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# Annual Report

October 2021 - September 2022

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This 2021-22 QSA Annual Report was presented at QSA Annual General Meeting on 18 February 2023.

QSA respectfully acknowledges the Gadigal and Wangal of the Eora Nation, traditional custodians of the lands on which our office is located, paying respect to elders past, present and emerging, and recognising the land always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

\*\* All financial figures in this report are expressed in Australian dollars.

COVER: Low energy stove used to prepare lunches in a rural Ugandan school. CREDIT: St Jude Family Project





## Our Reach

QSA worked with partners in four regions, supporting fifteen development projects in Uganda, India, The Philippines, Zimbabwe and Cambodia, and First Nations and Refugee and Asylum projects in Australia. Our achievements included:

- A new peace project in Cambodia is reducing conflict and strengthening collaboration in ethnically diverse communities with Khmer language skills for 70 disadvantaged Vietnamese children.
- 359 Ugandan farmers confidently apply new organic farming skills to improve banana agronomy, soil fertility and water conservation for climate-adaption and food security.
- 3 projects in Tamil Nadu, India, are providing training to 2,174 people enabling greater environmental awareness, changes to agricultural practices, and encourage more traditional food crops and animals more suited to local situations.
- Two projects are forming links in First Nations communities leading to more significant ideas – a business plan for a native plant nursery in Queensland and workshops to assist communities in drawing up project success indicators that are more respectful and articulate on Indigenous sense of place and country.



# Message from the Co-Convenors

As new convenors, the annual report is a great opportunity to review the challenges and successes of QSA's last twelve months. Our choice of projects continues to be informed by our Quaker testimonies: community, equality, peace, simplicity, care for the earth and integrity.

The goals of these community projects include the sustainability of water and food security, the inclusion of people with disabilities, and women's empowerment. Knowing that QSA has limited energy and resources means being unable to respond to all project requests. Building a community is a long-term commitment; therefore, QSA is usually not involved with emergency relief.

External factors impinge on QSA's focus. For example, the continued impacts of COVID-19, climate change and the flow-on effects of the invasion of Ukraine are being felt by our partner communities.

QSA projects in Uganda, Cambodia and Tamil Nadu (India) are delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). With a new federal government, any shift in where government funding is directed may impact QSA's future geographical focus.

In addition, QSA continues to support projects in First Nations communities, and refugee and asylum seekers support organisations funded by bequests and regular donations.

Within the wider Quaker community, some changes impact QSA. This community has been the lifeblood of QSA, with many people having a deep attachment to QSA through serving on committees, having an active interest in the progress of QSA's many projects, and participating in study tours or fundraising efforts. However, COVID-19 and an ageing population impact how QSA can connect with the wider Quaker community. Many people no longer attend in-person activities because of health or mobility issues. With the annual



Rae Litting



Therese Douglas





AYM gathering also online, there is less opportunity to have casual interactions regarding the work of QSA and the changes it faces.

In-person attendance is no longer the assumption for meetings at all levels with project partners, staff and the management committee, as well as with the wider Quaker community and donor base. Fortunately, the availability of Zoom meetings has meant staff, project partners and the members of QSA have been able to continue their work despite the increasing cost of travel and accommodation.

But how QSA continues to communicate its work effectively with the wider community is a challenge highlighted in the AYM review of QSA in 2021. This is amongst the issues to be addressed by a small committee with participation from members of AYM and QSA.

One of the pleasures of serving on the QSA management committee is hearing about the transforming effects of our projects, especially in better nutrition and the increased confidence with which marginalised groups are now participating in the life of their communities. We wish to make these achievements more widely appreciated. We are grateful to all the staff and volunteers who have made these improvements possible.

This year we farewell two people who've been with QSA for a total of 46 years!

John Dundas has been our Finance Officer since 1999, working as a volunteer. To say that John has been dedicated and reliable does not seem to reflect deeply enough the time and energy he has given to QSA.

Jackie Perkins has been the Executive Administrator since QSA moved to Sydney from Hobart in 1999 and full time in that role since 2004. Jackie has been the face and heart of QSA and has overseen many challenges, from differing government policies to witnessing the transformation of QSA into a company.

We look forward to celebrating the contributions of these two true friends of QSA.

At a time when our planet faces many crises – global warming, financial disruptions, and growing inequality – we trust our Quaker processes to show us how we can make the best possible contribution to a more just and thriving society.

**Therese Douglas and Rae Litting**



# Statement of Purpose and Quaker Testimonies

Quaker Service Australia's (QSA) purpose is to practically express Australian Quakers' concern for building a more peaceful, equitable, just and compassionate world. QSA works with communities in need to improve their quality of life with culturally sensitive, economically and environmentally appropriate and sustainable projects.

QSA is the international development agency of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia, and

the testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, environment and equality guide all its work. Central to QSA's work is the Quaker belief in the equal worth of all people, a belief rooted in Quaker experience over more than 350 years.

## Scope of our work: where we work and why

QSA was established in 1959 as an aid and development agency and legally incorporated association. QSA adopted a new governance structure in December 2016 and, in April 2017, became a company limited by guarantee.

QSA operates and manages activities from its office in Sydney and has no overseas presence. QSA favours community-initiated projects and partners with existing community-based organisations. Many of our partnerships developed organically from Quaker networks and historical connections.

QSA's approach is consultative and inclusive. We play a consultative role in project design, ensuring that community members are actively involved and activities are appropriate to their needs, interests and situations.

QSA does not participate in nor allow any funds or resources to be used for proselytising, terrorism or support for political candidates or organisations.





# Report from the Executive Administrator



As I sit to compile my report for the Annual Report, I know it will cover a much longer period as this will be my last report as QSA's Executive Administrator. I have resigned with effect from mid-December 2022. I realise this will come as a surprise, especially to those who thought I would never ever leave!

My time with QSA has been extensive, full, varied, and a sheer delight, although also with some aspects that are not quite as delightful. The sheer delight part will come as no surprise to most of you when I say that it is not the organisation, its charts, policies, and endless reviews, but the people. In that, I am in full agreement with Val Nichols, whom some may know was one of QSA's administrators during its early growth phase, when she said:

QSA is not 'programs', really. It is people.

Similar to Val, my lasting memory will be the faces and voices, the vibrant clothing, the wonderful smells of the cooking, the singing and laughter, and the delight in the faces of project participants showing me what changes they have made as a result of the training courses attended. I have had the privilege of meeting some amazing and talented people over the years. Some I have worked alongside in the QSA office, others I have only really known via emails and occasional monitoring visits, but everyone I have met has shared something of their lives with me, as I did. There is always something new to learn and many approaches to finding an answer to a problem.

Over the past year, QSA has undertaken evaluations of three projects; in Cambodia, India and Uganda, engaging local evaluation teams for an independent assessment of the project's impact. Such evaluations are an essential learning tool for QSA, the project partner, and community members. It provides an opportunity to share project insights, remind themselves of how it was before the project started and learn how it could be done better in the future, thereby adding to the capacity of the project partner organisations.

COVID is still having its impact around the globe, whether from continued infection rates, resultant health issues, or reduced income levels for communities



with few savings or resources. Travel restrictions in some areas have made it necessary to redraft the plans for the year's training courses or reduce class sizes. However, support from individual donors and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has enabled changes so practical support can be amended or extended and new ideas trialled. These new approaches include hiring external experts to provide input into marketing and business plans (a project in Cambodia and another in Queensland), creating a Village Knowledge Centre in Tamil Nadu, India and expanding community consultation processes, expanding community consultation processes, and identifying key performance indicators in NSW.

So, although QSA has worked with its project partners for several years, their ideas are never static, as they find new ways to address the community's expressed needs. With your continued support, they will be able to find alternative approaches to achieve food and water security, poverty alleviation, restoration of their local environment, and greater confidence and self-esteem.

## Jackie Perkins



Jackie, on a monitoring visit chatting with students in Tamil Nadu  
SOURCE: PBRC





# International Development

QSA's practical expression of development favours ongoing, community-led initiatives to achieve food security, water security and poverty alleviation with appropriate and sustainable change. We focus on sustainable development and are not involved in emergency relief. Our work aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

QSA uses an indirect service delivery model, supporting long-term partners who understand their community's needs and provide local support at a grassroots level. Our relationships with many project partners are long-standing. We've worked with some partners for years as their activities have changed in response to new community requests and are based on evolving long-term plans.

We support and encourage interdisciplinary, holistic and sustainable approaches that are culturally appropriate and relevant to the local context and resources, including technology. Our work often integrates ecology and climate adaptation, nutrition and health, gender equality, women's empowerment, child protection and inclusiveness.

Agriculture is central to poverty reduction and hunger eradication in rural areas in many nations. Women are vital to this process as the mainstay of many rural economies, so most of our work focuses on empowering and enhancing their capabilities.

Climate change adaptation and reducing the impact of natural disasters are crucial in the training provided, as climate change significantly affects agriculture.

QSA projects primarily focus on helping women build and strengthen skills in permaculture and other organic farming methods. With training and support, they establish home food gardens or build on their farming practices to cultivate more nutritious food for their family year-round. Where possible, any surplus can be sold to supplement household incomes. Another aim is to improve their quality of life and those of their families and communities. By improving their economic situation and social standing, women are more confident to accept leadership roles in their communities.



In recent years, QSA has concentrated on international projects in Cambodia, India and Uganda. This year, we supported a project in The Philippines, plus a small funding allocation in Zimbabwe.

QSA welcomes the ongoing support of the Australian Government. For example, in 2021/22, the Australian Government supported six of QSA's international projects through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

Operating a hand-weaving loom to create traditional scarves (kramar) SOURCE: Bunrany Hun Sen Development Center, Cambodia



## The year 2021/22

As COVID-19 continued to impact countries worldwide, QSA supported partners as they adapted projects to deal with the pandemic's ongoing health, economic and social effects. As health-related restrictions eased, most project activities returned to the "new normal". However, with limited resources, many project participants face extraordinary hardships as the pandemic's economic impact continues to affect the most vulnerable families.

In Uganda, our partners and their farmers carried out their work with adapted modes of operations and logistics, now the norm. Schools finally reopened in January (2022) after almost two years, the most prolonged period of school closures in the world. These closures had a detrimental effect on many adolescents' education and life circumstances. Unsurprisingly, this has been more pronounced for young women and disadvantaged youth, intensifying existing social and economic inequalities.

Cambodia's international borders opened in late 2021, children returned to school, and travel and meeting restrictions were lifted. However, with tourism still slow and other industries experiencing a downturn, many have lost jobs and faced economic hardships due to fuel and other price rises. So it's pleasing to hear that families participating in QSA projects fared better during the pandemic by applying their new skills and capabilities.



Projects in Tamil Nadu experienced COVID-related disruptions to planned activities, from changes to timetabling due to COVID outbreaks, travel and large-scale gathering restrictions, and hospitalisation of key personnel. In addition, torrential rain made travel impossible and caused erosion of some roads. The destruction of buildings from cyclonic winds also added problems for our project partners. Despite facing various challenges, the three Tamil Nadu projects completed all planned training sessions and activities while adhering to COVID safe guidelines.

In-person monitoring visits to Cambodia resumed in early 2022, but QSA staff have been unable to visit projects in other countries. Regular monitoring meetings and training by video conference continued this year, supplemented by increased remote financial spot checks.

4,566 people participated directly in our international projects this year, including 847 children and young people. 60% of participants were women and girls, and approximately 1.5% lived with disabilities.

QSA allocated \$561,875 to international projects this year, \$176,813 funded by QSA and \$385,062 facilitated by Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) funding.



Farmers from Rakai District, Uganda, create a compound vegetable garden  
SOURCE: St Jude Family Projects



# India

## Pitchandikulam BioResource Centre, Tamil Nadu

This year a new two-year project started supporting the Nadukuppam community via the Nadukuppam Panchayat Development Planning Committee (PDPC), addressing the expressed needs of the community and community-inclusive groups. In addition, a new Village Knowledge Centre is working through the PDPC, beginning a survey to collect information from within the region, providing a firm foundation for future project activities.



Amirtha Herbal Medicines collects medicinal plants and processes them into traditional remedies, empowering women and promoting health  
SOURCE: PBRC

The 20-person PDPC comprises representatives of the community, women's and youth groups, elected leaders, schools, and the PBRC NGO. PDPC will identify and agree on the needs of the various represented groups, to ensure inclusivity in their actions. An initial collective assessment identified eleven key areas for surveying, and in this first phase, healthcare, ecology, and education will be the priority. People have been trained in survey techniques. Following pilot surveys, the questions were modified, additional people were engaged, and a range of issues was considered in more detail, such as privacy, storage and security of data, and informed consent, especially for people with low literacy levels. The survey will include two thousand five hundred families, addressing the three priority areas.

This project changes PBRC's role from that of the training provider to that of mentor, responding to community-led initiatives and supporting the creation of a Nadukuppam Panchayat Development Planning Committee and Village Knowledge Centre. Towards the end of the project concluded in June 2022, an evaluation addressed its impact on project participants. The results (explained further on page 26) prompted PBRC to increase its focus on making local communities more cohesive and self-determined, using resources currently available from the Tamil Nadu Government.

This project is funded by QSA (\$12,756) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade under ANCP (\$44,025) and involves 2,024 participants.



## Vasandham Society, Tamil Nadu

This project aims to reduce the environmental impact of agricultural methods, encourage the growth of traditional grain crops more suited to the current climate as well as encourage farmers to change the type of poultry and small animals they keep from exotic breeds to those more suited to the feedstuff available and the current climate.

A further component of this project is cultivating and replanting trees in deforested areas. Six locations were selected, and the primary foci are:

- Raising community awareness about quality tree planting processes. Many of the farmers are not aware of quality tree planting sources and materials, and trees used in the region are generally of low volume and substandard quality
- Involving communities in tree planting whilst following COVID guidelines
- Plan to create local employment via mass tree cultivation
- Conversion of barren land into fertile land

Work continues to protect open water storage areas. Nine are protected from encroachment by nearby farmers who might plant crops on the periphery or erect fences to prevent access by cattle or community members.

This project cost is funded only by QSA. During the year October 2021 to September 2022, one project ended and another began, with a total budget this year of \$15,154. Fifty women and men will learn about caring for trees and increasing the success rate from seedlings to full-grown trees. They will also learn a wide range of horticulture skills to generate greater productivity and reduce the ecological damage of farming practices.



Tree planting to restore deforested areas  
SOURCE: Vasandham Society



## Trinity Rural Development Service Centre (TRDSC), Nagercoil

COVID outbreaks in the region and the prohibition of travel and meeting in groups delayed the start of this project. As a result, it started in April 2022, three months later than planned.

One hundred women Dalit community members from five villages were selected to participate in training to establish kitchen food gardens and enhance nutritional intake. Four field workers and the project coordinator met fortnightly for planning meetings and capacity-building workshops. Additional training given to the participants in bio-diversity awareness and ways to increase food security for their families has already generated signs of improved overall health. Surplus food has been sold in the local markets to supplement incomes.

The apparent benefits make this and similar previous projects popular and maintain the sustainability of the activities long after the project ends.

QSA is the sole project funder, and the total project budget is \$7,500. \$5,343 of the project budget was transferred and acquitted during this year.

A further \$1,754 was provided for a small motorbike to make it easier and safer for the trainers to visit project participants in different villages. This cost includes insurance, road tax and a helmet.



Project participants receive tree seedlings and nutritional herbs to establish their home food garden. SOURCE: TRDSC



# The Philippines

## Abundant Water, Bohol



Providing water in remote rural communities.  
SOURCE: Abundant Water

Friends World Committee for Consultation, Asia-West Pacific Section, initiated this project based on learning from earlier Abundant Water projects in Laos and Timor Leste. It offers training in using ceramic water filters to provide safe, affordable household drinking. Local sourcing of reliable, good-quality ceramic filters is critical, and trainers receive the knowledge and skills needed for their roles.

This region has been affected not only by COVID-19 infections but also by typhoons which leave destruction in their wake, leaving communities without power, potable water and food sources. Under these circumstances, having the means to create safe drinking water without electricity is critical.

QSA allocated \$15,000 and provided \$7,500 this year for the project, jointly funded by several organisations, including Friends World Committee for Consultation, Canberra Region Quakers and Rotary.



# Uganda

## St Jude Family Project

This year saw St Jude embark on a new two-year project with three new communities to improve rural women's livelihoods through climate-resilient organic agriculture and improved banana production. Utilising low-technology and low-cost solutions accessible to the poorest farmers, St Jude provided training and support to 365 people, the majority of whom are women. As a result, 210 of these farmers increased their short-term food security from one and a half to at least two adequate meals a day whilst gaining skills and cultivating their longer-term food and water security. More than half of the farmers have more than doubled their family income, from less than S36 to S83 per month!

School food gardens are established and now contribute 26% of children's nutritional meals while also increasing environmental awareness and a positive attitude towards agriculture.

St Jude is trialling an approach to increase consultation and involvement of the husbands of participating farmers to mobilise their support for heavy labour tasks and corral joint responsibility for decision-making and cooperation, the work burden, and family wellbeing. The approach is proving beneficial and will continue into next year. However, an adequate solution is required and being brainstormed for women-headed households, many of which already experience social and economic disadvantage.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (S89,439) and QSA (S22,954) and involved 545 participants - 382 women and girls, 163 men and boys, and 15 people living with disabilities.



Practical training in fruit tree grafting helps farmers cultivate more hardy, healthy plants and improve fruit yields.  
SOURCE: St Jude Family Project



## Dream Farm Kyakabunga Group, Kiruhura

In partnership with St Jude Family Projects, QSA supports this young NGO from Kiruhura in southwestern Uganda. Dream Farm is developing its skills and capacity in organisational and project management, community participation processes, and organic agriculture.

A group of 20 farmers continued learning to improve their food production and nutrition knowledge through fortnightly community training and extension visits to their respective gardens. The training centred on enhancing ecological farming practices and included nutrition, hygiene, growing crops and vegetables to earn income, and marketing or selling their harvests at local outlets or markets.

This project was fully funded by QSA (\$17,026), and 24 people participated in activities this year.



Project staff from St Jude Family Project and Dream Farm attending a disability training course funded by QSA  
SOURCE: St Jude Family Project



# Zimbabwe

## King George VI Centre, Bulawayo

This unique centre in Zimbabwe provides academic and lifestyle skills training for school-age children living with disabilities. Many stay in specially constructed housing during term time, assisted by house mothers, returning to their families for the holidays. Their academic attainment is high; lifestyle skills enable them to be as independent as possible, and with music and dance, their confidence is impressive.

After being seriously impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns and school closures, the students and staff are now experiencing great difficulties caused by Zimbabwe's high inflation rate. All costs have increased, and salaries have not kept pace. QSA sent funds to assist in this struggle. Regular newsletters indicate they have been able to grow much of their food, especially with support from other donors who've provided watering systems and polytunnels. Staff training is also an ongoing commitment, with critical leadership, supervision and counselling training provided for middle managers.

QSA provided \$925 to support food security efforts.



Hearing-impaired students celebrate after exams on completing a practical course in food preparation.  
SOURCE: King George VI



# Cambodia

## Khmer Community Development, Kandal Province

COVID-19 restrictions on large gatherings continued to impact activities, so KCD changed to small group meetings. Villagers prioritising recovering from the pandemic's economic impact could not participate in activities, so numbers in some activities were fewer than expected.

Meetings helped 198 people identify priorities and develop agriculture and animal-raising plans. After training in natural agriculture, nutrition, and income generation, 80% were rethinking daily eating and started growing vegetables and keeping animals, improving living conditions and nutrition.

Traditional birthing and post-delivery practices in Cambodia often compromise the health and nutrition of women and their babies. Breastfeeding is often discouraged, and women follow a restrictive diet, including avoiding vegetables for up to two months. Due to reverence for older women, young women are reluctant to challenge the traditional practices espoused by their mothers and mothers-in-law.

An innovative KCD program used Forum Theatre to raise awareness and change attitudes around the negative impact of some traditional post-birthing practices. Young women, their partners, mothers and mothers-in-law worked together to identify nutritional issues and possible solutions. As a result, families are now aware of the need for new mothers to eat nutritious food, particularly vegetables. In addition, young women can provide healthy food for themselves and their babies and are empowered to advocate for nutrition and breastfeeding.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$72,336) and QSA (\$32,082) and involved 594 participants (438 women and girls).



Forum Theatre used to challenge traditional post-delivery practices to improve nutrition SOURCE: KCD



## Peacebuilding, Kampong Chhnang Province

In conjunction with KCD, QSA secured funding from the Jan de Voogd Peace Fund for a new peacebuilding project in Cambodia to promote peace in ethnically diverse communities with inter-ethnic distrust, resentment and discrimination.

This two-year project implemented by Khmer Community Development (KCD) commenced in April 2022. It promotes peace, equality, collaboration and understanding in communities with diverse ethnic populations, inter-ethnic distrust, resentment and discrimination. In these communities, ethnic Vietnamese are vulnerable and disadvantaged, denied citizenship, and without access to services like education and healthcare.

To promote understanding, 200 ethnic Vietnamese children will join Khmer language and life skills classes. Furthermore, various sporting and other activities encourage interaction between Vietnamese and Khmer children. In addition, awareness training will be provided along with integrated workshops and activities to promote collaboration.

In the early months, the project focused on identifying critical representatives in each ethnic community and starting support for schools, beginning Khmer language classes, preparing Khmer language resources for ethnic Vietnamese children and conducting training in child rights.

QSA funds this project from the bequest. The budget for the two-year project is \$148,430. In the first three months, QSA contributed \$14,202 to the project, involving 374 participants.



Football encourages interaction between Vietnamese and Khmer youth  
SOURCE: KCD



## Bun Rany Hun Sen Development Centre (BRHS), Pursat Province

COVID-19 restrictions didn't directly impact rural vocational training, and BRHS retained production, training and administration staff. COVID-19 education closures delayed vocational training at the Centre until November 2021, and the number of trainees in Pursat was lower than expected. However, training for rural farmers continued relatively unaffected.

From December 2021, when restrictions and border closures eased, handicraft orders increased and exceeded forecasts for the remainder of the year. Additional machinists were engaged to meet demand. Purchases from rural producers stopped when sales dropped due to COVID-19 but picked up early in 2022. Forty producers now supply products to the Centre. Handicraft sales enable farmers to supplement agricultural incomes subject to climate change.

Marketing of the Centre's courses and products is an ongoing challenge. The Centre recognises it needs to make changes to ensure the organisation survives and achieves self-sufficiency. An external consultant started work in May 2022 on a business plan and a plan to achieve sales to help finance some of the required changes.



This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$54,006) and QSA (\$12,6712) and involved 242 participants (159 women and girls).

Women weaving floor mats using locally sourced grass dyed with natural dyes  
SOURCE: QSA



## Department of Women's Affairs, Kampong Thom Province

Sixty new farmers trained in permaculture and climate change established food gardens producing nutritious food. 80% achieved year-round food security, and 45% earned more than USD50 per month selling surplus produce, particularly during the dry season when market prices rise.

All participants were trained in hygiene and sanitation to improve family health, and nine received materials to build a toilet. Thirty families received a water tank or materials to construct pump wells providing water for drinking and irrigating home gardens, enhancing crop production and extending the growing season.

Female commune leaders are the first point of contact in domestic violence and child protection incidents. Following training, they could better represent and advocate for women and children in their communities.

A declining water table is an ongoing problem in the project area. Due to climate change and increased demand, surface and underground water levels have dropped. Even with pumps and wells, many can't reach the water. This project prioritises the provision of water tanks and wells and the growth of lower water-use vegetables.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$53,701) and QSA (\$16,355) and involved 231 participants (203 women).



Refresher training on domestic violence, migration, hygiene and anti-trafficking to permaculture trainees

SOURCE: Department of Women's Affairs, Kampong Thom



## Department of Women's Affairs, Pursat Province

COVID-19 did not greatly impact the project, as most activities occur outdoors. Nevertheless, the pandemic impacted livelihoods in project areas due to job losses and increased indebtedness.

Seventy-nine farmers trained in permaculture-based techniques established successful home gardens growing a variety of fruit and vegetables, providing year-round food and enabling families to cease purchasing from local markets. They reported that this led to improved family health and nutrition. It also helped reduce the impact of COVID-19, particularly among those with surplus produce who took advantage of higher prices.



A permaculture trainee in her newly established home food garden growing vegetables for home use and for sale  
SOURCE: QSA

Access to clean drinking water is an ongoing problem for families in the project areas. This year, DWAP focussed on providing water jars and filters that ensured 80 families had access to safe drinking water and water for garden irrigation.

Women commune and village leaders gained new knowledge about equity and inclusiveness, climate change prevention, and child protection. They shared this information in workshops with 11,651 community members. As a result, they are more confident and able to intervene in domestic violence, migration and child harm incidents.

Following training, kindergarten teachers worked with 5,805 parents on child rights, child protection, and positive parenting. An evaluation in 2019/21 showed this leads to reduced child harm.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (S\$57,032) and QSA (S\$13,557) and involved 382 participants (366 women and girls).



## PROJECT FEATURE:

# Helping communities meet the challenge of climate change

Earthcare is a Quaker testimony, and Quakers seek to “develop a culture of caring for the planet, preparing for future generations of living things, and honouring the gifts of sustainable life offered by the earth.” Therefore, climate change and environmental impact are critical criteria for assessing all QSA projects, most of which are agriculture-based, aiming to help participants adapt to climate change and reduce the impact of natural disasters through training in new agricultural techniques.

In **Tamil Nadu, India**, QSA partner PBRC focuses on environmental education, sustainability, and organic agricultural reforms. This region experienced extreme weather events in the past year, which seriously reduced crop yields - cyclonic winds and intense monsoon rainfall far above previous years. Training in organic methods encourages farmers to maintain a close relationship with soil health and structure, so plants develop deeper, stronger roots to withstand climate extremes. Crop variants have been trialled and assessed for different climates, and training in seed-saving techniques provides more options for farmers.

Cattle and goats standing in water increases the risk of spreading foot and mouth disease in areas subject to flooding. Immune-enhancing herbal compounds within this project have kept this disease from the region despite its prevalence in nearby areas. Using low-fuel stoves for cooking is encouraged to reduce emissions and deforestation. In addition, indigenous trees are planted in denuded forests to provide fruits, medicinal products and shade and to increase carbon absorption.



Watering young indigenous trees planted in denuded forests. SOURCE: QSA



In **Cambodia**, most agriculture involves a single weather-dependent rice crop using large quantities of pesticides and fertilisers. Three projects teach permaculture techniques, including crop selection, seed-saving, water management, and using natural fertilisers and pesticides. Participants (primarily women) establish home food gardens achieving year-round food security and reducing reliance on traditional agriculture susceptible to climate change.

Climate change and increased demand result in declining water tables and reduced water levels in streams, ponds, rivers and underground. Many farmers have problems sourcing water, even if they sink wells. Projects in Pursat and Kampong Thom prioritise pump wells that provide much-needed water for household use and food garden irrigation. They also prioritise growing low water-use vegetables and using household wastewater during the dry season.

In Kandal Province, communities are encouraged to plant trees around their homes to reduce dust, provide food and reduce the impact of increasing heat due to climate change.

Climate adaptation and resilience are integral in the farming methods taught in **Ugandan** projects, particularly soil and water conservation, to reduce the impact of extreme and unpredictable climatic variations. Most methods also mitigate climate change as they contribute towards carbon sequestration, retaining moisture, lowering ground temperatures, and slowing deforestation.

The intensity and duration of drought affecting parts of **Uganda** increasingly challenge achieving year-round water security. Dream Farm's farmers in Kiruhura have not experienced droughts as severe as in many parts of the Greater Masaka region where St Jude's farmers are situated. Apart from rainwater harvesting methods practised by farmers, St Jude also advises farmers to save and invest in household water pits.



Water pit construction in Uganda. SOURCE: St Jude Family Project





## ISSUES FEATURE:

# Evaluations: Understanding the impact of our work

Evaluations are a crucial part of QSA's project management, providing data and a window into whether, why and how our programs achieve their goals. They also help ensure our limited resources have the intended impact. Well-designed evaluations have tangible benefits for QSA and its development partners. They ensure our project participants achieve the outcomes they need and deserve and deliver improvements to current and future projects.

We completed three project evaluations this year.

### **Improving Nutrition, Kandal province, Cambodia**

An evaluation in June 2022 assessed how well this project contributes to improving nutrition amongst ethnic Khmer and ethnic Vietnamese. In focus groups, 48 participants discussed nutrition awareness, eating habits, home food gardens and animal-raising, family health, decision-making about food, health and nutrition, and self-confidence on health and nutrition issues.

Ethnic Khmer had achieved incredibly positive changes, learning skills to grow health-supporting produce and avoid chemical fertilisers. Participants said this led directly to improvements in their lives.

Less health problems than before as we have natural vegetables and chicken at home that makes us healthier than before and have less illness.

The program was less impactful for the ethnic Vietnamese due to location and cultural and social oppression that negatively affected their living standards. KCD is now reviewing the project to cater more effectively for this community.

### **Organic agriculture, environmental education, women's empowerment and health in Tamil Nadu, India**

This evaluation examined the sustainability and impact over five years of a project working in a predominantly rural population, a third of whom belong to Scheduled Castes. Most participants rely on subsistence agriculture, growing crops and smaller fruit areas as cash crops. The project involves training in organic farming techniques, the making and marketing of herbal medicines and supplements, tree-raising for reforestation and education for students in environmental awareness and establishment of productive food gardens.

The evaluation showed clear improvements in family health and well-being and increased income for participants and their families from the sale of produce.



It also found 82% of students are now more aware of the natural resources of their region and keen to know about their broader bio-region. A similar proportion had created productive food gardens around their homes.

It's our belief that as we grow, the tree will also grow with us. Our unity and friendship will continue as long as the tree lives.

The report made recommendations for how the project could achieve even better results, which have been considered and built into the project design.



Improving banana production in Uganda  
SOURCE: St Jude Family Project

### **Climate-resilient, sustainable farming and banana revival for food and income security, Uganda**

The portrait emerging from a six-year evaluation of St Jude's work was a significant change for most farmers due to their participation in the two-year agroecology program. The evaluation focused on the three consecutive projects across five districts, the extent of change in the target communities, the quality of implementation and intended achievements, and lessons learnt during the period.

The evaluation found excellent results in soil management and health, social support, financial management and community organisation but identified room to improve or resolve: agri-yield for commercial purposes, market and value-add activities. In addition, the two-year intervention sometimes appears to limit sustained impact, often due to problems with water access, despite remarkable recent improvements.

The evaluators commended St Jude's participatory approach and the level of support provided to farmers and their families, which motivated farmers and increased their agency. Two factors contributed to St Jude's implementation success. Firstly, they retained capable and motivated personnel through regular staff development and support, particularly during COVID-19. Secondly, focused reflection in regular staff meetings was quickly translated into responsive adaptation and improved processes and practices.



# Australia

## Support for First Nations communities

QSA has a long history of working with Australian Indigenous communities to bring about changes they wish to see in their lives. This takes many forms - workshops addressing health and well-being, reducing domestic violence and enhancing social harmony, resources to assist Indigenous high school students, the establishment of income-generating ventures and support for community-led initiatives. Before ideas are finalised, lengthy discussions and opportunities for listening occur.

During the past year, QSA supported First Nations community initiatives in Queensland and South Australia.

## Kondaparinga Station Plant Nursery, Bungalow, Queensland

This project received financial support to explore and develop a business plan to establish and operate a native plant nursery at Kondaparinga Station. Key Indigenous community members brought a wealth of expertise in business planning, permaculture skills, volunteer experience at a Brisbane native plant nursery, knowledge of horticulture, and an understanding of the water resources in the region. Like all First Nations projects, this has strong support from the local community and Elders, without which the project could not go ahead. Although only five people were involved in the initial phase, it is envisaged that with such a strong foundation, many people will have skills training and employment opportunities in the future, encouraging the community back to Country and avoiding pressure or encroachment from mining companies.

QSA allocated \$6,000 this year to this project.



Exploring Kondaparinga Station  
SOURCE: Kondaparinga Station





### **Jinndi Mibunn Beenleigh Housing and Development Company**

Based in Beenleigh, Queensland, this project supports research and development of sustainable long-term revenue models to employ community members, provides revenue for the organisation, and benefits the broader community. In addition, it looks at governance issues with strong relevance to place and country. Previous funding applications did not include an Indigenous sense of place and country in their project goals or key performance indicators (KPIs), so funding was often denied. This project will enable local communities and groups to explore these concepts that can be transferred to other projects and will be fully inclusive. As a result, the communities will have a clear framework for future planning, a fully inclusive model that can be transferred to other projects over several phases.

Three community workers received training and support to work within the community, holding yarning circles, deep cultural learning and connective art, so those with low literacy could participate equally. Approximately 30 adults participated in this process, with the project ending in early 2023.

QSA allocated \$45,000 to fund this company, and \$24,750 was provided this year.

### **Healing Our Way Together, Aldinga Beach, South Australia**

Led by Tod Stokes, this project aims to provide a social and emotional well-being therapeutic program in a narrative group format in a culturally appropriate way to support positive and strong cultural identity and connection. Indigenous families experiencing trauma are referred to the program by local agencies or self-refer. With substantial input from local Elders, small groups of men only and women only (to maintain privacy and cultural safety) discuss significant issues, including culture, violence and communications. Each participant has a pre-involvement interview, and a researcher will conduct an end-of-project assessment to provide learnings for similar work in future. Nine people completed the first course and provided positive feedback on the results. A second course is currently underway.

QSA provided \$20,000 to Healing Our Way Together this year.



## Refugees and Asylum Seekers

QSA and all Friends are concerned about the millions of refugees and asylum seekers fleeing persecution and harassment. This year, the war in Ukraine led to a new wave of refugees, and climate change continues to create refugees, particularly in vulnerable low-lying areas.

QSA has limited resources and capacity to support refugees and asylum seekers directly, so it provides financial support to better-placed organisations that offer tangible support. This year this included support for refugee families impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns, students who lost jobs during lockdowns, and asylum seekers in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. \$30,000 was provided to the Refugee Council of Australia, Settlement Services International, and the Asylum Seekers Centre.

## The Friend's School, Hobart

QSA provided modest funding and collaboration for the Young Migrant Education Program (YMEP) and Friend's School students. In May, at a 'Students Against Racism' workshop, students heard first-hand stories from migrants, which also raised awareness of the impact of language.

In August, they participated in a walking tour of Hobart led by Indigenous community members who shared the story of colonisation and its impact on First Nations people. The students also contributed their energy to removing noxious weeds to preserve indigenous flora.

One student commented on their experience:

This workshop demonstrated the heartbreaking truth about the colonisation of Tasmania and the mistreatment of the Aboriginal peoples. It has allowed me to better understand the history of Tasmania and further understand my own culture, as I am an Aboriginal.

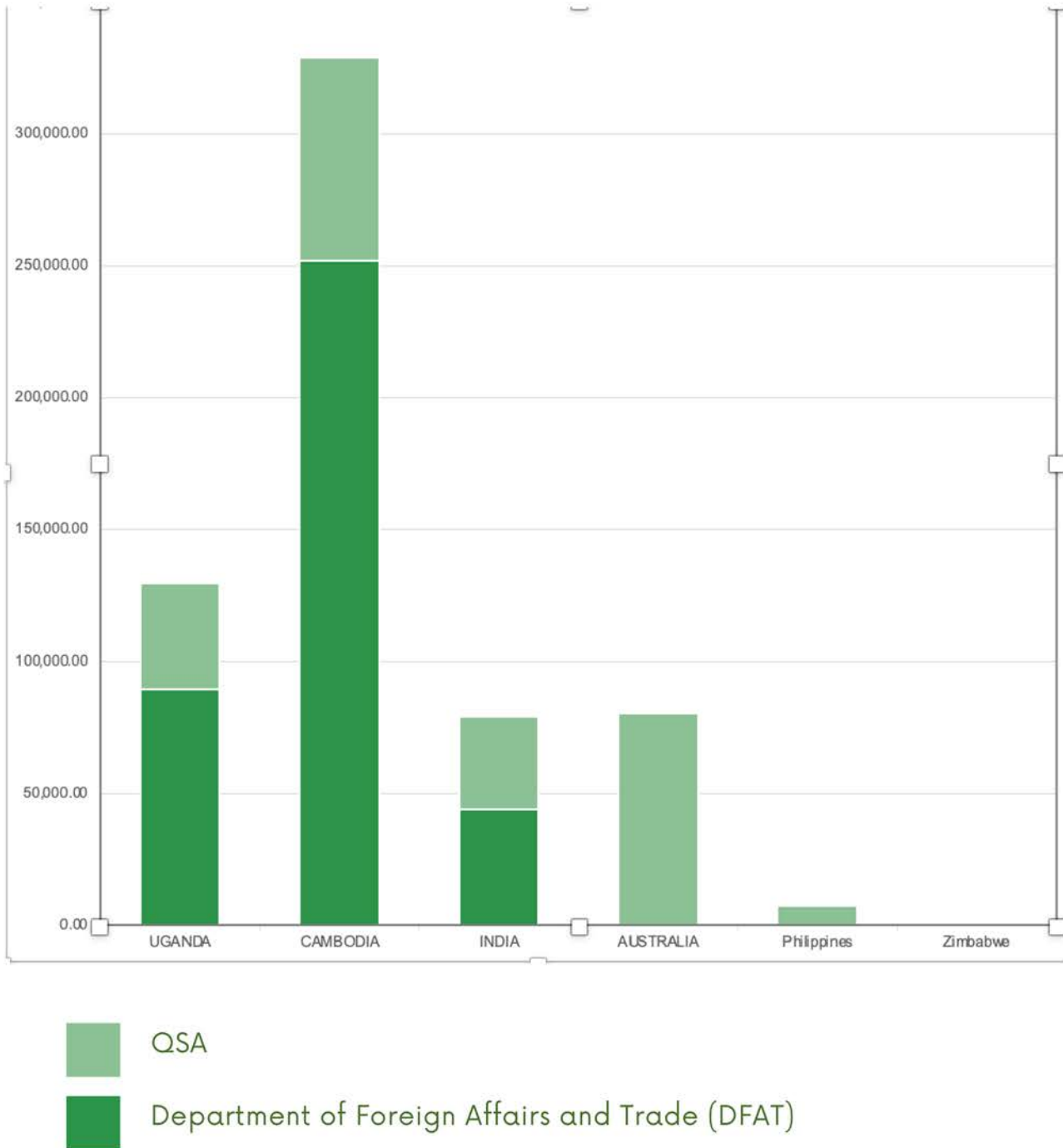


Young people participating in the Students against Racism workshop SOURCE: Friend's School



# Project statistics

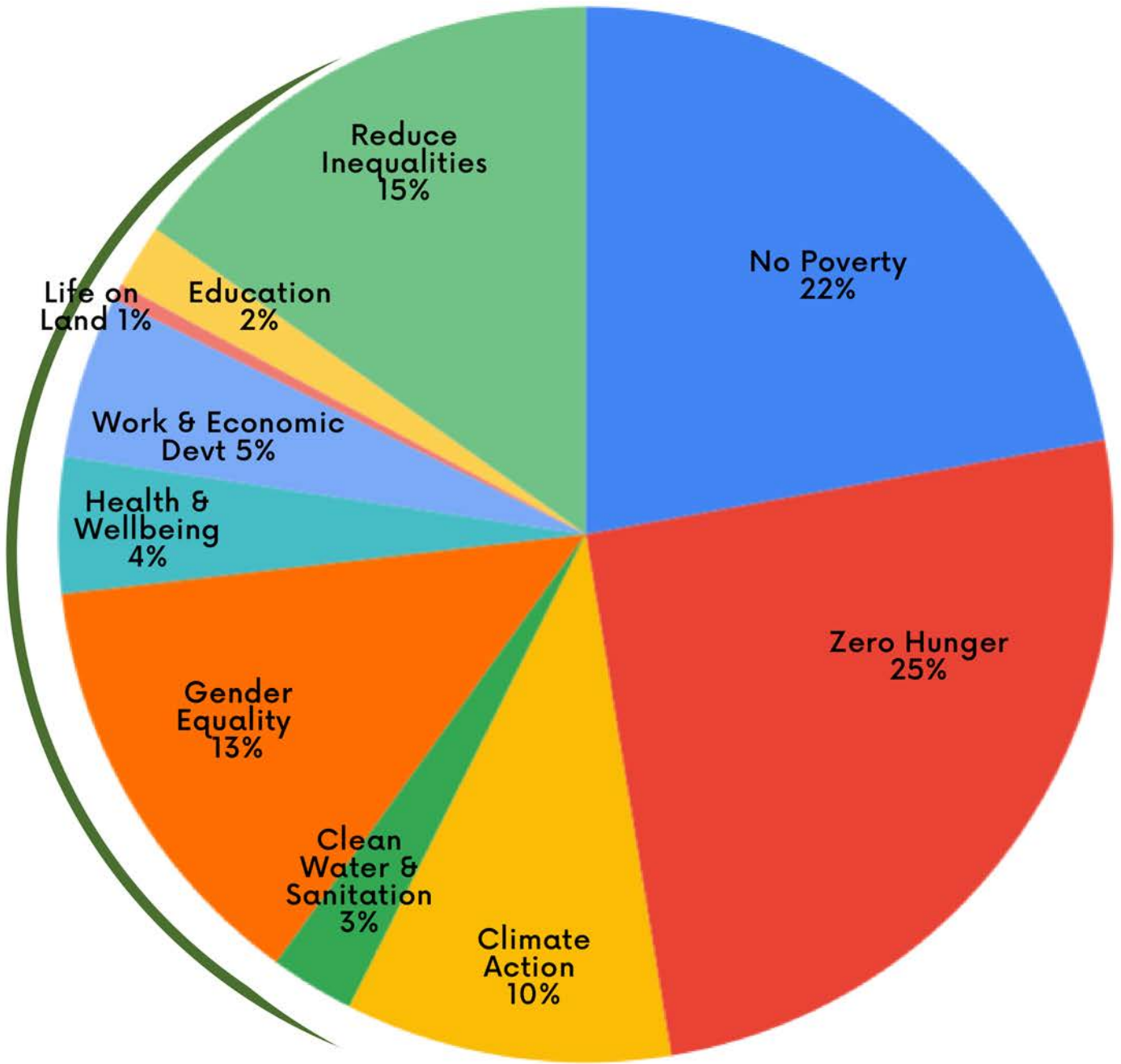
## Project expenditure by country and funding source



QSA supported international and domestic projects this year worth \$553,451. DFAT funded 81% of QSA's international project costs, a slight decrease compared with last year, and 75% of QSA's total project budget this year.



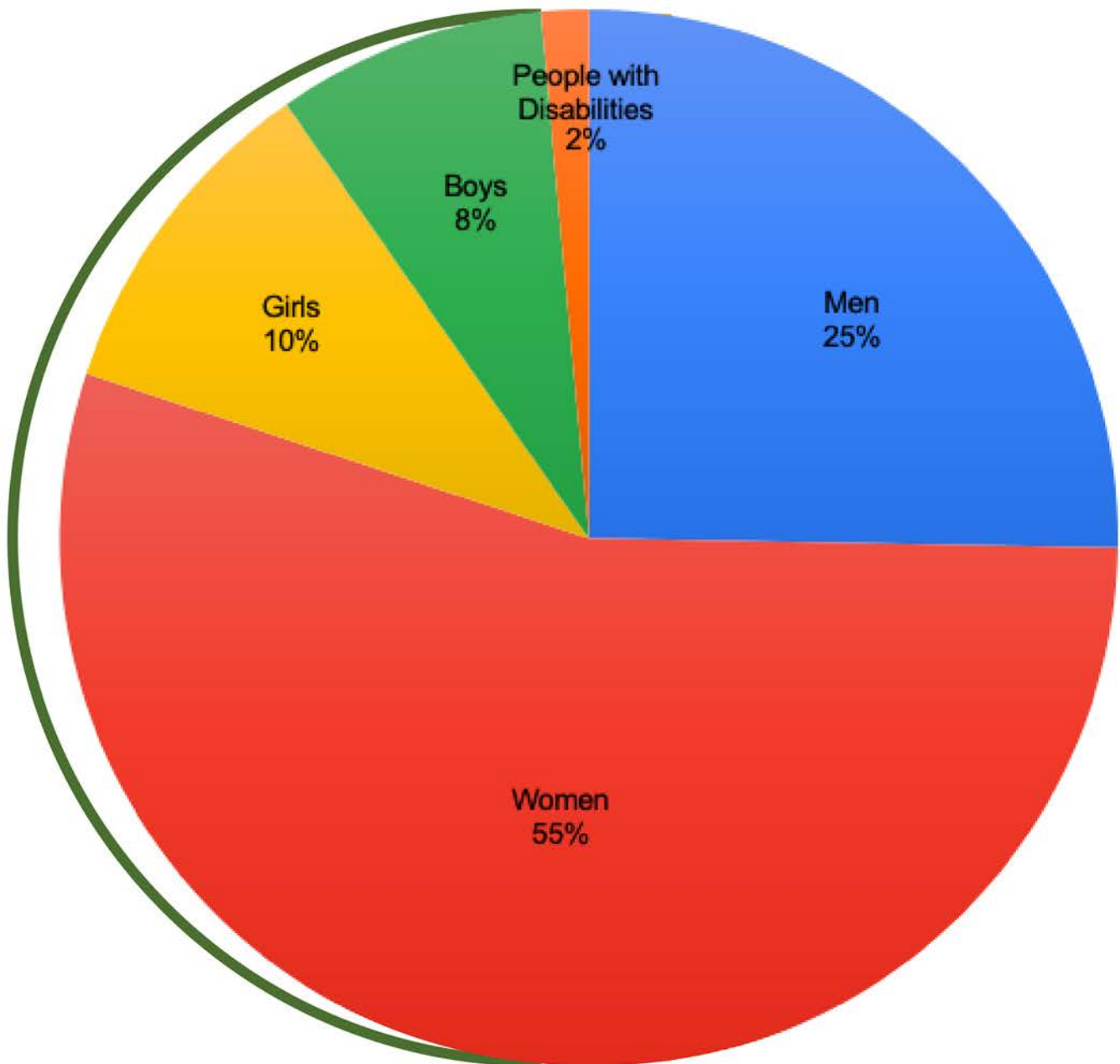
Project expenditure by activity  
(Sustainable Development Goals)



The above image shows the proportion of project spending by type of activity. It shows QSA's focus areas and the spread of funding across activities designed to achieve specific Sustainable Development Goals. It should be noted that all projects aim to achieve more than one Sustainable Development Goal.



## International project participants by gender, age and disability



The image shows project participants by gender, age and disability. 66% of participants were women and girls, and 18.6% were under 18.

The people living with a disability in the above graph includes men, women, boys, and girls, but this group made up less than 1.5% of total project participants.



# Due diligence

## Feedback and complaints

### Due Diligence

Due diligence and risk management are built into the QSA company, its organisational and operational processes, and each project and context. QSA engages rigorous procedures in managing its funds and projects to ensure transparency and accountability, prevent and deter fraud and misuse of funds (including non-development, political, religious and terrorist activity), and promote organisational effectiveness and efficiency for QSA and its partners.

QSA undertakes regular monitoring and assessments in line with its policies, ensuring that all decisions and transactions are conducted fairly, honestly, and transparently. In addition, annual audits of all projects provide sound financial management, and QSA continues to strengthen its systems and manage its residual risks.

### Feedback and complaints

Via its policy on Grievance Handling, Complaints, and Dispute Resolution, QSA strives to consider the rights of all concerned using open communication in a manner consistent with collaborative work practices and following Quaker teachings and ideals to resolve complaints, grievances and disputes.

As a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), QSA agrees to be bound by the association's independent, accessible, fair and confidential Code complaints handling process (more information below).



Meeting project participants with KCD staff during a monitoring visit in Kandal Province, Cambodia. SOURCE: QSA





The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct establishes standards of good practice in governance, program effectiveness, fundraising, and financial reporting to enhance its members' transparency and accountability.

QSA has been an ACFID member and a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct since 1996. Following its principles and values, the QSA Management Committee is committed to achieving the highest standard in every area of its work, recognising that handling complaints well is a critical way of learning what is needed to improve our work. More information can be obtained from QSA or directly from ACFID.

The QSA Management Committee affirms its commitment to be bound by the independent, accessible, fair and confidential ACFID Code of Conduct complaints handling process and promptly comply with reporting requirements, reasonable information requests and remedial or disciplinary actions recommended by the Code of Conduct Committee. Furthermore, QSA will monitor itself to ensure compliance with the Code and notify the Code of Conduct Committee if it becomes aware of significant transgressions by QSA or other signatory organisations.

QSA's adherence to the Code of Conduct demonstrates its commitment to ethical practice, public accountability, and supporting fellow ACFID members in pursuing their ideals and objectives.

QSA's Convenor is the contact person for receiving complaints:

convenor@qsa.org.au  
The Convenor, QSA  
Unit 14, 43-53 Bridge Road  
Stanmore, NSW 2048

For further information regarding the ACFID Code of Conduct or to make a direct complaint, contact the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee:

main@acfid.asn.au  
www.acfid.asn.au/contact-us  
(02) 6285 1816  
Code of Conduct Committee  
Private Bag 3, Deakin, ACT 2600



# Memberships and Accreditation

QSA is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), the peak body for Australian non-government aid and international development organisations and setting standards for good practice.

QSA maintains full accreditation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), working to reduce poverty in developing countries. Our policies, philosophies and practices align with ANCP's rigorous professional standards.

QSA is a member of the Church Agencies Network (CAN) group of church-based aid and development agency members of ACFID that provides for collaboration in advocacy, staff training and mentoring. Other CAN members: Act for Peace, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Anglican Board of Mission, Anglican Overseas Aid, Australian Lutheran World Service, Caritas Australia, Global Mission Partners, Salvation Army International Development, Baptist World Aid (Transform Aid), Uniting World, and Australia Christian Churches International Relief.

QSA maintains its status as a registered not-for-profit entity with a charitable purpose for public benefit under the Australian Charities & Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), the national regulator of charities.

QSA is also a member of the Refugee Council of Australia and the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network.



ACFID  
MEMBER



Asia Pacific  
Refugee Rights  
Network





# Company Members

Members of the Company of QSA serving from 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022, creating a network of Quakers around the country. A Management Committee (noted by \*) governs the QSA organisation and is located in Sydney.

## **Laurel Doel\*** NSW – Member

Brings to QSA extensive experience in adult education through work in prisons, Adult Migrant English Service, NSW TAFE and teacher training programs in the tertiary sector. Firmly believes education is transformative, particularly for those who have faced barriers to learning.

## **Therese Douglas\*** NSW – Member, Co-Convenor

Has extensive experience in running community-based development projects in Australia. She has served on numerous community development and management committees, including previously for QSA. With her family, she volunteered in Papua New Guinea for two years with Australian Volunteers Abroad.

## **Lesli Grant** WA – Member

Interest in development stems from a belief in social justice and the personal knowledge that everyone has skills they could develop and use to benefit their family, community, and country. Desires to support work restoring livelihood and empowering people to fend for themselves.

## **Mary Jane Hogan\*** NSW – Member

Retired teacher of English to adult migrants and international students with a strong adherence to social justice matters. Fifteen years as a freelance consultant in language assessment, managing test writing teams and delivering teacher professional development workshops.

## **Peter Jones** Tas – Member

An experienced speaker and writer on Quaker activities around the world. Has visited QSA programs in India, Africa, and Cambodia, as well as other aid agencies' projects in various countries.

## **Jo Jordan** SA & NT – Member

Brings extensive experience in worshipping with and serving her local and regional meetings. As manager of the Quaker Shop in Adelaide, offers a commitment to the continued support of QSA and its projects.





**Rae Litting\*** NSW – Member, Co-Convenor

Understanding of cross-cultural issues from professional and lived experience. Has published QSA material in the Australian Friend and served on numerous Quaker committees, including QSA Management Committee from 1999 – 2002.

**Dan Ong\*** NSW – Member, Treasurer

Experienced risk professional in the financial services industry and decision-maker in all areas of risk management. Strong leadership and mentoring capability.

**Pia Reiersen\*** NSW – Member

Extensive experience with humanitarian and development work (since 1992) and experience from management and board work.

**Martin Reusch\*** NSW – Member

Has lived and worked in the Middle East for extended periods. Has worked extensively with refugees and asylum seekers.

**Helen Webb** QLD – Member

A retired teacher in high schools and adults under ESL programs and literacy and numeracy training for job seekers. Has also lived and worked overseas teaching English to Chinese teachers of English.

**Bruce Henry** (Ex-officio)

Member – Presiding Clerk of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia Inc.

**Jacqueline Schultze** (Ex-officio)

Member – Secretary of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia Inc.

**Michael Morrissey** NSW – Public Officer, non-member

Experience in workplace health and safety (WH&S) management across various workplaces, including manufacturing, transport and government. Member of the Safety Institute of Australia with tertiary qualifications in business, human resources, WH&S, training and assessment.

**Jackie Perkins** NSW – Company Secretary, non-member

Masters of Social Science (International Development). Prior experience in administering a community centre, twelve years serving on the collective of women's health centre, fifteen years' experience as a medical herbalist. A part-time employee with QSA until 2004, employed full-time from 2004 as QSA's Executive Officer.



# The QSA Team



**Jackie Perkins**  
Executive Administrator  
Project Manager, Australia



**Fleur Bayley**  
Project Manager,  
Cambodia



**John Dundas**  
Finance, Treasurer  
(Volunteer)



**Ai Leen Qhan**  
Project Manager,  
Uganda, India



**Alis Middleton**  
Finance, Treasurer  
(Volunteer)





# Financial Summary

Donations received by QSA in FY2021-22 were 7.6% lower than in FY2020-21, mainly due to a decline in direct contributions from individuals in NSW and Tasmania. Conversely, individual donations from Queensland were 15.8% higher than the previous year. Donations from regional meetings increased compared with FY2020-21 but were still impacted by continuing pandemic restrictions and were still 70% lower than FY2019-20 donations and 80% lower than the FY2019-19 pre-pandemic year.

We're grateful to continue receiving funding from The Quaker Shop in Adelaide.

In FY2021-22, QSA continued to receive support from the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), with funding increasing by 1.9% over the previous year.

QSA posted a loss of \$275,000 in FY2021-22 compared with a \$65,000 surplus the previous year. Combined with the funding rollover and bequests received in FY2020-21, QSA expenditure on international projects was 41% higher. In addition, support for domestic projects increased significantly due to funds from bequests received in the previous year.

Administration and employee expenses were 20% lower this year.

The cash and cash equivalent balance at 30 September 2022 was \$1,090,000, compared with \$1,296,000 the previous year. Net Equity declined in the year to \$588,000, down from \$863,000 in FY 2120-21. QSA maintains adequate general reserves to cover exchange rate losses, staff annual leave and long service leave and to provide three months of expenditure in the event of winding up.

The following financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the ACFID Code of Conduct. For further information on the Code, please refer to the ACFID website at [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au)

A set of audited accounts is available on the QSA website at <https://www.qsa.org.au/about-us/annual-report>

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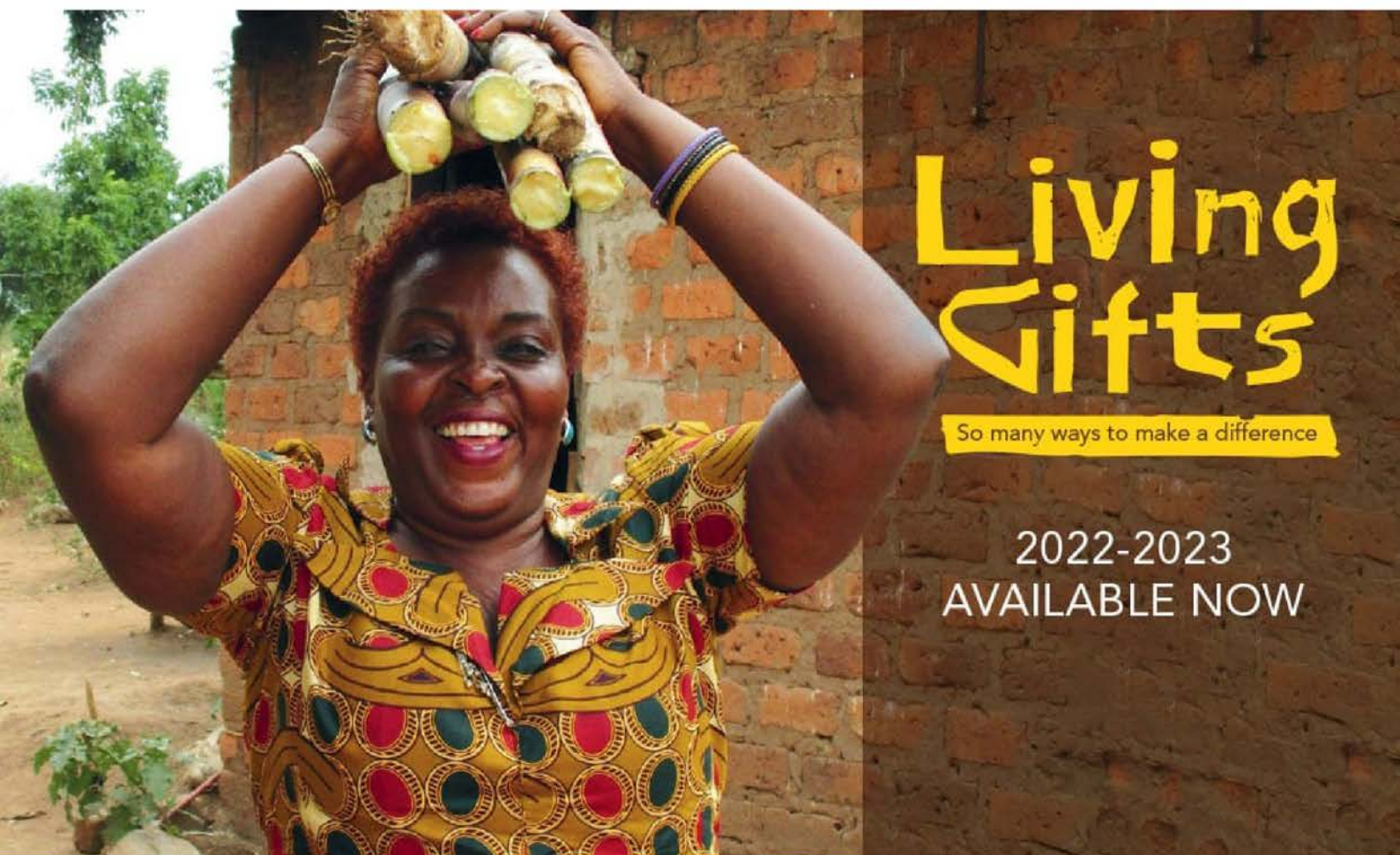


# Thank you

QSA is grateful to its supporters, volunteers and donors, without whom none of this work would be possible.

We also thank the incredible partners with whom we work who are passionate and dedicated to meeting the needs of their local communities.

If you would like more information about our work or if you would like to donate, please get in touch with the QSA office.



QSA's project partners have identified these gifts as the most meaningful to improve the quality of life for the communities with whom they work. These gifts help communities in Cambodia, Uganda and India are economically and environmentally appropriate and sustainable ways of gifting.

Please select a gift and purchase from our online shop.

[www.qsa.org.au/living-gifts](http://www.qsa.org.au/living-gifts)





**Quaker Service Australia Ltd**

**[www.qsa.org.au](http://www.qsa.org.au)**

**ACN 618 346 839 • ABN 35 989 797 918**

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