



TMSG

TOWNSVILLE MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT GROUP INC.

Annual Report 2023 – 2024



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PRESIDENT REPORT

It is an honour to be part of and witness the unwavering commitment of TMSG to its mission of fostering friendships among people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The year 2023-24 was a period of renewal for us. There were notable retirements, new appointments, and promotions.

We were delighted in March to appoint Dr. Tra Nguyen as the General Manager, a promotion from her previous role as Manager of the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP). Tra brings extensive knowledge of our programs and a strong strategic mindset to the position. I also thank outgoing CEO Stephanie Naunton for her service to TMSG.

I am grateful to the TMSG Management Committee (MC) members for their support, time, and wise counsel. This year, Cathy O'Toole, Rachel Montgomery, and Dushy Thangiah retired from the management committee, and I thank them for their contribution to TMSG.

We welcomed new members Gabe Cairns, Martin Locke, Jenny Panchal, and Dr. Seka Kiyangi, joining continuing members Ann Roebuck, Judith Rusoke-Dierich, and myself, providing us with a board of broad experience and talent.

Continuing the theme of renewal, your board and senior management held a strategic workshop in June 2024, from which we established priorities and direction for the short to medium term. I am pleased to report that the management and staff of TMSG are responding to those priorities exceptionally well.

On behalf of the Management Committee, I extend my sincere gratitude to our exceptional team of staff and volunteers who have worked diligently to drive our organisational growth and deliver an outstanding program. Their dedication and passion for our organisation are truly inspiring, and we are fortunate to have such a talented group of individuals.

Finally, a personal highlight for me has been attending the Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) graduations. Witnessing young individuals, all clients of the HSP program, strongly motivated and successfully navigating the world of work in their new community, is truly delightful. Each success story is a source of great joy.

Thank you all for an unforgettable and successful year!

Alan Carpenter
President

GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I present the General Manager's report. While I have had the honour of leading TMSG for the past three months of this financial year, I am particularly grateful for the opportunity to oversee the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) and other projects throughout the year. This year, TMSG continued to deliver several impactful programs funded by Federal and State Governments, as well as through partnerships and consortiums with other organizations. These include:

- Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)
- Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS)
- Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS)
- Diverse Queensland Workforce (DQW)
- Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW)
- Safer Pathway for Culturally and Linguistically for Women (SPW)
- Health to Health (H2H)
- Multicultural Health Engagement Project (MHEP)

In 2023-2024, TMSG proudly welcomed and supported 411 newly arrived refugees in Townsville. Despite the ongoing housing crisis, we expanded to 6 short-term accommodations and secured 80 long-term homes for our new arrivals. This achievement would not have been possible without the incredible collaboration within the HSP team.

Beyond housing, TMSG has supported 129 clients who secured jobs across industries, and 65 clients successfully obtained Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways I and other qualifications.

TMSG continues to be a trusted and welcoming space for individuals and families from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Through regular group work, training, community engagement, and events, we have fostered social connections, enhanced English literacy and digital skills, supported the development of other life skills, and celebrated both individual and community successes. TMSG remains a safe haven for hundreds of women and children seeking to escape domestic and family violence or enhance their understanding of human rights. Additionally, we have helped individuals build safer lives, improve their well-being, and strengthen their mental health.

Despite the ongoing challenges of the housing crisis and inflation, TMSG remains dedicated to strengthening Townsville's multicultural community in the year ahead. We're focused on expanding our programs, finding new funding opportunities, and building stronger partnerships with external services and relevant departments to offer the best support for our clients. Advocacy and a client-centered approach are at the heart of TMSG's vision, guiding both the Management Committee and staff in all our efforts to create lasting, positive impact.

I want to take a moment to thank the Management Committee directors and the Sub-committee for their ongoing support, commitment, and leadership at TMSG. A big shout-out to the TMSG accommodation team, who worked hard to make sure newcomers found stable housing and got settled into their new lives. Thank you. Rachel for doing amazing job as the HSP manager when I stepped up to be acting General Manager. Thanks to all our staff, volunteers, students, community leaders, stakeholders, and contractors for playing such an important role in supporting our clients and contributing to TMSG's success. I also want to say thank you to our funding bodies and head contracts for their continued support, as well as the Townsville City Council and Mercy Community for their invaluable help with accommodations. Lastly, I express my deepest gratitude to our clients for placing their trust in TMSG as their safe and supportive space.

Dr. Tra Nguyen
General Manager

TREASURER REPORT

TMSG ended the year with a surplus of \$602,855, increasing retained earnings from \$1,984,084 to \$2,586,939.

Earned income was total of \$3,941,449, \$1,730,226 above \$2,211,223 in the previous year. There were corresponding increases in expenditure due to this rise in activity, increasing from \$1,939,450 to \$3,338,595.

A significant departure from the previous financial year is the loan taken to partially fund the purchase of 222 Charters Towers Road. TMSG could have paid the full cost of the building from its reserves, but it was thought it would be prudent to hold a higher level of funds on deposit as a contingency against adverse events.

The Balance Sheet records total equity at \$2,586,939; with gross assets of \$3,838,363 and liabilities of \$1,251,424, predominantly for the loan on 222 Charter Towers Road (\$743,123) and for employee benefits and trade and other payables (\$508,301).

Alan Carpenter

Treasurer

Partners & Funders

- Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs
- Australian Government
Department of Social Services
- Blessed Mary MacKillop
Parish
- Catholic Diocese Townsville
- Department of Trade,
Employment and Training
- Department of Children,
Youth Justice & Multicultural
Affairs Qld
- Department of Women,
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Partnerships and
Multiculturalism
- Department of Human
Services
- Mercy Community Services
- Multicultural Australia Ltd
- NQ Primary Health Network
- Neami National
- Queensland Government
Department of Local
Government, Racing and
Multicultural Affairs

2023 – 24 STAFF

- Anwar
- Yasmin
- Jane
- Gladys
- Zhen
- Danni
- Marius
- Martin
- Suren
- Zhanming
- Anong
- Emmanuel
- Rajina
- Emilienne
- Apendeki
- Johanna
- Honorine
- Adam
- Sneha
- Niquita
- Ismahan
- Emily
- Jolie
- Joyce
- Moses
- Stephanie
- Senghor
- Jules
- Anh
- Tra
- Espoir
- Chantal
- Jackline
- Ji-Yeon
- Helen Ann
- Thelma
- Anju
- Grace
- Sibbo
- Judith
- Rachel S
- Rahila
- Elena
- Iraha
- Chathuri
- Sandi
- Shirin
- Souate
- Rachel Z
- Moustaph

2023-2024 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- **President:** Cathy O'Toole (1st July 2023, followed by Alan Carpenter March 2024-Current)
- **Treasurer:** Alan Carpenter
- **Secretary:** Ann Roebuck
- **Directors:** Gabe Cairns, Martin Locke, Seka Kiyangi, Judith Rusoke-Dierich and Jenny Panchal

Supporters

- Access Community Services Ltd
- Aitkenvale State Primary School
- Annandale State Primaray School
- Aitkenvale Community Hub
- Amnesty International Townsville
- Australian Taxation Office
- Billy Lids Kindergarten
- Carer Gateways - Wellways
- Centacare Cairns and Townsville
- Community champion from Costa Rica
- Commonwealth Bank – Aitkenvale Branch
- City Libraries Townsville
- Choi Kwang Do – International Martial Art
- Community Leaders
- Calvary Care Townsville
- Construction Skills Queensland
- Communities for Children Townsville West
- Elders Real Estate Aitkenvale
- Entire Wellbeing Family Law Pathways Network
- Football Queensland
- Inclusion Support Agency
- Individual community members
- James Cook University
- JCU Student Association
- JCU SANTE
- Gough Plastic
- Headspace Townsville
- Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters
- Ignatius Park College
- IT Solutions North Queensland
- International Youth Fellowship (IF) Townsville
- Indonesian Microbiologist
- Link and Launch
- Local Disaster Coordination Centre
- Motor Trades Association of Queensland
- Mike Carney Toyota
- Mercy Community
- Nab – Aitkenvale Branch
- NQ Domestic Violence Resource Service Inc.
- NQ Ummah Care
- NQ Women’s Legal Service
- Outback Pie Co
- PCYC Townsville
- Qld Department of Health
- Qld Department of Housing
- Qld Human Rights Commission
- QLD Community Alliance
- Qld Police Service
- Qld Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma
- Primary Connect
- Qld Statewide Tenant Advice & Referral Service
- Red Cross
- Refugee Council of Australia

Supporters (Continued)

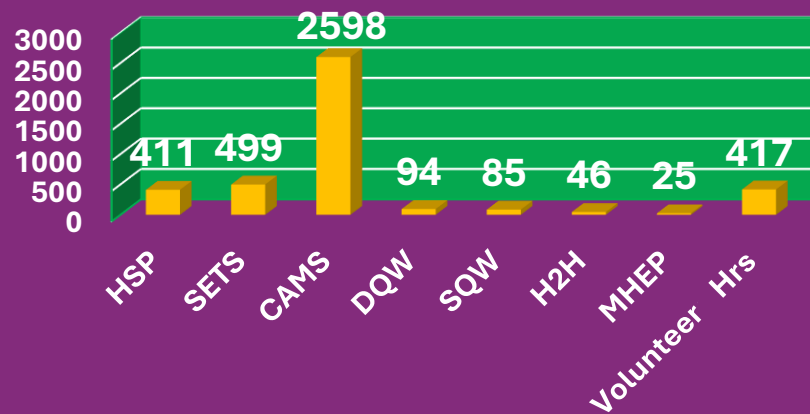
- Rent Connect
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Refugee Health Network Qld
- Red Cross
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Smart Precinct NQ
- Small Business Financial Counsellors
- St. Patric School
- Services Australia
- Study Townsville
- Serco
- Regional Development Australia
- Society of St Vincent De Paul
- Soroptimist International TSV
- St Benedict’s Catholic School
- St Margaret Mary’s College
- TIE Service
- TAFE North
- Tenancy Training Institute
- Tendercare Disability Services
- The Smith Family
- TMSG Volunteers and Members
- Townsville Chamber of Commerce
- Townsville City Real Estate Cranbrook
- Townsville Community Legal Service
- Townsville Islamic Society
- Townsville Enterprise
- Townsville State High School
- Townsville University Hospital
- Townsville Manufacturing Hub
- Thuringowa State School
- Townsville Mosque
- Townsville Congolese Communities (3)
- Townsville Somali Community
- Townsville Kenyan Community
- Townsville Central African Community
- Townsville Indonesian Community
- Well Hung Glass
- TSV Mentally Healthy City
- Triple P International Pty Ltd
- Thuringowa State School
- TMSG – Strum and Giggle Group
- University of Central Qld
- Umbrella Studio Contemporary Arts
- Volunteering North Qld
- Workforce Australia
- Well Hung Glass
- Youth With a Mission

STATISTICS

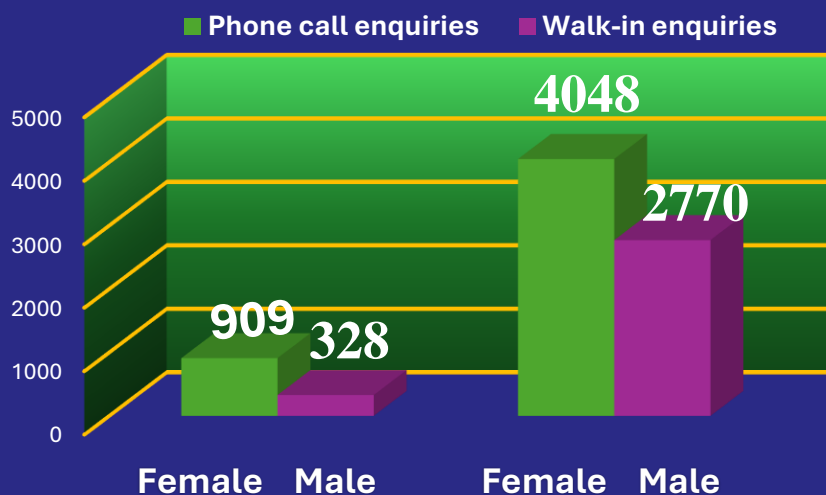
Humanitarian Settlement Entrants in Townsville 2023-2024



Client Number/ participant engagements by Key Programs



ENQUIRIES 2023-2024



Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)

The Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) supports humanitarian entrants and other eligible visa holders integrate into Australian life. It does this by helping new arrivals build the skills and knowledge they need to become self-reliant and active members of the community.

In the period of 1 July 2023 until 30 June 2024, HSP received 411 newly arrived refugees. The majority of arrivals are from Central African Republic (178 people) and Democratic Republic of Congo (146 people); remains are from Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan. Additionally, HSP received 4 clients under Specialised and Intensive Services (SIS) referrals.

HSP team consists of 11 staff: HSP program manager: Anong Inthaboualy, 5 HSP case managers: Rachel Suko, Rajina Karki, Jason Hu, Tennessee Daniels, and Ameya James, 3 Accommodation officers: Sandi Kyaw, Surendran Gopalan, Adam Mahamat, Claim officer: Thelma Piotto and Schedule Coordinator & Life Skill Training Facilitator: Jules Ngassamba.

Anong Inthaboualy:

Program Manager - Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)



Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS)

The Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program at TMSG, funded by the Department of Home Affairs, supports humanitarian entrants and eligible migrants in their settlement journey. It complements the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) by enhancing social participation, economic well-being, independence, personal well-being, and community connectedness.

In the past year, SETS assisted 499 active clients through individual and group support. Of these, 281 received individual assistance—44 medium-intensity and 237 low-intensity cases. With the five-year eligibility limit lifted, the program anticipates serving more clients in the coming years.

SETS also coordinates four weekly group activities: Homework Program, After School Drop-in, Job Ready Workshop, and English Conversation Class. These initiatives foster language skills, educational engagement, community involvement, and job readiness. Most clients are from the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia, with others from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Tanzania, Ukraine, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The SETS team consists of Sagar Joby (Program Manager), Sneha Mathur (Program Officer), and Yasmin Ali Abukar (Part-Time Program Officer).

Sagar Joby

Program Manager

Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS)

Townsville Medicare Mental Health Centre Report

The Townsville Medicare Mental Health Centre (formerly Head to Health), operated by Neami National in partnership with TMSG, provides vital support for individuals in psychological distress. It offers immediate mental health assistance, connects individuals to ongoing services, and delivers culturally inclusive care through trained professionals, including those with lived experience.

The program raises mental health awareness within CALD communities by participating in events such as Community Fun Learning Day, Refugee Week, Harmony Day, and delivering mental health education at TAFE and TMSG Lifeskills training. From July 2023 to June 2024, the program received **46 referrals**, with **26 clients** completing intakes. Others were referred to alternative services or received short-term support.

To ensure accessibility, transportation was provided for clients unable to travel independently. By promoting culturally sensitive resources and normalizing mental health conversations, the program empowers individuals to seek support without fear, emphasizing the value of community engagement in improving mental health outcomes.

Anwar Ali Abukar

Mental Health Community Engagement - Head to Health Program



Multicultural Health Engagement Project (MHEP)

The Multicultural Health Engagement Project (MHEP), a collaboration between TMSG, the Central African Community and Refugee Health Network, Queensland Health, and Queensland Ambulance, aimed to improve health access for the Sango-speaking population from the Central African Republic (CAR) in Townsville. The project used a co-design process, ensuring the community's active participation in creating relevant health resources.

TMSG hosted several community leader meetings with CAR leaders and community members to discuss health needs, shaping the creation of three animated videos on how to call an ambulance in Sango, French, and English. The community provided feedback on video scripts, and the final animations included Townsville landmarks for local relevance.

A key concern raised by the community was the difficulty in calling an ambulance due to language barriers. Personal stories highlighted the need for clear, accessible resources. The videos were designed to address these issues, offering easy-to-understand health advice.

To ensure maximum accessibility, the videos will be distributed via social media and WhatsApp, the most effective platforms for reaching CAR community members, making it easier for them to access vital health information.

TMSG is proud to have contributed to the MHEP program, funded by Refugee Health Network Queensland, and is excited about the success of the health resource created to support the CAR community. The project reflects TMSG's ongoing commitment to improving health access for Townsville's diverse populations.

Dannielle Bruch

Contracts Manager

Community Actions for a Multicultural Society (CAMS)

The CAMS program continues to connect culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people with services, professionals, and the wider community, promoting social connections and economic participation through study, jobs, and business opportunities. From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, there were 2,600 instances of CALD participant engagement and 160 instances of organizational, volunteer, and student engagement to support CAMS.

Highlighted activities include:

- **38 English Conversation Sessions:** Helping participants learn new English words and practice native languages, with activities like multi-language conversations and counting games.
- **31 Handicraft Workshops & Sewing Classes:** Connected CALD people with limited English skills to the mainstream, promoting self-care and mental well-being.
- **2 Empowering Workshops** (Nov 2023 & Jun 2024): Focused on digital literacy, teaching participants to use apps like Google Translate and Duolingo.
- **1 TMSG Intercultural Connections Event:** In partnership with Tendercare Disability Service, Aitkenvale State School, and Aitkenvale Community Hub, this event brought together over 200 people.
- **44 Job Ready Workshops:** Targeted CALD people with limited English to improve job readiness.
- **53 Gardening Sessions:** Workshops on making Eco Enzyme to reduce methane gas from food waste, in partnership with the EE Study Centre and others.
- **1 Community Fun and Learning Day:** Held in September 2023, it brought together people from diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities, in a fun and informal setting with service providers.

CAMS also participated in several community events, including R U OK Day, Mental Health Week, and Harmony Days, and organized 6 meetings to establish the Townsville CALD Community Reference Group.

Thanks to all TMSG networks, organizations, volunteers, and participants for their significant contributions to the success of CAMS activities.

Dr. Johanna Kodoatie-Cahill

CAMS practitioner and Employment and Community Engagement Manager



Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW)

During the reporting period, TMSG successfully delivered the Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) Program to 50 participants, providing a Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways in collaboration with Ace Community Colleges. Although the standard participant limit per SQW agreement is 36, an overlap in funding between contracts allowed the Program Coordinator to manage both programs simultaneously from September 2023 to February 2024.

Participants received one-on-one support, including CV and cover letter development, job applications, interview preparation, police checks, Blue Cards, and employment inductions. They attended job expos and were referred to additional services, further education, and ongoing support to address employment barriers. Key achievements:

- 50 participants completed their Certificate II.
- 20 participants gained employment in commercial cleaning, disability support, and aged care.
- 15 enrolled in Certificate III programs in Individual Support, School-Based Education, Community Services, and IT.
- Participants represented 11 nationalities, including Burundi, Cambodia, CAR, DRC, Ethiopia, Philippines, and Zimbabwe.

Elena Tirado Tirado

Coordinator Employment Pathway & Mentor

Multicultural Women's Group (MWG)

The Multicultural Women's Group (MWG) at TMSG fosters friendships across diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, supported by the Queensland Government's Community Actions for a Multicultural Society (CAMS) Program.

From July 2023 to June 2024, MWG hosted workshops and events, including:

- 7 Ways to Wellbeing Workshop (July 2023)
- Multicultural Queensland Month Celebration (August 2023)
- Domestic Violence Awareness (September 2023)
- Elderly Abuse Awareness (October 2023)
- Empowerment Workshop (November 2023)
- End-of-Year Celebration (December 2023)
- Eid Mubarak Celebration (April 2024)

In December 2023, MWG visited the Townsville Manufacturing Hub (TMH), followed by a February 2024 industry tour. Partnerships with CAMS, TMH, and TMSG strengthened these efforts. MWG also honoured Tendercare Disability Service for diversity and inclusion during Multicultural Queensland Month.

Special thanks go to the Queensland Government, volunteers, and participants for empowering culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Dr. Johanna Kodoatie-Cahill

CAMS practitioner and Employment and Community Engagement Manager



Diverse Queensland Workforce (DQW)

The TMSG Intercultural Employment & Business Hub, funded by Queensland's Government Diverse Queensland Workforce program, supports work-ready migrants, refugees, and international students at no cost. The program connects participants with information, workshops, education pathways, work experience, and job opportunities.

In the past year, the Hub has supported 68 participants and helped 94% secure meaningful employment. The Hub works closely with CALD jobseekers throughout their employment journey, strengthening job-readiness skills, assisting with job applications, providing career coaching, and offering post-employment mentoring.

The Hub places strong emphasis on building employer networks, resulting in successful employment outcomes for participants such as Bonfils and Emmanuel. Bonfils secured a car detailer role at Mike Carney Toyota with the Hub's support, overcoming challenges like limited professional networks. Emmanuel, a recent refugee, also found his first job in Australia at Mike Carney Toyota through the Hub's referral. Both participants received personalized support with resumes, interview preparation, and post-employment mentoring.

To address challenges like navigating the Australian workplace, balancing work and family, and overcoming a lack of local work experience, the Hub organized targeted workshops. These included a Workplace Wellbeing session on stress management and a Cleaning Foundational Skills workshop for industry-specific knowledge in hospitality and cleaning services, both with multilingual support.

Emily Mulroy and Emilienne Kayeye

Program Coordinators Diverse Queensland Workforce

Safer Pathways for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Women Program

TMSG delivered the *Safer Pathways for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Women* (SPW) program, providing essential support to women of refugee and migrant backgrounds experiencing Domestic and Family Violence (DFV). Through this initiative, TMSG has addressed the specific barriers faced by CALD women, such as language barriers, cultural differences, lack of understanding of their rights and Australian systems and immigration status.

The program focuses on empowering women affected by DFV through in language workshops and individual intake support. TMSG's workshops educate women on their rights, recognising DFV, available services, and safety planning, while fostering awareness of healthy relationships and legal protections. Tailored to CALD communities, these workshops provide a safe space for learning, asking questions and sharing experiences.

SPW also offered personalised intake support, helping women navigate their unique, often crisis, situations and access necessary services, including legal advice and safety options. The program breaks down language and cultural barriers, ensuring women can access the services they need. Through these efforts, TMSG provided both immediate support and long-term DFV solutions, promoting resilience and safety for CALD women in Townsville.

Dannielle Bruch
Contracts Manager



TMSG

TOWNSVILLE MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT GROUP INC.

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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.



TOWNSVILLE MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT GROUP INC.

Inspired by Cultural Diversity