23)

This encourages people from different backgrounds to come together, learn about each other's cultures, and build a sense of belonging.



Health and Well-Being Services (p. 24-27)

This takes care of both physical and mental health. It ensures that people have access to doctors and also offers support for mental well-being.



Youth and Family Services (p. 28-30)

Special support is provided for young people and families to make sure their unique needs are met, helping them to adjust and thrive in their new environment.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

Our multicultural staff brings a unique depth of understanding to our services. By providing targeted language and cultural orientation, we ensure a more inclusive and tailored approach, fostering stronger connections and better support for individuals from Middle Eastern, Subcontinental, African, and Asian communities.

CLIENT-CENTRED APPROACH

We recognise the rich diversity within the migrant and refugee community and, in accordance with both our guiding principles and the expectations of our funding bodies, we meticulously customise our offerings to meet the distinctive needs and circumstances of each individual we serve. This ensures our support is both effective and resonates with their experiences and backgrounds.

TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

WSMRC places a strong emphasis on transparency and accountability in its operations. To achieve this, the organisation conducts regular Board meetings where key decisions, financial reports, and program updates are discussed and recorded.

Financial statements are prepared and audited annually by an independent auditing firm, ensuring accuracy and compliance with accounting standards. The Board maintains open lines of communication with stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, clients, and external partners, fostering a collaborative and inclusive approach to governance.

CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICS

All Board members and our staff adhere to a Code of Conduct, outlining their responsibilities, including confidentiality, conflict of interest management, and duty of care.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

WSMRC recognises the importance of succession planning to ensure continuity in governance. This involves identifying and nurturing potential future Board members.



Board of Directors



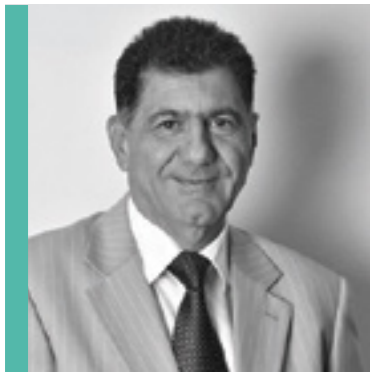
Ms Rola Hijwel
Chairperson

Rola is an accredited solicitor with over 20 years of experience in immigration law. She is admitted in both the Supreme Court of New South Wales and the High Court of Australia. Rola specialises in Immigration Law and is recognised as an Accredited Specialist by the New South Wales Law Society. She is currently the Principal Solicitor and Director of Hijwel Migration Lawyers. Rola is deeply committed to advocating for equal and fair treatment for migrants.



Ms Myee Gregory

Myee brings 15 years of experience in problem-solving and relationship-building across various industries, including film, higher education, public sector, and not-for-profits. She holds an MBA from the University of Sydney and has a background in media and communication. Currently, Myee focuses on improving systems and resources at Chartered Accountants ANS. She is passionate about welcoming newcomers to Australia.



Dr. Amad Mtashar, OAM

Amad holds a Doctorate and has been a pioneering figure in the community sector for many years. He has been a dedicated member of the Western Sydney MRC Board since 2003, contributing significantly to the settlement process of migrants and refugees. Amad has received numerous awards for his tireless voluntary work and service to the wider Australian community.



Mr Vijhai Utheyan

Vijhai has a background in the not-for-profit sector and currently works at the peak body for community legal centres in NSW. He has extensive experience in governance and has been involved in various organisations dedicated to supporting migrants and combating racism in Australia. In addition to his professional work, Vijhai is completing a law degree and enjoys activities like paddleboarding and volunteering.



Ms Anita Kumar

Anita is an accomplished CEO and social entrepreneur known for her dedication to enhancing educational and social opportunities for children and families. As the CEO of ECTARC, she is driven by a profound commitment to early childhood education and care, ensuring high-quality services in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven areas. Anita is focused on collaborating with the sector, providing qualifications, and supporting workforce initiatives across NSW, QLD, and ACT. She is passionate about advancing these efforts in the future and is eager to build connections and partnerships.



Ms Helen Wortham

Helen is a distinguished Digital Program Manager, celebrated for her dynamic, innovative, and dedicated project management. Her ability to unify diverse teams to exceed project goals is attested by numerous recommendations. With expertise in IT management and a profound understanding of higher education and research sectors, Helen excels in driving successful digital transformations. Her leadership style focuses on mentorship and cultivating a culture of service excellence.



Mr Mustafa Agha

Mustafa is the Executive Manager, Policy at Business NSW, leading the policy agenda for positive change in the business environment. With a decade's experience in policy development and a background in investment management, he is passionate about innovation and economic growth. As a native of Western Sydney, Mustafa is determined to help the region reach its full potential. He holds degrees in Medical Science, Economics & Finance, and is currently pursuing an MBA. Mustafa also serves on the board of the Greater Parklands advisory board for Parramatta Park.

Partnerships and Collaborators

We are delighted to share the positive impact of our funded programs over the past year, made possible through the generous support of our dedicated government and non-government partners. Together, we have worked tirelessly to uplift and strengthen our community, leaving a lasting mark on the lives of those we serve.

Emergency Relief and NGO Support

Funded by Multicultural NSW

This program provided crucial assistance during times of need, ensuring that our community members received the support they required. We extend our deepest gratitude to Multicultural NSW for their unwavering support in making this initiative possible.

Empowering and Supporting Local Communities

Funded by Multicultural NSW

Through this initiative, we have witnessed the remarkable growth of our local communities. Multicultural NSW's steadfast support has been instrumental in making this vision a reality.

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

Funded by the Australian Government's Department of Health and Aged Care

CHSP has been a cornerstone of our efforts to assist elderly members of our community. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Australian Government's Department of Health and Aged Care for their generous support.

Cultural Connect (Multicultural Supported Playgroups)

Funded by Department of Communities and Justice NSW

Through this program, we have witnessed the joy and growth of children from diverse backgrounds coming together. We are thankful for the support of the SETS program in making this initiative possible.

Women's Leadership Program - MiLivelihood

Funded by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

We are proud to have empowered women in our community through this program, offering them the tools and confidence to pursue their aspirations. Our heartfelt thanks go to the Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet for their invaluable contribution.



Compact (Community Cohesion Collective)

Funded by Multicultural NSW

This program has played a pivotal role in fostering unity and understanding within our community. Multicultural NSW's ongoing partnership has been instrumental in nurturing a cohesive environment.

Community Capacity Building

Funded by Settlement Services International (SSI)

This program has been a cornerstone in building a stronger, more resilient community. We are grateful for SSI's continuous support in this endeavour.

Multicultural Elder Connect

Funded by South Western Sydney Primary Health Network Limited

Multicultural Elder Connect has been a beacon of support for our community members, ensuring access to crucial services and resources. We are grateful for the steadfast support of South Western Sydney Primary Health Network Limited.

SET Family Domestic Violence

Funded by the Department of Home Affairs

This program played a crucial role in providing safety and support to families facing domestic violence. The Department of Home Affairs' commitment to this cause has been instrumental in creating a safer environment for those in need.

MiWay

Funded by Department of Industry, Science and Resources

This program delivers youth engagement activities in the Liverpool and Campbelltown local government area for first generation refugees, migrants and culturally linguistic and diverse communities who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system.



COLLABORATION WITH DIASPORA NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

We are proud to collaborate with several esteemed non-profit organisations in the South West and Macarthur regions, each of which shares our passion for community empowerment and inclusivity. Our valued partners include:

- Afghan Fajar Association Inc.
- Afghan Women On The Move
- Africa Health Australia
- Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Australia
- Arts & Community Development
- Assyrian Aid Society
- Assyrian Australian Association
- Assyrian Democratic Movement (Zowaa Inc.)
- Assyrian Church
- Australian Arab Cultural Forum
- Australian Burmese Rohingya Association Inc.
- Australian Karen Organisation Inc.
- Australian Mandaean Sports Club
- Australian Mesopotamian Cultural Association
- Babylon Chaldean Sport Club
- Chaldean Australian Society
- Chaldean Catholic Church
- Chaldean League
- Community Care Kitchen
- Cross Cultural Partnerships Engagement Worldwide
- African Australian Communities United
- Ethnic Communities Council of NSW Inc.
- Fiji Diaspora Women's Alliance
- Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Great Lakes Agency for Peace and Development (GLAPD)
- HeyYa TV
- Himyana Social Services
- Igbo Community Australia
- Iraqi Australian Christian Association
- Iraqi Australian University Graduates Forum
- Islamic Council of NSW
- Islamic Women's Association Australia (IWAA)
- Khmer Community of NSW Inc.
- Lao Oz Inc.
- Lebanese Muslim Association (LMA)
- Liverpool Australian Sudanese Community
- Manda House In Australia Inc.
- Mandaean Association of Australia
- Mandaean Australian Community Cultural Club
- Mandaean Media Network
- Mandaean World Congress
- Melkite Catholic Eparchy
- Mesopotamian Social Group Inc.
- MIA - Liverpool Islamic Centre
- Multicultural Youth Affairs Network
- Macarthur African Communities Network
- Muslim Women's Welfare of Australia (MWWA)
- NSW Al Ahwaz Community
- Saint Zaia Assyrian Language School
- St Luke's Anglican Church Liverpool
- St Mary's Assumption Chaldean Catholic Parish
- Sumer Association for Culture and Arts
- Sydney Community Connect Association
- The Mandaean Women's Union in Australia
- The Nasoraean Mandaean Association Inc.
- Vietnamese Community NSW Chapter Inc.
- Youth For Global Peace

We extend our deepest gratitude to all our partners, donors, and community members who have made this journey of empowerment and growth possible. Together, we look forward to a future filled with even greater positive impact and transformation.

Settlement Engagement and Transition Support Service (SETS)

Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) Service is a Commonwealth Government initiative. It aims at helping newly arrived migrants, refugees, and humanitarian entrants settle into their new communities. It provides a range of services and support to assist these individuals and families in becoming self-reliant and participating fully in Australian society.



WSMRC is a sub-contracted service provider of SETS through its consortium partnership with leading not-for profit and charity, Settlement Services International (SSI).

OVERVIEW OF OUR SERVICES

Orientation and Information: This includes providing newcomers with essential information about Australian society, including legal rights and responsibilities, education, healthcare, and employment.

English Language Training: Offering English language courses is a crucial component, as proficiency in English is often a key factor in successful integration.

Employment Assistance: Providing support for finding employment, which can be a significant challenge for newcomers.

Housing Assistance: Helping individuals and families find suitable accommodation.

Social Support and Community Connections: Encouraging social interaction and community engagement to reduce isolation and promote a sense of belonging.

Cultural Orientation: Helping individuals understand and navigate Australian culture, customs, and systems.

SETS complement existing initiatives like the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) and other Commonwealth support for vulnerable migrants, especially for those lacking family and community support. It builds upon the successful former Settlement Grants program, focusing on key areas such as English proficiency, education, and employment.

GROWTH OF OUR SERVICE

The program overall has made significant progress in facilitating successful settlement for humanitarian entrants and eligible migrants.

Key indicators include:

- Enhanced understanding of Australian systems through programs like FICT and citizenship, fostering healthy family relationships.
- Improved English language proficiency, crucial for effective communication and community integration.
- Increased confidence in using public transport for recreational outings, expanding clients' experiences.
- Strengthened parent-child relationships through shared recreational activities, promoting familial bonds.

SETTLEMENT SERVICE OUTCOMES 2022/2023

Client feedback and satisfaction surveys consistently reflect high levels of support and assistance provided through SETS, reaffirming the program's commitment to timely and impactful early intervention support for vulnerable individuals and communities.

- We served 11.8% more clients in the past year.
- We provided 13.3% more sessions in the past year.
- We offered 9.6% more group sessions in the past year.
- We saw a 19.7% increase in attendance of our group sessions in the past year.

Our services are reaching more people than ever before.



1826

CASEWORK CLIENT CONTACTS WITH 918 INDIVIDUAL CLIENTS



1602

GROUP SESSION ATTENDEES OVER 179 SESSIONS



162

ENGLISH CLASSES ATTENDEES OVER 40 HOURS



135

ADVOCACY CLIENTS



75

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT CLIENTS



142

YOUTH SUPPORT CLIENTS OVER 20 SESSIONS



59

HEALTH AND WELLBEING CLIENTS OVER 11 SESSIONS



19

HOURS OF FORM ASSISTANCE

Highlights for 2022–2023



1. ENHANCED LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

One of the most notable accomplishments has been the marked improvement in English proficiency among program participants. Many who once faced language barriers have now become confident communicators, navigating their new environment with ease and confidence.

2. EMPOWERED EDUCATION

The SETS service has a tailored approach to educational support has yielded impressive results. Participants have not only gained access to quality education but have also shown remarkable progress in their academic pursuits. Many have successfully transitioned into higher education or vocational training, paving the way for a brighter future.

3. EMPOWERED WORKFORCE INTEGRATION

The service emphasis on employment readiness has translated into tangible success stories. Numerous participants have secured meaningful employment, not only contributing to their own well-being but also enriching the broader community through their diverse skills and talents.

4. CULTIVATED SENSE OF BELONGING

Perhaps one of the most heartening outcomes has been the emergence of a strong sense of belonging among program participants. They have seamlessly integrated into their new communities, forming meaningful connections and actively participating in local events and activities.

5. STRENGTHENED SOCIAL FABRIC

The ripple effect of the program's success is felt throughout the community. Newcomers who once felt isolated are now integral parts of the social fabric. This strengthened cohesion has enriched the cultural tapestry of the region, fostering an environment of mutual understanding and appreciation.

In retrospect, the SETS program's holistic approach to settlement support has not only met its objectives but has exceeded expectations. It stands as a testament to the power of tailored assistance in facilitating successful transitions and creating a more inclusive society for all. The program's impact will continue to resonate for years to come, leaving an indelible mark on the lives of those it has served.

Mrs G's Journey

Mrs. G, driven by a strong determination to pass the citizenship test, embarked on a transformative experience through the WSMRC's citizenship course. Her journey exemplifies the program's profound impact on individuals seeking integration.



Overcoming Isolation and Safety Concerns

Upon her initial arrival, Mrs. G grappled with feelings of isolation and safety apprehensions, which hindered her ability to venture outside. However, her resolute commitment to passing the citizenship test spurred her to enrol in the citizenship course. This courageous step propelled her beyond her comfort zone, encouraging active participation.

Addressing Language Barriers

As someone with limited English proficiency, Mrs. G encountered language barriers that posed challenges in navigating daily life and preparing for the citizenship test. Recognising her needs, the WSMRC provided invaluable language support, including English language classes and translated materials. These resources significantly enhanced her linguistic skills and deepened her understanding of test requirements.

Creating a Sense of Belonging

Through the citizenship course, Mrs. G found a community of like-minded individuals also preparing for the test. Engaging in group discussions and activities centered on Australian history and culture fostered meaningful connections with peers and the broader community. This sense of belonging was instrumental in her journey toward integration.

Exploring the Beauty of the Blue Mountains

During the course, Mrs. G seized the opportunity to embark on an outing to the Blue Mountains, marking her inaugural visit to the area. The experience of learning about the Three Sisters and the surrounding region left an indelible impression. Energised and eager, she explored alongside fellow participants, savouring the beauty of nature, forging deeper connections, and momentarily escaping her routine. This memorable experience underscored the joy and rejuvenation derived from exploration and shared moments.

Confidence and Empowerment

Completing the citizenship course, Mrs. G reflected, "The course was more than just a means to pass the test; it provided me with a comprehensive understanding of Australia and its functioning. I gained insights into my rights and responsibilities as a citizen, bolstering my confidence in becoming an integral part of Australian society. Moreover, the course instilled in me the assurance that I could pursue further education and employment opportunities. While passing the exam brought me great happiness, what truly resonates is the encouragement and confidence the course instilled in me."

Trust and Support

Throughout the program, the dedicated staff at WSMRC provided unwavering support, fostering a trusted environment. Always available to address queries, offer guidance, and extend encouragement, their steadfast backing played a pivotal role in bolstering Mrs. G's confidence. This support ultimately empowered her to explore further opportunities, including enrolling in a Florist course.

Empowering Survivors

Sarah, a resilient 21-year-old, fled her home country to escape an arranged marriage and the harrowing prospect of undergoing forced circumcision. Her four elder sisters had endured this painful tradition, leaving Sarah determined to forge a different path. Discovering her family's unilateral arrangement of her marriage, Sarah embarked on a risky journey to Australia, seeking refuge and support from an online acquaintance.

Challenges Faced

Upon arrival, Sarah's desperate plea for independence resulted in rejection and disownment by her family. The emotional toll of this abandonment left her grappling with self-worth and hopelessness. A temporary refuge with a friend swiftly dissipated, leaving Sarah in dire financial straits. With the help of a new community, she traded childcare for sustenance and partial rent payments. However, strained relations over unpaid rent exacerbated her emotional exhaustion, pushing her to consider returning to her homeland.

Intervention by WSMRC

Sarah's pivotal turning point came when she reached out to WSMRC, seeking assistance from local community services. Through a comprehensive need's assessment, it became clear that Sarah required legal guidance, financial aid, counselling, and a health check-up.

Sarah's journey, marked by resilience and the support of WSMRC and partner organisations, exemplifies the program's commitment to empowering survivors of domestic and family violence. Through targeted interventions and tailored support, we strive to ensure that individuals like Sarah find safety, stability, and hope in their new home.



Tailored Support:

WSMRC promptly facilitated essential connections for Sarah:

- **Legal Support:** A referral to the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre (IARC) was made for assistance with a protection visa application.
- **Health and Well-being:** Sarah was connected with NSW Refugee Health Services for a thorough health check-up, ensuring her physical and mental well-being.
- **Financial Stability:** A referral to Settlement Services International (SSI) for Status Resolution Support Payment (SRSS) was arranged to provide her with critical financial support.

Progress and Achievements:

While awaiting IARC's response, both the refugee health clinic and women's health service swiftly accepted and acted on the referrals. SSI confirmed approval for one-year income support (SRSS). Sarah, now enveloped in a supportive network, expressed profound gratitude for the lifeline provided. She no longer entertains thoughts of returning to her homeland.



My name is Haidi, and I am 23.

August 29, 2023, was the date that I set foot in Australia, penning a new chapter for my family and myself.

I am a Syrian immigrant, and back home, I completed my university education with a major in English literature. My family and I left behind the life we understood and embarked on the unknown, hoping to find new opportunities.

Our journey to Australia was uncommon. Compared to many other refugees, we came on a sponsorship visa, which meant we would receive different government assistance. Everything was on our shoulders, from finding a place to live to securing employment and organising transportation. It was a challenging beginning. Despite the challenges, My family and I remain determined.

My first glare of hope came from the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre (WSMRC)—a relative who recommended this non-profit organisation recognised our struggles as newcomers. I contacted MRC, and to my amazement, they were helpful. They helped me find employment, navigate the online services essential to life in Australia, and much more. I am grateful for the support provided.

Haidi's Journey to Australia

My name is Haidi, and I am a Syrian immigrant. My family and I left behind the life we understood and embarked on the unknown, hoping to find new opportunities.

I plan to pursue a business administration and human resources degree, a shift from my background in English literature—a motivation for a change from working with children to working with youths.

My journey is no overnight success story. It took seven years of effort and numerous visa rejections before finding a place to call home.

"NEVER GIVE UP" is my simple message to everyone. Even when your circumstances seem impossible, persevere.

Haidi's story is a testament to the resilience of refugees who embark on a new journey searching for a more hopeful future in new lands despite all odds.

MiLivelihood Employment Program

The MiLivelihood program embodies a holistic approach to supporting women from refugee and migrant backgrounds in their transition into Australian workplaces.



The program assists individuals in identifying their skills and interests, guides them along career pathways, and creates strategies that lead to employment opportunities.

Participants also benefit from tailored resume development, connections with host employers, essential employability skills, and an improved understanding of Australian workplace culture.

Further, the program offers advice on future career and education prospects.

The program has three core objectives:

- 1 Enhancing English Proficiency & Workplace Awareness
- 2 Fostering Social Connections & Community Integration
- 3 Boosting Confidence & Self-Esteem

Throughout our program's existence, we have been honoured to witness profound and enduring transformations in the lives of the women we support.

Our unwavering commitment to empowering female refugees and vulnerable migrants, who were previously excluded from public opportunities, has produced tangible and far-reaching results. Since its initiation in mid-February 2022 up to the present date (October 2023), we have effectively assisted over 180 clients, surpassing the KPI goal of 140 by June 2024.

2022

YEAR ESTABLISHED



180+

CLIENTS TO DATE

In addition to the mandatory 10-week employment training course required by our KPI plan, we offer an array of skill-building classes that exceed the KPI requirement. These classes encompass Digital Literacy, Jewellery Crafting, Cake Decoration, Knitting, Cookie Making, and Sewing, all contributing to the empowerment of women.

Accomplishments and Achievements

With over 180 clients currently participating, the Milivelihood program has significantly improved lives through hands-on skill-building activities, covering areas like knitting, jewellery making, makeup artistry, and digital literacy. This term, the program is broadening its scope to include a second Digital Literacy course in Campbelltown and a Makeup course in Liverpool Women's Resource Centre, both offered in collaboration with TAFE NSW. These courses not only empower women but also equip them with vital certifications for today's competitive job market.

In response to the growing demand for access to its transformative Milivelihood Employment program, the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre (WSMRC) has forged strategic partnerships with fellow service providers and training organisations. This collaborative effort aims to expand the program's impact, equipping migrant women with the skills, strategies, and opportunities needed for successful employment.

EMPOWERING DREAMS: MONA'S JOURNEY

Mona, an Afghan lady who has called Liverpool home for over 22 years but was facing employment challenges until she joined our Milivelihood program. Her husband, a painter, often struggled with inconsistent job opportunities, especially during the winter months.

Mona stumbled upon the Milivelihood program at the Liverpool library while attending a Quran class. Her journey began when she joined our 10-week program. We collaborated closely with her to create an impressive resume and cover letter, and we provided her with the knowledge

and skills necessary for job applications and enhanced her interview techniques. Additionally, we offered encouragement and assistance in her pursuit of studies at TAFE, broadening her horizons.

Today, Mona has embarked on a new chapter in her life. She is employed in a childcare, which has not only enabled her to break free from relying on government support but has also boosted her self-esteem and sense of purpose. Mona believes that she's not just a better provider for her family but also a more nurturing mother and supportive wife.

Mona's success story is a testament to the transformative power of education, skill development, and a strong support network that Milivelihood program provided for her.

Mona is a shining example of how determination, resilience, and the right opportunities can change lives for the better.

RESILIENCE REWRITTEN: LAYLA'S JOURNEY

Layla is a remarkable woman from Iraq who found herself trapped in a situation of domestic violence at home. However, Layla's life took a profound turn when she connected with our Milivelihood program, which played a pivotal role in her remarkable journey.

With the support of our Milivelihood program, Layla

discovered her inner strength and resilience. The program not only equipped her with the tools to address the challenges she faced at home but also played a crucial role in helping her secure her very first job at Chemist Warehouse as a pick and pack worker.

Layla's success story is a shining example of the transformative

power of the Milivelihood program. It demonstrates that with the right support, individuals like Layla can break free from the shackles of adversity, find gainful employment, and, most importantly, regain their independence. Layla's journey stands as clear evidence of the program's success in changing lives for the better.





“I’m proud to witness the transformative impact we’re making. We’re breaking barriers, fostering empowerment, and amplifying diverse voices, creating a more inclusive society. I’m excited for the future and the success stories yet to come.”

- Ms Nadia Bouchti, the CALD Women’s Leadership Program Lead

International Women’s Day

In commemoration of International Women’s Day, we acknowledge and celebrate the invaluable contributions of women from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds within our society. The 2021 census data underscores the cultural richness of Western Sydney, revealing that over 52.7% of the population is born overseas, and 68% speak a language other than English at home (ABS 2021). However, research has illuminated limited engagement in civic processes, including volunteering and civic participation, among multicultural communities.

This deficit is attributed to factors such as language barriers, institutional unfamiliarity, and mistrust in institutions. Consequently, a gap in civic participation and representation has emerged, impeding the diversity of voices and perspectives in decision-making arenas.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Women in Leadership Program

The Western Sydney MRC had recognised the need to develop the leadership and decision-making skills of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women in the region to address this gap. The project had three broad objectives: awareness raising, knowledge enhancement, and skills training to promote civic engagement and foster leadership skills among CALD women.

Through capacity building, mentoring, and networking, the project aimed to empower these women to become more visible and influential in their communities and enable them to participate in decision-making processes at all levels.

This program was funded by Multicultural NSW and Settlement Services International.

The program comprised four stages designed to help participants build their leadership skills and confidence.

STAGE 1 - UNLOCKING YOUR POTENTIAL: BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND SELF-EMPOWERMENT

In this first stage, Dr. Rawaa El Ayoubi from the Aspire Leadership Network led four workshops from April to May. They covered topics like understanding oneself, leadership style, setting goals, and dealing with challenges.

STAGE 2 - AMPLIFYING YOUR VOICE

This stage included workshops in May by FECCA and Brand Unity. They focused on things like speaking up, engaging with decision-makers, and effective communication.

STAGE 3 - GUIDANCE AND GROWTH: CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP SKILLS THROUGH MENTORSHIP

In this stage, participants received guidance and support from accomplished women leaders in Southwestern Sydney. This mentorship helped them develop their leadership skills.

STAGE 4 - CELEBRATING SUCCESS: GRADUATION, NETWORKING, AND GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

The program ended with a graduation event and a visit to NSW Parliament in November. This allowed participants to celebrate their achievements and learn about how government works.

Influence and Aspiration

This program welcomed women from different cultural backgrounds who wanted to improve their leadership skills. It provided a unique platform for them to come together, share experiences, and inspire each other. This program aimed to break down barriers and create a more inclusive society.

One notable achievement stemming from this program is the elevation of two program participants to leadership roles. They attested that the training they received, coupled with the incredible support of their mentors, empowered them to confidently step into these leadership positions, propelling them forward in their careers.

Special Acknowledgment

The program’s success was possible thanks to partners like Aspire Leadership Network, FECCA, Brandunity, and the CALD women mentors. We would also like to thank Anne Stanley MP, Dai Le MP, and Charishma Kaliyanda MP for their support.

List of Mentors

- Dr. Rawaa El Ayoubi
- Vidia Henshaw
- Mariam Seitouneh Bernard
- Jennifer Cheung
- Kristina Luburic
- Kristine De Gusman
- Anita Kumar
- Rachel Haywood
- Rola Hijwel

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

TAFE Accredited Community Development Training

In our steadfast dedication to nurturing community leadership and building capacity within Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, Western Sydney MRC orchestrated the "Statement of Attainment in Leading and Managing Community Groups" course, expertly facilitated by TAFE NSW. This case study illuminates the journeys and accomplishments of 16 committed participants from CALD backgrounds who have successfully completed the course.

The course drew a diverse cohort of 16 individuals from South Western Sydney, each representing distinct CALD backgrounds and experiences. These community leaders shared a unified goal: to augment their expertise in community leadership, legal and ethical compliance, facilitation, and collaborative project management.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course was designed to equip participants with the tools and knowledge necessary to drive positive change within their communities. The key objectives included:

- 1 Cultivating robust community leadership skills
- 2 Effectively managing legal and ethical responsibilities
- 3 Elevating facilitation skills for enhanced community engagement
- 4 Pioneering and overseeing impactful community projects in collaboration

OUR IMPACT

Through unwavering dedication and active involvement, the 16 participants made remarkable progress in their community leadership journeys.

Enhanced Leadership Proficiency:

Participants refined their capacity to motivate and lead, instilling a sense of pride within their respective communities.

Legal and Ethical Competence:

The course provided participants with a deeper grasp of legal and ethical compliance, ensuring that community initiatives are executed with responsibility and integrity.

Efficient Facilitation:

Equipped with newfound facilitation skills, participants adeptly fostered open dialogues and collaborative efforts among community members.

Community Project Triumph:

Armed with newfound knowledge, participants successfully initiated and managed community projects that addressed pressing issues within their communities.

The ripple effects of this course reached far beyond individual development. Participants returned to their communities imbued with enhanced leadership abilities and a reinvigorated commitment to community engagement. This catalysed a surge of positive transformation, as communities reaped the benefits of well-structured projects tailored to their specific needs.

The "Statement of Attainment in Leading and Managing Community Groups" course stands as a pivotal force in empowering CALD community leaders to enact positive change within their respective communities. These participants stand as shining examples of how education and skill development lead to more robust, resilient, and engaged communities. Their accomplishments serve as a powerful testament to the significance of investing in community leadership and capacity-building endeavours.

The culmination of the project, comprising a graduation ceremony and networking event, as well as a visit to Parliament House, also offers participants a firsthand encounter with the workings of government.



CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND EVENTS

Harmony Week 2023

The 2023 Harmony Week event was a celebration and a testament to the strength and resilience of Western Sydney's multicultural sector. It demonstrated that diversity is an invaluable asset that enriches our social fabric. It showcased a community that embraces inclusivity and welcomes the world.

On March 21, 2023, the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, in partnership with SSI, organised a special Harmony Week event. It brought together people from diverse backgrounds to celebrate their unique identities and shared humanity. This event highlighted the strength of multiculturalism in Southwestern Sydney, promoting inclusivity, connections, and unity.

The event began with a meaningful "Welcome to Country" by Uncle Malcolm Maccoll, honouring the Indigenous heritage of the land. This set a reverent tone for the gathering, reminding everyone of the rich history that shapes our modern multicultural society.

The event's cultural richness was further highlighted by a captivating musical performance by Roger Ly from the Cambodian community. This fusion of Cambodian and Australian music created

an atmosphere of harmony and cultural exchange, uniting hearts through the universal language of music.

What made this event truly special was the diverse representation of cultures, with attendees from various countries. This illustrated the vibrant cultural mosaic of Southwestern Sydney, emphasising the beauty of diversity.

The event also introduced attendees to Moroccan culture through Soussiya Dar Diyafa. Moroccan tea and sweets offered a delightful culinary journey, enriching the event's cultural diversity. Distinguished guests like Joseph La Posta from Multicultural NSW, Yamamah Agha from Settlement Services International (SSI), Charishma Kaliyanda, Member of Liverpool, and Clr Betty Green from Liverpool City Council, highlighted the event's importance within the local community.

Multicultural ElderConnect Program

The Multicultural ElderConnect Program (Care Finder) was initiated by the Department of Health and funded by the Primary Health Network (PHN) to provide specialist, intensive face-to-face support for people aged 65+ from CALD backgrounds to access MyAged Care (MAC) and other relevant services and supports.

AIM OF THE PROGRAM

To improve clients' understanding of the aged care system and how to access it, improve engagement with the aged care system and to coordinate supports when seeking access to the aged care system.

Support provided to clients includes but not limited to the following: assistance to understand and access the aged care system through application to services, attending meetings and assessments with clients when appropriate, support with finding appropriate service providers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Some of the program's key activities are community outreach to raise awareness about the aged care system, collaboration with other services such as SSI, local health departments and other organisation that deliver the Care Finder Program (The Benevolent Society) to enhance service delivery.

Since its commencement at WSMRC in March 2023, the Multicultural ElderConnect Program has supported and assisted more than 190 clients with varying degrees of case complexities.

The team has surpassed the calendar year KPI by 30% which exceeded the PHN's expectations. We collaborate with other organisations and services to cover gaps in service delivery such as speaking a specific language to enhance communication with clients. The team assisted more than 25 clients to receive approval for Home Care package (HCP). In general, we exceeded the KPI for this calendar year.

A JOURNEY TO AGED CARE SERVICES UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT

A 65-year-old woman was referred to our program by the local health district assessment team as she required further assistance to understand aged care services. The connector visited the client, introduced herself and provided a comprehensive explanation about MAC, the services available and how to access them. At first, the client felt hesitant to give consent to the connector to be her representative due to previous unpleasant experiences with other providers. The connector then took the following actions to make the client feel at ease.

The connector informed the client that they work for a not-for-profit organisation and the assistance provided is free-of-charge, assured the client that all information provided is private and confidential except in certain circumstances, and no contact is required to engage the organisation's services.

Indeed, the client felt at ease, and consented for the connector to be her representative. The connector then assisted the client with finding an Occupational Therapy service and arranged an appointment for the client to conduct an initial over the phone assessment, provided support with filling out a passport application form and provided support during the ACAT assessment.

After that, the client now feels comfortable reaching out regularly to the connector to seek support or discuss issues/concerns. Currently, the client is waiting to receive HCP level 3 referral code. Additionally, the connector is assisting with finding a suitable service provider to connect the client with after receiving the referral code.

Since its commencement at WSMRC in March 2023, the Multicultural ElderConnect Program has supported and assisted more than 190 clients with varying degrees of case complexities.

EMPOWERING A RESILIENT 75-YEAR-OLD REFUGEE: NAVIGATING AGED CARE SERVICES IN A NEW HOMELAND

A 75-year-old woman who arrived in Australia in October 2022 as a refugee from Iraq needed assistance to access aged care services due to severe health issues and limited supports in the new country. The referral to WSMRC came from an SSI Humanitarian Settlement Program case manager. The connector visited the client and her daughter to explain what the program is and how it can help her in accessing and receiving the services required. However, there was a degree of reluctance to work with the connector as she was new in the country and overwhelmed with information about different services and supports.

The connector was able to build rapport with the client as they both spoke the same language and were able to relate to each other which made the client feel comfortable to speak about her situation. That in turn, assisted the connector in understanding the client and her needs.

The connector referred the client to MAC and requested many services and supports. Throughout the waiting period for assessments, the connector kept in regular contact with the client and assessment team to follow up. The client and her daughter contacted the connector and requested her presence at both assessments and the connector explained the assessment process and aim to the client and what those assessments mean for her. The client is currently awaiting the assignment of Home Care Package Level 3 or 4. The connector is currently helping with searching for a suitable service provider.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO OUR SUCCESS

The team is always honest and transparent with the client to ensure the goals and expectations are realistic and attainable for both the client and the connector. The connectors (individually and as a team) always strive to support and advocate for the client to the best of their ability. Moreover, The ElderConnect Team consistently supports one another in a professional capacity, conducts regular meetings and provides feedback to ensure quality of service delivery is evaluated and improved on if needed. Support from the organisation's senior management has also assisted the program to run smoothly.

PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Increase participation in community events to enable the team to meet and communicate with potential clients face-to-face and explain our services. It also allows for networking and connection establishment with other organisations, which could lead to future collaborations and improve our skills to grow professionally.

Additionally, the ElderConnect team aims to collaborate with other WSMRC programs to deliver appropriate recreational activities for current and future clients to maintain engagement with the program. This will benefit the organisation as a whole.



Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) at WSMRC, funded by the Australian Government's Department of Health and Aged Care, remains a cornerstone in enabling individuals aged 65 and above (50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People) to maintain their cherished independence in the comfort of their own homes.



INCLUSIVITY IN ACTION

Since its initiation in November 2017, WSMRC has been steadfastly committed to serving Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities. This steadfast dedication is underpinned by a deep understanding of the unique needs and backgrounds of each individual, ensuring that our care is not only comprehensive but also deeply respectful of diverse cultural contexts.

CENTRE BASED RESPITE (CBR)

Our Centre Based Respite (CBR) service is the heartbeat of our program. Every Thursday from 10am to 1pm, CHSP consumers engage in an array of activities designed to enhance their quality of life. From structured group events to culturally enriching experiences and educational sessions, this service is a cornerstone of our program.

FLEXIBLE IN-HOME DAY RESPITE

Our one-on-one Flexible In-home Day Respite service is a testament to our dedication to personalised care. Available from Monday to Friday, between 8 am and 6 pm, it's a tailored experience designed to meet the unique goals and needs of each individual. Whether it's a leisurely stroll in the park, light exercise, or assistance with daily tasks, we strive to make each day brighter and more fulfilling.

WE ARE... **Culturally And Linguistically Diverse**

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS

16,758 HOURS OF RESPITE DELIVERED TO DATE

Until June 2023, we've dedicated an astonishing amount of time to ensuring the well-being and comfort of our clients.

103 INDIVIDUAL CHSP CONSUMERS SERVED

Our services have touched the lives of 103 individuals who have found comfort and support in our program.

2022/23 FISCAL YEAR

In this period, we extended our care to 22 CHSP consumers, delivering an impressive 4,400.83 hours of high-quality service.

PROFOUND SOCIAL IMPACT

The statistics are not just numbers, they represent lives touched, enriched, and transformed.

1 Fostering Social Connections

Through Centre Based Respite, we've witnessed a remarkable increase in social participation. Participants engage in activities while form lasting connections, enriching their overall quality of life.

2 Enhanced Well-being and Independence

Our In-home Day Respite service has had a transformative effect on the lives of our consumers. They've reported increased confidence in carrying out daily tasks, leading to a greater sense of independence and autonomy.

3 Cultural Enrichment and Inclusivity

Serving CALD communities has not only been a privilege but a profound learning experience. Our program has played a pivotal role in bridging cultural gaps, fostering understanding, and promoting inclusivity.

LOOKING FORWARD

In our journey forward, we envision a future marked by continual growth and enhancement of our offerings. With a team of devoted experts, a profound respect for diverse cultures, and an extensive array of engaging activities, we are on the cusp of making an even more profound difference in the lives of those under our care as outlined below:

1. Feedback-Driven Excellence: We're dedicated to enhancing our services through valuable client feedback gathered via surveys. This helps us continually refine and improve, ensuring top-notch care.

2. Inclusive Communication: We're committed to inclusivity by translating our documents into multiple languages. This ensures everyone, regardless of language, can access and benefit from our services seamlessly.

3. Partnership with Carers Gateway: A promising collaboration with Carers Gateway is on the horizon, allowing us to extend comprehensive support to caregivers and their loved ones.

4. Community Engagement: Our commitment to outreach remains strong. Through various initiatives, we're connecting with a wider audience, spreading awareness about our services and providing vital resources.

5. Empowering Care Workers: Recognising their pivotal role, we're dedicated to continuous training and development for our care workers. This equips them with the latest knowledge and skills for exceptional care delivery.

As we look ahead, our vision is clear—to continue enriching the lives of those we serve, leaving a positive and lasting impact on individuals and their families. Together, we step confidently into the future, ready to embrace new challenges and opportunities.

RESPITE CARE: RESTORING CONFIDENCE AND MOBILITY

Mrs. Margrette Rasmussen is a person living with dementia and used to be a kindergarten teacher. She was referred to WSMRC by the Campbelltown Hospital following her consecutive falls. She had around 10 falls during the same year and got a fracture. She had become very frail, lacked confidence and motivation to move and do things. Her husband, Mr. Robert, was worried about her well-being. He was stressed and felt helpless as he was not able to prevent her from having a fall. The respite service was planned along with Margrette and Robert for a few hours, twice a week.

During the respite services, the care support worker assisted Margaret with her continence and to access the areas in her house. She also constantly encouraged her to move and stay active. She doubted herself in the beginning, however, after some sessions she became an active participant in these activities. They used to do balance exercise together, Brain Gym, and walk in the local park and sing kindergarten songs as a reminiscence activity. Meanwhile, Robert was able to get some time off his caring responsibilities to attend his errands. He was also sure that his wife was safe and being supervised while he was away.

MAINTAINING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Adeeba Kasha is living with her daughter who works full time. Due to this, she had limited social involvement. She joined a Centre Based Respite Group at WSMRC in April 2023 as she wanted to stay involved in the community and socialise. She mentioned that it is something that she looks forward to every week. She says that she is pleased to be a part of the Centre Based Respite group as she gets to meet her friends, get involved in group activities, and can go out to the clubs and parks. She is also working on her English solving word games.

Although she joins the group for a few hours each week, it has in some way reduced her boredom and loneliness and added a new purpose in her life.

YOUTH AND FAMILY SUPPORT

MiWay Program

The MiWay Program is a youth program funded by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources as part of Safer Communities Grant to address the critical challenges faced by disengaged youth aged 14-18, taking into account their individual strengths and

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The MiWay Program has been an instrumental force in the lives of disengaged youth aged 14-18, conducting a remarkable 62 program sessions over the past year. These sessions encompassed a diverse range of activities tailored to address the multifaceted needs of our participants. These included:

- **Wellbeing Workshops**
- **Employment Programs:** Highlighted by an eye-opening visit to Western Sydney Airport
- **Conflict Resolution Workshops:** Empowering participants with self-awareness and self-confidence
- **Educational Programs:** Featuring a transformative tour of Western Sydney University
- **Young Women Creative Program:** A platform for empowering young women through art and skill development
- **Commemorative Weeks:** Including Harmony Week and Refugee Week
- **Dynamic Sport Programs:** Encompassing Gala Day, swimming, Festival23 Women's Soccer Tournament, basketball, soccer, and more.
- **Exciting School Holiday Programs:** Spanning Luna Park, kayaking, Sydney Zoo, Sydney Theatre, Sydney Clay, rock climbing, Tree Tops, and beyond.

PERSONALISED CASE MANAGEMENT

Throughout the year, **54 young individuals** received the invaluable guidance of personalised case management. This tailored approach ensured each participant's unique needs and challenges were addressed comprehensively, resulting in transformative progress and growth.

HOLISTIC SUPPORT

The MiWay Program stands as a beacon of holistic support, recognising that the needs of our participants extend far beyond the surface. In addition to the dynamic program sessions, participants benefited from a wide array of supplementary support:

1. **Skill-Building Programs**
2. **Education Initiatives**
3. **Employment Pathways Assistance**
4. **Engaging Diversionary Activities**

This comprehensive approach to support acknowledges the intricate tapestry of challenges and aspirations that shape the lives of our youth, ensuring that every facet receives the attention and nurturing it deserves. Through this holistic framework, participants have experienced remarkable growth and development, paving the way for brighter futures.



YOUTH AND FAMILY SUPPORT

COMPACT Program

Funded by Multicultural NSW, the Compact Program embarked on a mission to understand the experiences of young individuals during the COVID-19 era, with a special focus on their interactions in online spaces, particularly Facebook.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Extensive research revealed a stark reality: in times of community adversity, such as the COVID pandemic, youth, and communities across Western Sydney felt a profound disconnect from governing authorities. They grappled with policies and laws, often without the opportunity for collaborative problem-solving. This led to a breakdown in trust, giving rise to feelings of isolation and frustration.

With this understanding at the forefront, Compact endeavoured to restore community resilience and trust through a novel approach: social media engagement. We unveiled Instagram and TikTok accounts under the moniker 'Street Journal'. Our vision was to partner with young minds in Liverpool to co-create community-driven journalism and storytelling. This collaborative venture aimed to provide students with firsthand experiences by visiting various services and spaces. Here, they had the platform to share not only their own narratives but also those of the individuals who stood by them during their journey.

This initiative extended beyond storytelling—it was a comprehensive endeavour. Our participants received specialised training in marketing and community engagement. The Compact Program was engineered to be an engaging, enjoyable project, designed to bring students into new environments, connect them with essential services, and facilitate interactions with key figures in government and the community. Additionally, we were proud to provide a diverse range of facilitators who offered tailored training to equip these young individuals with invaluable skills and knowledge. This holistic approach aimed to empower youth, fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration within their communities.

The Compact Program, initiated during the financial year, is scheduled to conclude in April 2024.

PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN 2023/2024

In the upcoming year, we are committed to making our youth programs even better. Here's what we have in store:

- 1 **Reaching More Youth:** We want to help even more young people, especially those who might not have easy access to our programs. We have recently opened our office in Campbelltown and will be expanding our work there.
- 2 **Better Workshops:** We'll keep making our workshops more interesting and useful, adapting them to what young people need including a focus on mental health and wellbeing.
- 3 **Mentors and Leaders:** We're planning programs where experienced people can guide and inspire our youth.
- 4 **Community Projects:** Young participants will get to join projects that make our community stronger and more inclusive.
- 5 **Teamwork and Partnership:** We'll partner with other groups to bring more resources and support to our programs.
- 6 **Listening and Learning:** We'll ask for feedback and use it to make our programs even better.
- 7 **Skill-building for Our Team:** Our staff will get more training to provide the best help for young people.

These plans show our commitment to always improving and supporting our youth. We are excited about the year ahead and our mission to make a brighter future for the next generation in our community.



Empowering Futures: Transforming Lives Through Art and Music

In collaboration with the NSW Government, our initiative has impacted 100 young minds, aged 8 to 12, from disadvantaged backgrounds, unlocking a world of creative expression and personal growth.



Through the power of art and music, we've witnessed a surge in self-confidence and self-expression among our students. These newfound skills serve as powerful tools for communication and emotional development.

The project has fostered a spirit of inclusivity and camaraderie. Students from diverse backgrounds have come together, forming bonds that transcend cultural and economic boundaries. By providing a safe and stimulating environment, we've not only nurtured artistic talent but also cultivated a sense of belonging and security among our young participants.

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

Students, ranging from ages 7 to 11, have not only honed their musical abilities but have also exhibited remarkable improvements in focus, discipline, and teamwork. This newfound diligence has resonated in their academic pursuits.

The art classes have become a canvas for personal growth. Participants, aged 6 to 11, have blossomed into budding artists, showcasing an impressive array of techniques and perspectives.

Building on their previous achievements, students have continued to shine. With increased confidence and refined skills, they've taken on leadership roles, mentoring their peers and becoming ambassadors of creativity.

The resonance of music continues to echo in the hearts of our students. Beyond technical proficiency, they've developed a deep appreciation for collaboration and the transformative power of artistic expression.

In the art classes, we've witnessed the emergence of unique voices, each piece a testament to their individual journeys. These young artists have not only honed their craft but have also gained a newfound sense of pride in their abilities.

Throughout this transformative journey, a dedicated student on placement with WSMRC has been a witness to the remarkable progress. The project coordinator has played a pivotal role, not only in facilitating the classes but also in providing personalised support to each student, ensuring their growth is nurtured to its fullest potential.

Our Staff and Volunteers

RECOGNISING THE HEART OF OUR ORGANISATION

The Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre (WSMRC) is powered by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers who come from diverse backgrounds and bring a wealth of experience and skills to the organisation. They are united by a shared commitment to supporting migrants in their journey towards successful integration into Australian society.

We want to extend a gracious and heartfelt thank you to each member of our team. Your tireless efforts and unwavering dedication are the bedrock of our organisation's success. Each day, you go above and beyond to make a positive impact in the lives of the migrants we serve. Your compassion, cultural sensitivity, and professional expertise are what set WSMRC apart.

OUR COMMITMENT

At the core of WSMRC's mission is the belief that every migrant deserves the opportunity to thrive in their new home. The heart of our organisation lies in the compassionate, culturally-sensitive approach that our staff and volunteers embody. They are not only professionals in their fields but also empathetic individuals who understand the unique challenges faced by migrants.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

WSMRC places a strong emphasis on professional development for its staff and volunteers. Regular workshops, training sessions, and conferences are organised to ensure that our team remains updated with the latest information and best practices in the field of migrant support. This commitment to ongoing learning empowers our staff to provide the highest level of service to our clients.

The core of our mission is the belief that every migrant deserves the opportunity to thrive in their new home.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND WELL-BEING

Recognising the demanding nature of their work, WSMRC places a premium on the well-being of its staff and volunteers. Flexible work arrangements, mental health resources, and initiatives promoting a healthy work-life balance are actively encouraged. This approach not only ensures the health and happiness of our team members but also enables them to provide better support to the migrants we serve.



**Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd
Directors' Report
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2023**

The directors present their report, together with the financial statements, on the company for the year ended 30 June 2023.

Directors

The following persons were directors of the company during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

- Clr Nathan Hagarty (resigned during FY23)
- Dr Amad Mtashar
- Ms Myee Gregory
- Ms Rola Hijwel (Chairperson)
- Mr Vijhai Utheyan
- Ms Feng Guo (resigned during FY23)
- Ms Helen Wortham
- Ms Anita Kumar (appointed during FY23)
- Mr Mustafa Agha (appointed during FY23)

Principal activities

The company is a community-based non-profit organisation established to actively and directly relieve the situation of immigrants and refugees whose social conditions render them disadvantaged.

The principal activities of the company during the financial year were:

- To ensure the quality of Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd and programs through the efficient and effective management of the service and its projects;
- To develop and promote the resource role of Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd to non-English speaking community groups, individuals and workers in the Liverpool area;
- To advocate for access and equity for people from non-English speaking backgrounds; and
- To identify and address the needs of particular disadvantaged groups.

Operating results

The surplus for the company for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 was \$70,886 (2022: surplus \$308,026).

Auditor's independence declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* is set out after this Directors' Report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:



Ms Rola Hijwel
Chairperson

10/10/2023 October 2023



Ms Myee Gregory
Finance & Audit Subcommittee Chair

04/10/2023 October 2023



SDJ Audit Pty Ltd t/a SDJA
ABN: 11 624 245 334
P: PO Box 324
West Pennant Hills NSW 2125
M: 0428 074 081
E: info@sdja.com.au
W: www.sdja.com.au

**Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd
Auditor's Independence Declaration to the Board of Directors of Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2023**

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as lead auditor for the audit of Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2023, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- a) No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- b) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.


SDJA
Simon Joyce
Director

6/10/2023 October 2023 Sydney,
New South Wales

Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd
Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue			
Revenue from contracts with customers	4	4,051,432	3,109,846
Other income	5	355,923	338,119
Total revenue		4,407,355	3,447,965
Expenses			
Administration and other operating expenses		(329,023)	(247,763)
Audit fees		(13,200)	(15,550)
Bad debts		(2,050)	(1,565)
Computer expenses		(73,966)	(85,285)
Cleaning		(44,766)	(22,420)
Catering		(12,851)	(5,848)
Consultancy/facilitator fees		(69,433)	(46,630)
Depreciation		(263,161)	(193,256)
Electricity		(32,334)	(28,113)
Employee benefits expense		(2,374,345)	(2,066,163)
Insurance		(69,410)	(34,202)
Finance costs		(75,244)	-
Lease payments for short-term/low-value expenses		(48,472)	(8,149)
Legal fees		(381,967)	(18,181)
Motor vehicle expenses		(21,619)	(12,954)
Program costs		(458,360)	(312,272)
Repairs and maintenance		(28,759)	(6,974)
Telephone and internet		(33,136)	(31,552)
Travel and accommodation		(4,373)	(3,062)
Total expenses		(4,336,469)	(3,139,939)
Net surplus for the year		70,886	308,026
Income tax expense		-	-
Surplus after income tax		70,886	308,026
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income		70,886	308,026

Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Ltd
Statement of Financial Position
As at 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
Assets			
Current			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	1,844,186	2,461,129
Trade and other receivables	7	600,372	86,950
Other assets	8	56,988	30,871
Current assets		2,501,546	2,578,950
Non-current			
Trade and other receivables	7	52,033	-
Property, plant and equipment	9	1,570,320	88,280
Non-current assets		1,622,353	88,280
Total assets		4,123,899	2,667,230
Liabilities			
Current			
Trade and other payables	10	528,486	237,774
Provisions	11	155,010	201,451
Other liabilities	12	636,977	724,171
Current liabilities		1,320,473	1,163,396
Non-current			
Provisions	11	139,302	53,047
Other liabilities	12	1,142,451	-
Non-current liabilities		1,281,753	53,047
Total liabilities		2,602,226	1,216,443
Net assets		1,521,673	1,450,787
Equity			
Accumulated funds		1,521,673	1,450,787
Total equity		1,521,673	1,450,787

Governance and Compliance

Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Limited is a company limited by guarantee, with ABN 24 881 173 229. Recognised as a public benevolent institution (PBI) since July 2005 by the Australian Taxation Office, it also holds status as an income tax exempt charity and a deductible gift recipient. This entitles the organisation to certain tax concessions and exemptions consistent with its PBI status, relating to goods and services tax and fringe benefits tax.

Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Limited is duly registered with the ACNC, as required by law, in the states and territory where it raises funds. As a registered charity, Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre Limited is committed to upholding the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) Governance Standards. These standards serve as fundamental principles for effective governance, and we routinely assess our compliance with them.

Our policy framework is designed to ensure alignment with:

- ACNC Governance Standards, which include a commitment to uphold Australian laws.
- Our contractual obligations, including those under crucial government funding agreements.
- Community expectations.
- Our organisational values.

We have maintained our quality management system under ISO 9001. This continues to have provided Western Sydney MRC with several advantages:

1. **Assessment of Organisational Context:** Defines stakeholders and their expectations, enabling clear objective setting and identification of new business opportunities.
2. **Robust Compliance and Risk Management:** Through certification, we've established strong systems for compliance and risk mitigation.
3. **Client-Centred Approach:** Ensuring consistent client satisfaction leads to repeat business, new clients, and organisational growth. We've implemented feedback mechanisms to facilitate client input.
4. **Enhanced Efficiency:** Alignment and understanding of processes across the organisation drive increased productivity and decreased administrative overhead.
5. **Meeting Statutory and Regulatory Requirements:** Ensures compliance with necessary legal standards.
6. **Market Expansion:** ISO 9001 certification is a requirement in some sectors and partnerships, allowing us to access new markets.

Future Direction

The Western Sydney WSMRC's mission is rooted in the pursuit of Sustainability Through Growth and Diversification. We are committed to purpose-led leadership, placing the community at the centre of our endeavours. Our people-centric approach prioritises the well-being and professional development of our team members. We aspire to create a lasting impact through strategic partnerships, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual benefit. This mission guides us towards a future where we stand as a beacon of positive change, advocating for evidence-based priorities and serving as a catalyst for progress in our community and beyond.

Contact Details

For more information or enquiries about the details contained in this annual report, please contact our Chief Executive Officer, Mr Nathan Burbridge.





Western Sydney MRC

108 Moore Street
Liverpool NSW 2170

wsmrc.org.au