



# TMSG

TOWNSVILLE MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT GROUP INC.



## Annual Report 2020-2021

## Funding Bodies & Contracts

- Australian Government  
Department of Home  
Affairs
- Australian Government  
Department of Social  
Services
- Morris Family Foundation
- Multicultural Australia Ltd
- Queensland  
Government  
Department of Local  
Government, Racing and  
Multicultural Affairs
- Refugee and Immigration  
Legal Service
- Townsville City Council



### TMSG President Report

TMSG acknowledges the Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun people, owners of the land where TMSG operates, and the neighbouring Bindal people, elders past, present and future. TMSG is proud to share this land with the oldest living culture in the world.

TMSG is funded by both the Commonwealth and State Governments to deliver the following support services to the people settling in our communities:

- Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) assists people to build a new home in our vibrant communities.
- Settlement Engagement and Transition Service (SETS) focuses on improving people's independence, social inclusion, economic and personal wellbeing, and community networks.
- Multicultural Women's Group offers information and social interaction for women, particularly those from non-English speaking backgrounds.
- Safer Pathways for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) women explores how understanding of human rights influences settlement and provides educational opportunities for CALD communities and service providers.
- Community Action for Multicultural Society (CAMS) aims to build inclusive communities across Queensland by extending a welcoming invitation for people from Cultural and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.
- TMSG also provides advocacy services and small group activities for people settling into our community.

TMSG staff work with the people who use our support services to build resiliency and the capacity to build a new life in their new home. TMSG is focused on ensuring that people experience a welcoming community where human rights and inclusion are evident and valued. TMSG is constantly faced with the challenges presented by language barriers and lack of social housing. These challenges will be front and centre for the Management Committee as we move into the new financial year.

The financial year 2020 - 2021 has been a very challenging time for TMSG and the people who use our support services. The ongoing outbreaks of COVID have meant that international borders have been closed and very few new arrivals have come into our community over the past 18 months. Queensland has been very fortunate to date in terms of our ability to live in an unrestricted environment compared with people and families in NSW and Victoria. We have had to deal with the fact, however, that life as we have known it is no longer business as usual. This has encouraged us to focus on being flexible and adaptive to new and emerging environments.

Despite the challenges, TMSG has been very visible and active in our communities this year. A key celebration was the launch of the *TMSG Reconciliation Action Plan*, primarily developed by the previous Manager, Meg Davis, in collaboration with the Management Committee and staff. The Townsville City Council has acknowledged the success of the collaborative CALD Disaster Resources Program by the nominating TMSG in the *Resilience National Awards*, where TMSG is a finalist. TMSG also participated in the following events and celebrations:

- Our Townsville
- Refugee Week
- Empowerment Forums: Micro Business Initiative & Education, Employment and Leadership
- Community Fun and Learning Day
- Harmony Day
- Palm Sunday Walk for Refugees
- End of Year Celebration

Challenges also offer opportunities and my thanks go to the Management Committee members who have worked in a collaborative and focused manner this year to take advantage of any opportunity presented. The Finance Sub Committee has worked effectively with the management team to ensure our financial sustainability in challenging times. The Governance Sub Committee has also delivered a range of sound governance policies and procedures.

TMSG has also experienced a range of staffing challenges due to the impact of reduced demand for HSP services. I would sincerely like to thank Thi Huong Tra Nguyen, for her outstanding stewardship in leading TMSG during these trying times. I would also like to thank the management team and staff for their patience and commitment to the people we serve.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Management Committee for their support and commitment to TMSG. It is also with sadness but immense gratitude that I thank Mick McCabe, who is stepping down from the Management Committee at this 2021 AGM. Mick has been serving TMSG for decades, he was a founding member of the Management Committee, and his legacy is one of commitment and action in achieving social justice, fairness, and inclusion for those people who come to our land as refugees. Thank you, Mick. I would also like to thank Tracey Tatnell for her commitment and contribution to the Management Committee during the past year as she steps down from the Management Committee as well. Thank you, Tracey.

I thank the management and staff for their ongoing commitment to TMSG and I also thank those people who place their trust in TMSG to assist them to settle in our communities. Your courage and determination inspire us every day.

Cathy O'Toole  
President TMSG Management Committee



## AGM REPORT 2021

### GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

I have currently only been in the role of General Manager for less than eight weeks. Although I have only been a part of TMSG for a very short period time, I am aware of the highly regarded work, dedication and reputation of the organisation. Therefore, it is important to thank the many people and funding bodies who have supported TMSG prior to my time with the organisation.

I would like to thank the TMSG Management Committee and staff for the very warm welcome. I am honoured to be joining such a highly skilled, talented and dedicated team, and I look forward to continuing and growing the work of TMSG.

My sincere thanks and gratitude goes to Tra Nguyen for her time as Acting General Manager. It is a huge undertaking to be both the Manager of Humanitarian Support Program and Acting General Manager. However, Tra has been fantastic in supporting both TMSG staff and clients and I thank her for her tireless work.

A very special thanks to our amazing TMSG volunteers. This year 926 volunteer hours were provided to TMSG. This valuable time is critical to supporting TMSG clients and events, as well as our core purpose to inspire our community to embrace cultural diversity. My thanks also to all of our James Cook University and TAFE students, as well as Access trainees.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, this has been a very busy year for TMSG. TMSG have been successful in ongoing funding for Settlement, Engagement and Transition as well as funding to extend our domestic and family violence services. Our Community Action for a Multicultural Society are busier than ever and as part of that program we were very pleased this year to be able to host a number of events again, including; our Community Fun and Learning Day, Harmony Day, Empowerment Forum, and Palm Sunday Walk for Refugees. This year we also launched our Reconciliation Action Plan.

In partnership with the Townsville City Council, TMSG was a Queensland state finalist for the Resilient Australia Awards for our natural disaster ready booklets which have been created across multiple languages.

As we move forward of a life with COVID, TMSG has delivered numerous COVID vaccination information sessions across multiple languages, including; Sango, Somali, Swahili and French. These information sessions have been critical to our culturally and linguistically diverse communities and TMSG is delivering vaccination hubs on-site in October and November to ensure accessibility to the vaccine.

On behalf of TMSG, I would like to thank all of our funding bodies, contractors and partners. We would be unable to provide the necessary services and supports without your assistance and it is truly appreciated. A special mention to Blessed Mary MacKillop Parish, Mercy Community Services and Townsville City Council for their ongoing support for our properties and short-term accommodations.

I am excited for the year ahead and to grow the work and opportunities for TMSG, our clients and the wider multicultural community.

**Stephanie Naunton**  
**General Manager**



# Townsville Multicultural support Group Inc.

## Treasurer's Report 2020-2021 Financial year

### Introduction

This report provides a summary of significant issues affecting the financial viability of TMSG. Matters of accounting and audit are covered in the audit report.

### General

For the 2020-21 financial year, TMSG recorded a surplus of \$432,395. TMSG remains solvent with a very healthy balance sheet as at 30 June, 2021 with net assets of \$1,613,921. It must, however, be remembered that financial reserves are required to provide for:

- a. Cash required for liabilities such as taxation, employee leave and other entitlements.
- b. Unexpended grant income that must be spent on that grant.
- c. Post Covid19 there are many challenges and TMSG will have to pivot to respond to new programs or needs and it is important that we maintain reserves to allow us to act.

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed and will continue to pose significant financial threats to TMSG and as such this report addresses these threats and the Management Committee strategy in response.

Covid aside, there are no significant doubtful or bad debts or liabilities known that affect the financial viability of TMSG.

### Government Assistance

In the year to 30 June 2021, TMSG received government assistance in coping with Covid in the form of Job Keeper (\$517,350) and a cash boost stimulus payment (\$50,000). In the absence of these payments TMSG would have recorded a loss of \$134,955.

No further government assistance is anticipated for the current financial year, and with no certainty that humanitarian settlement arrivals will recommence, the TMSG management committee has accepted a recommendation for a modest reduction in staffing to limit losses this year. This has occurred.

### Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)

In the last 'normal' year (2018-19) income from the HSP program was 64% of the total and as such the performance of this program is critical to the financial health of TMSG. Margins are tight and administration of claims has to be well managed to ensure sufficient revenue to cover costs.

For 2020-21 HSP had reduced to 41% of total income. Despite almost no arrivals, work under the program continued providing ongoing assistance to newly settled clients. Staff have been very diligent in ensuring claims are made for all chargeable activity.

But HSP relies on continued arrivals to keep revenue flowing. Arrivals remain blocked and there is no sign as to when these may recommence. While there is a substantial number approved for settlement, there has been a warning that arrivals may recommence with a rush. With this in mind, it is very important to retain the staffing capacity and expertise in TMSG to deal with this when it occurs.

As such, a key financial strategy is to preserve reserves so that staffing can be retained in anticipation of a restart in arrivals.

### The Strategic Response

The net effect of Job Keeper, reduced staffing and hours worked, some staff attrition, and good work in optimising HSP claims is that the finances of TMSG are stable and secure for the time being. To secure TMSG into the future, the Management Committee and the TMSG management team is:

- Seeking new programs/revenue opportunities
- Advocating wherever possible for a recommencement of HSP arrivals.

An alternative measure of value of TMSG is the quality and capacity of its staff. As such in all considerations, an overarching objective is to stabilise staffing while senior management (and the MC) applies itself to the task of identifying new revenue streams.

The head HSP contractor, Multicultural Australia (MA), continues to advocate for the HSP program but they too have had to make severe staff cuts.

It has been further agreed by the MC, to reduce stress upon staff on short term contracts, such contracts are to be extended as far as funding streams allow.

**Alan Carpenter**  
TMSG Treasurer

## Partners & Supporters

Access Community Services Ltd  
Aitkenvale Primary School  
Amnesty International Townsville  
Amparo  
Blessed Mary MacKillop Parish  
Carer Gateways - Wellways  
Catholic Diocese Townsville  
Centacare Cairns and Townsville  
Chris Blyth  
CityLibraries Townsville  
Community Leaders  
Communities for Children Townsville West  
Crystal Clear PR  
Dancenorth Australia  
Department of Human Services  
Dr Betty McLellan  
Elders Real Estate Aitkenvale  
Entire Wellbeing Family Law Pathways Network  
Inclusion Support Agency  
Individual community members  
James Cook University  
Mercy Community Services  
Multicultural Australia  
Northern Australia Primary Health Ltd  
NQ Domestic Violence Resource Service Inc.  
NQ Primary Health Network  
NQ Ummah Care  
NQ Women's Legal Service  
PCYC Townsville  
Qld Department of Health  
Qld Department of Housing  
Qld Human Rights Commission  
Qld Police Service  
Qld Program of Assistance to Survivors of  
Torture and Trauma (QPASTT)  
Qld Statewide Tenant Advice & Referral Service  
(QSTARS)  
Quota Thuringowa  
Red Cross  
Refugee Council of Australia  
Refugee Health Network Qld  
Rent Connect  
Ryan Community Centre  
Settlement Council of Australia  
Services Australia  
Society of St Vincent De Paul  
Sorooptimist International TSV  
St Benedict's Catholic School  
St Margaret Mary's College  
Surf Life Saving Qld  
TAFE North  
Tender Care  
The Smith Family  
The Women's Centre  
TMSG Volunteers and Members  
Townsville Chamber of Commerce  
Townsville City Real Estate Cranbrook  
Townsville Community Legal Service  
Townsville Islamic Society  
Townsville State High School  
Townsville University Hospital  
Umbrella Studio Contemporary Arts  
Volunteering North Qld  
Youth With a Mission

## Multicultural Women's Group (MWG) Report (1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021)

The Multicultural Women's Group (MWG) is committed to the TMSG vision: bringing people together, not exclusively women, from different cultural backgrounds in the spirit of friendship. TMSG acknowledges and is grateful for continuing support by the Queensland Government-funded CAMS Program.

Playing the Indonesian instrument "Angklung", learning new English words, small group discussions and presentations by each group were the regular activities of the MWG sessions. This year, there were 12 sessions held:

- ◆ English conversation about Numeracy Literacy (July 2020 – online and face to face)
- ◆ Sharing Culture (August 2020 – online and face to face)
- ◆ Healthy Lifestyle (September 2020 – online and face to face)
- ◆ Improving self-esteem (October 2020 – online and face to face)
- ◆ Empowerment Forum: Education, Employment and Leadership (November 2020 – face to face)
- ◆ End of Year Celebration: Thanksgiving to Volunteers (December 2020 – face to face)
- ◆ Visiting Local Disaster Coordination Centre (January 2021 – face to face)
- ◆ Information session by Selectability (February 2021 – face to face)
- ◆ Celebrating Harmony Day (March 2021 – face to face)
- ◆ Visiting Bunnings Warehouse – Domain (April 2021)
- ◆ Empowerment Forum: Micro Business Initiative (May 2021 – face to face)
- ◆ Celebrating Refugee Week (June 2021 – face to face)

Our two empowerment forums included sharing stories of struggle, resilience, and achievements in making adjustments to life in Australia and in initiating their own business (Micro Business Initiative). Visits were organised to Bunnings Warehouse (Domain) and the Local Coordination Disaster Centre. Two celebration sessions were held, Harmony Day (March) and Refugee Week (June). Playing Angklung, head-wrapping and flower arrangement activities were the most popular and connected participants (including TMSG Management Committee President, volunteers, male participants, guests from Dance North).

Since lockdown started in March 2020, MWG maintained sessions using Zoom. Face to face delivery restarted in November, while observing pandemic protocol.

Two big events have been inspired and influenced by the monthly MWG activities. The Community Fun and Learning Day (May 2021 – part of the 2020 – 2021 CAMS Workplan) and active participation in Townsville City Council "Our Townsville" event (June 2021).

The 2021 Community Fun and Learning Day (CF&LD) was successfully held following the success of the 2019 event. The aim of the event is to connect CALD people, especially stay-at-home mums, with relevant service providers in an informal setting. More than 100 people, including children, interacted with stallholders including Townsville City Council - Community Engagement Division (Disaster Resilience and Recovery), Amparo, Centrelink, Selectability, NEAMI National, Society of St Vincent de Paul, State Emergency Services (SES), QLD Fire Emergency Services (QFES), and Tendacare Disability Services. The CF&LD activities which received positive response were dancing and Angklung workshops, demonstration of kitchen fire by QFES, a traditional head-wrapping competition, and marble and spoon races.

TMSG and MWG members were invited by Townsville City Council to be involved in the "Our Townsville" event and to have stalls in the Multicultural area. The event combined Eco Fiesta, Heritage Day, Disaster Ready Day, Get Active, Pet and Mentally Healthy expos in one mega event at Anderson Gardens. Women from Democratic Republic of Congo, South Korea, India, Indonesia, and Australia displayed and sold their artwork or handicraft products, henna painting and head wrapping, and music and dancing workshops were held.

Handicraft workshops were held immediately after the Multicultural Women's Group (or English conversation) sessions. These both improve mental health and provide English language practice in an informal and practical setting.

MWG has successfully maintained its planned activities despite the COVID 19 pandemic. The keys are being resilient and creative in finding strategies and in mastering digital technology. Most importantly, ongoing and constant support from volunteers and working in partnerships have all made a significant contribution to the success of the MWG sessions.

Thanks to organisations: Wellways, Townsville City Council, especially Community Engagement Division (Disaster Resilience and Recovery) and Local Coordination Centre, Youth with A Mission (YWAM), Dance North, and Selectability.

Special thanks to volunteers (including JCU students who did placement at TMSG), guest speakers, CALD presenters and guest panellists: Anne Brook-Wagner, Ann-Marie Bollier, Chathuri Weerasekara, Cherry Wells, Dayle Foreman, Erwin Lofranco, Etando Mlondani, Fiston Mikedi, Fabrice Merci, Grace Ronelyam, Hera Oktadiana, Ikenna Ohabuiko, Jean Dartnall, Jiyoen Park, Jolie Munyana, Kartika Natalia, Kay Aung, Kitty Nankervis, Linda Davis, Liz Schmidt, Louise Ashford, Lynette Trezona, Mariam Owato, Marylyne Sergei, Marie-Claude Brown, Neha Kamboj, Paw Wah, Rachel Montgomery, Rachel Zahabu, Rex Grattidge, Samitamba Kayeye, Shirin Yousefi, Sibbo Sengabo, Suzanne Bocking, Vivi Slat, Yoon Sandi Kyaw, and Zakaria Ali.

Johanna Kodoatie-Cahill  
Multicultural Women's Group Coordinator

# 2020-2021 Staff

Anong	Jolie	Sandi
Anwar	Kasma	Sibbo
Chathuri	Maliki	Teneale
Daoud	Marilyne	Thelma
Esther	Paw Wah	Tony
Fabrice	Rachel	Tra
Grace	Rahila	Tshika
Innocent	Ramla	Vincent
Jacky	Rose	Yasmin
Jenny	Rukiye	Yu-Chich
Ji-yoen	Saida	Zakaria
Johanna	Samhoun	Zhen

## 2020-2021

## Management Committee

President: Cathy O'Toole

Vice President: Danni Bruch

Secretary: Ann Roebuck

Treasurer: Alan Carpenter

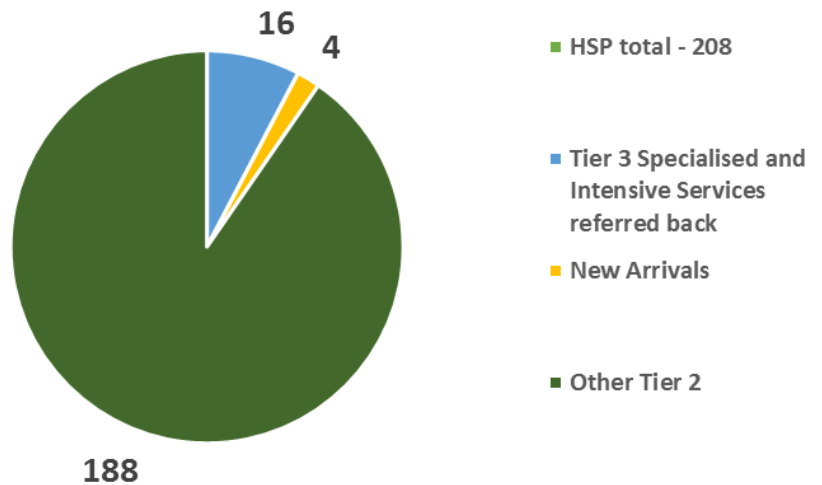
Members:

Mick McCabe

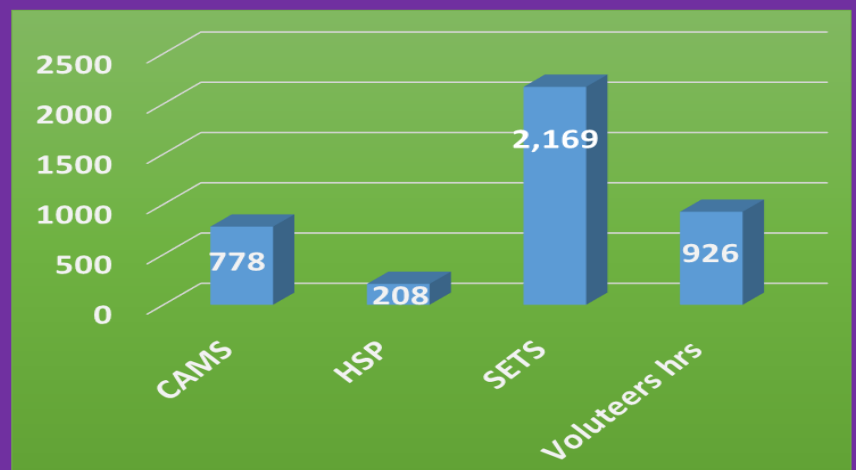
Rachel Montgomery

Tracey Tatnell

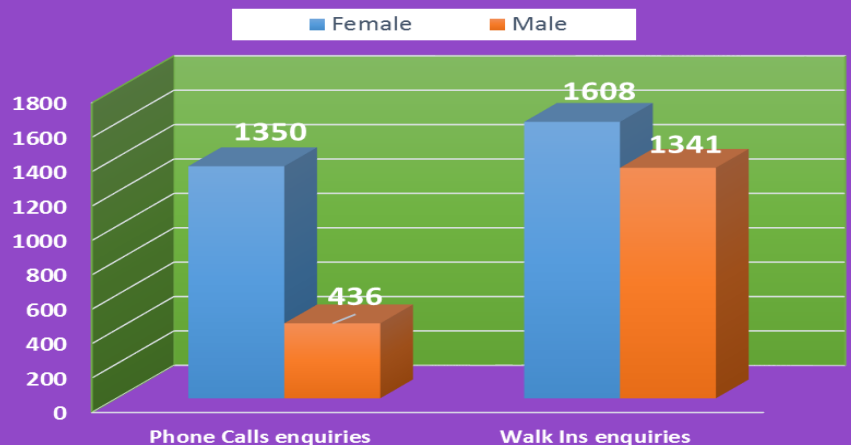
Humanitarian Settlements Entrants in Townsville



Client Number by Key Program



ENQUIRIES





## PROGRAMS:

- >> Advocacy for Multiculturalism
- >> Community Education and Health Programs
- >> Multicultural Women's Group



## TMSG Vision

To address needs through greater participation in and contribution to a better quality of life for our multicultural society.

## 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 honour your Vision, and we join with you in your hopes for your future and for our futures together.

## CONTACT:

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TOWNSVILLE MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT GROUP INC.

*Inspired by Cultural Diversity*