QSA Notes

February 2024

Highlights from the QSA Annual Report 2023

Cressida Hall | QSA Executive Manager

Making traditional hand fans in Tamil Nadu, India

I have now been in the position of Executive Manager for around four months. My first few months were a blur of learning, meeting people and trying to understand the essence and culture of QSA. In these months, I've realised what an extraordinary organisation QSA is. I've found an organisation that performs well above its resources, has committed and skilled staff, an engaged Management Committee, and a loyal band of supporters in the Quaker community.

As many of you know, QSA is a fully accredited organisation that receives support from the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). Indeed, I believe that we are the smallest organisation with this accreditation, a testament to the hard work and vision of former Executive Administrator Jackie Perkins and her team. ANCP accreditation means some of QSA's international projects are delivered in partnership with the Australian Government through the ANCP.

The 2022 - 2023 financial year saw us receive a 17% increase in funding from the ANCP due largely to the new government's expanded commitment to international aid and development. These welcome additional funds have enabled QSA to increase support for our partners and significantly expand our reach and impact.

In 2022–2023, the number of people directly participating in international projects funded through QSA was 11,352, an increase of 250% from the previous year. The cohort seeing the most significant growth is children and young people. This year, 6,484 children and young people benefited from our programs, up from 847 the previous year. These young people are being engaged in projects around peacebuilding, environmental education, sustainable agriculture, food security, and education and empowerment on child rights. Our project partners have been working hard to inspire, engage and inform the next generations.

However, there is more to do. One area where we saw 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 statistical drop is due to the increase in participant numbers but 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 very much affecting how we and our partners worked. While the direct health impacts of COVID-19 have 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.

Annual Report Highlights

Following are some highlights from the recently published QSA Annual Report, October 2022 - September 2023. A copy of the Report, including a full set of financial accounts, is available for download from the QSA website at www.qsa.org.au/about-us/annual-report

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.

Project Statistics

- Project expenditure by country - With five projects, Cambodia was the largest region for QSA project spending, accounting for one-quarter of QSA's total funds. Uganda and India were the following largest countries. Most funds are allocated directly to international projects and activities, with a small proportion channelled through Australian-based organisations to overseas locations.
- Project expenditure by activity (Strategic Development Goals) - The largest share of QSA's project expenditure went to activities designed to achieve Zero Hunger (33%), No Poverty (20%), Gender Equity (15%) and Climate Change (15%).
- Project participants by gender, age, and disability - 57% of participants in QSA projects were women and girls, and 52% were under 18. People living with a disability made up less than 1% of the total project.

For more information about QSA's work and profiles of the individual projects, download the QSA Annual Report 2023 from the website, along with a full set of financial accounts.

If you have any questions or queries, please get in touch with us at administration@qsa.org.au

If you would like to support us and our projects, you can donate at https://www.qsa.org.au/donate