

asetts



ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17



we believe that all those who have experienced trauma have a fundamental right to rehabilitation, healing and support

contents

from our patron	3
chairperson's report	4
from our ceo	5
ASeTTS: who we are	6
what we do	10
our approach	10
our impact	11
our people	12
our clients	13
clinical services	14
community services	16
research and evaluation	20
training and supervision	22
administration	22
treasurer's report	25
annual financial report	26
get involved!	31



from our patron



the way that we welcome, support and integrate refugees within our communities is a fundamental part of this humanitarian challenge



Our world today is characterised by unprecedented levels of human mobility. Sadly, a great deal of this is due to the forced displacement brought about by chronic and devastating global conflicts. The challenge for the international community is to respond with empathy, fairness and action to the plight of those caught up in the maelstrom of history. It is a challenge that goes to the core of our humanitarian values.

The way that we welcome, support and integrate refugees within our communities is a fundamental part of this humanitarian challenge. Restoring dignity, facilitating recovery, promoting integration and providing flexible and responsive supports is a profound responsibility, and one that it is discharged with enormous skill by ASeTTS.

It is deeply reassuring to know that this year more than 1800 vulnerable refugees, many with the most harrowing of histories, have been provided with services ranging from trauma counselling to recreational programs, from women's groups to therapeutic camps for children.

As ASeTTS celebrates its 25th year of service in 2017, it is an important time to pause and take stock of all that has been achieved throughout the lifetime of this unique organisation. All those who have been involved in the work of ASeTTS over this time – staff, board members, volunteers and supporters – should be immensely proud of all that has been achieved.

I am excited about the prospect of many more years of this important work, and honoured to be associated with such a deeply important cause.

Janet Holmes à Court AC



chairperson's report

Our global, social, political and financial landscape is one characterised by complex changes, swift evolution and unpredictable events. Not-for-profit organisations such as ASeTTS are not exempt from the challenges of the current milieu. To best serve our clients and ensure our sustainability and effectiveness into a future that is very different from our past, it is vital that we remain flexible, innovative and open to change.

The future for Australian not-for-profits is one in which we must face a range of challenges – uncertain government funding, changes to regulation, accountability and reporting responsibilities, rising expenses, the proliferation of similar organisations, the evolving digital landscape, and shifting policy and financial frameworks.

To adapt to the times, organisations like ASeTTS must evolve and boards must change the way they work, with a focus on collaboration, strategic partnerships and diversified funding sources.

When I look at ASeTTS, I see an organisation that is more than capable of rising to meet the challenges ahead. I see a committed and skilled board that is focused on the bigger picture; and dedicated, passionate staff members who have embraced challenges with flexibility and strength. Our diverse strengths and our willingness to work together in uncertain times is what will allow us to flourish into the future.

Due to board decisions and actions taken during 2016–17, and with the support and understanding of staff and the outstanding leadership of our previous interim CEO Antonia (Toni) Stampalija, we have been able to turn the financial losses of the previous two years into a healthy surplus. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank Toni for her invaluable and highly effective leadership of ASeTTS through a challenging phase of our journey. We are now well equipped to continue to operate confidently and also to consider future-proofing from a position of strength, so as to enhance and refine the delivery of vital services to survivors of torture and trauma.

On behalf of the ASeTTS Board, I would like to express my gratitude to all ASeTTS staff – past and present – for their resolve, commitment and preparedness to accept the changing and ongoing uncertain circumstances. I also express my thanks to my fellow board members for volunteering their time and skills, sometimes at very short notice and in the midst of their busy day-to-day agendas.

Grateful thanks are also due to our funders, corporate sponsors and donors for their continued support of our work.

In the year ahead, it is important for ASeTTS to remain resilient and responsive, and to continue enhancing our services and operations through more proactive and coordinated initiatives. I have every confidence we will find innovative and exciting ways to adapt to the new circumstances and challenges that confront us.

Antonio Giometti

to adapt to the times, organisations like ASeTTS must evolve and boards must change the way they work



there is still a great deal of work to be done, both in the prevention of trauma and in assisting survivors to heal from the ongoing impact of gross human rights violations



I could not be more thrilled to be here to celebrate 25 years of ASeTTS' outstanding service to survivors of torture and trauma in Western Australia. Reaching this quarter of a century milestone is something that so many of us are proud of. It has been my absolute pleasure to be associated with ASeTTS for more than 15 years now, and to witness how this organisation has evolved while remaining true to our founding mission and vision. Our 25th anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on where we have come from, to celebrate where our organisation is today, and to develop our vision of what we can achieve in the next 25 years.

Sadly, torture continues to be practised in many countries across the world. We are also facing a global refugee crisis of epidemic proportions, with unprecedented levels of forced displacement. All this means that there is still a great deal of work to be done, both in the prevention of trauma and in assisting survivors to heal from the ongoing impact of gross human rights violations.

from our ceo



The people we welcome through our doors here at ASeTTS every day have shown incredible courage in the face of persecution, violence, displacement and multiple losses. The personal histories our clients bring with them are often horrific, but witnessing their capacity for resilience, strength and hope as they journey towards recovery and find their place in their new home is inspiring and a privilege.

Nothing that we do would be possible without our skilled and compassionate staff, who display incredible dedication to our mission and vision and a desire to support our clients on their journeys – and extending far beyond their professional duty. I sincerely congratulate every staff member for the passion, commitment and skill they contribute to assisting survivors of torture and trauma to rebuild their lives. We are also immensely grateful to our volunteers, who provide invaluable support to our clients and various agency projects.

Due to the unwavering support of our staff and the firm commitment of the ASeTTS Board, we have finished this year in an extremely positive position, both financially and operationally. My sincere thanks also to the ASeTTS board members for contributing their diverse skills and generous time to help the organisation navigate through a year of significant change.

Finally, our work would not be possible without the ongoing support of our major funders; we thank you all for your vital contributions. In addition, it is incredibly encouraging to receive financial contributions from individual donors who believe in the work of healing survivors of torture and trauma. These extra resources make a real difference.

We are very proud of our 25-year history in Western Australia and we look forward to the next 25 years of journeying with survivors of torture and trauma as they rebuild their lives.

April Pearman
(Interim Chief Executive Officer)

ASeTTS: who we are

The Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors – ASeTTS – is a not-for-profit organisation that provides holistic services to refugee survivors of torture and trauma living in Western Australia. We also partner with other community organisations to provide integrated and responsive services to our clients.

Since its foundation in 1992, ASeTTS has delivered a range of targeted programs for people who have arrived in Western Australia from all over the world. As the Western Australian member of the national Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (FASSTT), we are committed to supporting clients nationwide to restore safety, connection, meaning and dignity.

The organisation has no political affiliation and works with survivors of torture and trauma irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion, age and gender.

This financial year, ASeTTS provided direct services to more than 1800 survivors of torture and trauma. In addition, our staff facilitated programs, educational opportunities and events that engaged with diverse sectors of the Western Australian community.



22.5
million

refugees were seeking
safety across international
borders at the end of 2016



17,555

refugee and humanitarian
visas were granted by
Australia in 2015–16



1167

refugees were settled
in Western Australia
in 2016–17



celebrating 25 years

The thriving multi-service organisation that ASeTTS is today was born 25 years ago from an ideal: a small group of people who believed deeply in the need for responsive, tailored services for refugee survivors of torture and trauma.

A shared vision and a commitment to human rights underpinned the early efforts of our first management committee, as they worked to establish ASeTTS and secure funding. A one-year seeding grant from the Commonwealth Government covered one salary and the rent for small premises in Barrack Street, Perth, and ASeTTS opened its doors to survivors of torture and trauma in Western Australia.

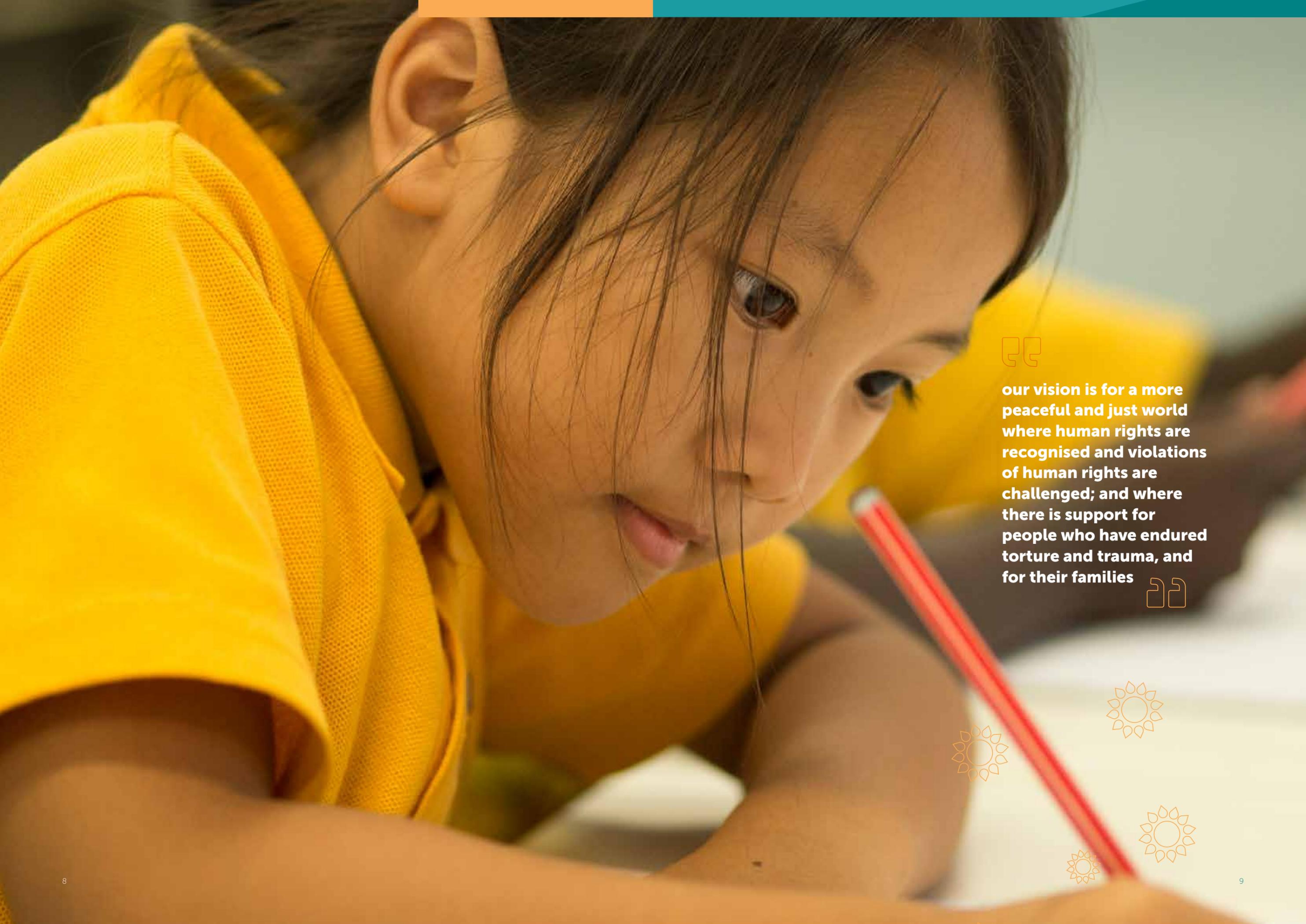
As the need grew for services to refugees and people seeking asylum who had arrived in WA, so too did ASeTTS. In 1994, we received funding through the Australian Government's new Program

for Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (PASTT). This enabled us to expand our services considerably; we soon outgrew our tiny premises in the Bon Marche Arcade in the centre of Perth, and, in 2003, relocated to our current home on Beaufort Street.

Also in 2003, ASeTTS gained accreditation with the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) – the global umbrella body for torture and trauma rehabilitation organisations. Notably, for many years our former CEO Norma Josephs served as the IRCT's Pacific Representative.

ASeTTS has grown to be a leading Australian organisation in the area of torture and trauma rehabilitation. We have successfully diversified our revenue, and now have an annual budget of more than \$4.5 million.

Currently, ASeTTS has more than 40 dedicated staff members speaking a combined total of 26 languages. We look forward to the next 25 years of ASeTTS' vital contribution to humanitarian services in Western Australia.



our vision is for a more peaceful and just world where human rights are recognised and violations of human rights are challenged; and where there is support for people who have endured torture and trauma, and for their families





what we do

ASeTTS provides flexible services that help people reconnect with their innate strengths.

The main areas of our work are: therapeutic services to refugees, via a range of treatment modalities

group programs that strengthen the wellbeing and connections of refugees

programs for refugee youth

capacity building with new and emergent refugee communities

complex case support to refugee families with extensive needs

counselling and assistance to asylum seekers in detention

cultural transition programs tailored for newly arrived refugees

educational and capacity building programs for refugees – including leadership skills, employment readiness, healthy family functioning and domestic violence awareness

professional development across health, education and community service sectors, to enable organisations to understand and meet the needs of torture and trauma survivors

linking clients with trained volunteers that provide practical support.

our approach

ASeTTS' holistic, strengths-based approach helps refugees to restore control and safety, attachment, identity, dignity and value, and fosters their sense of belonging.

Our work is underpinned by the recovery model defined in Rebuilding Shattered Lives, which is a framework adopted by many torture rehabilitation services globally.

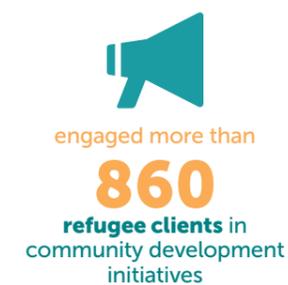
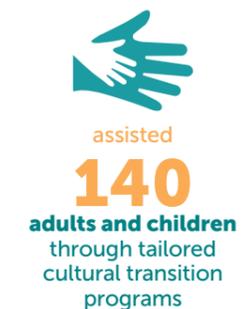
Our four core 'Recovery Goals' sustain a shared vision and aim across all ASeTTS services and programs. They are:

1. To restore safety and enhance control, and reduce the disabling effects of fear and anxiety
2. To restore attachment and connections to other human beings and a sense of belonging
3. To restore meaning, identity and justice
4. To restore dignity and value and reduce shame and guilt.

our impact

This year, we provided support to 1870 refugee survivors of torture and trauma from all over the world.

In the 2016–17 financial year, ASeTTS staff:





our people

ASeTTS staff are talented and passionate people united by their commitment to supporting our clients on their journeys to recovery and belonging.

All staff members are experienced professionals who come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The organisation is governed by a board of 10 board members that volunteer their time and expertise to ensure the effective leadership of the agency.

Guided by ASeTTS' constitution, the board is charged with setting direction, providing leadership and ensuring that financial obligations are met. One board member is a nominee from ASeTTS' client reference group, United Voices.

what makes our work possible

It is the culture of ASeTTS that makes me so happy to work here. We are all so different, and we bring such different skills and experiences, but no one feels out of place here. It's a culture of acceptance and diversity. We take the time to celebrate everyone's difference – just as we celebrate and embrace the difference of our clients. It's what makes our work possible.

Samira Husic

Coordinator
Community Services



2016–17 board members

Mr Antonio Giometti
Chairperson

Mrs Norma Jeffery
Vice Chairperson
(to October 2016)

Dr Bernadette Wright
Vice Chairperson
(from October 2016)

Dr Susan Hoffman
Secretary

Mr Tim Blackburn
Treasurer

Ms Ferhana Ekic
United Voices representative
(to October 2016)

Mr Darren Ginnelly
Ms Raissa Kundwa

Ms Latifah Arzso Rauf
United Voices representative
(from March 2017)

Mr Dawson Ruhl
CEO – ex officio
(from May 2017)

Mr Kwame Selormey
(on leave of absence)

Ms Kirsten Shearn
(to May 2017)

Ms Julie Sprigg
(on leave of absence)

Ms Antonia Stampalija
Interim CEO – ex officio
(to May 2017)

Ms Katherine Willcox
(to September 2016).

our clients

For some people, assumptions that are central to human existence have been shattered by their experiences.

ASeTTS clients come from all over the world, from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. They are people who were either tortured or traumatised in their country of origin or while fleeing that country. The trauma our clients have experienced – as well as the effects of dislocation, loss and deprivation – has long-lasting and extensive effects on their wellbeing. It can change the way they feel about themselves and about others, and shatter their sense of belonging and wholeness. Their trauma may be internalised as chronic anxiety, depression and grief that affects every part of their life.

Newly arrived people also must cope with the daunting task of settling in a new country and adapting to a new way of life – with of all its practical challenges such as housing, employment and language acquisition.

The experience of trauma is not confined to adult refugees and asylum-seekers; many children and adolescents also have experienced or witnessed profoundly traumatic events. At ASeTTS, we are aware of the unique challenges faced by young people, and we work with them to reconnect with their strengths and find their place in their new community.

Our client demographics change with changing international contexts and conflicts. This year, the top five countries of origin of clients were Afghanistan (308 clients), Iraq (200), Iran (167), Myanmar (125) and Syria (121). Notably, the gender split of clients was fairly even: 52 percent male clients, 48 percent female clients. About 25 percent of clients this year were children and young people aged under 18.



my own experience helps me to understand my clients

I am from Afghanistan, where I worked in international development and for the UN. My first involvement with ASeTTS was as a client, in 2010. I was at the Curtin Immigration Detention Centre waiting for my asylum claim to be processed. It was a difficult time, and I received counselling from an ASeTTS therapist for about a year. It was a big support for me.

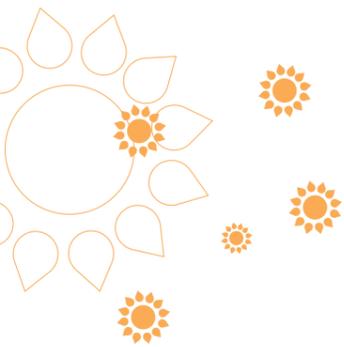
In Australia I found work assisting refugees and asylum seekers, at first through the Humanitarian Settlement Service and then at ASeTTS.

My own experience helps me to understand my clients much better. I focus on helping them to find their own strengths and become independent. It's incredibly rewarding to help people build a new life.

Assadullah Khurrami

Program Specialist
Complex Case Support





clinical services

ASeTTS aspires to provide holistic services that assist refugee survivors of torture and trauma to rebuild their lives.

counselling

Since 1992, ASeTTS has delivered skilled counselling that responds to various forms of trauma.

Counselling remains a core component of ASeTTS' services, but is now complemented with holistic services and programs able to meet diverse recovery needs.

ASeTTS counsellors use a range of evidence-based treatment modalities to help clients process their traumatic experiences and strengthen their psychological health in a safe therapeutic space.

This year, ASeTTS delivered more than 2800 counselling sessions and provided individual therapy to almost 700 clients.

services to people seeking asylum

One of ASeTTS' priorities is to ensure that people seeking asylum, who may be living in detention or living in the community in Western Australia, have access to mental health and counselling services.

The focus of counselling is to raise awareness and provide psycho-education regarding the effects of

trauma and the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Counselling also assists clients to enhance their capacity to cope with their often profound features of PTSD and other pathologies.

This year, ASeTTS counsellors provided services to 85 asylum seekers living at either Perth Immigration Detention Centre or Yongah Hill Detention Centre in Northam. The vast majority of these clients have experienced significant torture and trauma in their home country, and their trauma may have been compounded by their detention experience. The top three countries of origin of these clients were Sri Lanka, Iran and Iraq.

ASeTTS staff provided counselling to a further 130 asylum seekers living in the community, in community detention or on Temporary Protection Visas. Australian Red Cross or MercyCare typically provide practical support to asylum seekers, with ASeTTS delivering therapeutic services to help meet their psychological needs and to address trauma. The top three countries of origin of these clients were Iran, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.

pro bono services

Ensuring that all asylum seekers have access to mental health services is critically important to ASeTTS, including those whose claims for protection may be unsuccessful. As such, we also

provided pro bono services to 39 asylum seekers who could not access Medicare.

the Asylum Seeker Hub

In November 2016, ASeTTS partnered with the Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees (CARAD), Riverview Church, Red Cross, MercyCare and The Humanitarian Group to establish the Asylum Seeker Hub.

Located in the inner Perth suburb of Burswood, this is a centralised service that is open on a drop-in basis every Thursday. Here, asylum seekers can seek help with immigration issues and paperwork, practical support with paying bills and accessing food, and speak with a counsellor or case worker about other needs.

psychiatric services

In 2016–17 we continued to provide psychiatric services that form an integral part of a holistic model of treatment and recovery for many clients.

ASeTTS' consultant psychiatrist provided a total of 480 consultations to almost 140 clients. To address clients' complex responses to trauma, treatment is diverse and flexible, drawing on range of modalities and tailored to meet the individual's needs.



Loneliness, with all its physical and emotional consequences, is emerging as a challenge for many of the clients. And trauma impacts on trust and the forming of close relationships, as well as the ability to parent and nurture – which is becoming an increasing focus of the work.

Clients forget their resilience and strength. Viktor Frankl speaks of 'tragic optimism' – a sense of hope in the face of suffering. It is a hopeful psychiatry I try to provide.

Dr Sue Lutton
ASeTTS Consultant
Psychiatrist



community services

Our Community Services area includes the Community Development team and staff that deliver ASeTTS' Family Support, Complex Case Support, Youth and Volunteer programs.

community development

The Community Development team focuses on building community capacity and helping clients to find meaning and purpose, through developing connections and a sense of belonging in their new home.

This year, we delivered a range of programs, support groups and activities. Staff also designed and delivered training to strengthen the capacity of community leaders and future leaders. In addition, ASeTTS continued to work extensively with bi-cultural workers from many communities.

The following initiatives were delivered to a total of 860 clients during 2016–17:

Families United Together Facilitators' Group

ASeTTS Community Leadership Group

United Voices (ASeTTS client reference group)

Advanced Conflict Resolution for Community Leaders

Training on Trauma-informed Approaches for Active Bi-Cultural Workers

Girls' Volleyball Project

'Refugees are Human: They Are Resourceful, Not a Burden' (seminar)

Chin Women's Group

Burundi Children's Drumbeat Group

Community Healing Project – Syrian and other community groups

Oromo Community Project

Humanitarian Entrants Interagency Network.

project profile: girls' volleyball project

This project aimed to help young women born in Afghanistan or Iran to enhance their psychological wellbeing, physical health and social networks through team sport. The project had 20 enthusiastic participants, all of whom speak Hazaragi as their first language. The project was supported by the WA Department of Sport and Recreation, through its Community Participation program. Volleyball Western Australia provided technical guidance to the group, who then used their new skills and confidence to help young children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to learn volleyball.

project profile: Families United Together

Families United Together is a community education initiative to help address family and domestic violence (FDV). Using an empowerment model, ASeTTS trained 26 community facilitators from Hazaragi, Arabic, Karen, Chin and Burmese communities. The aim was for these participants to then educate their own communities about FDV.

Project participants also visited the Central Magistrates Court and Legal Aid to gain practical knowledge to support their community members experiencing FDV issues. Participants then designed community education projects tailored to their communities and, with the support of ASeTTS, implemented their initiatives to about 560 people, through community events.

The initiative was funded by the Department of Social Services' program 'Building Safe Communities for Women and their Children'. Importantly, the project enabled the participants to share their knowledge as community facilitators, at a concluding forum with relevant service providers.

family support

Working holistically with families and children is a core component of ASeTTS' work. Staff continued to work intensively with families, providing targeted support and relationship and family counselling. This year, we streamlined our work with children, with enhanced parent interview assessments and a playroom incorporated into the service. Overall, ASeTTS delivered services to 83 individual clients and 22 clients in group contexts.

The successful Families in Cultural Transition (FICT) program assisted many families to adapt to Australian life. This year, five groups of 13 clients participated in a series of interactive educational sessions, delivered by skilled bi-cultural staff.

Our Children in Cultural Transition (CICT) program helped 43 children aged 5–12 transition to the Australian education system and learn more about their new community. The four-day program was delivered to four separate groups across the Perth region, with a focus on the areas of Mirrabooka and Gosnells.

Staff also delivered a tailored program for newly arrived group of Syrian/Iraqi refugees. Held in Gosnells, the eight-week program was a joint FICT/CICT endeavour, due to the large cohort that included 24 children.



groups play an important role in breaking isolation, forming new connections, language acquisition and learning new skills

Enabling connections is a major part of ASeTTS' work with families and individuals. This year, our popular Friday Village women's group met weekly. Almost 230 clients, including 59 new referrals, benefitted from the program's focus on reducing social isolation and encouraging positive interaction between mothers and young children. This enhances secure attachments, and builds children's skills and maturity in preparation for school.

This year, ASeTTS facilitated a Sing & Grow group, in partnership with Sing & Grow Australia, for mothers and young children under the age of five. Through a carefully designed music therapy project, the program strengthens relationships in families, enhances positive parenting and attachments, and improves parents' capacity to support their children's development. Sing & Grow was delivered in Mirrabooka over an eight-week period, and involved six families and 15 individuals.

ASeTTS continued to engage refugee men, through the weekly Men's Group. This year, a total of 75 clients, including 41 new referrals, participated in a range of educational and social activities. To accommodate the group's request for a greater focus on English practice and cooking, one session per month was held at ASeTTS' community centre.

Other group programs included: Camp Kulin: 50 children attended four camps on scholarship places

Ballet groups: 40 clients participated in two groups. A collaboration with the West Australian Ballet

Learning Club: 12 children aged 6–12 participated in the Learning Club, based at Nollamara Primary School

Adventure-based Therapy: 54 children aged 7–12 participated in five, three-day programs in the Kwinana area

Afghani Girls Swimming Group: 16 young women participated in this 12-week program. A collaboration with Beatty Park Leisure Centre

Former Yugoslavian Group: 20 clients participated in this weekly group at ASeTTS

Additional opportunities for all ASeTTS clients and their families to attend sporting, recreation, cultural and art activities.

complex case support

ASeTTS' Complex Case Support program continued to assist clients presenting with complex and extensive needs, including major health and psychological issues, domestic violence issues, risk of homelessness and legal complications.

The program helps clients to recognise and enhance their strengths and abilities, and to achieve independence. This year, our staff worked intensively with 45 individuals in 18 households.

youth program

ASeTTS' Youth Program aims to re-engage and re-connect young refugee people with their families and/or education. The program delivers counselling and mentoring, mainly through outreach, as well as extensive collaboration with schools and the youth justice system.

Focusing on strengths and resilience, our work is based on the Circle of Courage model – an evidence-based approach linked with ASeTTS' recovery goals. However our services are flexible and responsive to the individual's needs.

This year, ASeTTS staff worked with 47 young people. Initiatives included three school holiday programs and a five-day 'Camp of Courage'. The five-day camp is an opportunity for young people to build safety and connection with other young people and to foster a culture of respect. Participants engage in activities that challenge them both physically and emotionally.

Our Youth Specialist Workers were delighted to receive this feedback from participants: 'Thank you for giving us something that our family couldn't do – making us feel like we belong. All the activities we did taught us something, which is to be tougher and stronger and not allow anyone to put us down. Because of you guys, we have found the courage to be better and make better decisions.'

In addition to our core youth services, ASeTTS delivered a Drumbeat program to engage newly arrived Syrian children and their families. Conducted at Aranmore Catholic College over a 12-week period, Drumbeat culminated in a 'family fun day' of drumming and music.

our volunteers

This year, more than 100 volunteers continued to support ASeTTS clients in diverse ways, including social and recreational outings, transport orientation, advocacy, English language practice, homework assistance and transport orientation. They also assisted at ASeTTS groups, programs and events, and provided valuable organisational support.

ASeTTS also completed a review of our volunteer program, as part of our focus on evaluation, monitoring and organisational capacity building. Focus groups were held to identify strengths and gaps in our volunteer program, and identify opportunities for future growth and development.



“thank you for giving us something that our family couldn't do – making us feel like we belong”



research and evaluation

Rigorous and relevant research provides ASeTTS with a way of continually investigating the needs of the people and communities we serve, and helps us to ensure the best outcomes for our clients.

ASeTTS' program of monitoring and evaluation is paired strategically with our research department; this enables us to not only assess comprehensively our own programs and services, but also to contribute locally, nationally and globally to the work of gathering and processing evidence about the effectiveness of torture and trauma rehabilitation services.

The importance of ongoing strategic research was emphasised this year by the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), at its 10th International Scientific Symposium in Mexico City. As an IRCT member, ASeTTS was represented at the conference by our Professional Standards and Research Manager, April Pearman, who presented ASeTTS' research outcomes.

The event also saw the IRCT's Fifth General Assembly (comprising 152 global members) ratify the 'Mexico Consensus'. This is a vital document that confirms the importance of commitment to high-quality and ethical research to inform the work of all agencies working with survivors of torture and trauma. The Mexico Consensus emphasises the need:

'To conduct rigorous and ethical research, with diverse outlooks and perspectives, to benefit the torture victims we serve. This includes documenting torture and its health consequences, identifying and addressing the needs of torture victims, and identifying, developing and evaluating effective treatment modalities that are both individual and holistic in nature.'

ASeTTS' strategic approach to research involves formalised partnerships with universities and experienced researchers. We are also an active member of the national research working group of the Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (FASSTT), and contribute data to the National Minimum Data Set. This year, ASeTTS conducted the following research projects:

Mental Health Needs Among Refugees in Immigration Detention

This study investigated rates of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress symptoms among asylum seekers who presented for treatment of trauma-related issues while held in detention in Australia. Findings suggest that mental health assessment is necessary and intervention is critically needed for people at risk of psychological distress in detention settings. Researchers: April Pearman (ASeTTS), Dr Elizabeth Newnham (Curtin University), Charis E. Anton (The University of Western Australia), Stephanie Olinga-Shannon (ASeTTS).

Impact of Visa Insecurity on Refugee Mental Health

This study aims to determine the effect of visa insecurity on mental health outcomes within a clinical sample of refugees in Australia. Findings suggest that for refugees living in the community, temporary status visas play a significant role in ongoing distress. Researchers: April Pearman (ASeTTS), Dr Elizabeth Newnham (Curtin), Dr Angela Nickerson (The University of New South Wales).

Use of Multilingual Computer Assisted Client Self-Interview (Multi-CASI)

This project focuses on researching the use and effectiveness of the Multi-CASI computer program to assist in the standardised assessment of people who speak diverse languages and have limited literacy skills. The program considerably eases the process of data collection for therapists and offers several advantages, including data completeness and standardisation, immediacy of data entry, and elimination of transcription costs and errors.

Researchers: NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), ASeTTS.

Best Practice Principles for Interventions with Domestic and Family Violence Perpetrators from Refugee Backgrounds

This research aims to identify best practice principles to inform and underpin culturally appropriate domestic and family violence interventions for perpetrators from refugee backgrounds, with a focus on five countries of origin: Afghanistan, Burma, Iran, Iraq, and Sudan. Despite a large and increasing number of individuals and families fleeing persecution, war and violence who are resettling in Australia, there are limited interventions for perpetrators of family and domestic violence from refugee backgrounds, and a lack



of evidence to inform culturally appropriate and effective perpetrator interventions for them.

Ten bi-cultural research assistants (a male and female from each of the country groups) were recruited to conduct interviews. The research was funded by ANROWS, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety.

Researchers: Elizabeth Lang (ASeTTS), Professor Colleen Fisher (UWA), April Pearman (ASeTTS).

Exploring Refugee Experiences of Torture and Trauma Counselling

This qualitative research project seeks to better understand client experiences of counselling at ASeTTS and to explore the individual and structural factors impacting client engagement.

Researchers: Alicia Gibbs (Curtin), April Pearman (ASeTTS).

Torture and Trauma Counselling Outcomes

This study involves the analysis of pre-existing non-identifiable data that was collected as part of routine clinical counselling assessment and intervention, using a standardised tool. Data analysis indicates that counselling intervention has had a positive impact for both anxiety-based and depressive symptoms. Researchers: April Pearman (ASeTTS), Alyssa Lillie (UWA), Stephanie Olinga-Shannon (ASeTTS), David A. Coall (Edith Cowan University).

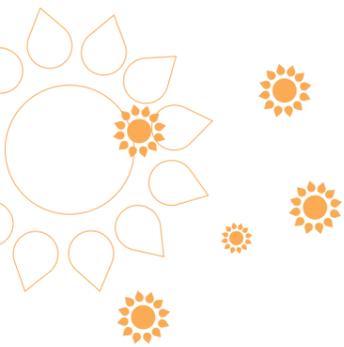


we want every dollar of funding we spend on delivering services to have the most impact for the people we serve

Constant research, evaluation and monitoring is vital for that. Whether it's finding out more about what specific communities need, researching the best way to deliver leadership training to emerging community leaders or evaluating our counselling outcomes for clients, we have to make sure that we get it right.

April Pearman
Professional Standards
and Research Manager





training and supervision

Professional learning and support for ASeTTS staff helps ensure that our staff have the resources required to carry out their work. This year we provided extensive individual and group supervision to all staff members who work with clients. This comprised 462 sessions (individual and group) totalling 503 hours of professional supervision.

ASeTTS staff also attended a wide range of educational programs, with 11 staff members attending the 1st Australia and New Zealand Refugee Trauma Recovery in Resettlement Conference. Held in Sydney in March, the conference was hosted by our FASSTT consortium partner, NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS). ASeTTS staff participated in one major panel, delivered two oral presentations and two poster presentations, and also served as session facilitators.

We also delivered 40 different specialised educational workshops to a range of organisations in the allied health and education sectors, to enhance their knowledge and competencies in working with people affected by torture and trauma.

Our repertoire focuses on critical competencies such as understanding the diverse and far-reaching effects of complex trauma, assessing and supporting suicidal clients from refugee backgrounds, and working effectively with interpreters. Half of these workshops were open to ASeTTS staff and to students, who benefit from these training, education and networking opportunities.

ASeTTS also continued to provide an external professional supervision service to other agencies. In addition, we are committed to enhancing education and knowledge in our particular area of health and community service, through student placement opportunities. Students are able to engage with the services we provide to survivors of torture and trauma, and undertake relevant workplace learning; in return, they offer ASeTTS additional human resources that benefit our programs. This year, we hosted four university students and two TAFE students.

we are committed to enhancing education and disseminating knowledge through student placement opportunities

administration

Behind the scenes, ASeTTS' team of dedicated administration staff continued to support the organisation's work in numerous ways. This year had a strategic focus on organisational development across all administrative functions, including:

- a comprehensive review of ASeTTS' policies and procedures, as part of the ongoing commitment to ensuring their relevance and currency

- a UPS (uninterrupted power supply) and server upgrade, to provide more storage capacity

- an office restructure, which delivered an additional meeting room

- streamlining finance and payroll functions, including engaging an external provider and the transition from MYOB to the new Xero system that incorporates web-based leave request and approval functions.





our consistent focus has been to maintain ASeTTS' important service delivery requirements for our clients and stakeholders



This year we are delighted to record a net operating surplus of \$725,666 – a result that has helped to significantly stabilise ASeTTS after a challenging previous two years.

Two major factors are involved in this result. First, revenue increased by \$538,000 to \$4.7 million from the previous year financial year. This was due to the funding increases from the Department of Social Services (\$343,000) and the Department of Health (\$178,000). Second, the organisational restructure at the beginning of the financial year helped reduce operational expenditure from \$4.9 million to \$4 million.

treasurer's report

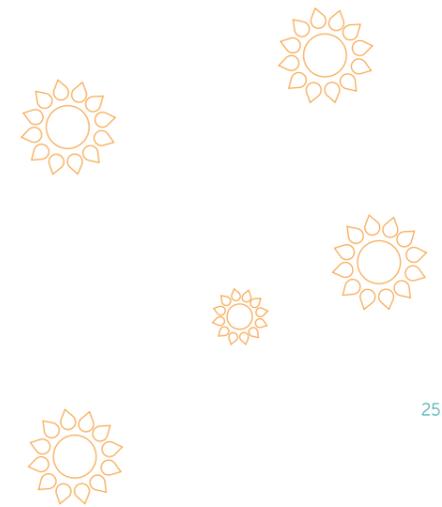


Overall, from a financial perspective there has been a significant positive turnaround for the organisation. This provides ASeTTS with strengthened financial capability to continue to work on developing programs and exploring alternative funding options in the future.

Tim Blackburn (FCPA, CTA)

The ASeTTS Board, along with the senior management team, implemented new reporting functions that included comprehensive key performance indicator monitoring; this resulted in significantly improved organisational efficiency, including in the delivery of crucial programs. Our consistent focus has been to maintain ASeTTS' important service delivery requirements for our clients and stakeholders.

With the surplus we have improved our balance sheet equity, with net assets totalling \$1,557,471 (2015–16: \$831,805). Of note is the increase in cash of \$471,000. Current and non-current provisions have decreased, due to the payout of several redundancies in the early part of 2016–17 financial year. Liquidity improved with \$2.34 of current assets available to fund every \$1 of ASeTTS' short-term obligations (up from \$1.65 in 2015–16).



annual financial report

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Grants and government funding	4,584,127	4,043,538
Interest	46,157	34,409
Other	90,678	104,369
Total revenue from operating activities	<u>4,720,962</u>	<u>4,182,316</u>
Employment	(2,863,725)	(3,769,618)
Consultants and contracts	(219,389)	(115,099)
Staff development	(40,379)	(24,000)
Program	(354,939)	(405,904)
Administration	(271,495)	(201,276)
Premises	(66,844)	(114,589)
Insurance	(71,419)	(105,056)
Travel	(70,334)	(98,103)
Depreciation	(32,921)	(59,690)
Finance costs	(655)	(6,828)
Other	(3,196)	-
Total expenses from operating activities	<u>(3,995,296)</u>	<u>(4,900,163)</u>
Surplus (deficit) from operating activities	<u>725,666</u>	<u>(717,847)</u>
Non-operating income		
Provisions written back		
Grant funding	-	23,128
CRM deposit	-	75,675
Staff development	-	27,591
Non-operating expenses		
Redundancies	-	(326,257)
Strategic work	-	(62,877)
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income (deficit)	<u>725,666</u>	<u>(980,587)</u>

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income As at 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,547,376	2,076,501
Receivables	188,424	134,272
Total current assets	<u>2,735,800</u>	<u>2,210,773</u>
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	173,991	129,197
Total non-current assets	<u>173,991</u>	<u>129,197</u>
Total assets	<u>2,909,791</u>	<u>2,339,970</u>
Current liabilities		
Payables	827,576	639,050
Current Provisions	340,517	730,211
Total current liabilities	<u>1,168,093</u>	<u>1,369,261</u>
Non-current liabilities		
Non-current provisions	184,227	138,904
Total non-current liabilities	<u>184,227</u>	<u>138,904</u>
Total liabilities	<u>1,352,320</u>	<u>1,508,165</u>
Net assets	<u>1,557,471</u>	<u>831,805</u>
Equity		
Retained earnings	1,360,951	737,185
Reserves	196,520	94,620
Total equity	<u>1,557,471</u>	<u>831,805</u>

I have seen enough

I was born in a small village called Nimule in South Sudan. My village is famous for the national park where there are hundreds of beautiful wild animals. Nimule is close to the River Nile. People from my village would fish in the Nile and there was always enough to eat. My people are the Madi people. Our tribe arrived in South Sudan over 600 years ago.

I was only a child when the Second Sudanese Civil War began between the Sudanese government forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army. At first the fighting was far from our village. When the war came to us it was as fast as a fire tearing through a dry bush. My memories of that time flicker like a movie playing too fast. The things I have seen are more terrible than the worst nightmare. Some of them I can't speak about. I remember explosions and noise, and everyone running in different directions. The smell of gun powder was so strong and there was blood everywhere. I remember the screams, the noise, the bodies.

Everyone had to run for their lives because of a war that we didn't even understand. I spent many years in the Dagahaley refugee camp in Kenya before I received a visa to come to Australia. I didn't know anything about Australia. When I arrived here I knew that it was a good place. A place where I could feel safe even though I missed my family so much.

People were kind to me and they helped me find my way. I studied English and I found a job cleaning offices for a big company in the city. It was hard work but I was happy to have a job. I was used to hard work.

I found ASeTTS in 2012. Someone at the hospital had told me that it was a place where you could come to talk and where they would help you with the memories that caused you trouble. I came to counselling with Maria every week at first and now I come once a month. To help with the telling I drew pictures for her of some of my memories. It was the first time I could tell anyone my story.

Alice

ASeTTS client

this is a good country

When the immigration people asked me why I wanted to come to Australia I told them the truth: it is for my children. So that they will be safe. So that they will have a future. But seven years after I first came to Australia, my children are still not with me here. I speak to them every day and I miss them and my wife very much. It makes my heart feel very bad. Life is not safe for them in Iraq. They cannot go to school because it is too risky. There is danger in that area and kidnappings. So my wife keeps them home and teaches them herself, but it is hard for her with six children.

I first came to Australia in 2010 and I spent 14 months in detention on Christmas Island. I was so happy when I received my visa. I still remember the date it came. November 3rd, 2011. I was so excited. I wanted to study, to find a job and to bring my family here to join me. This is a good country. But it was much harder than I thought. I didn't speak English and I didn't know anyone here when I arrived. I wanted to apply to bring my family to Australia but I didn't have anyone to help me fill in the forms. There were so many forms. I didn't know how I could do it and there was no one I could ask for help.

When I came to ASeTTS I made friends. My counsellor helped me to talk about all the things that made me feel sad. Not to talk is a problem and I felt better when I could tell someone about these things. I first started coming to the ASeTTS Men's Group in 2013. I come every week and I have met men from all over the world. They are my friends. Every week we are together. We go on so many different outings and we have learned and seen so much. Ehsan is the leader of the group and he is very nice.

Now I have done all of the right paperwork and I am just waiting for an answer about when my family can come to Australia. I know that they will have good lives here and that they will like this country very much.

Mohammed

ASeTTS client





get involved!

The work we do to restore dignity and hope to people whose lives have been shattered by war and conflict would not be possible without the ongoing generosity and commitment of our supporters.

There are many different ways you can support ASeTTS' ongoing work with some of the world's most vulnerable people.

become a corporate partner

We welcome the opportunity to work with your company or organisation to tailor your support to your particular humanitarian area of interest.

pro bono services and gifts-in-kind

Donating products or professional services is an important way that businesses and individuals can support ASeTTS work. Tickets, vouchers and other gifts-in-kind can always be put to good use for our clients. If you are willing to donate professional services – such as legal, medical, allied health, marketing, graphic design or others – we would love to hear from you.

donate

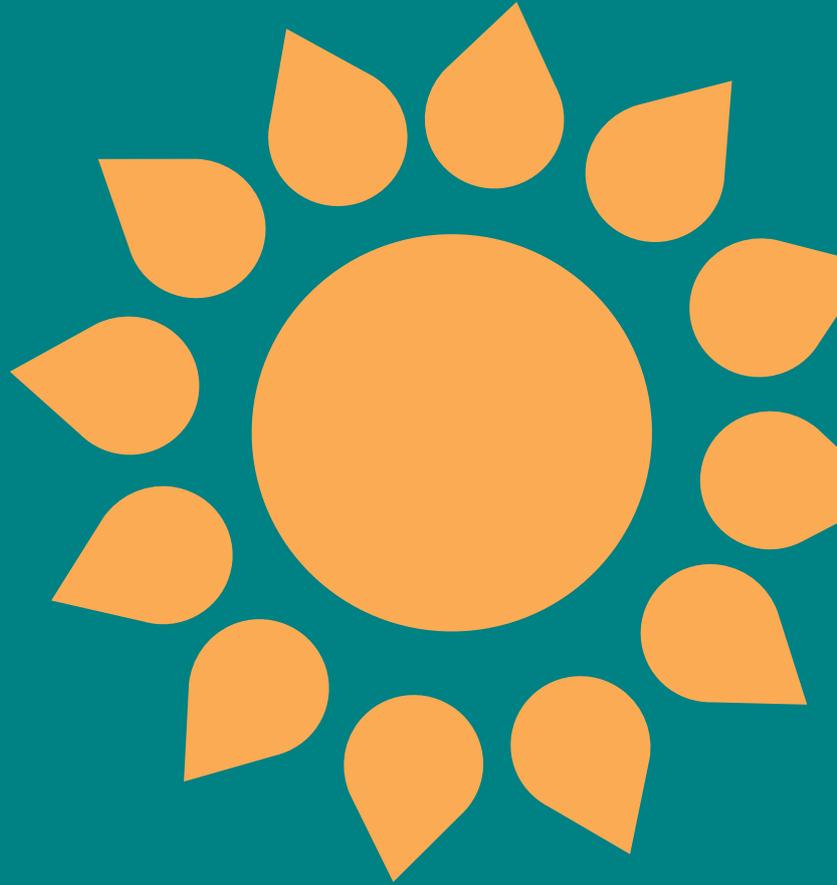
A financial contribution can have a vital impact on the lives of the refugees we work with. Whether you choose to commit to covering the costs of art supplies for an art therapy workshop, supporting a refugee child to attend a summer camp, or sponsoring a specific program, be assured that your donation will be put to a highly effective use.

bequests

Leaving a gift in your will to support the ongoing work of ASeTTS is a powerful way to support refugees and to leave a meaningful legacy. We have an outstanding efficiency rate in terms of funding being directed towards service delivery rather than administrative costs.

please get in touch with us by emailing executive@asetts.org.au

We will be delighted to discuss ways that you can be involved



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This annual report was proudly
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