

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



Supporting migrant and refugee women
for more than 40 years

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SpeakOut

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Immigrant Women's SpeakOut Association of NSW

Immigrant Women's SpeakOut Association of NSW (SpeakOut) is a key women's organisation which acknowledges and values the cultural, linguistic and multigenerational diversity of migrant and refugee women. It empowers these women to achieve gender equality in all areas of their lives. SpeakOut provides education, information, support, guidance and other direct services to migrant and refugee women of non-English speaking backgrounds in NSW.

SpeakOut advocates for their issues and ideas at all levels of government, community, industrial sectors and the media.

SpeakOut is committed to creating and sustaining lasting change by

- Giving women the confidence and the tools to achieve economic, social and political autonomy;
- Educating and supporting women to live a life free from domestic and family violence;
- Creating awareness of the issues that face them and their communities among the broader population through policy research, advocacy, consultation groups and training programs;
- Providing a forum and opportunity for these women to have their voices heard.

Our Vision

'A society that values the rich and diverse contributions of immigrant and refugee women.'

Our Values Dignity

We take a person-centric, strength-based approach to empower women from non-English speaking backgrounds to speak, act, and choose with enhanced knowledge and confidence. We uphold their right to choice, independence and dignity.

Respect

We operate on the principles of respect and anti-discrimination. We strive towards equity and equality for culturally and linguistically diverse women by

- Respecting their views and choices;
- Fighting for their rights;
- Challenging the stereotypes in the mass media or other sectors of the community.

Safety

Women's safety is our priority. We operate in an inclusive environment, free from violence and harassment. We provide culturally safe and appropriate services to immigrant and refugee women. In all aspects of our work, we ensure that their rights and privacy are upheld.

Social Justice

We aim to break down the barriers that prevent immigrant and refugee women from participating fully in the Australian society.

Chairperson's Report Gayathri Dharmagesan (update)



Dear Members and Supporters,

I am delighted to address you today as the Chairperson of the Immigrant Women SpeakOut Association. It has been a year of transformative change, growth, and renewed commitment to our mission.

First and foremost, I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to our new CEO, Sunila Kotwal, who has taken the helm with unparalleled dedication and passion. Her commitment to advocacy and securing new funding opportunities has been nothing short of remarkable. Her visionary leadership has already begun to yield positive results, and we are confident that she will lead us to even greater heights in the years to come. I must express my immense gratitude to all our staff members Rukhshana Sarwar, Mariam James, Marichu Gloria and Evelyn Boehringer for their exceptional dedication and tireless efforts.

Our achievements, challenges, and aspirations over the past year.

In a year marked by unprecedented challenges, our association remained steadfast in its commitment to empowering immigrant women from diverse backgrounds. We continued to provide a safe and supportive space for them to voice their concerns, share their experiences, and access essential resources.

Achievements:

Community Engagement: We successfully organised multiple community events, workshops, and support groups engaging 698 women, fostering a sense of belonging among immigrant women.

These gatherings helped strengthen our network and provide vital support during challenging times.

Advocacy: Our association actively engaged with policymakers and local authorities to advocate for immigrant women's rights. We participated in discussions on Social housing and Homelessness, Plight of temporary visa holders experiencing abuse, Residential Tenancies Act and Coercive Control Bill.

Aspirations:

Financial Sustainability: We are committed to diversifying our funding sources to ensure our long-term sustainability. This includes exploring partnerships with local businesses and seeking grants from philanthropic organisations.

Community Outreach: Our service is committed to extending its outreach initiatives, ensuring a warm welcome to immigrant women in our community and delivering the essential support they require to rebuild their lives in a safe environment. Our goal is to empower them on their path to healing and independence. In closing, I want to express my gratitude to our dedicated members, volunteers, and supporters for their continuous support and commitment to the Immigrant Women Speak Out Association. Together, we will continue to empower immigrant women, celebrate their resilience, and work towards a more inclusive society.

Thank you for your trust and support.

Treasurer's Report

Nelia Sumcad



On behalf of the Management Committee, I thank the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) that provides funding for the core services of the Immigrant Women's SpeakOut Association (SpeakOut). This year we have acquitted the funds that were provided by the DCJ, as well as the balance of one-off funds from last year from the following sources:

- Paul Ramsay Foundation: \$10,621.51
- Social Sector Transformation Fund (SSTF) - Direct Allocation (DCJ): \$4,449.15
- DSV (Family and Domestic Violence) National Partnership Agreement (DCJ): \$9,684.22
- This year we also received one-off grants from:
 - City of Parramatta - Multicultural Women's Shelter: \$10,000
 - City of Parramatta - Celebrating Grandmothers: \$10,000
 - Mercy Foundation: \$12,500 (first remittance of the total grant of \$50,000).

A big thank you goes to Paul Ramsay Foundation and City of Parramatta for one-off grants for Celebrating Grandmothers and also for the Shelter; as well as to Mercy Foundation for one-off funding to the SpeakOut Multicultural Women's Shelter for creating an Employment Hub to make them financially independent, to prevent them from being homeless.

I also send my gratitude to Evelyn Boehringer, the SpeakOut Operations Officer for her great job in documenting the inflows and outflows of funds. Also, thank you to Ram Kokularamanan, the SpeakOut Accountant and Stephen Sproats, the SpeakOut Auditor.

This is my last year as SpeakOut Treasurer as I have completed my tenure as member of the Management Committee. I thank the membership of the Immigrant Women's SpeakOut Association especially the Management Committee, Staff members and Volunteers, for the experience of being able to work with you and serve SpeakOut. Best wishes to all for the coming years!

Executive Officer's Report Sunila Kotwal



Running the organisation which makes such a huge difference to the lives of migrant women is a tremendous responsibility. I thank the Management Committee and past Executive Officer Jane Brock for trusting me. I took over the role in August 2023. For me, It has been a very fulfilling year.

Jane Brock is a visionary and a great leader who was at the helm of this organization for more than 20 years. Multicultural Women's Shelter is her biggest legacy. It has provided thousands of hours of bed-nights to women fleeing abuse since its inception in 2016. We will strive to continue this legacy by providing safe and culturally appropriate accommodation to single migrant women in distress. In 2022-2023, SpeakOut provided 1,883 bed-nights to women in the Shelter. We have also introduced programs to make them financially independent by upskilling them and supporting them in their search for employment. Stability and financial independence will open new opportunities for women and will enable them to live with dignity and confidence. Long term sustainability of Multicultural Women's Shelter remains a key priority.

As with any organisation which undergoes transition of leadership, there have been some challenges. But we have overcome them with focused and directed efforts and optimism.

We work towards the vision 'A society that values the rich and diverse contributions of immigrant and refugee women'.

Our strategic priorities for this year are Advocacy, Financial sustainability, Governance, Risk management and broadening our services.

Capacity building is one of our strategic priorities. We propose to take multi-pronged approach to advocate for capacity building. Capacity building of the ...

- mainstream community and organisations about the specific types of abuse and specialised support required by migrant and refugee women.
- community, primary prevention initiatives, equipping the community to recognise and provide first level of support to the victims.
- victims, highlighting the support available and providing them pathways to escape violence and become contributing members of the society.

SpeakOut is considered to be a niche organisation, expert in supporting women on temporary visas. Not by choice though. Other organisations transfer these complex cases to us, directly or indirectly. This year 92% of our clients for Homelessness program were on temporary visas. The team is expert in resolving these complex cases, very driven and outcome focussed.

I am thankful to all our donors and partners for trusting us to continue to work in this sector.

I am grateful to the Management Committee for their support and guidance throughout the year. I thank our volunteers and members. We have received so many requests for volunteering from the community, that we are planning to broaden our scope for volunteering.

I am grateful to the team for welcoming me and supporting me in my every decision. Rukhshana Sarwar, Mariam James, Marichu Gloria, Evelyn Boehringer, Summera Hafeez and Amelia Chadwick, I couldn't have done this without you! Thank you.

I am committed to having a workplace where the team can deliver on purpose, bring out the best in each other and achieve their potential. Let us all work together to make this a better place for migrant and refugee women.

Our Services

Immigrant Women's
Resource Centre (IWRC)



Homeless Multicultural
Women's Integrated
Support Service (HoMWISS)



Multicultural Women's Shelter



Advocacy—for your rights



Immigrant Women's Resource Centre

(Targeted Earlier Intervention)



Community Engagement and Development

Immigrant Women's Resource Centre (IWRC) is designed to reduce some of the issues faced by migrant and refugee women such as

- Physical and emotional isolation due to language barrier;
- Absence of support system such as extended families;
- Lack of employment opportunities due to limited education or non-recognition of overseas qualifications;
- Cultural barriers, spiritual beliefs, traditions.

IWRC facilitated a range of activities for women to reduce isolation, provide networking opportunities, promote community engagement and skills development. These activities were split into community connections and support.

Some of these are English conversation, Basic Computer skills and Sewing classes, Health information sessions, field trips, celebration of days of importance such as International Women's day, Harmony Day as well as cultural events.

These gatherings have helped multicultural communities such as Afghan, Arabic, Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Iranian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan and Vietnamese.

Digital Literacy

SpeakOut conducted computer classes to increase digital literacy, enhance career development and create employment pathways. Under this, students created their email addresses, digital accounts such as myGov, ImmiAccount (for immigration related inquiries), learnt to use these applications on their mobile phones and social media applications.

They also learnt Microsoft Office applications; Word, Excel and PowerPoint. This equipped them to complete their TAFE projects in a professional manner.

They learnt to set up calls, share documents on video conferencing applications such as Zoom. This assisted them in their search for employment, with the recent trend of employers making the initial applicant screening via Zoom.

The courses were customised for each student and the teacher monitored their progress against the goals set.

Students continued to visit SpeakOut Computer Centre for ongoing learning and further practice.

This has been a very successful initiative.



Immigrant Women's Resource Centre (Targeted Earlier Intervention)

Sewing Classes

This is again a very popular initiative. SpeakOut conducted 23 classes for women from various migrant backgrounds. These classes were held at SpeakOut premises, once a fortnight for four hours.

They undertook different sewing projects. They also learnt hand embroidery and hand sewing.

Some of their projects were

- Cross cut skirts
- Handbags, these were completely hand stitched
- Table runners and matching tissue box covers for festive season
- Flower shaped wrist pin cushions
- Toilet roll holders using quilting techniques
- Two different handbags of their choice.

The women were happy and excited to learn new skills, had a sense of belonging and formed close friendships in these classes.

Since 2021-2022, their teenage daughters also come to learn sewing during school holidays. This year they learnt hand sewing and they loved it. They stitched

- Tissue box covers
- Hand sewing framed windows
- Small Pouches
- Keyrings

The girls were happy, excited and very proud of their achievements.

SpeakOut received positive feedback from all the students. They were admired their teacher and were proud of their new skills.



Immigrant Women's Resource Centre (Targeted Earlier Intervention)

Conversational English Classes

Another important activity in the Community Skills Development program is the English conversation class, which has been running for more than 15 years. These classes were conducted once a week for two hours. Approximately 5 women from different backgrounds, Afghan, Iranian, Pakistani and Sri Lankan learnt and communicated with each other and built strong friendships and supported each another. The age group varied from 21-65 years.

They learnt how to communicate with their doctors, fill up the basic forms and answer phone calls in English from services they were in contact with. The classes focused on their areas of interest such as women's issues, health, culture, cooking, Australian geography, basic anatomy, Australian law, Consumer rights, discrimination: racial and gender, Forced marriage, Stress management and safety. Participants practiced writing mock up correspondence to fully comprehend and revise the skills.

Art Group

39 women participated in four sessions to learn the art of paper flower making. These sessions were held fortnightly for four hours. They were therapeutic and provided women networking opportunities.

Gardening

Gardening sessions were organised for the clients under the Pathways to employment initiative. The participants potted succulent and flowering shrubs. These are displayed in the SpeakOut office and Shelter.

Collaboration and Engagement

SpeakOut organised International Women's Day in collaboration with Seva International Inc, Boronia Multicultural Services and Sri Lankan Australian Women's Network. Speakers included Cumberland Mayor Lisa Lake, Dr. Anju Aggarwal, Dr. Tanima Banerjee, Cumberland Councilor Dr Sabrin Farooqui and Dr Ramprasad Attur, Senior Child Psychiatrist.

The theme was 'Embrace Equity'. This informative event was well appreciated and enjoyed by more than 60 attendees.

SpeakOut also collaborated with City of Parramatta to organise events such as International Women's Day.

SpeakOut organised Refugee day in collaboration with Boronia Multicultural Services. It was inspiring to hear the stories of survival from refugees and everyone admired their tenacity, resilience and positivity. Yoga session and free massages were also organised for the attendees. 26 clients attended the event.

Other sessions were

- Women's Gathering on Eid-al-Adha, 62 participants.
- Domestic Violence support and guidance information session for Indian community with 120 clients.
- Health information session (Cancer), 21 clients.

Rapid Antigen Test kits

The COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test kits were distributed to the needy clients.



Immigrant Women's Resource Centre (Targeted Earlier Intervention)



Picnic in Parramatta Park - 22 June 2023



TAFE Granville Community Services Connect Information Day - 26 Oct 2022



TAFE Lidcombe Law and Community Services Expo - 7 June 2023



Dress for Success Expo - 10 May 2023



International Women's Day, partnering organisations. Cumberland Mayor Lisa Lake addressing the gathering.



Women's Gathering - 22 September 2022
Information session during Health Week celebration of Multicultural NSW

Year in Snapshot 2022-2023

HoMWISE

Number of clients who received support and guidance **192**

WOMEN'S SHELTER

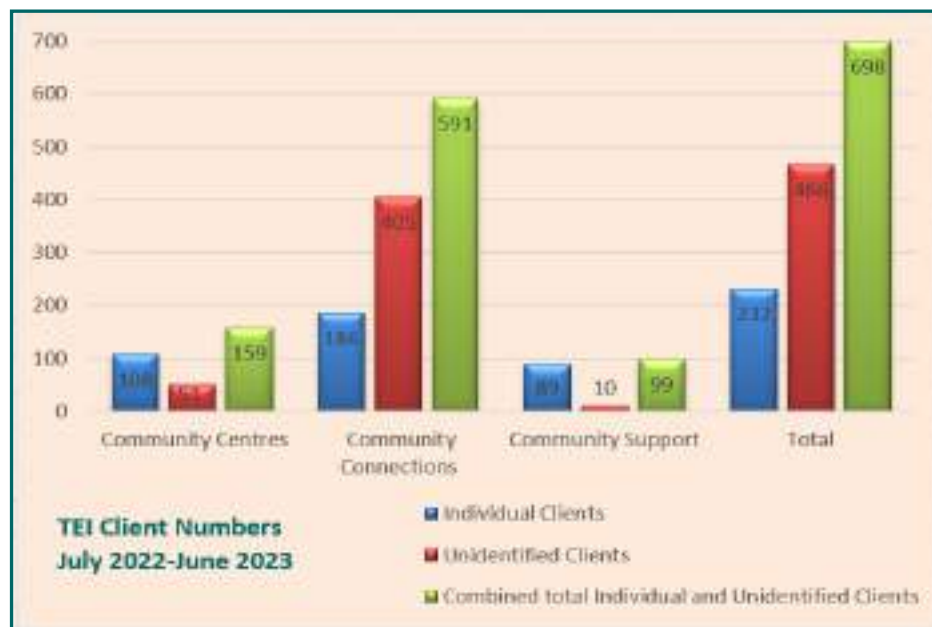
Number of bed-nights provided **1,883**

IWRC

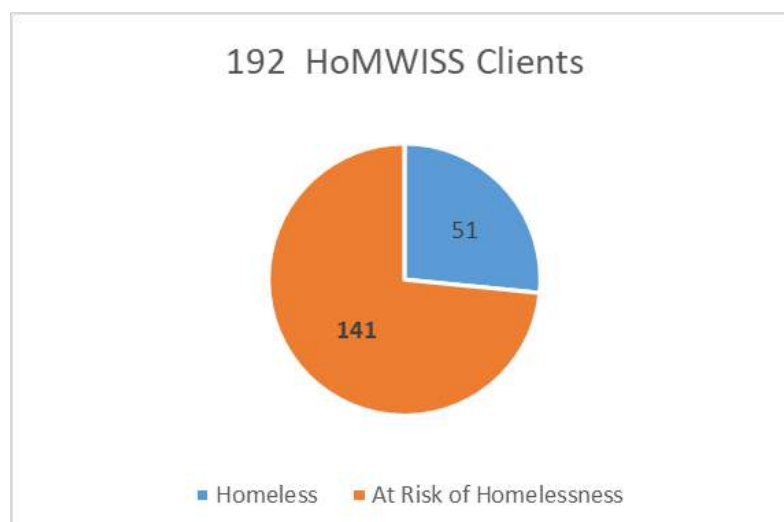
Number of clients who participated in skills development/activities **698**

Immigrant Women's Resource Centre (Targeted Earlier Intervention)

In 2022-2023, SpeakOut supported 698 women under various initiatives.



Homeless Multicultural Women Integrated Support Service (HoMWISE)



Homeless Multicultural Women Integrated Support Service



SpeakOut offers information, guidance, support and referrals to migrant women experiencing domestic and family violence, who are or are on the verge of being homeless.

Every individual has the right to adequate standard of living, necessities such as health, food, water and most of all, a safe place to stay. However, homelessness has emerged as a global problem, including in countries such as Australia. Homelessness is caused by complex factors, some of which are affordable housing and domestic violence.

Homelessness is Human Rights violation. It requires positive measures by the State and Federal governments to minimise and to prevent, if not to eliminate it.

Being exposed to homelessness has huge impact on the safety of those affected. It not only leads to mental and physical health issues and it might cause deaths, if not addressed in a timely manner. Homelessness Australia, in [A Plan to End Homelessness](#), sets out clear actions to end homelessness, which includes ending rental stress by 2032. It was said that homelessness can be solved through providing safe and affordable housing, ensuring people's incomes allow them to afford these including other essentials.

During 2022-2023, SpeakOut assisted 192 clients. 51 of these clients were already homeless and 141 clients were on the verge of homelessness. 90% were on temporary visas, which severely restricted the support they could access. These clients were not eligible to access Housing, or crisis accommodation

Direct Services, Referrals and Advocacy

The Project officers at SpeakOut continued to support clients by providing case management and co-case management with other SHS and non-SHS services. They collaborated with other services to meet the needs of clients.

90% out of SpeakOut's 192 clients were on temporary visas. Their visa categories were temporary Partner visa subclass 309, temporary Partner visa subclass 820, Bridging visa, Student visa and Tourist/Visitor visa. Where possible, the officers helped clients to Special Benefits from Centrelink.

They assisted clients to complete the paperwork to access financial assistance provided by Red Cross and Victims Services. This financial assistance paved the way for them to be independent and focus on getting the jobs.

Again, depending on their visa, the officers also assisted them to access the Family Violence Provisions of the Migration Rules in order to get their Permanent Residency and to be able to access government services.

When they were granted Permanent Residence visa, they were assisted to apply for housing through the housing pathways such as social housing, community housing, and also to set up tenancy in the private rental market.

Homeless Multicultural Women Integrated Support Service

Some of these clients did not have work rights. The officers assisted them to apply to change conditions on their visa applications to get the work rights by helping them with how to provide relevant documentation in order to be allowed to work in Australia.

SpeakOut Project officers are highly skilled in dealing with complex cases.

SpeakOut's Multicultural Women's Shelter supported single migrant women (with no children). Women with children were referred to other organizations for crisis accommodation or transitional housing.

SpeakOut also provided clients food vouchers and Opal Cards for transport.

Collaboration and Partnerships

SpeakOut believes in collaboration with other services to meet the needs of the clients to deliver benefits for them. As 'two heads are better than one', partnering with other organisations can offer clients additional benefits. It also creates goodwill, enhances skills and knowledge of the workers.

SpeakOut continued to work in partnership with organisations such as Link2Home, Domestic Violence Line, Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCAS), Women's Legal Services, Women's Health Services, Centrelink, Housing NSW and other SHS and non-SHS services.

The partnerships with various groups assisted the officers to link the clients to their communities, thereby gaining supportive network and reducing their isolation. It also helped SpeakOut to organise information sessions providing information about health such as breast cancer, support available to victims of domestic and family violence, conduct Yoga, Laughter Yoga and other related classes.

In order to keep abreast of the happenings in the sector, the officers attended seminars, forums, and consultations facilitated by government and non-government organisations.

'Optimism Leads to Achievement' - Jinny's story

Jinny came to Australia on a Visitor visa. Later she applied for Protection visa and was granted Bridging visa while the application was being processed. In January 2019, while waiting for the decision, she met Jake through a friend. They started communicating via WeChat, using the translation function, as Jinny could not speak English. After a month chatting regularly, Jake took her home and introduced her to his parents. His parents liked her so much that they often invited her for dinner. She told them that she had a son who was overseas. But that did not seem to bother Jake and his parents. As Jake seemed to be a very nice guy, she moved in with him. In May 2019 they started a de facto relationship. After a year of living together, Jake proposed, they got engaged and got married in December 2020.

Jinny and Jake started a happy life. Since she operated a restaurant in her country, she planned to open a restaurant in Sydney, when their financial situation permitted.

Jinny started to tidy up Jake's house. She planted flowers and vegetables in the backyard so that they could eat fresh vegetables and save some money at the same time. She cooked nice dishes and often invited Jake's parents for dinner.

She lodged her Partner visa application, and was granted another Bridging visa, with no work rights. She felt overwhelmed by the love and care from Jake and his parents. She was so happy, she thought it will never end.

However, good things never last. Jake started to be abusive. Despite that, she was optimistic, until she was physically abused.

One night, to celebrate a festival, she prepared very nice dinner. She called Jake for dinner. Jake was upset and started screaming at her saying 'Go and eat by yourself. Don't disturb me'. She was shocked as she did not know why he was upset.

Homeless Multicultural Women Integrated Support Service

When she asked Jake, he got annoyed and grabbed her. He pinned her down and started punching her. She was so helpless that all she can do was to cover her face with her hands. She tried to defend herself by pushing him away. She was getting choked and was crying hard. Jake let go of her. As soon as she was free, she called the Police. Then she grabbed her bag and left the house. She went to the train station. Jake followed her. The police arrived at the station. But she could not explain anything due to language problem. Police interviewed Jake and took his statement. Jinny could not understand what was being said. Later she was brought to the police station. An Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) was issued against her. She was treated as the perpetrator, not the victim. She was charged with assault with bodily harm.

That night, she went to a friend to seek refuge. But she was in so much pain that she went back to the police station to report. The police told her to go to the hospital, which she did. She was admitted to the hospital. A social worker from the hospital called SpeakOut and referred her to the service.

SpeakOut Project Officer called her and booked an appointment. After assessment, she was provided crisis accommodation at SpeakOut's Multicultural Women's Shelter. She was also assisted to get financial assistance from Red Cross. A case management plan tailored to her needs was developed. She was then referred to Women's Legal Centre for legal assistance.

She denied committing the crime, as she was the victim who was physically assaulted. This was a clear case of 'misidentification' (identifying victim as a perpetrator). However, the Solicitor representing her, advised her to plead 'guilty', that this was the best option for her. She was very adamant. Jinny was told that there would be no criminal record, just a Community Correction order. Jinny did as she was told. She found out that she had a criminal record, when she applied to get her Police Clearance with Australian Federal Police.

She was devastated. But she did not lose hope.

The SpeakOut officer assisted her to apply to change her visa conditions, to remove the 'no work rights' clause, so that she could work. She was successful in the application. Immediately after, she found a job in a restaurant in the City. She moved out of the crisis accommodation. She found a private rental near her workplace.

Her husband continued to stalk her. She was advised by SpeakOut officer to go to the police and report all the incidents of stalking. She was successful in getting ADVO against the husband.

Jinny continued with her therapeutic treatment. It helped her recover from her traumatic experience.

Jinny is now a Permanent resident. She is very happy. She still works in the restaurant. She is now planning to bring her son to Australia so that they can be together again.



Multicultural Women's Shelter



The Multicultural Women's Shelter provides crisis accommodation to multicultural women (with no children) escaping domestic violence. It provides a safe place for women, who are on the verge of being homeless, and provides them security, hope and help to rebuild their self-esteem.

In the shelter we provide

- Temporary accommodation for single migrant women
- Inclusive, friendly environment where their safety is of prime importance
- One on one, culturally specific support from a dedicated case worker
- Information on safety planning and risk management
- One to one counselling
- Guidance and support for the next step including referrals to services such as victim's financial support, social support, legal aid, court advocacy services
- Personalized support of an in-house recruitment consultant to get the first job in Australia.

In 2022-2023, SpeakOut provided 1883 bed-nights to the clients in the shelter.

The women look after each other, support each other and develop a bond, long term friendships.



Multicultural Women's Shelter

Nika—A story of Resilience

In August 2022, Nika, a 25 year old woman from Iran, was referred to SpeakOut by the Community Migrant Resource Centre (CMRC) for further support and assistance.

Nika had met her husband through her relatives. It was an arranged marriage, with her consent. They got married in 2020 in Iran and Nika came to Australia in 2021 on temporary Spouse visa. Nika lived with her husband in Western Sydney. She was happy. She looked forward to a new life in this new country. Nika soon found out that her husband had drinking problem and also used drugs with his friends. She tried to stop him, but he became violent, yelled at her and physically assaulted her.

The abuse continued. After enduring it for several months, Nika could not bear it. She left home and went to the police. The case worker from CMRC assisted her to pack her bags and to apply for Apprehended Violence Order (AVO). AVO was granted. Her husband was later diagnosed with Schizophrenia.

When CMRC referred Nika to SpeakOut, after the Initial Assessment, the SpeakOut officer along with Nika mapped out her case management plan.

Safety and accommodation were her immediate priorities. Nika was offered accommodation at SpeakOut's Shelter. She was provided emotional support. To reduce her trauma and anxiety she was referred to a Farsi speaking psychologist. Nika joined TAFE to learn English. SpeakOut officer assisted her to get Centrelink Special Benefits, for which she was eligible under her visa category. Nika enrolled in SpeakOut's Computer class. She learnt how to upload documents on Centrelink website. She also learnt Word and PowerPoint. It was very helpful for her TAFE assignments.



SpeakOut helped Nika to apply for her permanent residency under the Family Violence Provisions of the Australian Migration Regulations. SpeakOut officer guided her on how to prepare all the relevant documentation including statutory declaration. The application was successful and Nika has recently been granted permanent residency.

Currently Nika is studying in TAFE and working part time in hospitality. She stays in SpeakOut's transitional accommodation. SpeakOut has assisted Nika to apply for housing under the Start Safely program. She is on priority list. Nika is happy, she is independent. Her dream is to complete her higher education in Health and contribute back to this country that has supported her so much in her difficult times.

Multicultural Women's Shelter

Language is no barrier – Feima's Story

Feima was a very qualified and successful woman. She held an executive position in the company in her country. She also owned several properties. She met Paul on a holiday trip to Australia. Paul and Feima met at the Opera House during dinner. Paul approached Feima and asked her to be his friend. They exchanged contact details and started communicating. Paul introduced himself as lawyer with his own Law firm. Feima was impressed.

Later Paul scheduled a trip to South America to meet Feima. They both met fell in love. Paul and Feima spent two weeks together. They both wanted further commitment in the relationship.

Upon his return to Australia, Paul called Feima and asked for hand in marriage, before another man snatched her from him. Feima was very happy. She also expressed her feelings, the joy Paul brought to her life. They started making wedding plans. Feima wanted to get married in South America where most of her family lived. She invited Paul's family and his friends over to South America, and offered to help Paul with some money for their airfares. Paul happily accepted the financial offer.

Paul and Feima got married in South America. After the wedding Paul, his family and friends returned to Australia. They had a long distance relationship for a few months. Feima shared with him information about her financial position, her assets in South America. Paul was happy. He lodged the Partner visa 309 application for Feima. After eighteen months, the visa was granted.

Feima migrated to Australia to settle with Paul. The first three months were right out of a fairy tale book. Feima had brought large amount of cash with her as backup before securing a job in Australia. Paul was very happy. They travelled around Australia and went out for dinner most weekends.

After three months, problems started to emerge. Paul started asking her to sell few of her properties and transfer the money to Australia. Feima disagreed. This made Paul angry. He threatened to cancel her Permanent residency application and kick her out of the country.



Feima replied that she was happy to return to her country. But she was worried about the embarrassment it would cause, returning within two years, with a failed marriage. She told Paul that she was looking for work, but language was a barrier. Paul got very upset and slapped Feima. Feima called her brother in South America. Feima's brother called his friend in Australia and requested him to help her. Feimsa's brother's friend helped her. He called the Police. Police rescued Feima, and removed her from her violent husband's house.

Feima was referred to SpeakOut by the police. SpeakOut officer supported her. She was accommodated in the Shelter. She was advised and assisted with modification of her Permanent residency application by changing the conditions and applying under the Family Violence provision. Feima was successful with her application and was granted Permanent residency.

Feima enrolled in TAFE to study English. She learnt to read and write in English. She secured a job at a Café Bar. She worked there for two years. Later she bought the business. She is now a proud owner of her Café and has even employed ten staff members.

Feima is an example of grit, determination, hard work, an example that 'Language is no Barrier when you set your goals!'

Advocacy-Upholding your rights



SpeakOut combines grass roots participation and strong community voices with powerful policy advocacy networks, raising the issues, highlighting the concerns and advocating for change.

SpeakOut advocated for

- Longer consultation period for Coercive Control Bill;
- development of customised community awareness, education, monitoring campaign as part of Coercive Control Implementation and Evaluation Reference Group;
- Women on temp visas experiencing violence to receive the same level of support as permanent residents or citizens as part of National Advocacy group;
- Visa related issues for multicultural clients with the Department of Home Affairs;
- Homeless migrant women at Women's Housing Roundtable organised by Green's MP Jenny Leong;
- Education and awareness of Misidentification of victims from multicultural communities at Multicultural Forum;
- People with disability Australia for recommissioning of Building Access Project;
- DV provisions in Residential Tenancies Act with Women's Legal Service;
- NSW Roundtable on Meeting the needs of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse children in the context of Domestic and Family Violence organised by Myriad Kofkin Global and Settlement Services Int.
- Safety for clients and their children, practitioners managing vicarious trauma, providing culturally safe approach while working with migrant and refugee women and their children.

SpeakOut participated in webinars on 16 Days of Activism, highlighting misidentification of victim in multicultural communities, in one of these webinars.

SpeakOut participated in several stakeholder Consultation groups with government and non-government organisations, advocating for migrant and refugee communities.



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2022-2023

Gayathri Dharmagesan	Chairperson
Nelia Sumcad	Treasurer
Sr. Margaret Ng	Secretary
Charity Danquah	Deputy Chairperson
Dr. Rugmini Venkatraman	Deputy Treasurer
Kyungja Jung	Member
Myra Hechanova	Member
Ronnie Wang	Member
Sumati Advani	Member



Left to right: Dr. Rugmini Venkatraman, Myra Hechanova, Ronnie Wang, Sister Margaret Ng, Nelia Sumcad, Gayathri Dharmagesan, Charity Danquah

Not in the photo: Kyungja Jung, Sue Advani

STAFF

2022-2023

Sunila Kotwal	Executive Officer
Marichu Gloria	Project Officer
Rukhshana Sarwar	Project Officer
Mariam James	Project Officer
Evelyn Boehringer	Operations Officer
Amelia Chadwick	Work Placement and Support Officer
Summera Hafeez	Sewing Class Facilitator
Jane Brock	Executive Officer up to 12 Aug 2022
Ram Kokularamanan	Accountant September 2022-present
Mohan Packianathan	Accountant July 2022-Aug 2022

Thanks to our Volunteers and Students in placement for their contribution

VOLUNTEERS

Nadera Hakimi, Anthony Montebello

STUDENTS IN PLACEMENT

Brielle Culpan, Ruby Hartley (University of Technology Sydney)

Acknowledgements

SpeakOut is grateful to the Funding bodies and Partners for their ongoing support. We look forward to working together to support migrant and refugee women and make their lives safer and richer.

Department of Communities and Justice

Paul Ramsay Foundation

Mercy Foundation

City of Parramatta Council

Afghan Women's Network

Anatolian Community Services

Asian Women at Work

Boronia Multicultural Services

Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS)

Cumberland Council

Cumberland Women's Health Centre

DFV Committees

Equality Rights Alliance

Harris Park Community Center

Harmony Alliance

Linker Network

NOOR Association

NSW Police

Philippines Australia Community Services Inc

Settlement Services International

Seva International Inc.

Sri Lankan Australian Women's Network



Contact Us



PO Box 9031, Harris Park NSW 2150



Phone: (02) 9635 8022



email: info@speakout.org.au



www.speakout.org.au



[wespeakout](https://www.facebook.com/wespeakout)



[@IWSAwomen](https://twitter.com/IWSAwomen)



[Immigrant Women's SpeakOut Association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Immigrant-Women's-SpeakOut-Association)



*Empowering
women
to live with
dignity*

**IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT
ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC**

ABN 47 885 007 025

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT 30 JUNE 2023**

IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2023**

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MANAGEMENT DECLARATION

IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

The Board of Management of Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW Inc declare in their opinion;

- (a) The attached financial statements in respect of the year ended 30 June 2023 and notes thereto comply with accounting standards
- (b) The attached financial statements and notes thereto give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association
- (c) The attached financial statements and notes thereto are in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act 2009
- (d) There are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due & payable;

This statement has been made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for on behalf of the Committee.



Chairperson

29 September 2023



Treasurer

Harris Park

MIGRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	2023	2022
REVENUE		
Cash Flow Boost	-	-
Grants Received (Note 10)	547,245.40	614,006.50
Handy Income & Membership	4,185.10	754.85
Donations	-	2,370.97
Balance of funds - Multicultural Women's Shelter	116,928.92	255,493.81
TOTAL REVENUE	668,359.42	872,626.13
PENDITURE		
Accounting	13,922.25	13,269.09
Administration Support	1,530.00	5,297.49
Association Expenses	2,358.14	240.08
Audit & Legal	3,500.00	3,500.00
Balance of funds	74,785.66	116,928.92
Bank Charges	181.63	253.42
Support	5,687.84	4,881.38
Staff computers & Technology	2,841.41	5,118.46
Electricity and gas	5,554.10	2,518.11
External assessor fees	-	-
Electrical Appliances	-	747.23
General Insurance	6,675.33	3,842.09
Internet	3,759.22	2,064.54
Printing Postage & Stationery	1,517.15	1,162.47
Professional Development	873.12	-
Project	13,765.69	77,719.49
Provisions - Annual Leave	- 43,810.13	7,616.09
Provisions- Long Service Leave	- 27,867.31	1,393.55
Installation	-	1,800.00
Fund Grant	-	10,111.82
Staff	67,567.53	62,343.46
Repairs -MWSI Shelter Maintenance	7,786.16	4,811.27
Repairs Security & Maintenance	844.99	5,732.35
Salaries & Wages	464,562.72	458,662.65
Staff Amenities & Sundries	2,624.50	23,655.65
Subscriptions	538.18	1,173.24
Superannuation	47,330.41	42,927.88
Telephone	2,934.43	3,977.00
Travel	-	795.15
Workers Compensation	8,696.07	10,256.08
	668,137.09	872,768.94
RESIDUAL SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	222.33	142.81
OTHER REVENUE	-	-
TOTAL SURPLUS FOR YEAR	222.33	142.81
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR YEAR	222.33	142.81

GRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 30 JUNE 2023

	2023	2022
CUMULATED FUNDS	\$ 42,299	\$ 42,076
Represented by:-		
CURRENT ASSETS		
on Hand	150	150
at Bank	270,680	361,529
payments	8,182	2,380
al Bond	4,780	4,780
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	283,792	368,839
FIXED ASSETS		
ment – at cost	12,489	12,489
culated Depreciation	-12,489	-12,489
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	0	0
TOTAL ASSETS	283,792	368,839
LIABILITIES		
Creditors (Note 7)	45,033	16,462
s in Advance (Note 8)	74,785	116,929
sion for Projects	38,238	38,238
sion for Employee Entitlements (Note 9)	83,437	155,134
TOTAL LIABILITIES	241,493	326,763
NET ASSETS	\$ 42,299	\$ 42,076

IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2023**

Balance at 30 June 2021

Net Surplus
Other comprehensive income
Total comprehensive income for the year

Balance at 30 June 2022

Net Surplus
Other comprehensive income
Total comprehensive income for the year

Balance at 30 June 2023

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2023

	2023	2022
Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Receipts from Funding Bodies & Clients	551,430	617,132
Payments to suppliers and employees	642,279	789,330
Net Cash inflow from Operating Activities	-90,849	-172,198
Net Cash outflow from Equipment Purchases	0	0
Net Increase (Decrease) in cash held	-90,849	-172,198
Cash at beginning of year	361,979	533,877
Cash at End of Financial Year	\$ 271,130	\$ 361,679
Reconciliation of Operating Surplus after tax to Net Cash Inflow From Operations		
Operating Surplus After Income Tax	222	-143
Depreciation & Loss on Disposal	0	0
Increase/Decrease		
Rental Bonds	0	0
Prepayments	-5,802	62
Creditors	28,571	-28,674
Provision for Projects	0	-4,500
Provision Leave	-71,697	9,010
Grants in Advance	-42,143	-147,973
	-\$ 90,849	-\$ 172,198

IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

1. Corporate Information

Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW Inc operates under the Association Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW). Its business operates in the Parramatta LGA.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

a) Basis of Preparation

This general purpose financial report has been prepared in accordance with Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW), Australian Accounting Standards and other authoritative pronouncements of the AASB & urgent issues group interpretations. The financial report has been prepared on the basis of historical cost and does not take into consideration changing values of money or current valuations of non-current assets. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

b) Significant accounting judgments, estimates & assumptions

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates & assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income & expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making judgments. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates & underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current & future periods.

c) Revenue Recognition

Revenue is recognised when the association is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and is net of GST.

d) Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

e) Cash

Cash & Cash equivalents in the balance sheet comprise cash at bank and in hand and in short term deposits are stated at their nominal value.

f) Trade Debtors

Trade Debtors are stated at original invoice amount less any Provision for doubtful debts where applicable. Normal trading terms are 7 to 30 days.

g) Plant & Equipment

Fixed assets are depreciated over the expected useful life on a reducing balance basis.

h) Grants in Advance

Grants in Advance are carried forward at their original amount and are to be provided subsequent to the balance date.

i) Employee Leave

The liability for Annual & Long Service Leave is recognised and measured at the amount expected to be paid when liabilities are settled.

j) Provisions

These are recognised when there is a present obligation as a result of past funding and it is probable that an outflow will be required using reasonable estimates.

k) Government Grants

Grants are matched against expenditure in the year expenditure is incurred and in accordance with funding body requirements.

3. Income Tax

No income tax is payable as the entity is exempt from taxation.

	2023	2022
4. Contingent Liabilities	\$nil	\$nil
5. Capital Expenditure Commitments	\$nil	\$nil
6. Segment Information		
The association operates predominantly in one industry, as it acts as sponsor for Government funded projects. The company operates in one geographical region, being Sydney, NSW		
7. Trade Creditors		
GST & PAYG	34,735	15,349
Trade Creditors	<u>10,738</u>	<u>3,113</u>
	\$45,033	\$18,462
8. Grants in Advance		
Sheller	48,442	92,174
Mercy Foundation	11,770	-
City of Parramatta- Celebrating Grandmothers	7,822	-
- Sheller	8,751	-
SSTF	-	4,449
Paul Ramsey Foundation	-	10,627
POSV Partnership	<u>-</u>	<u>9,884</u>
	\$74,196	\$119,524
9. Employee Entitlements		
Provision for Annual Leave	42,689	84,578
Provision for Long Service Leave	<u>40,768</u>	<u>70,556</u>
	\$83,437	\$155,134
10. Grants Received		
UnMARRS	345,527	328,941
D2.1 - TR1	158,213	159,549
City of Parramatta	10,000	-
City of Parramatta	10,000	-
Mercy Foundation	12,500	-
SSTF Open	-	5,000
SSTF	-	2,000
Govt IS	-	69,997
MARRS	-	30,000
	\$547,245	\$615,107

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT

TO MEMBERS OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statement of Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW Inc which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2023, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Comprehensive Income and Cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and the executive assertion statement.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statement of Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW Inc is in accordance with the Incorporated Associations Act Associations Incorporation Act 2009, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the associations financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended on that date; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and Associations Incorporation Act 2009.

Basis for opinion

I conducted the audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditors responsibilities for the Audit of the financial statement' section of my report. I am independent of the association in accordance with the ethic requirements of the Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia, and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the code.

I believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Responsibilities of the Responsible Entities for the Financial Statement

The management of the Incorporated Association are responsible for the preparation a financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial statement is appropriate and in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the Associations Incorporations Act 2009 and for such internal control as the executive determine is necessary to enable the presentation of the financial report that is free of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the report the financial report, the responsible persons are responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible persons either intend to liquidate the association or to cease operations or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the associations financial reporting process.

Auditors Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material, if, individually or in aggregate, they could be reasonably be expected to influence the economic users taken on the basis of this report.

Unit 7, Dural Business Park
286-288 New Line Road, Dural
Mail: PO Box 95 Round Corner NSW 2158

T: 02 9651 3685
F: 02 9651 4971
M: 0416 215 377

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery intentional omissions misrepresentations or the override of internal control
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures by the responsible persons,
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible persons' use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in the Auditors report to the related disclosures in the financial statement or if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of the audit report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statement, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statement presents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the responsible persons regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during the audit, effectiveness of the association's internal control



Stephen A Sproats

Registered Company Auditor 3932

Dural

29 September 2023

