

annual report

Our vision is to achieve a society that values the **diversity** of its **people** and actively provides **support** to ensure **meaningful** social and economic **participation** and to assist individuals and families reach their **potential**.



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ceo's report

The importance of honouring SSI's mission and its values has never been more poignant as it has been over the past 12 months. It has been a year of great challenge and confrontation in both service delivery and policy development. We have been in turbulent times with a constant changing environment and approach towards our refugee and asylum seekers.



SSI CEO Violet Roumeliotis

This inconsistency and policy on the run has at times caused great organisational anxiety at all levels of SSI in how we approach these policy changes, the impact it has on our clients and whether or not we are doing the right thing being involved in some of these program areas, for example, supporting asylum seekers as they come out of detention on bridging visas. In hindsight, which is always 20/20, we have done the right thing. Our membership, NSW's Migrant Resource Centres and diversity agencies, and stakeholders, who work closely with us and have an aligned mission, understand that the importance of a welcoming organisation to greet and support asylum seekers while waiting for the outcome of their protection request, and the value-added approach SSI has offered, I believe, has made us a richer and more significant organisation.

Respecting human rights and social justice and the principals of people meeting their full potential, fairness and dignity for all, underpins all of our programs and service delivery frameworks. Over the past 12 months

SSI has developed extraordinary policy and procedures for all program areas. This has been a challenge given that we have had to roll out programs and new service delivery models, while also trying to develop a framework around it. Our staff have been extraordinary in their capacity to respond and provide excellent services in very trying conditions, our volunteers with their Sisterhood and Mateship programs who have supported men, women and their families in a variety of ways is commendable. It flies in the face of mainstream views that culturally and diverse communities do not volunteer and need to spend a few days at SSI to see that that is a great fallacy. The Executive and Leadership Group have done extraordinary work in all the divisions of SSI, and we are drafting an SSI business plan.

In the past 12 months our priorities, as detailed in our strategic plan, is ensuring there are opportunities for our clients' voices to be heard, stronger stakeholder relationships, quality services for vulnerable communities and a whole of client integrated service. Each of those priority areas under

each division of SSI has had significant outcomes and successes. Our support systems, such as the strengthening of internal communications through the Be Well program, newsletters, development of the website and intranet and social media, has reaped rewards and allowed for better communication across all our sites.

There has been extraordinary work done in the area of developing premises to make it comfortable and attractive for our staff and clients and the seeds have been set for the development and implementation of an organisation-wide quality management system. SSI has spent considerable time in looking at the development and improvement of our financial reporting and a more user friendly reporting framework. The executive has also been looking at the implementation of an ERP system which will include the migration of finance, payroll and Human Resources from MYOB. There has been incredible work done in our ITC systems and infrastructure as well.

The Humanitarian Services division supported 5,849 refugee families and 2,818 asylum seekers in 2012/2013 and 1,364 of these clients were children under the age of 18, of these clients SSI provided temporary accommodation to approximately 3,000 clients and assisted many more to secure affordable housing in the community. At the end of 2012-2013, the division had over 200 staff located in 14 sites around Sydney and now also in regional NSW with plans for further growth in 2013-2014. The division supported 171 families and individuals granted women at risk visa class 204 and several hundred women on other visa classes with similar characteristics. SSI has established itself as a leader in the provision of services to this group and has been working closely with the UNSW to ensure that staff is trained and that appropriate assessment tools are in place. Since the commencement of support services to asylum seekers in 2012-2013, SSI has had the opportunity to learn about the needs and challenges facing this vulnerable and unpopular group in some parts of the Australian

community, with limited resources. SSI has invested in additional support services to provide social and practical skills as well as partnering with ethnic community groups to ensure appropriate support networks are put in place and that clients' voices are heard. The popular SSI Community Kitchen Program has provided thousands of hot meals to asylum seeker clients through engaging with in-kind support and generosity from the broader community. Support has not necessarily come from traditional supporters in our sector, but by organisations such as the Country Women's Association and mainstream faith groups, such as Hill Song.

The Business and Community Development division has equally punched well above its weight. In the out-of-home care area, 37 children are being supported in foster care in the metropolitan and Hunter regions. The majority of the children are from Vietnamese and African backgrounds. Other children are from Bosnian, Cambodian, Macedonian, Samoan and Russian backgrounds. We currently have three caseworkers, two from Vietnamese background on secondment from Community Services, and a third is of African background. Our multicultural model of cultural matching is innovative and a success.

The Early Intervention component of the division is again leading some extraordinary innovation in practice and in resource development. SSI has been funded by FACS under the Keep Them Safe initiative, to deliver a range of projects that promote child wellbeing and early intervention outcomes for migrant and refugee families. The projects are intended to build strength and resilience within families that are undergoing settlement, change and adjustment in a new country. The projects also aim to build improved practice capacity within settlement, migrant, government and NGO family support services.

Our Refugee Enterprise Facilitation project has two enterprise facilitators, two extraordinary women, and numerous potential businesses are

being explored with SSI's clients. We are proud of this project and we know that it will change the lives of many of our clients.

I want to acknowledge the important work of our Marketing and Communications team. SSI has invested resources into this area and it is expanding particularly in the social media area. The critical amount of work on the upgrading of the website will be evident to anyone who logs onto the site. We have seen dramatic results with this investment and none more obvious than the management of the spate of negative media reports over the past 12 months relating to our asylum clients. The team's ability to identify good stories has seen SSI achieving solid results including coverage in print and electronic media, including some national coverage and a resulting growing profile via this medium. Our monthly newsletter is a production marvel and adds to sound communication between SSI staff and its membership and broader stakeholders.

I would like to warmly acknowledge my executive team for the extraordinary work that they do, Carol Cahill for supporting all of us, the Leadership group - a highly talented and clever group of people with endless energy - and once again our wonderful Board members, who take their role of governance seriously and ensure that the work we do is done appropriately, efficiently with transparency. I acknowledge our Chair Kamalle Dabboussy for the extra effort and work that he puts into SSI. I would like to thank our funders for the trust that they put in us to ensure that we meet our contractual obligations, the wonderful SSI staff, case managers, their team leaders and coordinators, volunteers, administrators and finance people, who perform critical work that adds to our successes and, finally, our clients - the reason why we exist at all. Hopefully, our work and efforts allows them to meet their aspirations and live with dignity and hope.

chair's report

The past year has seen enormous change and growth continue at SSI, which was achieved in a political and social environment distorted by a hotly contested Federal election. The organisation has expanded to include three major service-oriented programs focusing on the settlement of refugees, support for asylum seekers living the community and out-of-home care case management for foster carers, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD).



SSI Chair Kamalle Dabboussy

Throughout this difficult period when organisations like SSI felt under siege at times as public opinion was negatively influenced by some elements of the media, radio shock jocks and disturbing anti-asylum seeker political campaigning, SSI staff remained resilient and focused on supporting clients. SSI staff has worked tirelessly throughout the year to implement programs and expand services for over 10,000 refugees and asylum seekers.

The Board, SSI executive and staff were frequently reminded by positive stories in the media and word-of-mouth reports from the community that many were supportive of asylum seekers and Australia's excellent humanitarian record. In fact, we had many examples of supporters and like-minded organisations rallying to work for the benefit of our clients.

It is extremely important that the enormous contribution that immigrants and refugees have made to Australia becomes a part of our civic DNA as well as our official history, as it always has been. We must not simply take for granted the significant benefits

Australia has reaped, and continues to reap, over many decades from its migrant and refugee population. Campaigns to develop inclusive policies that empower these significant minority groups in Australia have been fought in the past and won. Multicultural Australia is the living proof of the success of these policies. This latest wave of refugee arrivals will also bring new and enriching success stories.

The previous 12 months has seen a turnover in excess of \$36 million with more than 300 staff. During this period the Humanitarian Settlement Service (HSS) program was expanded following its 2011 introduction, and a CAS and ASAS contract was awarded to SSI.

The organisation's achievements are due in equal measure to the uniqueness of the organisation, featuring its membership of Migrant Resource Centres and Multicultural Services, client-focused model of service delivery, and its dedicated and highly specialised staff. The decentralised model lends itself to state-wide programs, such as Humanitarian Settlement Services,

as well as localised specialist operations that can be managed centrally and rolled out where required, including the Community Support Program and out-of-home care.

SSI is developing a reputation for innovation in case management, specifically the Multicultural Foster Care Service (MFCS) which is the first of its kind in NSW where a multicultural not-for-profit organisation has been contracted to develop and deliver a culturally appropriate model of foster care.

The service is staffed by bilingual workers with cross cultural and out-of-home care casework skills and knowledge. The MFCS directly addresses the difficulties in recruiting, assessing, training and retaining foster carers from CALD backgrounds, and the limited opportunities for cultural matching of children and carers. It is currently responsible for 29 children and young people, and this number will grow to 50 when the service is at full capacity.

Ethnic communities have also responded to our service with

unexpected welcome, with many families embracing our service and volunteering to be foster carers or in other capacities.

SSI is developing new programs and services, in partnership with mainstream services, that directly benefit our clients. This year, for the first time in Australia, people from CALD backgrounds were able to connect to accessible legal services through collaboration between Legal Aid NSW and SSI. Civil and family lawyers from Legal Aid NSW will provide legal advice services on site to clients at Migrant Resource Centres as well as offering regular education workshops about the Australian legal system.

During the past year there have been considerable achievements in relation to the organisation including an expansion and upgrading of infrastructure, the implementation of a major IT communications program and workforce development through in-house training and wellness programs.

I thank my colleagues and fellow Board members for supporting me in my role as Chair and for their assistance in

successfully directing SSI during this unprecedented period of growth.

I would also like to thank the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and NSW Family and Community Services for supporting the organisation in the delivery of services.

In my second year as Chair I remain proud to be associated with SSI and thank everyone for their commitment to the organisation and its clients.

treasurer's report

Financial Commentary – Financial Year 2012/2013

In fulfilling its mission, SSI has continued to focus on innovation, better use of technology and managing its financial position responsibly. SSI has made significant steps to ensure financial sustainability, through an increase in income by diversifying its revenue base, active management of costs and productivity improvements. The financial statements and specific disclosures included in this financial commentary have been derived from the audited financial report for the year ended 30 June 2013.



SSI Treasurer Rosa Loria

Highlights

Income and Expenditure Statement

Settlement Services International has realised a surplus of \$4,395,056 from operating activities for the year.

The 2013 financial year is the second full year of operation for SSI. Total revenue increased by 282% over the previous year with a significant increase in net surplus for the year. The major contributing factors for the increase in income were the commencement of the CAS/ASAS Program and a fully operational Foster Care Program.

SSI's revenue for 2013 was \$36,009,911. Revenue breakdown is as follows:

Source	\$
DIAC - Humanitarian Settlement Services	11,515,042
DIAC – CAS/ASAS	23,778,096
Multicultural Foster Care Service	510,431
Australian Apprenticeships	34,500
Legal Aid NSW Project	22,727
Australia Council Project	20,000
Interest	121,065
Membership Fees	1,800
Sundry Income	6,250

Operating costs for 2013 were \$31,614,855. SSI's operating costs include a component of client costs of \$15,307,315. The client costs are comprised of living allowance and other payments made to clients in the CAS/ASAS program.

Balance Sheet

The total Current Assets have increased by \$13,925,633 over the previous year. This increase was predominantly an increase in Trade & other receivables and a significant increase in cash.

Non-Current Assets increased by \$2,451,093. The increase reflects

substantial expenditure in the area of IT, office fitout, and furniture & fittings due to the continual expansion of the CAS/ASAS program.

The year saw an increase in Current Liabilities of \$11,981,670. The main component of the Current Liabilities at year end was Unearned Income of \$8,769,825. This income is yet to be accounted for as it comprises forecast invoicing for the CAS/ASAS program. Provision for leave increased by \$438,303 reflecting the number of new staff employed during the year. In addition, the increase in payables also reflects the high level of activity in the

areas of Creditors, GST and employee payments such as, superannuation and PAYG payments due for payment in July 2013.

Overall the organisation held a strong position, with an increase in net assets (assets less liabilities) over the previous year, of over 250%.

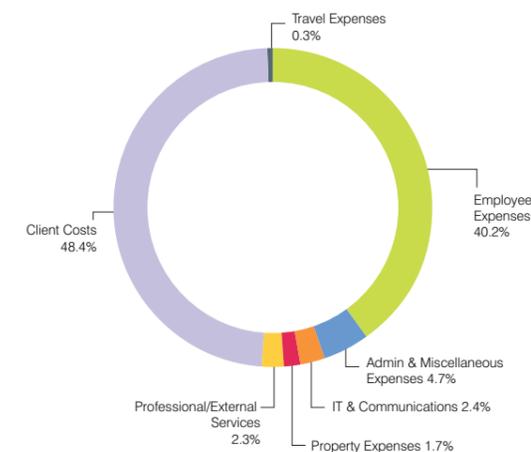
Connect Australia Foundation

For the financial year 2012/2013, the foundation did not receive any funding and no grant submissions were lodged.

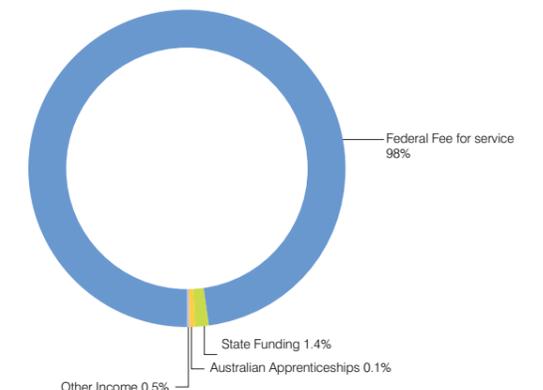
Cash Flow Statement for the Financial Year ended 30 June 2013

	\$
Cash at the beginning of the year	199,667
Operations	
Net Cash Flow from Operations	11,985,417
Investing Activities	
Net Cash Flow from Investing Activities	(2,702,656)
Financing Activities	
Net Cash Flow from Financing Activities	-
Net Increase / (Decrease) in Cash	9,282,761
Cash at Bank 30 June 2013	9,482,428

Expenses



Income



Summary Profit & Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2013

	2013 \$	2012 \$
Federal fee for service	35,293,139	9,331,590
State Funding	510,432	11,250
Australian Apprenticeships	34,500	-
Other Income	171,840	93,670
Total Income	36,009,911	9,436,510
Client Costs	15,307,315	349,408
Orientation Costs	-	32,331
Travel Expenses	52,900	184,542
Employee Expenses	12,712,439	7,029,881
Administration & Misc Expenses	1,498,027	996,385
IT & Communications	761,356	244,885
Property Expenses	546,577	89,902
Professional/External Services	736,241	486,598
Finance Expenses	-	2,018
Total Expenses	31,614,855	9,415,950
Net Profit/(Loss)	4,395,056	20,560

Settlement Services International Inc. Balance Sheet as at 30th June 2013

	2013 \$	2012 \$
Current Assets	16,796,040	2,870,407
Total Current Assets	16,796,040	2,870,407
Non-Current Assets	2,652,029	200,936
Total Non-Current Assets	2,652,029	200,936
Total Assets	19,448,069	3,071,343
Current Liabilities	13,313,637	1,331,967
Total Current Liabilities	13,313,637	1,331,967
Non-Current Liabilities	-	-
Total Non-Current Liabilities	-	-
Total Liabilities	13,313,637	1,331,967
Net Assets	6,134,432	1,739,376
Funds		
Retained Funds	6,134,432	1,739,376
Total Funds	6,134,432	1,739,376



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