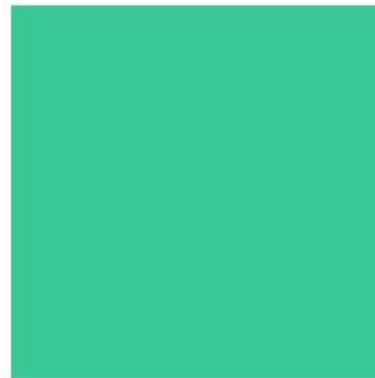
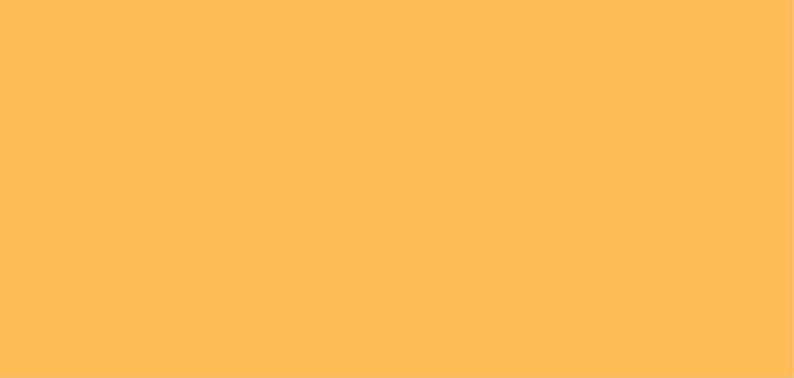


# Annual Report



1 October 2022 - 30 September 2023





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

This report was presented at the QSA Annual General Meeting on 17 February 2024. All financial figures in this report are expressed in Australian dollars.

While the audited Financial Report that forms part of this report covers the QSA financial year, 1 October 2022 to September 2023, the figures included in the narrative project reports generally cover the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 as this is the reporting year for Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Australian NGO Cooperation Program.



# Contents

Message from the Co-Convenors	4
Statement of Purpose and Quaker Testimonies	6
Our Reach	7
Where we Work, Why and How	8
Message from the Executive Manager	9
International Development	10
International Projects	
Cambodia	12
India	17
Bangladesh	19
The Philippines	19
Uganda	20
Afghanistan/Portugal	22
Australia	
Refugees and asylum seekers	22
FEATURE: Peacebuilding in Cambodia	23
Program Statistics	
Program expenditure by country	25
Participants by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)	26
Project participants by activity	27
Organisation information	
Due diligence	28
Feedback and complaints	28
ACFID Code of Conduct	29
Memberships and accreditation	30
Management Committee	31
The QSA team	32
Financial Highlights	33



# Message from the Co-Convenors



Since our last report, we've seen another year of significant change for QSA. After farewelling Jackie Perkins as Executive Administrator and John Dundas as Finance Officer, we welcomed Pia Reiersen as the new Executive Administrator and Niraj Shah as the new Finance Officer in early 2023. Pia, Niraj and staff members Ai Leen, Fleur, and Alis worked tirelessly to incorporate many changes in the management and day-to-day running of QSA.

These changes included closing the office in Stanmore and moving all paper records to the new mini office at the Wahroonga Meeting House, establishing a part-time office in the WeWork offices in Sydney, migrating accounts to Xero and reviewing the electronic documentation systems.

Unfortunately, for family reasons, Pia will leave QSA in October 2023. In a very short time, Pia gave so much energy and vision to QSA as a previous member of the Management Committee and, most recently, as the Executive Administrator.

This year, we also welcomed two new members to the QSA Management Committee: Aletia Dundas and Paul Carter, who are already enhancing their capacity.

Travel has become more accessible this year. Joss Brooks from Pitchandikulam in India has visited Quaker Meetings in Hobart and Sydney, and his presentations regarding the QSA-funded project were welcomed.

What has not changed is QSA's commitment to empowerment by spreading peace through support and knowledge to overcome unequal access to food and water security. The Aubrey Bequest QSA has assisted Afghan refugees in resettling in communities practising permaculture in Portugal and assisted asylum seekers on Manus Island awaiting resettlement. The Jan De Voogd Peace Fund has funded ongoing peacebuilding activities in Cambodia under the auspices of QSA, and a bequest from the late Pamela Mary Oliver-Padgham enabled QSA to provide much-needed vehicles to three project partners.

All our work is supporting local community initiatives to improve living standards. The QSA Management Committee continues to review its terms of reference and guidelines for its various funds, always informed by the Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community and Equality.

Thank you for the ongoing support for QSA shown through the talent, time and treasure of the many committed volunteers and staff who truly reflect the "service" of Quaker Service Australia.

Once again, we are humbled to receive donations from the tireless work of volunteers across Australia. The Quaker Shop in Adelaide has continued to be a significant donor, and QSA has again been named in a bequest.

Therese Douglas and Rae Litting

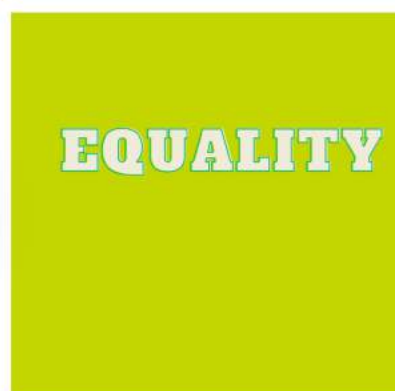


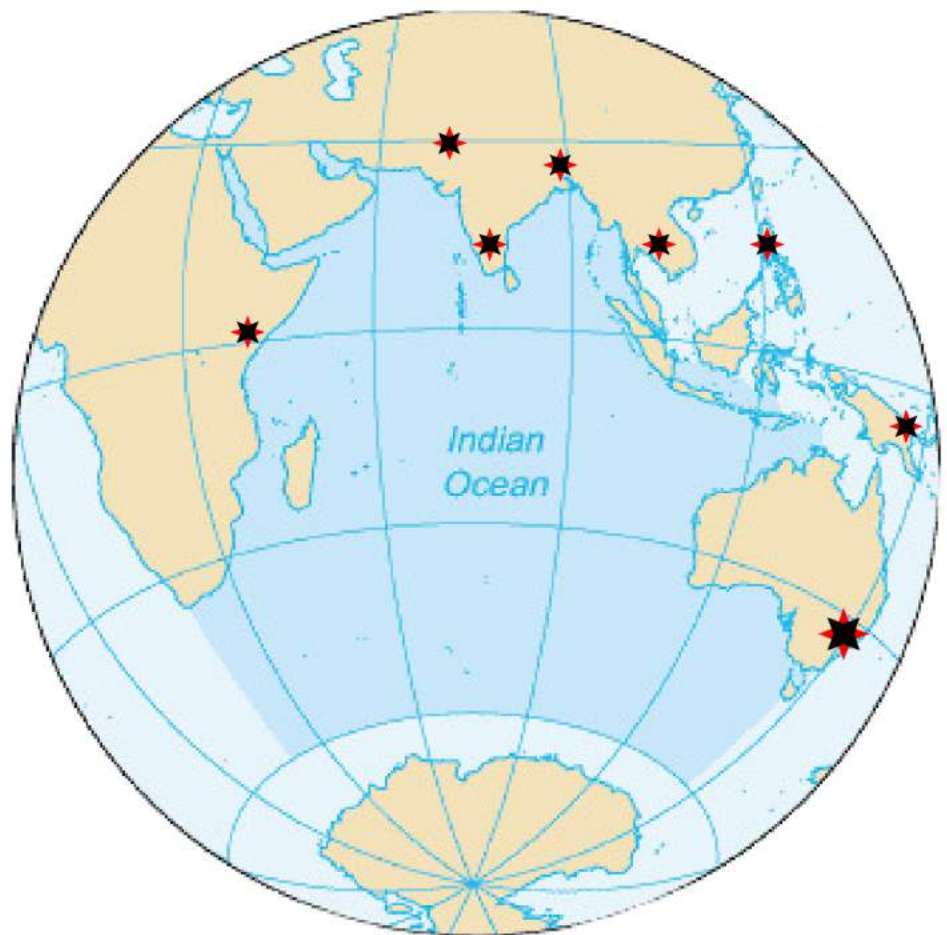


# Statement of Purpose and Quaker Testimonies

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.





## Our Reach

QSA worked with partners to support twelve development activities in Uganda, India, the Philippines, Cambodia, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan and two refugee and asylum projects in Australia. Together, our achievements included:

- Over 290 smallholder farmers and their rural households in Uganda have enough food (3+ meals) to eat every day following two years of hard work improving their land management practices with climate-resilient agriculture.
- 17 Afghan peace activists were supported to resettle in Portugal, learning practical permaculture skills and receiving language, eco-social, cultural, legal, financial, personal, and professional training to promote a successful integration.
- A new business unit (the Enterprise Project) established in Pursat Cambodia will implement systems and practices that can be used in the broader handicrafts organisation to achieve self-sufficiency.
- More than 50 women in Tamil Nadu (India) improved family health and income through entrepreneurship training and learning about collecting and processing indigenous herbs for traditional medicines.



# Where we Work, Why and How

QSA was established 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 supports community-initiated projects and partners with largely local, secular, rural, and civil society organisations, led chiefly by personnel who are indigenous to the communities where they work.

QSA's relationships with partners are informed and guided by Quaker teachings that espouse equality as one of its fundamental principles. QSA's approach is consultative and inclusive. We play a role in project design, ensuring that community members are actively involved and activities are appropriate to their needs, interests, and situations.

Project participants across QSA's work are predominantly women, with many initiatives aimed at women's empowerment, including encouragement and support for involvement, coordination, and leadership in groups and at community levels.

Evaluations are a crucial feature of QSA's project management. They provide data and a window into why and how our programs achieve their goals and help to ensure our limited resources have the intended impact.

Under the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Australian NGO Cooperation Program, QSA must regularly evaluate projects. Also, as a member of the Australian Council for International Development, QSA commits to "...invest in quality assessment of their work and to reflect, share and apply the results and lessons of our work with others."

However, the main reason is that 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.

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





# Message from the Executive Manager

This year has seen a growth in support for our projects of 17% from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Australian NGO Cooperation program (ANCP). This rise flows from the Federal Government's increase of Australia's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment announced in the 2022-2023 budget. These additional funds have enabled QSA to increase support for our partners and expand our reach.



In 2021–2022, 11,352 people directly participated in our projects, an increase of 250% from the previous year. The cohort seeing the largest growth is children and young people. During this year, 6,484 children and young people benefited from our programs, up from 847 the previous year. These young people are engaged in projects around peacebuilding, environmental education, sustainable agriculture, food security, and education and empowerment on child rights.

However, there is more to do. One area where we have seen a decline in participation was for people living with disabilities. Here we saw a drop in participation from approximately 1.5% to 0.45%. This is a statistical drop due to the increase in participant numbers, but it is still of concern. Increasing the involvement of people living with disabilities is something we will continue to work on with our partners as appropriate.

In our last annual reporting period, COVID-19 was still affecting how QSA and our partners worked. While the direct health impacts of COVID-19 have now decreased in most international locations, our project partners continue to work with communities for whom the economic impact is still very apparent. Lacking formal support structures, many families need help to recover from income loss caused by the pandemic. We expect that the pandemic will continue to inform our work and projects over the next few years.

Like many other organisations, QSA faces the challenge of a declining supporter base. We continue to be supported by the Quaker community through the Quaker shop in Adelaide, individual donors and through bequests. This support is vital for QSA to continue its work in building and empowering communities to meet the challenges of poverty, hunger, climate change and inequality. We thank the Quaker shop and the community for their generous and continuing support.

## Cressida Hall

\* Cressida is the current QSA Executive Manager. She started working with QSA after the end of this reporting period.



# 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.

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.

Smallholder agriculture is key to reducing the poverty and hunger that persists in rural parts of many nations. Women are to smallholder farming as farming is to rural economies: female farmers are the mainstay of rural livelihoods, 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 also provided a small amount of funds to a water project in The Philippines, a permaculture activity in Bangladesh, and projects to assist in the resettlement of Afghan refugees in Portugal and asylum seekers on Manus Island.

QSA acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). In 2023/24, six of QSA's international projects were delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program.

QSA allocated \$153,102 to six ANCP projects from 1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023, while the Australian Government (via ANCP) funded \$449,736.

10,339 people participated directly in these projects, including 5,498 children and young people. 57% of the participants were women and girls, and 0.45% were people living with a disability.



# Cambodia

## Khmer Community Development (KCD), Kandal Province

During this three-year project, KCD provided training and helped people in target communities identify their priority needs and implement successful projects to meet them in areas including nutrition and agriculture (including home gardens and livestock), gender role sharing, income generation, and improved natural environment.

Additional government funds allocated in January funded two successful pilot projects that led to significantly greater participant numbers and new activities included in a new three-year project commencing in July 2023.

KCD secured cooperation with education authorities to promote environmental education through schools, developed curricula, prepared teaching resources, ran workshops with teachers, and conducted environmental education sessions with 1,052 primary and secondary students.

KCD identified that it needed to enhance the strategic approach to gender within its community development work but recognised that it needed to speak with women to learn about their situations and gather ideas to empower them to change and improve their lives. KCD conducted a workshop involving 20 women, using Forum Theatre techniques to collect information about issues for these women and to produce stories for future gender-related performances. The participative, non-confrontational approach enabled women to discuss their situations and develop practical solutions openly.

Based on this workshop, KCD prepared a performance used in presentations to local authorities and men and women in target communities. A vital feature of this approach is the involvement of men. KCD works with local authorities, including police, district government officials and education directors, to help them promote gender equality in the community.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$95,007) and QSA (\$35,668), involved 1,819 participants (978 women and girls), and included 20 people living with disabilities.







## Bunrany Hun Sen Development Center (BRHS), Pursat Province

BRHS Center provides handicraft training for rural women, a production facility and commercial outlet, and assistance for farmers to increase and diversify their incomes.

Handicraft sales recovered after COVID-19, but marketing and sales are ongoing challenges. The Centre needs to make changes to ensure its survival, and the aim is now to build capabilities and support the transition to a more commercial, self-sufficient organisation.

The number of handicraft trainees this year was lower than planned. It was decided that some skills were not sufficiently in demand for the Center and the community, so the proposed training was postponed.

Additional funds provided by the government in January 2023 were allocated to implement a business plan to enable the Center to become self-sufficient by 2026. A business consultant worked with Center management to prepare a detailed operations and business plan to be implemented in 2023/24.

A vital element of this plan is a new, more commercial business unit (known as the Enterprise Project) that will establish systems and practices that can be implemented across the organisation to achieve self-sufficiency. Work has started recruiting new operations and production staff and identifying new product lines.

This project was delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), with QSA contributing \$6,068 and ANCP \$87,229 from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. It involved 64 participants, including 53 women and girls.



## Department of Women's Affairs (DWAK), Kampong Thom Province

This project addresses food and water security and enhanced livelihoods for rural families, particularly women. It focuses on health, hygiene, and sanitation, including providing tanks or materials for constructing wells and toilets.

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. A further sixty farmers trained in 2021/22 received refresher training and support.

An evaluation was conducted to assess if the project has improved the empowerment of women who participate. "Evidence demonstrates that the project has made and continues to significantly impact participants' lives in their financial situation and lifestyles. However, the changes go further, affecting family power dynamics and how women see and enjoy their lives. Evidence also shows that the program has a broader social impact, improving community-based partnerships and relationships."

With additional government funds allocated in January 2023, 35 additional project participants were provided with water tanks or the materials and training to construct pump wells to provide water for household use and irrigation.

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

This project was delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), with QSA contributing \$25,396 and ANCP \$72,470. It involved 299 participants (219 women).





## Department of Women's Affairs (DWAP), Pursat Province

Permaculture training and basic equipment enabled 80 rural women to establish home gardens, achieve food and water security year-round, and improve family health and nutrition. Techniques including composting, water-saving, irrigation, crop selection and food storage enabled farmers to reduce the impact of climate change in flood-prone areas. Following business training, they generated income from selling surplus produce.

Female commune and village leaders gained new knowledge about equity and inclusiveness, climate change prevention, and child protection and shared this information in workshops with 10,572 community members (8,155 women). They were more confident and could intervene in domestic violence, migration, and child harm incidents.

Following training, commune kindergarten teachers worked with 3,044 parents (2,694 women) on child rights, child protection, and positive parenting.

This project does not have a specific climate objective, but by implementing permaculture techniques and small business skills, participants can increase food security and reduce the impact of climate change. The farmers are encouraged to grow trees around their houses to reduce heat and dust and provide food.

This project was delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), with QSA contributing \$29,268 and ANCP \$54,291. It involved 368 participants (351 women and girls).

In addition, with funds from the Oliver-Padgham bequest, QSA purchased a 4WD vehicle for DWAP, which is a great asset when visiting remote villages, particularly during the wet season.



## Peacebuilding, Kampong Chhnang Province

In conjunction with KCD, QSA secured funding in early 2022 from the Jan de Voogd Peace Fund for a two-year peacebuilding project in Cambodia to promote peace in ethnically diverse communities characterised by inter-ethnic distrust, resentment, and discrimination.

The project focuses on teaching Khmer language skills to ethnic Vietnamese children and young people, many of whom had not previously attended school and could not speak Khmer. Various sporting and other activities encourage interaction and collaboration between Vietnamese and Khmer children and communities.

During October - December 2022, severe flooding impacted the project. Activities were postponed avoiding risks associated with children travelling along flood-affected waterways and roads. Some project activities in May and June 2023 were also halted when restrictions on travel and meetings were imposed in the lead-up to national elections.

KCD conducted courses on child rights to children and young people and parents, arranged meetings with Vietnamese leaders and communities to understand and define the key issues KCD needs to work on and engaged a consultant to prepare materials and provide training to improve the professional skills of schoolteachers in informal and public schools. Five key persons were appointed to promote engagement with the communities, and they were trained in child rights, child protection and safeguarding.

QSA funds this two-year project from the Jan de Voogd bequest. From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, QSA contributed \$57,274 to the in-county project costs. The 659 project participants included 388 children and young people (200 girls) and 266 parents (171 women).







# India

## Pitchandikulam Bio Resource Centre, Tamil Nadu

This was the second year of a two-year project that started in July 2022, supporting the Nadukuppam community via the Nadukuppam Panchayat Development Planning Committee (PDPC) and addressing the community's expressed needs. In addition, a new Village Knowledge Centre, working through the PDPC, conducted a survey to collect information from within the region and provide a firm foundation for future project activities. 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 PDPC and Village Knowledge Centre.

There's been significant progress in environmental education, health interventions and ecological surveys. Data collected through surveys and studies were converted into beautiful posters, teaching materials, website creation, eco geographical maps, and updated PowerPoint presentations that were available and displayed in the Knowledge Centre. It's now been proposed that the Knowledge Center be showcased/extended in the main school of Nadukuppam and the village centre.

The Environment Education program organised educational activities for several secondary and middle schools. Sessions included students' vegetable gardening, a forest visit, archaeology sessions, snake identification, forest awareness (video show), a Villu Paatu (an ancient form of musical storytelling performed in Southern India) street play and puppet training, and waste material reuse training. An eco-camp was also organised at Pothur Nanneer Lake (one of the lakes restored in Pitchandikulam Forest at Chennai).

This project was delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), with QSA contributing \$25,355 and ANCP \$49,925. 6,066 people directly participated, 56% of whom were women and girls.

With funds received from the Oliver-Padgham bequest, QSA also purchased an electric vehicle for PBRC. Such a purchase would not have been possible within normal project budgets.

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

This two-year project commenced in April 2022 to alleviate poverty, provide food and water security and preserve environmental sustainability and biodiversity. It provides one hundred female Dalit community members from five villages with training to establish kitchen food gardens and enhance household nutrition. Results show that the overall health of families has improved, and the sale of surplus produce has enabled families to supplement their incomes.

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

## Vasandham Society, Tamil Nadu

This project aims to reduce the environmental impact of agricultural methods and encourage the growth of traditional grain crops and animals to reduce the impact of climate change. A further component is propagating and replanting native trees in deforested areas.

From July to August 2022, QSA transferred \$31,274 to the project. However, Vasandham Society was impacted by a decision by the Indian Government not to renew the licenses of some civil society organisations, which resulted in them being unable to accept international donations.

Funds received from QSA have now been frozen, and the project has effectively been stopped pending an appeal against the decision.







# Bangladesh

## Permaculture guide for refugees

QSA contributed \$6,765 to the Bangladesh Association for Sustainable Development for translating and printing Rowe Morrow's book *Earth Restorer's Guide to Permaculture*. The publication is used to facilitate agriculture training for refugee communities in Bangladesh.

# The Philippines

## Abundant Water, Bohol

Friends World Committee for Consultation, Asia-West Pacific Section, initiated this project based on learnings from earlier Abundant Water projects in Laos and Timor Leste. It offers training in using ceramic water filters to provide safe, affordable household drinking water. Local sourcing of reliable, good-quality ceramic filters is critical, and this project trains community educators to inform the community on the safe use of ceramic water filters.

In recent years, typhoons have affected this region, leaving communities without power, potable water, and food. Having the means to create safe drinking water without electricity is critical to communities in this region.

For the second year, QSA allocated \$7,500 for this project.

# Uganda

## St Jude Family Projects, Greater Masaka

Long-term QSA project partner St Jude Family Projects, along with 365 farmers organised in nine farmer groups from Rakai, Lwengo and Kalungu Districts, have been able to celebrate their hard-earned successes from two years of integrating sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture into their land management practices.

Improved soil fertility, rainwater harvesting, and organic pest control have contributed to almost 300 farmers and their households more than doubling their farm output (over the two years) to the point that they have enough to eat daily. To help with food security across the year and over the longer term, St Jude has supported farmers with crop diversification, sourcing quality inputs, including a variety of revived banana crops and working together to trial improved seed-saving methods.

In addition to increasing the quantity and quality of their farm produce, many majority-women farmers have almost tripled their households' savings. The skills and knowledge gained by farmers from the project have extended into post-harvest handling and value-addition, resulting in further income and reduced spending on food and farm inputs.

Seven large underground water tanks were constructed during the year to serve 42 households. This initiative was recommended in the most recent 6-year evaluation and was enabled through additional ANCP funding.

This project was delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), with QSA contributing \$31,347 and ANCP \$91,725. 1,723 people directly (913 women and girls) and included 13 people living with disabilities.

QSA also provided a 4WD vehicle for this project, using funds from the Oliver-Padgham bequest. This is a great asset for the project partner, enabling safe travel to remote locations with poor roads. Such a vehicle could not be funded within the normal project budget.







## Dream Farm, Kyakabunga, Kiruhura

In rural western Uganda, a small and remote community-based NGO, Dream Farm Kyakabunga, has concluded its first three-year project. A key focus of the project has been building the institutional capacity of the 5-year-old organisation, which is now better equipped in terms of staff and operations, with an orientation to serve and support the members of its community experiencing food insecurity.

St Jude Family Projects and QSA have continued supporting Dream Farm through ongoing monitoring visits and mentoring in project and organisational management, sustainable agricultural training, and participatory methods, and implementing a 'mini project' that has strengthened food and income security for 20 women and their families. Most farmers have successfully improved their agricultural practices with low-cost methods and minimal additional inputs.

From project start to close, project participants and their households have increased their food security from an average of one to three meals a day due to improved land productivity and soil and water conservation. Surplus and diversified farm produce, such as onions, beetroot, and cabbage, has also enabled the farmers to earn up to \$100 additional income per month.

QSA fully funds this project, and \$9,191 was provided this year. Fifty people (28 women and 14 people living with disabilities) learned a range of horticulture skills to increase productivity and reduce the ecological damage of farming practices.

# Afghanistan/Portugal

## Afghan refugee resettlement in Portugal

This project, which commenced in December 2022, relocated Afghan refugees from Pakistan to Portugal and supported them to establish lives in their new country. Following the fall of Kabul, an international team of peace activists and permaculturalists began seeking a place of safety for a group of Afghan peace workers whose lives were in danger. After fleeing to Pakistan, the 17 young peace workers waited patiently for a year and a half to receive a visa that would allow them to reach a place of safety.

In December 2022, they received visas for Portugal to join an agro-environmental group in Mértola working to meet the region's desertification and depopulation challenges. The group arrived in Portugal in February 2023, where they were supported with housing, food, and educational opportunities. The group participates in a 'hands-on' permaculture program to restore the land, learn practical skills, learn a new language, and receive eco-social, cultural, legal, financial, personal, and professional training and support to promote a successful integration.

Through Permaculture for Refugees, QSA provided \$49,858 for this project using funds from the Aubrey bequest.

# Australia

## Refugees and Asylum Seekers

QSA and all Friends are concerned about the millions of refugees and asylum seekers fleeing persecution and harassment. With limited resources and capacity to directly support refugees and asylum seekers, QSA provides financial support to better-placed organisations offering tangible support.

This year, QSA provided funds from the Aubrey bequest to Manus Lives Matter (\$25,000) to provide emotional and practical support for refugee families impacted by the Australian Government's offshore asylum processing. In addition, \$30,000 from the endowment was allocated to the Queensland Regional Meeting of Quakers to set up a loan fund to meet the travel costs of refugees seeking to bring sponsored relatives to Australia from central and eastern Africa.





# Feature



## Peacebuilding in Cambodia: Reducing inter-ethnic conflict and building connections

This project was designed to reduce conflict and strengthen collaboration in ethnically diverse Cambodian communities in Kampong Chhnang province, Cambodia. After 18 months, it is achieving encouraging results. Focused on language skills and education, it aims to enhance community relations and provide learning opportunities for children and youth to improve their prospects.

With its implementing partner, Khmer Community Development (KCD), QSA successfully applied for funding from the Jan de Voogd Peace Fund. A Quaker Peace activist, Jan left his estate to be spent on projects fostering peace and social justice.

### **Background to the problem - the situation of ethnic Vietnamese**

Most of the Cambodian population is ethnic Khmer. Still, up to 10 per cent are ethnic Vietnamese who are vulnerable and disadvantaged, denied citizenship and the right to own land, and without access to services like education and healthcare. Considered migrants, despite living in the country for many generations, this community experiences significant discrimination and deep-seated historical resentment.

Ethnic Vietnamese are concentrated on lakes and waterways where they fish and live on or near the water. In the poor Kampong Chhnang fisher communities, anti-Vietnamese attitudes are a latent issue that quickly surfaces if adverse circumstances arise. Khmer people have little awareness or empathy regarding the existential concerns of ethnic Vietnamese, and ethnic Vietnamese keep a low profile to avoid being targeted. This results in fragmented communities where escalation is possible at any time, and neither Khmer nor Vietnamese openly speak about this latent conflict.

### **Elements of the project**

It is politically difficult to talk about peacebuilding in Cambodia concerning ethnic Vietnamese, so this project focuses on education, particularly language skills, as a vehicle to build collaboration and reduce conflict. There are two elements:

#### **Getting communities together**

This project includes events and activities to promote understanding and bring the communities together to achieve inclusive community development and improve social cohesion and advocacy.

Children and parents/guardians receive awareness training in child rights and non-discrimination. In addition, the different ethnic groups are involved in workshops designed to encourage them to collaborate to address their community's needs. In addition to formal workshops, activities and events are organised so the communities can meet.

## **A shared language**

This project provides ethnic Vietnamese children with the language skills they need to overcome many of their current disadvantages and provides opportunities for children from different ethnic groups to work and play together. KCD has demonstrated how language skills training can promote inter-ethnic peace in other locations. Shared language is a critical prerequisite for promoting understanding between these diverse ethnic communities and enhancing the life opportunities for ethnic Vietnamese children excluded from school and employment.

Two hundred ethnic Vietnamese children from four schools joined Khmer language and life skills classes and activities designed to increase attendance, reduce dropout rates, and improve life opportunities. New Peace Clubs and Children's Councils enable children and young people from ethnic communities to learn and explore social and life skills together. In a series of workshops, 100 Khmer and Vietnamese children and young people will collectively discuss visions for their communities.

## **The project so far**

Initially, the project focused on identifying key representatives in each community, activities to support schools, starting Khmer language classes, and preparing Khmer language resources for ethnic Vietnamese. Training in child rights was also provided to 400 children and adults in both communities.

With the start of Khmer language classes, most Vietnamese children are learning Khmer for the first time. In addition, more children attend school after the child rights training, and school directors say some new parents have enrolled children.

The project area suffered severe flooding in October 2022, with Vietnamese families the worst affected. Many lost their houses. However, they have yet to receive support from local authorities. As a result, project activities were postponed, avoiding risks to children. Since then, some adults had difficulties participating due to their focus on rebuilding houses and businesses following the floods and the ongoing impact of COVID-19.

A two-year project is very short when working with different ethnic communities, but KCD is confident of achieving good results. They are already working to secure another donor to help support ongoing work in these communities.

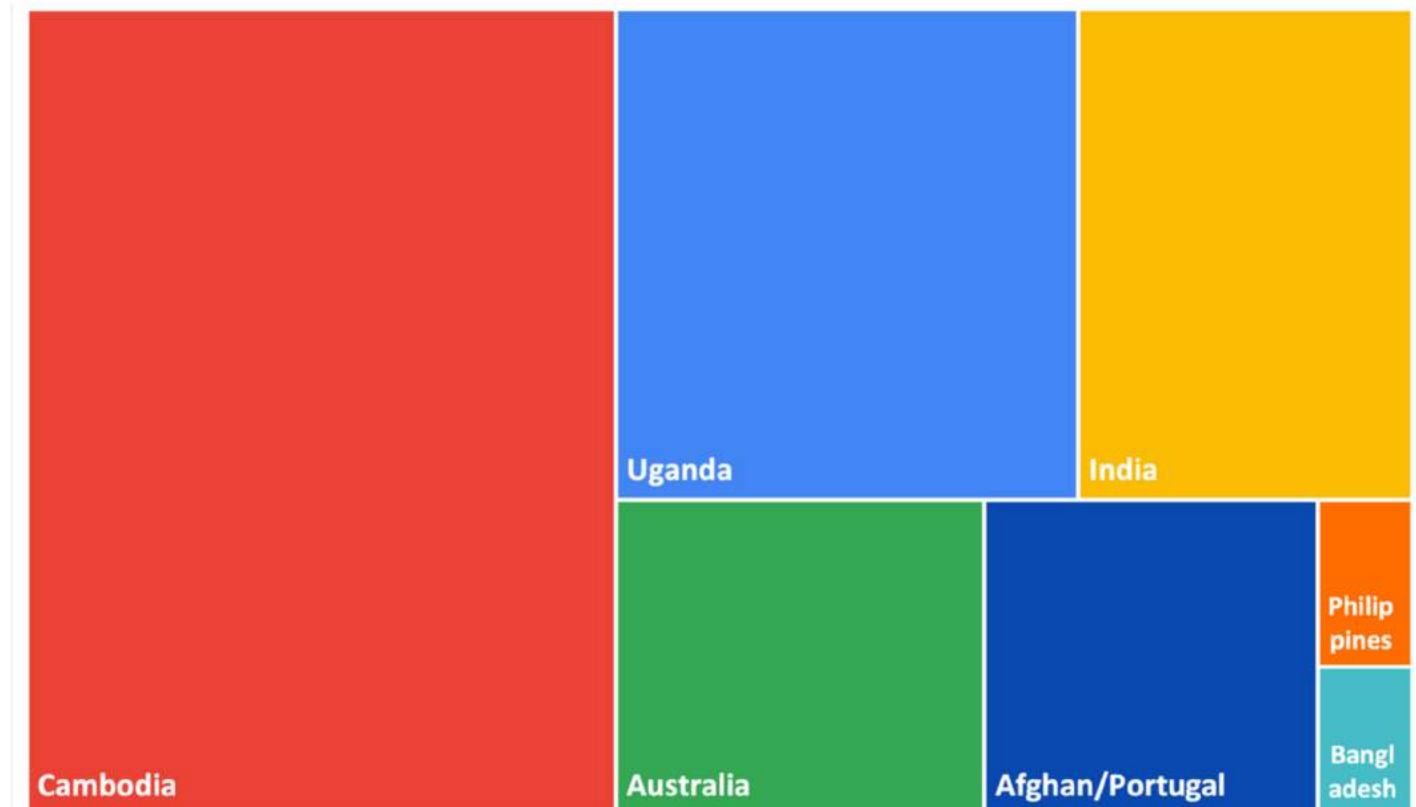




# Program Statistics

The following graphs are provided to help illustrate the nature of QSA's activities, including its geographic reach, the nature of its activities and details of participants. In some instances, data from different time periods has been amalgamated due to the differing periods covered by the ANCP project reporting years (1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023) and the QSA financial year (1 October 2022 - 30 September 2023).

## QSA project expenditure by country



With five projects, Cambodia was the largest region for QSA project spending, accounting for one-quarter of QSA's total project expenditure. Most funds are allocated directly to international projects and activities, with the remainder channelled through Australian-based organisations to overseas locations.

Uganda

11%

Cambodia

25%

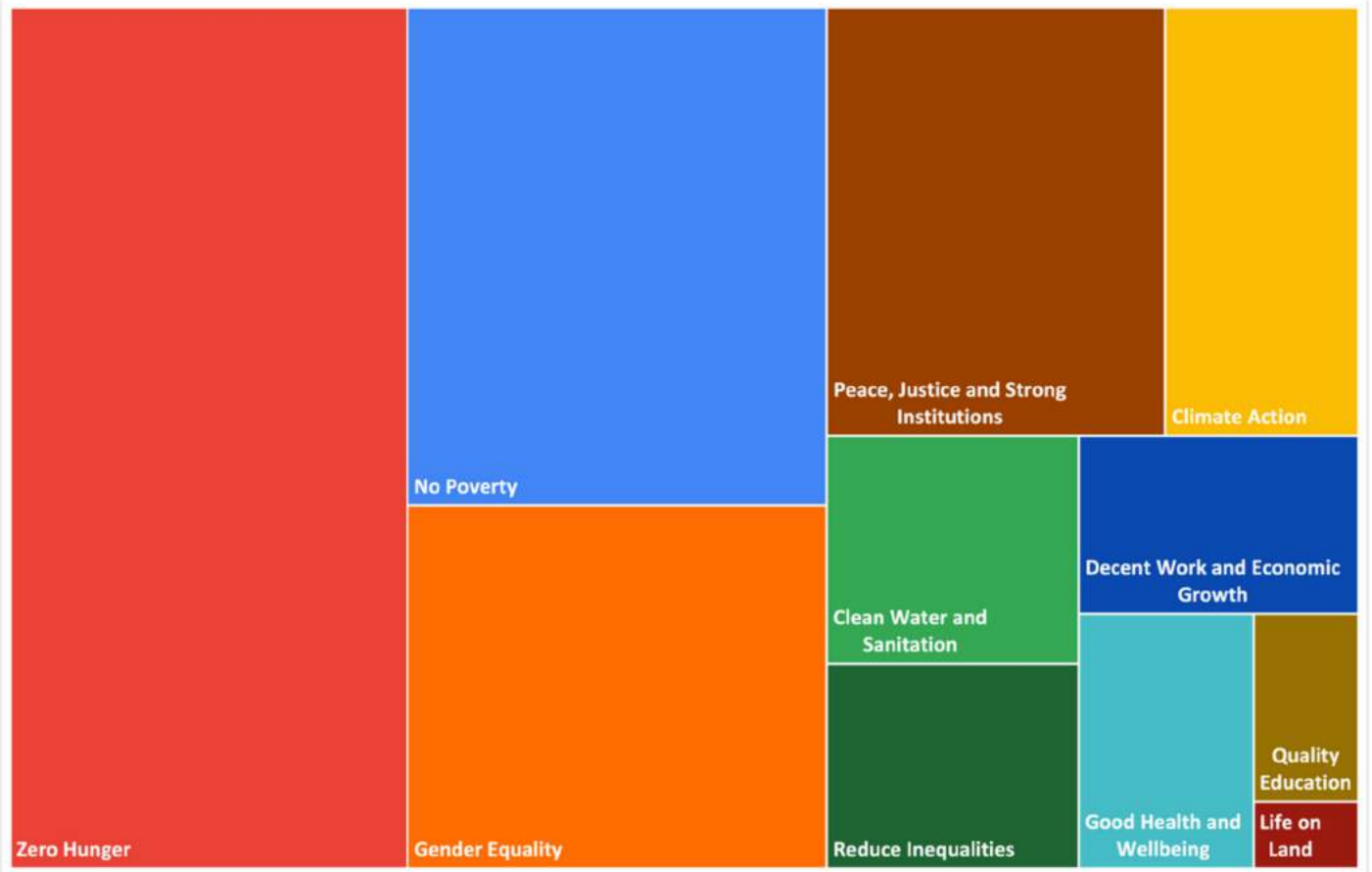
India

8%

Non-ANCP  
projects

33%

# Project expenditure by activity (Strategic 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.

Zero Hunger

29%

No poverty

17%

Gender Equality

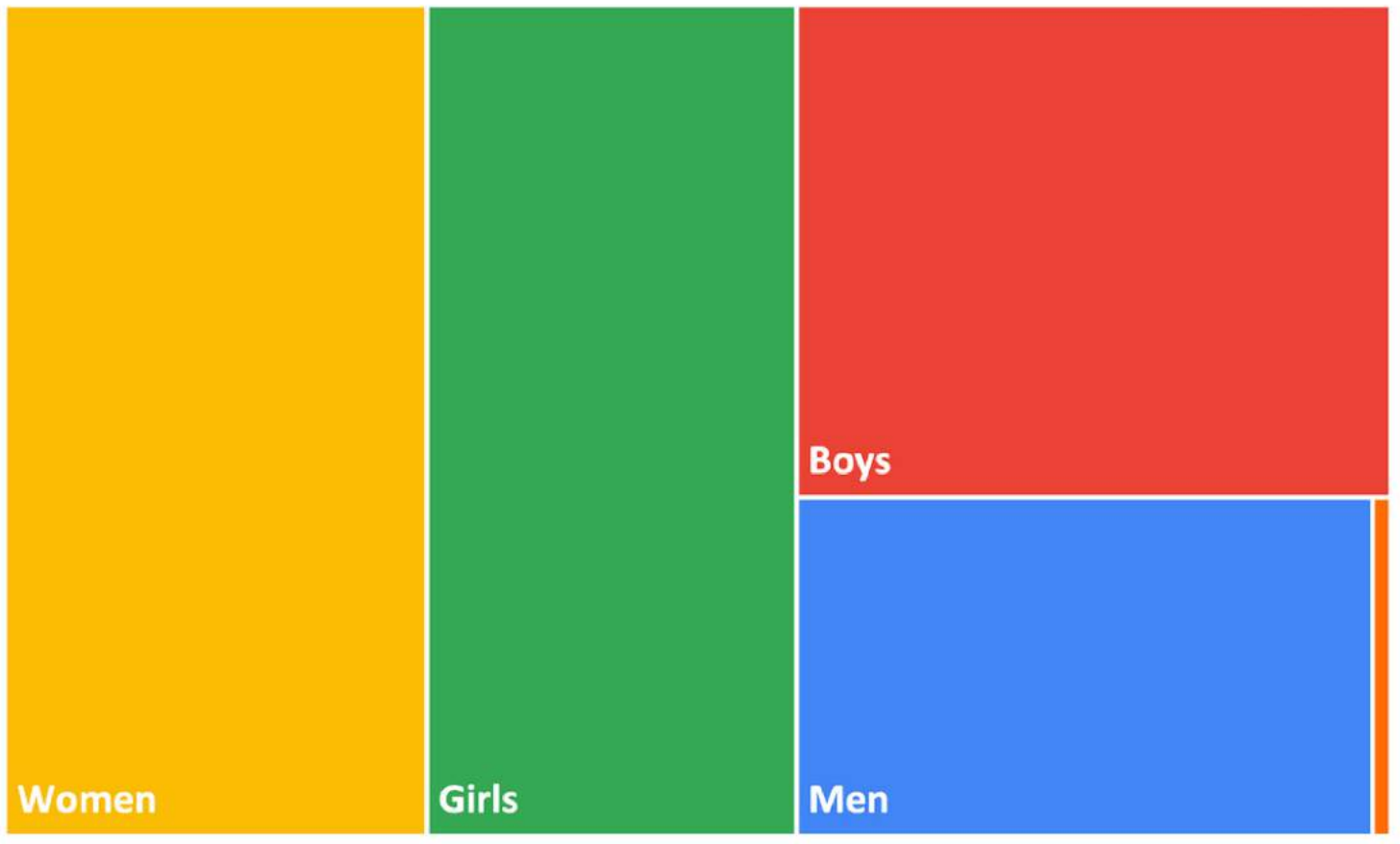
13%

Climate Action

7%



## Project participants by gender, age, and disability



The image above shows project participants by gender, age, and disability. 57% of participants were women and girls, and 52% were under 18.

People living with a disability made up less than 1% of the total project participants and are represented by the small orange section.

QSA partners did not report any participants who identified as non-binary.

Female  
Participants  
57%

Participants  
under 18 years  
52%

Participants living  
with disabilities  
0.45%

Participants in  
Cambodia  
projects  
28%



# Organisation Information

## 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 to promote organisational effectiveness and efficiency for QSA and its partners.

QSA undertakes regular monitoring and assessments, 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 consistent with collaborative work practices and following Quaker teachings and ideals to resolve complaints, grievances, and disputes.

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



## ACFID Code of Conduct

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 is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice. As a signatory, we are committed to and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability, and integrity.

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  
59 Boundary Road, Wahroonga, NSW 2076

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, that sets standards for good practice.

QSA maintains full accreditation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), a unique global program that supports trusted Australian Non-Government Organisations (ANGOs) through flexible annual grants for effective development projects overseas. To receive funding through the ANCP, NGOs must be accredited by DFAT. Accredited NGOs are required to undergo a rigorous independent assessment of their organisational structure, systems, and philosophies.

QSA is a member of the Church Agencies Network (CAN), a group of church-based aid and development agency members of ACFID.

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.



ACFID  
MEMBER



## Management

Previously incorporated as an association, a new governance document was adopted in December 2016, and in April 2017, QSA became a company limited by guarantee.

A Management Committee, acting as a board, manages the business of the organisation. Following is a list of Management Committee Members during the 2022/23 financial year.

Therese Douglas - Co-Convenor

Rae Litting - Co-Convenor

Laurel Doel (Resigned August 2023)

Mary Jane Hogan

Daniel Ong

Pia Reiersen (Resigned December 2022)

Martin Reusch (Resigned August 2023)

Aletia Dundas (Appointed February 2023)

Paul Carter (Appointed August 2023)

Company Secretary

Jackie Perkins (October 2022 - January 2023)

Pia Reiersen (January - September 2022)

An up-to-date list of Management Committee members, including their profiles, is available on the QSA website.



# The QSA Team



**Jackie Perkins**  
(Oct - Dec 2022)  
Executive Administrator  
Project Manager, Australia,  
and India



**Pia Reiersen**  
(Jan - Sep 2023)  
Executive Administrator  
Project Manager,  
Australia, and India



**Ai Leen Quah**  
Project Manager, Uganda



**Fleur Bayley**  
Project Manager,  
Cambodia



**Niraj Shah**  
Finance Officer  
(From Oct 2022)



**John Dundas**  
Finance Officer  
(To Oct 2022)



**Alis Middleton**  
Finance Administrator





# Financial Highlights

QSA's total income for the Quaker financial year, 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023, was \$1,569,892. This comprised:

- Grant funding recognised as income, \$677,744 compared with \$ 438,156 the previous year, a 54.68% increase.
- Interest income, \$21,784, ad 2773.4% increase (FY22 – 5,834) due to interest rate rises.
- Donations from the Quaker shop in Adelaide total \$98,000, an 18.1% increase from the previous year.
- Bequests, \$566,670 (none received in FY22).
- Donations, \$205,694, a 13.4% reduction on the previous year.

The increase in grant funding is due in part to an increase in financial support by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

The decline in donations continues a downward trend, with FY23 donations 48% lower than those received in FY19. However, QSA has been fortunate to benefit from generous Quaker legacies and bequests in recent years, and donations from the Quaker shop in Adelaide this FY were the highest on record.

Funds allocated to international aid and development projects delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) in FY23 totalled \$906,552, a 26% increase on the level in FY22 of \$719,551. Funds allocated to domestic and non-ANCP international projects in FY23 were 86,530, a 68% increase over the previous year (FY23 – 51,549). This is largely due to the allocation of funds received as bequests.

QSA recorded a surplus in FY23 of \$297,147 after a loss of \$275,486 in FY22. This surplus is due to the bequests received.

Administration and employee expenses in FY23 at \$279,663 declined from \$273,568 in FY22.

Our cash and cash equivalent in FY23 was \$1,239,766, compared with \$1,071,951 the previous year, and Net Equity increased by 50%, from 587,752 in FY22 to \$884,899 this year.

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 audited financial statements have been prepared following 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 full set of audited accounts is available on the QSA website.



# Thank You

QSA is grateful to its supporters, volunteers and donors without whom this work would be possible.

**Quaker Service Australia Ltd**

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

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