

## TMSG Annual General Meeting

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### Statement of Apology and Reconciliation

To all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, your families and communities. We apologise for the human suffering and injustice that you have experienced as a result of colonisation and generations of discrimination and marginalisation that has resulted from that. We acknowledge your right to self-determination. We commit to working in solidarity with you in ways that you choose and determine. We recognise your leadership, we honor your visions and we join with you in your hopes for your future and for our futures together.

Townsville Multicultural Support Group held its twenty-sixth Annual General Meeting on 11 October 2018. AGMs are a regulatory requirement under the Associations Incorporation Act and can be a cut and dried experience. However I find at TMSG this is never the case! Despite the procedural requirements, TMSG always finds a way to make the annual general meeting a personal, welcoming and emotional experience. This year was no exception – we welcomed new members, celebrated the achievements and successes of community projects, said goodbye to some dear friends, reflected on the year that was, and expressed frustrations as we spoke about the challenges of the year passed, and those which lie ahead. There was an impressive number of people in attendance including members, supporters and politicians, and our wonderful independent Chair, Dr Betty McClellan.

Two new programs were notable changes to TMSGs local service profile in 2017/2018: The Safer Pathways for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women initiative which involves group training and discussions about domestic violence law in Australia and how it relates to human rights on settlement; The Disability Safe Place Project - a community development initiative implemented in 2017/2018 that focussed on creating inclusion for culturally diverse individuals living with a disability. Participants in this project developed resources to assist organisations and businesses to be more welcoming and inclusive. At the AGM, Project Leader Sibbo Sengabo showcased the quite wonderful online resources which were developed as part of the project, acknowledging program participants and supporters of the project who were present. I encourage you all to distribute the link to the online resources and youtube clips through your networks, no matter where you work, study or play, so we can grow inclusion and welcome in Townsville. #Ways to Welcome [www.waystowelcome.org](http://www.waystowelcome.org)

The committee shared with members that it has been monitoring closely the workload and financial impacts of the new funding framework for the Humanitarian Settlement Program. The transition from block funding arrangements to a complex claims based system has not been easy. The Committee acknowledged the great contributions of staff and adaptations made to our internal systems and processes. The financial report presented the reality of losses incurred by TMSG this financial year in delivering this program. Settlement is at the heart of what we do, and we ask staff and supporters to take the change journey with us in 2018/2019, to ensure we can continue to provide this service for the long term. We look forward to the challenges of supporting an increase in anticipated arrival numbers to regional Queensland and to welcoming families from the Central African Republic.

We said a heartfelt farewell to Bulai Barber after 15 years with TMSG. Rahila and Meg presented a beautiful bouquet and gift and there were tears all around. Thank you dearest Bulai, for all the support you have given each of us!

Committee member Mick McCabe dedicated the refurbished TMSG garage as the 'Sheila Hawthorn Annex' as a tribute to the much loved, long serving past president who led TMSG from 2004 to 2016 . Thank you to Teneale Grigg and Gambling Community Benefit Fund for turning this vision into a reality! Thank you to everyone involved in pulling together another wonderful AGM, and for all those who attended and support us in our vision!

**Rachel Montgomery, President.**



## “REFUGEE WOMEN: KEY TO THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES”

TMSG is proud to be one of three Australian organisations working under the direction of the Forced Migration Research Network within University of New South Wales (UNSW) on the above international project that is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Project leaders are Associate Professor Eileen Pittaway, Dr. Linda Bartolomei and Geraldine Doney. Other funded partners are Australian National Council of Refugee Women (ANCORW) and the Jesuit Refugee Society (JRS). There are a number of other self-funded Australian partners including Sydney Settlement Services International (SSI) and MDA Ltd.

The project “Refugee Women: Key to the Global Compact on Refugees” involves a consultative process with women and girls who are displaced and presents an ideal opportunity to ensure that gender equality –through the naming of specific needs of women and girls is integral to the new international policy framework of the Global Compact on Refugees. The focus on women and girls is key to unpacking the reasons why women and girls currently do not enjoy adequate international protection. The project is inclusive of the needs of men and boys.

The project aims for documentation of a Programme of Action to be included within the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) of the Global Compact, as a means of ensuring transformation across all stages of flight and displacement...addressing gender inequality and endemic sexual violence which is a key obstacle to equality for women and girls throughout the refugee flight to safety.

Another aim of the project which lines up with the work of many advocates, is that women and men who are displaced and those who are now resettled, are the principal voices heard within the processes of the UN. Reports by people who attended recent meetings of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) indicated that the UNHCR is indeed, working hard to accept recommendations from refugee representatives who are able to make their voices heard in the policy process and at UN meetings.

The project will document practical guides for implementation across all stages of flight and displacement...based on consultations with key people from within displaced situations – including but not limited to...Bangladesh, Thai Burmese Border, Myanmar, Malaysia, Afghanistan and Thailand. Specific actions to build gender equality will be specified in all four ‘pillars’ of the Global Compact: Reception and Admission, Support for immediate and ongoing needs, Support for Host Countries and Communities and Durable Solutions.

In October, I attended briefing meetings by UNSW in Bangkok with other delegates from Australian partners, a DFAT representative and representatives from key partner countries. It was the first stage of the project, a wonderful opportunity to hear from delegates of those countries and to begin to grasp the enormity of the project and its potential to influence local awareness of global regional processes and increased awareness of the refugee journey.

**Meg Davis, TMSG Manager**

*This article is informed by an article in the Forced Migration Review ...issue 57, February 2018: “Enhancing the protection of women and girls through the Global Compact on Refugees.” by Assoc. Professor Eileen Pittaway and Dr. Linda Bartolomei who are leading the project.*

## Townsville - Mentally Healthy City



On 22 November 2018 the Tropical Brain & Mind Foundation launched Australia’s first Mentally Healthy City Project Townsville at a function at The Ville. Starting in North Queensland, the aim is to make Townsville the most mentally healthy city in the country. The project was launched by former Prime Minister and beyondblue Chair Julia Gillard. At the launch, TMSG’s Mental Health & Wellbeing Project Officer, Rukiye Apaydin was invited to join the Mentally Healthy City Steering Committee by the Chair, Sue McGinty.

*Meg Davis, TMSG Manager and Rukiye Apaydin,  
TMSG Mental Health & Wellbeing Project Officer  
with Julia Gillard AC, Chair of beyondblue*

**Let’s strive for mental happiness!**

# General Updates

## Townsville's Most Influential People

Congratulations to TMSG Manager, Meg Davis on being listed in the Townsville Bulletin's 50 most influential list. This is recognition for her dedication to resettling people in the region for over 20 years and in getting the work of TMSG out there in the wider Townsville community. Meg attributes this nomination to the support and drive of the TMSG Management Committee and a hard working, dedicated staff team.

*"Congratulations to my good friend Meg Davis.", Nazifeh Yousefi.*

*"Well done Meg on being in the top 50 most influential people of Townsville! I have long admired your work and the beautiful community you have created at TMSG. I was so proud for you when I saw that in the paper.", Theresa Webster - Project Officer, The Smith Family.*

*"Congratulations Meg, you are a true angel to the people of Townsville.", Leanne Evans.*

*"Congratulations Meg.", Coralee O'Rourke MP.*

*"Congratulations on the recognition for all you do for our new families to Townsville and Australia. I am really impressed and proud.", Susan Perry - CEO, Community Gro.*



## TMSG End of Year Celebration & Ceremony

Join us for a light dinner, sharing of stories, graduation of Community Leadership Program participants, acknowledgement of volunteers, musical entertainment and celebration of another busy year at TMSG in 2018.

This year we are aiming for a plastic-free event, so please bring your own plate and cutlery to use.

Catering is provided.



**Thursday 13 December**

**5pm - 8pm**

**Ascension Church Hall, 6 Mill Drive, Heatley**



For RSVP contact Rahila  
admin@tmsg.org.au or 4775 1588

## The Castle Club

TMSG enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the Townsville Bulletin Castle Club at the Ville October 23, alongside staff from Umbrella Studio to raise funds for the organisations. It was an entertaining, fun packed evening...a great way to get to know the Umbrella Studio staff, to observe the entertainment and to mingle with guests whilst selling tickets. We are very grateful for the support of the Bulletin in this venture with the funds raised amounting to \$2,290. These funds are being used to assist with initial accommodation costs as families arrive in Townsville through the Australian Government's Humanitarian Scheme.

TMSG staff took the opportunity to share information about TMSG and to promote our book celebrating 25 years history "Heartache, Strength and Hope." A book was gifted to celebrity guest Richard Reid. Yet again another promotional activity of TMSG ...spreading its wings to extend information about how all the community can extend welcome and inclusiveness across Townsville in many different ways.



*TMSG staff Rukiye, Meg and Jacky with TMSG Management Committee Secretary, Ann Roebuck and Hollywood celebrity, Richard Reid.*

# Program Updates

**TMSG's Safer Pathways for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Women Program** recently spent two days providing intensive training on Human Rights, Women's Rights, Children's Rights and Domestic and Family Violence to 60 multicultural students studying in the Adult Migrant English program at TAFE North in Townsville. The students represented 23 different countries including Thailand, Mongolia, South Sudan and India, representing over 35 languages.

Delivered by our Community Human Rights Trainers Jacky, Uweza, Isse and Amy to women and men separately, the two-day program provided a safe space for women and men to learn about their human rights, engage in discussions around issues within their homes and communities and get information on support services in Townsville that they can access.

The Safer Pathways Program aims to contribute to positive settlement outcomes for refugees and migrants by providing clear and accurate information about Human Rights, domestic violence, the Australian laws and available support services. By building the capacity of multicultural communities to recognize and respond to domestic and family violence cases we are able to help CALD women living in Townsville that are experiencing, or are at risk of domestic and family violence to access the support they need. Men have responded positively to information on recognizing and understanding forms of violence and managing responses.

Feedback from the program was very positive with participants stating:  
*"I found these sessions very useful, I feel good to know there are people I can talk to".*

*"It was important for me to learn about the domestic violence because in my country they do not talk about the domestic violence and how it can hurt the family".*

*"I am happy to learn about the Australian laws as I want to be a good citizen".*

TMSG is looking forward to running this training again in the New Year!

**Tahlia Briggs, Project Coordinator**



*Jacky Ndayisaba, Human Rights Trainer with participant, Awilda Fernandez Nacovics*

## Community Leadership Program

The Community Leadership Program in Townsville is a partnership between Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. and Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland Ltd. The program is funded by the Australian Government, Department of Social Services.



The Program aims to assist members of new and emerging communities to develop skills, including independence, confidence, general well-being and networking, which contribute to the capacity of new communities to be able to participate equitably in Australian society.

The sessions run every Thursday from 11 October - 13 December. Within the first six weeks the program had participants represented from 13 different countries: Congo, Korea, Nepal, Laos and Denmark, just to mention a few. During the first couple of sessions presenters have given the participants information and skills on topics such



as the Refugee and Immigration Legal Service, Disability Support, Public Speaking, Conflict Management and Resolution and managing boundaries. Overall the participants gave some great feedback. The most common feedback has been that the participants achieved better confidence and knowledge about useful topics and that they appreciated the outcome of the sessions. Feedback from one participant:

*"I'm very grateful to TMSG, ECCQ and the presenter of the session for their time and efforts. It helps me build up confidence and opportunities".*

The participants will graduate at a special ceremony on Thursday 13 December as a part of TMSG's End of Year Celebrations.

**Schanne Skammelsen, International Social Work student**

## WHAT WE AT TMSG NEED MOST RIGHT NOW

What a wonderful community we live in, here in Townsville. We have so many people offering various donations, so we have compiled a list below of what would be most helpful for new arrivals.

### LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION

We have 17 families/single clients in short-term accommodation such as motels. Our clients don't have a rental or employment history and that makes it hard to secure long-term accommodation. They do have ongoing income to cover rental costs, they are thankful to be here and very respectful.

We urgently need long-term rental properties close to bus stops in Pimlico, Currajong, Hermit Park, Mundingburra, Aitkenvale, Heatley, Kirwan, Annandale:

7 x two bedroom units/houses, 6 x three bedroom houses, 2 x four bedroom houses

### PERSONAL CARE PACKS x 30

People arrive here with nothing and all family members need personal care products, underwear, socks, personal hygiene products etc. We need these for men, women, children and babies.

### SCHOOL PACKS x 30

A backpack with pencil case, drink bottle, lunchbox and hat for boys and girls.

### TAFE PACKS x 10

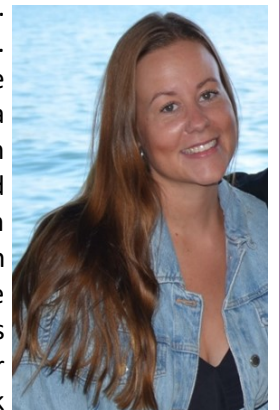
A backpack with pencil case, drink bottle and lunchbox for young adults.



*TMSG clients at a school enrolment.*

## STUDENT PROFILES

My name is **Schanne Skammelsen** and I'm a student at VIA University, Aarhus in Denmark. Currently, I'm on my second year of university doing my degree of International Social Work. I began my student placement at TMSG the 3rd of September 2018 and will end the placement the 17th of January 2019. During my placement I have worked side by side with a Case Manager in the HSP. My job at TMSG has been to support newly arrived refugees in their settlement area, attend various health assessments, school and TAFE enrolments and many other tasks. Furthermore, I have been a part of the Community Leadership Program with Tahlia Briggs, which has given me a great perspective of refugee's development within their first years in Australia. My placement at TMSG has been very useful for my future career as a social worker and has provided me with increased interpersonal skills such as teamwork, negotiation and leadership. The staff at TMSG have supported me whenever needed and at the same time they have extended my trust and confidence to work independently in a flexible, reflective and respectful way. I'm very grateful to be a part of the team and I have recommended this placement for future international students.



My name is **Anong Inthaboualy**. I first came to Australia in 2005 for my Bachelor of Science at JCU. Then I married and had three children. I had been doing full-time home duties for 8 years and decided to undertake a diploma of community services because my youngest one will start school next year. During my work placement at TMSG, I have found my passion and what I really want to do in my future career. I have been given opportunities and assigned tasks that challenged myself and identified my strengths and weaknesses. The work and people have inspired me to pursue my career and improve my expertise in community and social services. After I finish my diploma, I want to get a degree in social work. I would like to thank TMSG for providing me with a valuable opportunity to experience such a professional working environment.

Hi my name is **Jiyoen Park**. I come from South Korea and I have been living in Townsville for 4 years. I am a trainee who is currently doing a Business Administration Internship at TMSG. I started on the 27th of August 2018. I feel rewarded for working with professional staff at TMSG to support refugees' and migrant's settlement. Through TMSG I have expanded my understanding of our multicultural society by communicating with people who have diverse cultural backgrounds. I really appreciate the traineeship opportunity that has been a wonderful learning experience and a motivator for my future.



# CAMS (Community Action for a Multicultural Society)

**CAMS Program** continues to maintain its goal of developing social connectedness by sharing and exchanging cultures, through excursions and at the same time improving English conversational skills. Recently, after learning new English words and having conversations with volunteers and associates, the participants had the opportunity to learn how to play Indonesian traditional music instrument from bamboo, the Angklung. They all enjoyed the experience of learning the musical instrument. An excursion to a Community Event of Cyclone Day at Strand Park in collaboration with TMSG's selectability program and TMSG volunteers, enabled 15 people to attend. This was a special invitation from Townsville City Council's Emergency Management Officer to experience interacting with wider communities at the event as well as to learn how to be Cyclone Ready. People originally from Somalia, Congo and Indonesia had an opportunity to do CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) at the Emergency Services stall. We also had the opportunity to have a picture together with the Mayor. Feedback from participants at the event was positive and we hope to organise more excursions in the future.

**Johanna Kodoatie-Cahill, CAMS Practitioner**

*Left - TMSG staff, volunteers and clients with Mayor Jenny Hill at Cyclone Sunday*

*Right - Participants at Cyclone Sunday learning CPR*



## Women's Group

**The Multicultural Women's Group** organised two main activities in this quarter:

> Participating in a "Drought Relief Fundraising – Market Day" event organised by Uniting Church, Aitkenvale. Six Women originating from different countries including Congo, Afghanistan, Papua New Guinea, South Korea, and Peru participated in the Market Day. Although not many items were sold, the ladies have learned how to present and to market their items and how to put a reasonable price on the items.

> A community education session of "Waste and Recycling" was held on 26 October 2018. Forty women and men attended the session. Ashlee Stockwell, Waste Educator from Townsville City Council educated the participants to differentiate between which wastes can be recycled and which ones cannot. The session began by introducing new English words relevant to the topic and was facilitated by our beautiful volunteer, Jean Dartnall. This learning activity made it easier for the participants to comprehend the message of RECYCLING. Thank you Jean. We were grateful to Ramla Mohamed, a smart and amazing young lady from Somalia and David Muhoza, a gentleman from Congo, who were happy to voluntarily assist the participants with language support. Their contribution significantly added to the value of the session. Thank you Ramla and David. The Multicultural Women's Group also invited Bulai Barber to have a farewell speech in the session. Bulai is one of the longest Women's Group members and had worked at TMSG for more than 15 years. Goodbye Bulai, hopefully, you enjoy your retired time with happiness and we will miss you always.



*Johanna & Bulai*



*Ramla with Ashlee from Townsville City Council*



*Drought Relief Market Day*

**The TMSG Multicultural Women's Group keeps maintaining TMSG'S mission to quality of life through greater participation in and contribution to our multicultural society. If you would like to join the Women's Group Contact Johanna or Rahila at TMSG.**

## Containers for Change

TMSG has registered with Containers for Change so that when you return your containers to a refund point you can choose to donate your 10 cent refund to us! Simply use our scheme ID - C10044505 – which will allow your refund to be deposited directly into our bank account as a donation. Save the environment and support a local community organisation at the same time. Visit the Containers for Change website for information on what you can recycle and where! [www.containersforchange.com.au](http://www.containersforchange.com.au)



**DONATE YOUR  
CONTAINERS**  
WE RECEIVE 10 CENTS FOR EACH

WHEN RETURNING YOUR CONTAINERS, USE OUR SCHEME ID:

**C1004450**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND  
FOR HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT

# Thank You!

Thank you to the students from **St Patrick's College, Townsville** who donated 20 large fruit cakes to distribute to newly arrived families.

Last month the **Calvary Townsville Women's Group** organised an International Night and invited TMSG to attend. Gabe Cairns, TMSG Team Leader and Tra Nguyen, Case Manager attended and accepted a wonderful donation of \$2000. This generous donation will go towards creating starter backpacks for school aged children who have arrived as refugees.



Gabe and Tra accepting the donation.

## Thanks and Feedback

*Hi Teneale, I mainly want to congratulate the editors on the formatting of articles and the really good balance of pictorial and informative matter in the newsletter!*

**Sheila Hawthorn, ex-TMSG President**

*Hello Tahlia, Thanks I am happy the group enjoyed the session. It was lovely to meet you all. What a great service your organisation provided for migrants. Can you please thank the group for their feedback.*

**Glenda Duffy, Dawn Aboriginal Consultancy**

*TMSG HSP client, Jacqueline wanted to pass on her thanks to the TMSG team for informing her about a job opportunity for which she was successful in applying for. Her son also started a part time job recently.*

**Tra Nguyen, TMSG Case Manager**

*Thank you to Mi Mi who has been working hard to help TMSG clients secure employment at the laundry. She personally introduces clients to the supervisor and follows up with forms and work requirements. 4 people have got jobs recently.*

**Rukiye Apaydin, TMSG Mental Health & Wellbeing**

## Volunteers Update



A fantastic way to support TSMG is by donating your time through volunteering! TMSG is grateful to have a number of highly engaged people who donate their time to assist with our services to our clients. The type of activities our volunteers do are broad ranging from helping in the English conversation and sewing classes, shopping and setting up the short or long term houses, being at the airport on arrival and helping with administration. Volunteers on Call - As we are currently in a very busy period at TMSG, welcoming increasing numbers of new arrivals who are calling Townsville home, we are thinking of new options of how best to support our clients and are currently trialing a 'volunteer on call' system. This is where our volunteers put their hand up to be at the TMSG office on a rostered permanent weekly shift basis and assist with whatever the day brings. You can do a day or 2 hours if that suits you. We often have tasks that come up that you can't predict, such as getting prescriptions, buying nappies and assisting with bank ATM orientation. It's very helpful to have volunteers respond directly to situations with the support of the TMSG team. A very sincere thank you to all our volunteers – the delivery of our services would so much harder without your help, we appreciate all that you bring to TMSG and all that you do!

# Important Dates

TMSG End Year Celebration & Community Leadership	Thursday 13 December, 5pm - 8.30pm Church of the Ascension Hall, 6 Mill Drive, Heatley
Sewing Group	1st/2nd/3rd and 5th Fridays of every month 10.00am-12noon <i>school terms only</i>
English Conversation	Starting again on 18 January 2019
Multicultural Women's Group	4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of each month, 9.30am-12noon Finished for 2018 First group for 2019 will be on Friday 22 February - topic TBA
Women's Swimming Safety Course	TBA 2019 - Contact Settlement Services at TMSG for more information
TMSG operating hours over the Christmas period	Monday 24 December – closed Tuesday 25 December – closed (PH) Wednesday 26 December – closed (PH) Thursday 27 December – open Friday 28 December – open Monday 31 January – closed Tuesday 1 January – closed (PH) Wednesday 2 January – open as usual

TMSG Management Committee and Staff wish everyone a happy, healthy and safe holiday season!



The TMSG history book is selling fast....there is only one box left! Don't miss out, come in and purchase your book for \$20 today.

Thank you very much to the Burmese community for buying 15 copies of the book, your support is appreciated and we hope you enjoy them.

IF UNDELIVERED, PLEASE RETURN TO  
Print Post Approved: 42402200780  
Townsville Multicultural Support Group (Inc.)  
63 Ross River Road MUNDINGBURRA QLD 4812  
PO Box 1801 Aitkenvale QLD 4814

Like us on Facebook to get regular updates on activities and other topical items relating to TMSG locally, but also find links to other multicultural information.

<https://www.facebook.com/tmsg.org.au>



## Management Committee 2018/2019

President: Rachel Montgomery      Treasurer: Alan Carpenter  
Vice-President: Danni Bruch      Member: Linda Davis  
Secretary: Ann Roebuck      Member: Mick McCabe

**Women's Group Coordinators:** Johanna Kodoatie-Cahill & Rahila Talic

**Newsletters Editors:** Teneale Grigg & Meg Davis

*The contents, information, advice and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of TMSG and not the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) and Department of Social Services (DSS).*

## REMINDER:

**TMSG MEMBERSHIP** is due each year. **\$2.00** annually with donation to **\$5.00** welcome.