



Arab Council Australia
المجلس العربي استراليا

ANNUAL REPORT
2020

ABOUT US

Arab Council Australia (Council) is a secular community based organisation working to bring about positive social change and improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in the community.

We represent the interests of people from twenty-two Arab countries.

Our membership reflects this diversity and includes people of non-Arabic speaking background.

Since our establishment we have been providing a range of quality services such as: family support, child protection, youth projects, social support to older people, problem gambling and financial counselling, orientation and settlement, casework and educational support to children, youth and families, and emergency relief assistance.

We work with diverse communities and across sectors and play a pivotal role in in capacity and community building and in advocacy. We promote solutions through consultations, research, education, and partnerships; we work inclusively across diversity and in forging strong collaborative practices with community, government and private sectors.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work and pay our respect to elders, past and present. We acknowledge that this land was, is and always will be Aboriginal land.

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▲ Council's CEO and Board Members with 2019 Annual General Meeting (AGM) Chair and Returning Officer

Guests and members at Council's 2019 AGM



◀ The 2019 AGM Chair, Ms Majida Abboud Saab: Founding Member, of Arab Council Australia and Former Executive Producer, SBS Arabic Language Section



▲ L-R Council's Board members at the 2019 AGM: Dr Rita Almohty, Mary Shalhoub (Chairperson), Jamal Hamdan, Rana Saab, Jack Boutros, Wafa Jeha and Dr Imad Berro



▲ Guests and members at the 2019 AGM: L-R HE Izzat Abdulhadi, Ambassador of the State of Palestine joined by Hassan Moussa, Nasser Shakhtour (Board member), Clr Ola Hamed of Cumberland Council, Clr Nadia Saleh of Canterbury Bankstown Council



▲ Council's Chairperson and CEO with representatives of Council's 40 Year Celebrations Sponsors



It is with great delight that I present Arab Council Australia's annual report for 2020.

This has been a memorable and unforgettable year on many fronts. It also marks the end of my term as the Chairperson of Council - an honour of which I am proud. 2020 is a year that will go down in history as being tumultuous; socially, economically and politically.

It has been a year that impacted on all of us, one way or another; a year that we may never forget. Whilst the challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic have been multiple and severe, in no way did they diminish Council's capacity in meeting the community's needs. We took a leading role, supporting and encouraging people during a difficult period.

Despite lockdowns and restrictions, Council's services to the community adjusted to the shifting and fluid situation, and continued uninterrupted with an increased demand. Our services also expanded this year and the diversity of new projects is yet another testament to Council's durability and credibility.

The AwarAbility project culminated in the magnificent production and online launch of six videos which depict the lived experience of people with disability, people with mental health conditions, their families and carers.

This project led to the new 'Arability' initiative which supports the siblings and carers of people with a disability. Council's established track record of pioneering continued unabated during this period.

We initiated the Sanadi Foundation with the focus on providing support to those impacted by cancer and in raising awareness of the disease in the community. The Sanadi Foundation, launched at the 2020 Annual General Meeting, incorporates two new projects that aim to provide social support, challenge misconceptions and increase access to screening services.

I am confident that the Foundation will go a long way in enhancing the wellbeing of people affected by cancer. I am also in no doubt that many more wonderful new projects in this area will follow in the years to come. This year marks the end of our 2016-2020 strategic plan and I am proud to say that we met our goals with flying colours.

In developing the plan for the next 5 years, we undertook a comprehensive revision resulting in a document that articulates Council strategic directions. I am pleased to say that Council's goals align with nine of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

It is my honour to launch Council's strategic plan for 2021-2025 as part of my final report as the Chairperson.

As we work towards our strategic directions over the next five years, Council will continue to:

- Be the hub of support for families, young people, children, older people, the marginalised and vulnerable members of our community
- Work closely with our members and partners.
- Innovate and explore opportunities to build a fair and just future as we lead dialogues for and with our community.

I credit this organisation's numerous achievements to all involved: the resilient clients, the dedicated staff, the devoted Board and the unwavering leadership of Council's visionary and indefatigable CEO, Randa Kattan. Their commitment to the greater good despite the complex and changing landscape has been unparalleled and exemplary.

On a personal note, I take this opportunity to thank my colleagues on the Board, the CEO and leader Randa Kattan and the staff for their unrelenting support and confidence in me, and for their support during my tenure as Chairperson.

Thank you all for your part in building a formidable organisation. I am deeply proud to be associated with Council and sincerely wish my successor the best in the rewarding role of chairing such a great organisation.

Mary Shalhoub
Chairperson





▲ *Treasurer, Jamal Hamdan at the 2019 AGM*



▲ *Returning Officer, Clr Ola Hamed Cumberland Council at the 2019 AGM*



▲ *Guests and members at Council's 2019 AGM*



▲ *CEO with staff at the 2019 AGM*



▲ *Senior's Group Outing*



▲ *Financial Counselling and Gambling Harm information session*



Well, what a year!

It started with the worst bushfire season on record; and that was but a precursor to the raging events that were to follow – the pandemic, the groundswell of voices demanding justice and racial equality around the world and here in Australia; and of course, the explosion in Beirut that shook us to the very core.

There were so much more that made it the year it was – one that will endure vividly in our memory; globally, locally and personally. It was a year of extremes where the world felt both closer and so far away. The way that we think about family and community, and the way that we connect with each other and the wider world has undergone a seismic shift. For Council, along with so many others, the way we service and connect with the community drastically changed.

The safety of the community meant the abrupt closure of our doors and the dawn of an organisation that operated in the virtual. The transition into an office that was scattered across multiple suburbs, various study rooms and repurposed dining tables was swift. Though such an endeavour was new territory, the transition was relatively seamless.

With the help of new technologies, our services and projects shifted to the online world barely missing a beat. The economic crisis was hot on the heels of the health crisis. The pandemic exacerbated already existing social and economic disadvantage, and plunged many into the new reality of an uncertain future.

Council moved quickly to adapt existing processes, connect with other organisations and services, and extend the delivery of emergency relief and support to help address the exponentially growing need. Despite operating remotely, we continued to expand our programs and develop new initiatives and respond to crises as they emerged.

The catastrophic explosion in Beirut which devastated Lebanon and its people also impacted thousands of Lebanese migrants and families living in Australia. The profound shock from the scale of the destruction was difficult to fathom. So many stories of loss, of injury, and of entire homes and livelihoods destroyed.

We at Council worked quickly to help facilitate the fundraising that was abounding around the world and connected with the Australian Red Cross and their local appeal.

We also worked closely with government agencies to support Australian expatriates - in COVID-19 quarantine - who returned from Lebanon as a result of the blast and the ongoing economic crisis. The impact of the explosion will be felt by the people of Beirut and Lebanon for years to come and we at Council will continue to monitor the situation and provide support where possible.

Initiated in 2018, the From the Ground Up to Equality project developed the gender equality program “Musawat” which we are currently delivering to community groups around Sydney. Building on the strengths of Arab culture that support and promote gender equality, the Musawat program also challenges the gendered drivers of domestic violence and the entrenched values that contribute to gender inequality. The program will continue to be delivered into next year, and will include training for community worker to run sessions beyond the life of the project. The program is leaving a significant mark on people in the community, and has been crucial to shifting mindsets towards a deeper understanding of gender equality.

The two-year AwarAbility project concluded in 2020, culminating in the launch of the video web series. The six videos, which promoted messages of inclusion of people with disability and mental health conditions, were enjoyed by tens of thousands.

We are grateful to all the families that opened their doors and shared their stories with us. Their courage and warmth have been crucial to the success of these fantastic resources which have already travelled the world and continue to be utilised by other community organisations. The videos are available on Council’s website and Facebook page Emerging from the AwarAbility is the Arability project which kicked off in the first half of 2020.

This three year project focuses on the Arabic speaking background community living in Canterbury Bankstown and Fairfield local government areas, and is developing and running peer led support groups for Carers and Siblings of persons with disability.

A milestone to acknowledge this year is the completion of the strategic plan and the launch of the new five-year plan. Consolidating Council’s vision for a path towards a just society, the strategic plan continues to shape and focus our work, and we are looking forward to building on all that we have achieved so far, as we move into an ever-changing future.



We are thrilled to launch Sanadi Foundation at the 2020 Annual General Meeting. Sanadi Foundation was developed in response to the ongoing and increasing need for an Arabic specific cancer support network in Australia, and the fact that the Arab community is under-represented in cancer screening, more vulnerable during the cancer treatment phase, and less likely to utilise available support services.

Our vision for Sanadi Foundation is multipronged and long term. We are aiming to provide support and improve the emotional and social wellbeing, and overall health outcome for people affected by cancer and their families. We are also aiming to educate, raise awareness and debunk myths in the community. We are wanting for Sanadi to become the hub that would facilitate access to research and support services. Sanadi Foundation has already laid the groundwork for the forthcoming year.

We have received funds from Sydney Local Health District for the Arab Cancer Care project, and from Cancer Institute NSW for the Screening and Linkages project. We have conducted preliminary consultations with people impacted by cancer, and formed a steering group with health workers and community members with lived experience to determine the areas where support is wanted or needed most. Support activities will commence with a meet and greet session in December 2020, which will continue into the new year.

We are developing a volunteer training program in collaboration with the Anjali project of the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, which has been running for well over 30 years. And we are putting out the call for volunteers who will coordinate group and one-to-one activities. In naming the foundation Sanadi, we aim to convey the true meaning of the word which literally translates in Arabic to “my support”, or “someone I know I can lean on.” We look forward to sharing the stories of the foundation’s achievements in the coming years.

Through all the challenges, Council has unfailingly continued to support and service the community. Like many, we were tested as individuals and as an organisation, and I am both proud and humbled by Council’s ability to innovate and adapt at every twist and turn.

For this I say thank you: to our members for their ongoing support and commitment; to our funding bodies for their continued confidence in us and our capabilities; to the media for promoting our services and causes. To the many individuals and organisations we work with, I thank you for your openness to collaborate, innovate and advocate for inclusion, social justice and human rights - no matter how challenging it gets.

To the families and people that we meet every day, thank you for trusting us with your stories and struggles, and your hopes for a better future. You continue to inspire and drive us to do better. It is because of you that we do what we do. This organisation cannot serve the community without the commitment of our staff, volunteers and interns.

This year each one of you stepped above and beyond to ensure that we could continue to do what we do, and I thank you for your creativity, hard work and dedication. It is your engagement with the community, your professionalism and the care with which you approach your work that have helped to ensure Council is still the dynamic organisation it is today. I offer deep gratitude to our board members. You have all taken time out of your busy lives, and adjusted so easily to the demands of the year - a testament to your commitment to give back to the community. I thank each and every one of you for your dedication to this organisation and its values, and a special thank you to Dr Ramzi Barnouti who is retiring this year after more than a decade of selfless contribution to the governance of this organisation.

The wonderful Mary Shalhoub, our Chairperson, completes her tenure this year. Mary, your wisdom, resilience and optimism were invaluable in helping us see the best in every situation, no matter how tough it got. My profound thanks for your dedication to Council and the community, and your steadfast support to me personally.

Thank you for everything. We are stronger in our commitment and our capacity because of the year that was like no other. Council continues to be a leading, inclusive and progressive organisation, and that is something – particularly at the end of this year - to be thankful for.

Randa Kattan
Chief Executive Officer



With Secretary Dr Rita Almohty at the 2019 AGM

Key Achievements



This year marks the fifth and final year in Council’s first Strategic Plan from 2016-2020- Council’s vision and direction in promoting inclusion and social justice. The activities outlined in this report reflect Council’s achievements against the strategic plan. The goals have been used below to align the activities undertaken during this reporting period.

GOAL 1: Wellbeing

Promote well-functioning, healthy, productive, caring, and safe individuals, families and communities.

The Wellbeing goal encompasses Council’s work with specific client groups in the community. This strategic goal also embraces those occasions where Council can play an increased role, such as providing support to women and children who are victims of domestic and family violence, and supporting migrants and refugees in the resettlement process. It also includes a focus on expanding Council’s role in the ageing, disability and mental health fields, by expanding outreach services through new partnerships and locations. During the pandemic Council, together with health, community, and government organisations, focussed on disseminating information about the health crisis and promoting safe practices via social media and radio, as well as following up with clients alongside the provision of service.

Families Council’s family support services continued to provide support to children, young people and families, with a focus on a safe and healthy start to life for children and young people.

The impact of the pandemic, particularly on vulnerable population groups, resulted in an exponential increase in demand on Council’s support services. Additional demands for support came with the return of Australian expatriates from Lebanon as a result of the economic crisis and devastating Beirut explosion in August of 2020.

Casework and support services were provided and included:

Family Support Service

Funded by the Department of Community and Justice under the Targeted Early Intervention Program (combines the former Early Intervention and Placement Prevention and the Community Builders programs) this service focusses on the wellbeing and safety of children, families and individuals. During this period, the service has provided:

- activities that support families and individuals including parent support groups focused on increasing the capacity of parents to build positive relationships with their children;
- support services and referrals relating (but not exclusive) to domestic violence, financial difficulties, employment, mental health and housing;
- case management for young people and families needing additional and ongoing support to access appropriate services;
- home visits where required for assessment,

development of support plans, as well as ongoing implementation through case management.

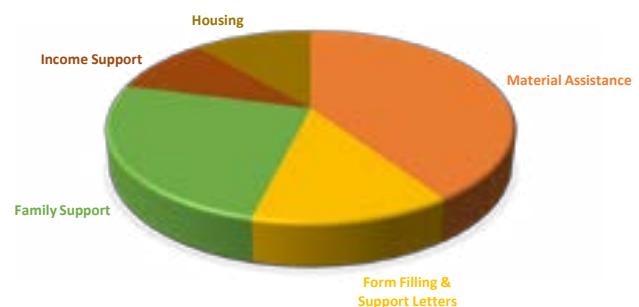
During this period, the service focused on families and individuals living in the Canterbury Bankstown, Liverpool and Fairfield LGAs. In line with physical distancing measures during the pandemic, any urgent home visits of face-to-face support were conducted outdoors and included initial home visit assessments and attendance to appointments with other services.

All other in person face-to-face services were suspended and ongoing support was provided remotely via telephone and/or video web applications.

The following table outline shows the support provided by this service

Family Support Service 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020	
Area of Support	Occasion of Service
Child Care	125
Domestic Violence	289
Education	113
Employment	108
Family Support	820
Form Filling & Support Letters	436
Housing	369
Income Support	314
Immigration & Settlement Issues	147
Legal	182
Material Assistance	1320
Mental Health	174
Physical Health	105
Supported referrals to other services	162
Total	4664

FIVE HIGHEST PRESENTING ISSUES
1 JULY 2019 - 30 JUNE 2020





Some specific presenting issues that this service support included: (please note that other issues supported through this service are covered in other sections of this report):

- Domestic Violence: Domestic Violence (DV) is not confined to cultural or socio-economic boundaries. There are increased vulnerabilities amongst newly arrived groups that have language barriers, or hold beliefs inconsistent with speaking out about DV. Data shows that the majority of those experiencing DV are women and children and that gender inequality is a driver of domestic violence. Gendered drivers of violence include (but are not limited to): men's control of decision making, limitations on women's independence, rigid gender roles, control of family finances and social condoning of DV. On this issue, Council has continued to provide direct support to families, women and children experiencing DV, as well as developing projects that build on existing research and previous projects. One such project is From the Ground Up to Equality (refer to relevant section of this report).

- Housing: Part of the holistic approach to client service is the assessment of housing needs of vulnerable people in the community. Council's Direct Services Unit worked with organisations such as the Department of Housing, Evolve and Hume Housing to assist clients with their housing needs. Clients were supported with social housing applications, and emergency brokerage services through the Start Safely program and Victim Services when required.

- Beirut Explosion: When the devastating events of the Beirut port explosion in August 2020 occurred, Council worked closely with the Australian Red Cross to support Australian fundraising efforts. The Australian Red Cross launched the Beirut Explosion Appeal with funds raised going to the Lebanese Red Cross/Crescent society to support the thousands that were and continue to be impacted by the widespread destruction.

At the request of the NSW Government, Council was also involved in coordinating and supporting the community response for Australian expatriates who returned from Beirut, with an estimation by the department that over 70% of the 330 persons had high support needs. Whilst returned Australians were in hotel quarantine, casework services and support for families and individuals were provided as required including the provision of basic goods, registration with Centrelink, emergency accommodation and resettlement services following the quarantine period. Upon transition into the community, casework continued for those that required ongoing support.

• **Stronger Connections:** Families, Children and Communities – Funded by Commonwealth through The Smith Family as the Facilitating Partner, the project runs the following activities:

- Playgroup: Targeting parents from culturally diverse backgrounds with children under the age of five, playgroup sessions are held once a week during school terms. Participants engaged in a range of activities, including school readiness programs, speech pathology, nutrition, and oral health, as well as fitness and health education. During the pandemic lockdown period, activities including fitness, speech and nutrition sessions were delivered remotely via web video applications. Craft packs that included school readiness activities were prepared and delivered, and the children proudly sent back photos of their completed work. Once restrictions eased, playgroup activities were held outdoors, parents and children participated in high numbers whilst adhering to health and safety precautions.

- Parents Group: This group provides parents with a space for quality social interaction to build on their parental knowledge and life skills, ultimately contributing to strengthening family relationships. Twenty (20) participated in this group and engaged in the Eat, Move and Live Healthy program facilitated by the Liverpool Health Promotion Service, as well as the Triple P (Parenting) program. Face-to-face sessions were suspended during the pandemic period, and transitioned to engagement via web-based video applications. Once restrictions eased, face-to-face activities were held outdoors and members of the Parents groups participated whilst adhering to health and safety practices.



▲ Vacation care outing



▲ Parenting Group Session



▲ Playgroup activities



- **Vacation Care:** An extension of Playgroup, Vacation Care runs during school holidays. Parents and children from pre-school, primary and early high school years participated in excursions to a variety of locations across Sydney including sports and activity centres, zoos, animal farms, libraries, parks and other local attractions. During the pandemic lockdown period, face-to-face activities were suspended and moved online engaging participants via video web applications.



▲ Parenting and playgroup activities during remote service delivery

• **Carers Social Support Group:** Established over three years ago in partnership with One Door Mental Health, this group promotes social participation for people from Arabic speaking background who care for a person with disability or mental health condition. During this period, the group of twenty-two (22) carers participated in information sessions on mental health, healthy lifestyles, disability, NDIS, and support services. All sessions were facilitated in Arabic and English. The group also participated in two social outings, and following the suspension of face-to-face activities due to the pandemic, the group continued to meet via monthly telephone and video calls. The carers group will be incorporated in the Arability project through which the social needs of participants will be supported.

Older People

Council's services to support older people from Arabic speaking backgrounds and their carers continued to grow, with programs that reduce social isolation, encourage healthy and active lifestyles, and provide information on relevant available services and organisations.

• **The Arabic Seniors Social and Information Network (ASSIN):** The ASSIN project continued to engage with the four seniors' groups in the Auburn, Blacktown, Parramatta and Holroyd areas. The four groups met once a week each at a different location, and took part in a range of social and educational activities. As a recognised vulnerable group, face-to-face activities for seniors were amongst the first to be suspended at the start of the pandemic. To ensure participants remained supported and connected, the activities were rapidly redesigned to remote engagement via weekly telephone calls, video group calls and online fitness and information sessions. As the restrictions eased, groups began to resume outdoor activities in line with health and safety guidelines. In 2021, the project is being extended to include a group in the Bankstown area.

Stronger Connections: Families, Children & Communities 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020

Activity Type	Registered Participants	
Parenting Support	20 parents	
Playgroup	24 parents	27 children
Total Attendance	1,138 parents and children	

People with a Disability

Council through a number of projects (listed elsewhere in this report) continued to work towards challenging misconceptions and stigmatisation around the experience of disability and mental health conditions. Council also worked on providing support and promoting access to services for people with disability and mental health issues, their carers and family members.

• **NDIS Gateway Service:** Council's Gateway service has continued to grow during this financial year and has established a strong presence in the community. The Gateway Service, through funds from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), provides support coordination to Arabic speaking clients with an NDIS plan. Council assisted clients to navigate the application and assessment process, and guided them to identify and access appropriate and sustainable services. The service also assisted clients in implementing, redeveloping and monitoring goals on individual NDIS plans. During this period, 29 clients received NDIS support coordination and were seen on 129 occasions.

ASSIN Groups

1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020

Total number of participants	63 participants	
Activity Type	Number of sessions	Occasion of Service (sessions x participants)
Information sessions	53	580
Excursions	81	933
Remote Engagement	12	699



Refugees

All services across Council assist refugees with their needs. Services include emotional, practical and material support such as income support, housing, form filling, advocacy and financial.

• **The Refugee Employment Support Program (RESP)** is an initiative of the NSW Government managed by the NSW Department of Industry. RESP seeks to address the challenges experienced by refugees and asylum seekers in finding long-term skilled employment opportunities. In partnership with Settlement Services International (SSI), Council's RESP is tailored to Arabic speaking background people from Western Sydney with the long-term goal of attaining sustainable employment.

The RESP program has moved into the next phase, with the piloting related projects, including The Hive project in collaboration with Planting Seeds, which will provide gardening and bee keeping skills and entrepreneurial opportunities for participants.

Community Health

• **In Fitness and In Health Project:** Funded by Sydney Local Health District and with a focus on improving the health and wellbeing of Arabic speaking background people, this project ran a six-month program that engaged 18 women in a series of fitness and nutrition sessions. At the start of the program, all participants met with a fitness instructor to design their respective personal goals, and by the end of the program 80% of participants stated that they achieved their goals. An added bonus was the formation of new and sustainable connections between participants.

• **COVID-19 Community Support:** Council promoted safe practices and provided regular updates to the community through social media posts and direct interactions with clients. A member of the CALD Covid-19 Advisory Group convened by South Western Sydney Local Health District, Council also worked with the Sydney Local Health District and produced community video messages recorded in Arabic that focussed on promoting safe practices during key times, including holidays and outbreak events.

Recognising that the pandemic exacerbated already existing socio and economic disadvantage, Council supported initiatives focussed on casual and cash economy workers, students, refugees and asylum seekers that were excluded from government emergency pandemic support.

• **Sanadi Foundation: Cancer Support Network:** Over the past four decades, Council has worked at a number of levels to raise awareness on a range of health issues, and promote better access to health services. Over recent years, Council has run and supported projects relating to cancer awareness and research. Council has also engaged with several research projects focused on cancer to better understand the barriers that prevent the Arabic speaking community from fully accessing support services and networks.

Council's consultations with people affected by cancer, their families and health professionals in the community highlighted the need for a culturally specific network to address support needs, prevention strategies, and raising community awareness.



▲ Parramatta Seniors Group outing



▲ Auburn Seniors Group outing



▲ Mt Druitt Seniors Group outing



▲ In Fitness and In Health Group Activities



Consequently, Council established the Sanadi Foundation (Sanadi) in late 2020. Sanadi - Arabic for 'my support' - aims to increase accessibility to established services, provide support and activities for people impacted by cancer, whilst also providing a resource for organisations and health professionals to tap into. Sanadi is in the first phase of development and will facilitate all cancer related projects initiated by Council. The following are two related projects:

- Arab Cancer Care: Funded by the Sydney Local Health District's Connecting Communities Challenge, the Arab Cancer Care project focuses on providing social support to Arabic speaking background people living in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA who have been impacted by cancer and their carers.

- Screening and Linkages: Arab Women in NSW: Funded by the Cancer Institute, this project focuses on raising awareness of breast screening to women of Arabic speaking background aged 50-74 years in the Blacktown and Fairfield LGAs. Arabic speaking background women are amongst the lowest in the population that utilise cancer screening services, and the project aims to provide accurate information about breast cancer, screening accessibility, and the increased survival rate through early detection.

By enhancing community engagement with health services, the project aims to ultimately improve the health outcomes and wellbeing of Arabic speaking women in the target area.

GOAL 2: Inclusion and Social Justice

Promote inclusion and social justice, access and equal opportunities for all.

This Strategic Goal focuses on increasing the participation of groups to engage in the community. With a strong focus on newly arrived refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants and their settlement needs, this goal encompasses the work of combatting exclusionary factors such as racism and discrimination, and increasing inclusion.

Equality and Inclusion

Council has continued to connect and work with other groups and organisations to promote equality and inclusion for all in the community. Consistent with our values, policies and longstanding work for human rights, equality and social justice for all, Council continued to stand up for equality and inclusion, designing and implementing programs that directly challenge stigma, isolation, and oppression.

- **AwarAbility:** Funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency, the two-year AwarAbility project was completed this year. AwarAbility adopted a strengths-based approach and engaged the Arabic speaking community at all stages of development and design. The project campaigned and worked to increase the knowledge and

skills of the Arabic speaking community to become more inclusive of people with disability and mental health concerns and better understand the needs and concerns of people and their families living with disability and mental health issues. With a focus on the Arabic speaking community in South Western and Western Sydney, the project also worked to raise community awareness and access to available support services. In consultation with stakeholders, consumers and community members as part of the project's two reference groups (stakeholders and consumers), the project developed fact sheets in Arabic and English and co-designed and ran a series of community workshops across the target areas. In addition, the project produced six short videos each in Arabic and English as part of a web series that combined music clips, drama and the sharing of personal stories.

Though restricted by the pandemic to a virtual launch, the web series and factsheets - available on Council's website and social media - were accessed across the globe with a reach of over 39,000 by the end of June 2020. These resources address the myths and misconceptions around disability and mental health, by promoting the lived experience of people and families, and continue to be accessed and shared beyond the funding term. The project also initiated an online forum for peer support and engagement with the expectation that it will continue as a platform for engagement beyond the project term

2019 - 2020 AwarAbility Project

Activity Type	Participants
Stakeholder Reference Group	12
Consumer Reference Group	15
Project Focus Groups	61
Community Education Workshop	143
Web Series Production	81
Online Community Forum	31

Arability - Supporting Parents and Siblings Project: This three-year project, funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency, commenced in January 2020. It is an extension of the work of the AwarAbility project. Targeting the Canterbury Bankstown and Fairfield LGAs, Arability aims to support Arabic speaking background parents and siblings of people with disability and mental health concerns.

The project will develop and run separate but complimentary peer-led support and social groups for siblings aged 10-15 years and parents/carers of people with disability and mental health challenges. By providing support and information, the project will increase the skills, knowledge and resources of participants to contribute to their wellbeing and sense of inclusion, whilst tackling disconnectedness and social isolation.



- **From the Ground Up to Equality Project:**

Funded by Women NSW through the Department of Communities and Justice, the From the Ground Up to Equality project aims to achieve a positive change in gender equitable attitudes within the Arabic speaking community. During the second year of this three-year project, Council co-designed the Gender Equality Program in consultation with the community, resulting in the development of the Musawat program.

Arabic for equality, Musawat is a unique and exciting strengths-based program. It challenges attitudes and beliefs which undermine gender equality whilst highlighting those that support and promote gender equality. The program also explores ways to make positive changes within families and the wider community for the long term. Program facilitators were recruited and provided with training to deliver the Musawat program which consists of six sessions.

The program was rolled out to groups of women and men in collaboration with community organisations. A seminar for community leaders will take place in December 2020, and accredited training will be offered to community workers as part of the strategies to ensure the delivery of the Gender Equality program extends beyond the funding term.

During the lockdown period of the pandemic, the project was temporarily repurposed to support families, women and children experiencing domestic violence (DV); this is in addition to the service provided through the Targeted Early Intervention program and is due to an increased demand for support on DV related issues.



▲ AwarAbility Web Series

GOAL 3: Poverty Relief

Alleviate poverty and promote greater equity for those in need.

This Strategic Goal aims to alleviate poverty through raising awareness of the disadvantage experienced by the Arabic speaking community as well as through the provision of direct measures to assist families and people experiencing financial hardship.

Emergency Relief and Material Assistance

Council continued to deliver emergency relief and material assistance services through a range of supports including:

- **Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA):** through this scheme, Council assisted people experiencing financial hardship in the payment of home energy bills. The demand for this service significantly increased as a result of the economic impact of the pandemic.

As a result of the lockdown EAPA service transitioned into remote delivery, with Council working in collaboration with the NSW Government EAPA team to streamline the remote assessment and application process.

- **Food Aid:** In response to the growing difficulties and challenges families and individuals experienced during the pandemic, Council received funding which assisted in restarting the Food Aid program, albeit for a short period of time. Funded by Multicultural NSW's COVID 19 Community Support Grant, the 12-week food aid program distributed 250 hampers to clients referred internally and through other organisations.

The hampers contained a range of fresh and pantry groceries, supplemented with other items on request such as nappies. The Social Outfit donated over 50 reusable masks during the roll out of the program and these were also distributed.

- **Additional Material Assistance:** In collaboration with House of Sadaqa, Good 360 Australia, and Dandelion, Council facilitated the provision of essential household furniture, appliances and everyday non-food items to low-income families and those facing financial hardships.

- **Work and Development Order (WDO):** As an approved sponsor organisation with Revenue NSW, Council offers assistance to eligible clients to pay overdue penalty notices held with the State Debt Recovery Office. By participating in counselling sessions, the WDO program enables clients to reduce unpaid fines by up to \$1000 a month. During this period, more than 200 clients were assisted through WDO.



Emergency Relief Assistance 1 July 2019 - 30 June 2020

EAPA	
Total number of clients served	1320
Total number of vouchers given	4486
Food Aid	
Total number of clients served	143
Total number of parcels distributed	250
Work and Development Order	
Total number of clients assisted	214

Gambling Help Recovery and Support

Following a harm reduction approach that aims to assist clients to address gambling behaviours, Council continued to provide the Gambling Help Recovery and Support Service and the Financial Counselling Service.

Funded by the NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing-Responsible Gambling Fund, the service provided therapeutic and financial counselling, casework and group support on gambling and other related issues to clients living in South West, West and Coastal Sydney, and their families and friends. The pandemic and related government restrictions resulted in limited access to in person gambling facilities. Not only were venues closed, but many events with gambling opportunities such as sport were suspended. Surveys on the impacts of the pandemic on habits found that there was a significant shift into online gambling, and Council engaged in community awareness raising initiatives on the issue.

Gambling Help Recovery and Support with the intent to either control or abstain from gambling, the service also assisted clients to reduce the harm associated with gambling on their lives including relationships, mental illness, study, employment issues, and crime. The service transitioned into remote provision as a result of restrictions caused by the pandemic.

The table below shows the supports provided by this service.

Gambling Help Recovery and Support

1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020

Clients serviced	231
Families/Friends of clients serviced	42
Number of counselling sessions	2032



The service also participated in consultations and raising awareness activities to engage with the community. They include but are not limited to, participation in:

- Consultations with funding bodies on planned marketing campaigns targeted to the Arabic speaking community addressing online betting and gambling and developing a model for gambling harm screening and referral that targets CALD communities.
- Consultations with Bankstown Sports Club; Dooley's Catholic Club Lidcombe; Bankstown RSL; St George Hospital Mental Health Centre; Rockdale Community Centre; Hurstville Community Mental Health Centre; TAFE; Punchbowl Church and schools in the LGA of targeted service regions – to raise awareness on the impact and effects of gambling within families, friends, communities and work.
- Presentations and information sessions on Gambling Harm at community centres in all regions (South West Sydney, Western Sydney and Coastal), including via remote events during the pandemic.
- Interviews on SBS Arabic radio on the harms of gambling particularly during the pandemic, Responsible Gambling Awareness Week, Newly Arrived Migrants and information on Gambling Harm and Financial Counselling.
- Participation in Gambling Forums and webinars in the South West Sydney, Western Sydney and Coastal regions on a range of gambling harm related issues including emerging gambling trends, dangerous ideas in gambling, impacts of pandemic on gambling habits and new insights into working with wagering clients.



Financial Counselling

Council's financial counselling service makes a real difference in the community. The service assisted people with financial problems directly related to gambling harm and worked to alleviate the anxiety of financial difficulties associated with gambling. As part of the Gambling Help Recovery and Support Service, financial counselling by accredited staff was provided to clients impacted by gambling as well as to their families. Financial counselling transitioned into remote service delivery during the pandemic. Council's services included:

- Financial counselling and supports related to financial hardship.
- Negotiations with creditors, financial institutions and government bodies on behalf of clients.
- Providing information on credit laws, debt recovery and bankruptcy.
- Providing Work and Development Order service for eligible clients.
- Referring clients to legal services, mental health and welfare services.

The table below shows the supports provided by this service.

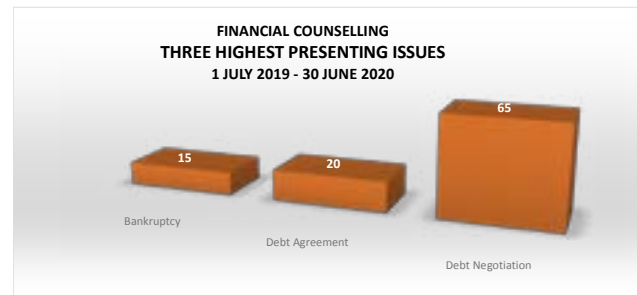
Financial Counselling 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020	
Clients serviced	54
Number of counselling sessions	240
Number of community education events	40

Forty (40) community engagement and awareness events on both gambling and financial issues were also provided by counsellors that focused on gambling education, control and budgeting skills. Due to the restrictions on gatherings, face to face community education were initially suspended, and ultimately transitioned into remote delivery.



The table below provides data on events and attendance:

Community Education Sessions	Attendance
Gambling and financial issues awareness sessions to Arabic speaking community members in Western Sydney, Coastal and South West Sydney	280
Gambling and financial issues awareness discussions on Arabic Radio, SBS, and 2ME	+200,000
Presentations to the community at community Centres, Schools, churches raising awareness on budgeting and gambling harm	100
Gambling issues forum presentations to community welfare workers and counsellors	160



▲ Gambling Harm and Financial Issues information community sessions



GOAL 4: Capacity Building

Build active, productive and cohesive communities and increase community skills and capacity.

This Strategic Goal focuses on building the capacity and cohesiveness of communities through strengthening connections, and the representation of Arab organisations and communities through the provision of community building events and educational activities for the Arabic speaking community.

It also identifies Council's integral role in promoting cultural awareness and in providing advice to others regarding the issues faced by Arabic speaking communities.

Community Building and Development

Council facilitated events and educational activities to build and develop community capacity and address community issues. These activities included community workshops, community networks/groups, social inclusion programs and events, skills/training programs, resources development, sector planning, consultation and partnership projects.

Some specific examples include:

- **AwarAbility Community Workshops:** Held in both Arabic and English, the AwarAbility workshops were run with service providers, community leaders, carers and consumers with the aim of building the capacity of the community to understand the needs of people with disability and mental health challenges.

A total of 11 workshops were held across South West and Western Sydney. Workshop content was also developed into online videos, and will be made available early in 2021 in both English and Arabic.

- **Parenting programs including 1, 2, 3 Magic, Emotion Coaching and Triple P:** Held both in Arabic and English, Council convened a series of seminars for parents and carers of children aged between 1 and 12 years of age as part of the parenting program.

Stages of child development and different parenting styles were explored along with various approaches to managing challenging and complex behaviours in children. The parenting programs were delivered in a number of locations including Chester Hill, Bass Hill and Georges Hall.

- **Arabic Workers Network (AWN):** Council continued to convene the AWN forum for workers from across NSW with an Arabic background or who work with the Arabic speaking community. AWN provides valuable information with the view to increase access and equity for the community, as well as providing a platform for skills development and information exchange amongst its members.

Due to the pandemic, the AWN meetings were temporarily suspended, with the first meeting taking place late in 2020.

- **Musawat: Gender Equality program:** Developed by Council, this program was rolled out to the Liverpool and Bankstown areas and delivery of sessions commenced at the end of 2020 and will continue in 2021.

With both women and men's group and run over six sessions, the Musawat program focuses on highlighting positive practices and beliefs that support gender equality, and challenging those foundational beliefs and traditional practices that undermine gender equality.



▲ AwarAbility Community Sessions



▲ Gender Equality Facilitator Training



▲ Gender Equality Community Sessions

Key Achievements



• **Activities and Information sessions:** Based on the identified needs of families through both consultations and casework, Council provided educational activities and partnered with other service providers in organising events. During the COVID 19 pandemic, information and updates on restrictions and other safety measures from the NSW Government were incorporated into group sessions, as well as one-to-one interactions.

The table below includes information on the type of activity conducted and the specific groups the activities targeted.

Topics	Target Group	Attendance
1, 2, 3 Magic and Emotion Coaching	Parents/Children	51
AwarAbility Community Workshops	Community	143
Bankstown Wellness Festival	Community	+500
Be Connected (Afford Employment)	Parents	11
Carer Group	Carers	150
Eat, Move, Stay Healthy	Parents	32
EAPA information sessions	Community	48
Fitness Class	Parents	84
Gambling Harm & Financial Counselling Information sessions	Community	450
NDIS Consultation	Community	36
Social Planning Workshops (Canterbury Bankstown Council)	Workers	+50
Social Stories (Aspire)	Parents	35
WDO Information Sessions	Community	30
Wise Employment Community Connection Event	Community	950

Playgroup remote activities



Key Achievements



Consultations, Advisory, Meetings and Networks

Council has continued to provide a consultative role and has been resourceful in addressing issues communities. During this period, Council participated in several advisory groups, meetings and networks, representations and partnerships. These are shown in the following table:

ACON	Liverpool Child & Family Interagency
Afford Employment	Liverpool Women's Resource Centre
Alliance for Gambling Reform Sydney	Mandaeen Resource Centre
ANROWS	Mental Health Coordinating Council
Arab Workers Network	Metro Assist
Aspect Australia	Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association NSW
Auburn Diversity Services	Multicultural Health Service
Auburn Police	Multicultural Health Communication Service
Australian Arab Business Council	Multicultural HIV and HEP C
Bankstown Canterbury Community Transport	Multicultural NSW
Bankstown Child & Family interagency	Multicultural Problem Gambling Services
Bankstown Children and Families Hub	Muslim Women Association
Bankstown Community Health centre	Navitas English language Centres
Bankstown Community Resource Group	NAPCAN
Bankstown Hospital	NDIS
Bankstown Multicultural Youth Service	NSW Health
Bankstown Police	NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service
Baptist Care	One Door Mental Health
Barnardos	Planting Seeds
Breakthru	Responsible Gambling Forums
Cancer Council of NSW	Riverwood Community Centre
Canterbury Bankstown Council	Roads and Maritime Services
Canterbury Earlwood Caring Association	Safe Work NSW
Catholic Care	Salvation Army
Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre	SBS Radio, Arabic program
Chester Hill North Public School	Settlement Services International (SSI)
Community Corrections NSW	Seniors Rights Australia
Creating Links	South West Sydney Area Health Service
Crisis Support Services	South West Sydney Legal Centre
Cultural Perspectives	STARTTS
Department of Health	State Debt Recovery
Department of Human Services	Sydney Alliance
Disability Services Australia	Sydney Local Health District
Diversity & disability Alliance	SydWest Multicultural Services
DV NSW Service Management	Syrian Australian Forum
Ethnic Communities Council of NSW	TAFE NSW
EAPA Scheme Provider Advisory Group	The Benevolent Society
Fairfield Child & Family Interagency	The Multicultural Network
Fairfield City Council	The NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre
Fairfield Community Action Group, Gambling Harm	The Smith Family
Family and Community Services	Unions NSW
Family Relationships	Uniting
FAMS	Western Sydney Community Centre
Financial Counselling Association of Australia	Western Sydney Community Forum
Greenacre Community Centre	Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre
Headspace	Western Sydney Recover College
Inclusive Communities Network (LGBTI)	Western Sydney University
Iraqi Health Professionals Association - Australia	Women's Health Centre (Bankstown)
Jesuit Refugee Service Australia	Women NSW
Legal Aid	Woodville Alliance

Key Achievements



▲ With Seniors Rights Australia



▲ Community Workshops with Aspect Australia



▲ Care for Carers Support Group



▲ Food Aid program delivery



GOAL 5: Advocacy

Advocate on issues affecting the community and promote a positive community image.

This Strategic Goal highlights the importance of advocacy and the role Council plays to engage both individuals, members and organisations in identifying and lobbying to protect the interests and uphold the rights of Arabic speaking communities. Council worked collaboratively with other agencies and across sectors on numerous initiatives, some of which are highlighted elsewhere in this report.

Collaboration

Positive Partnerships – In collaboration with Positive Partnerships through Aspect Australia, Council facilitated two consultation sessions with Arabic speaking parents and carers of children with disability to inform the process for understanding the Australian Disability Standards for Education.

Seniors Rights – Council worked with the Seniors Rights organisation in supporting the production of Arabic language videos for seniors that tell stories of financial issues within families. The videos are part of a campaign being run by Seniors Rights to raise awareness of a variety of legal rights that seniors have, but may not be aware of.

Arabic Living Library – In partnership with South Western Sydney Local Health District, Council hosted the Arabic Living Library in a virtual event that was streamed live on Facebook during the 2020 Mental Health Awareness Week. Instead of borrowing a book, a story is borrowed through a speaker. The Living Library event aims to help the community understand the lived experience of mental illness, tackle stigma and normalise getting help.

NSW Multicultural Women's Reference Group – through an invitation from the Department of Home Affairs, Council's CEO joined the Multicultural Women's Reference group, which acts as an advisory body on a range of issues relevant to the work of the Department, along with providing advice and feedback to the Department on what those impacts may be for women of a multicultural background and the community.

ATO CALD Community Leaders' Network – Council participated in a series of forums set up to provide connection between the ATO and the community, as well as a mechanism to provide feedback and insight directly to the ATO on a range of tax and super topics.

B-Project - Together with PlantingSeeds Council lodged an application for funding to the Australian Ethical Community Grants. Out of 430 applications, the 'B' training program made it onto the shortlist of only 24 organisations, and was ultimately successful following an online voting campaign. The program, known as The Hive teaches gardening and bee keeping skills and provides entrepreneurial opportunities for refugees.

Representation

Council, and by extension the community, is represented at various levels as illustrated throughout this report. Council also has active memberships with several organisations including Community Council for Australia, Sydney Alliance, Ethnic Communities Council of NSW, and the Australian Arab Business Council.

Council continues to engage with media (including social media) on issues facing or impacting the Arabic speaking community.

Council's CEO was interviewed on SBS Arabic radio on the issue of domestic violence and the increase of incidents during COVID-19. In partnership with Sydney Local Health District, Council produced and promoted video messages at times of key alerts and events regarding pandemic restrictions and community safety.

GOAL 6: Sustainability

Build a strong, representative and sustainable organisation.

This Strategic Goal highlights the importance of building the sustainability of Council to maintain its strength and representative role. It identifies measures such as identifying new funding models and services, developing the capability of staff and the maintenance of a healthy governance structure.

Applications for Funding

Council continues to identify opportunities to grow its services and funding sources. Several funding applications for new projects were submitted during this period:

- 2019-20 Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship: Fostering Integration Grants for the "Women: Integration in Action" project (unsuccessful).
- Individual Capacity Building Program Grant for the "Arability: Support for Parents and Siblings" project (successful).
- Community Grant Hub for the "Fostering Integration" project (unsuccessful).
- Sydney Local Health District through the Connecting Communities Challenge for the "Arab Cancer Care" project (successful).
- Covid-19 Community Support Grants Program for "Food Aid" program (successful).
- Bankstown Communities for Children - Smith Family for the "Parenting for the Best" project (unsuccessful).
- Cancer Institute's Cancer Screening and Prevention Grants for the "Screening and Linkages" project (successful).
- Compact Partnership Projects for the "Arab Australian Youth Network" project (unsuccessful).
- Department of Communities and Justice - Women NSW COVID-19 Domestic and Family Violence Grant for the "Arabic Speaking Background Stronger Support and Linkages" project (unsuccessful).



Council Membership

Council's membership ranges from individuals to community organisations interested in the successful settlement of Arab Australians. It includes people from a range of backgrounds, fields, age groups and religions. This membership provides Council with a cross section of views and ensures a broad representation of community's interests.

Recognising the upheaval that the pandemic has caused for many in the community and around the world, this year Council offered an automatic renewal for memberships ending in June 2020, and an offer of one-year free membership for new members.

Professional Development

Staff have attended various training to develop their skills and knowledge relating to a range of issues. The training attended includes:

- Financial counselling training and monthly supervision
- Annual Financial Counselling Conference
- Liquor and Gaming managers training
- Gambling counselling monthly supervision
- ANROWS – Prevention of violence when working with women
- Journal Clubs at Sydney University Gambling Treatment Clinic and Webinar
- Induction gambling counselling training
- Australian Childhood Foundation – Bringing Up Great Kids
- LifeLine- Recognise and Respond Appropriately to Domestic & Family Violence
- 123 Magic
- Seasons for Growth Training – Good Grief
- Family Law and Workers Rights – South West Sydney Legal Centre
- Multicultural Health Bowel Cancer
- FC Australia – National Tax Clinic
- Financial Abuse – Redfern Legal Centre
- Disability Inclusion Awareness Training
- RGF- COVID 19 help trends
- FCAN – COVID and personal insolvencies
- Revenue NSW – WDO during COVID 19
- EWON- Energy and water issues help during difficult times
- Redfern Legal Centre – resolving financial abuse
- MYOB Consultation and Training

Capable Governance

In December 2019 a new Board was elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Board consists of 10 members and they collectively bring extensive and valuable knowledge, skills and experience to the Council.

These include but are not limited to: management experience and major program implementation both within Government and the not-for-profit sectors in community services and health; extensive experience on Boards; private sector experience in business and legal sectors, education and training delivery; community development; advocacy for human rights and vulnerable groups, research, cultural promotion, developing innovative initiatives such as the Australian Arab Business Network, Sydney Alliance and the Pro Bono Medical Program for Asylum seekers and volunteer experience both in Australia and abroad.

These members are committed to social justice, promoting cross cultural dialogue, conflict resolution and working towards an equitable, fair, secular and transparent society where acceptance is achieved through dialogue and exchange of ideas and information.

The CEO and Public Officer for the Council, Randa Kattan provides a subsequent layer of capable governance with her skills and experience including: community leadership, organisational leadership, management of projects and programs within and outside the Arabic community and her experience on a range of high level and ministerial committees.

Ms Kattan is passionate about social justice, the status of women and social inclusion and uses this passion to unite a dedicated team in the Council to meet Council's organisational objectives.

The background features a teal color on the left side, transitioning into a white area on the right. The white area contains several overlapping, light blue geometric shapes, including rectangles and trapezoids, some of which are tilted. A solid orange vertical bar is located on the far right edge of the page.

2020 FINANCIAL REPORT



I am pleased to present Council's Audit Report for the 2020 Financial Year.

This report provides a true and fair view of Council's financial position and performance for this period, and has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. It includes the Auditor's Certificate, Balance Sheet, Income and Expenditure and Cash flow statements in addition to Notes that form part of the accounts.

Despite this year's numerous challenges, we have continued to effectively manage all funds and grants which have been expended and acquitted in accordance with funding guidelines.

At the date of issue of these financial statements, we have sufficient grounds to believe that Council is in a solid position to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

I thank all our funding bodies and government departments for their continued support, and for recognising Council's momentous work in the community.

My thanks to our Administration staff for their diligence in undertaking Council's day-to-day bookkeeping tasks, with all the comings and goings that these unprecedented circumstances have sent our way. I also would like to thank our Accountant Mr George Silvino and our Auditor Mr Edward Chahoud, for their work and professionalism.

I extend my deep gratitude to the Chairperson, Mary Shalhoub who finishes her tenure this year. Mary's drive and leadership during some trying times have been nothing short of inspiring. Thank you, Mary! Thank you also to fellow Board members, Council's staff and volunteers for your consistent commitment and hard work.

This year, Council endured, like many others, one of its toughest periods to date. We not only confronted the challenges head on but Council continued expanding and diversifying services and programs to meet the growing social needs of the community.

Finally, a humble recognition must go to our CEO, Randa Kattan, for her unwavering stewardship to sustain the stability of Council and for motivating us all with confidence, commitment and calmness, despite all the odds.

Randa along with 2020 made us stronger; even when at times we felt frail by all that the year delivered.

As we embark on a new year, let us grasp the vision to continue our mission, hand in hand with the community – but with the recommended gloves and masks on!

Jamal Hamdan
Treasurer





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STATEMENT OF THE BOARD

In the opinion of the Board:

1. The accompanying financial statements have been drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the financial position of **ARAB COUNCIL AUSTRALIA INC.** as at **30th June 2020** and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1.
3. All funds have been invested in accordance with the terms and conditions of funding agreements.
4. All funds have been expended in accordance with funding guidelines.
5. At the date of the statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

NAME OF MEMBER	SIGNATURE	DATE
Mary Shalhoub		25 Nov 2020
Jamal Hamdan		25 Nov 2020



Edward D. Chahoud B.Bus., CPA
CERTIFIED PRACTISING ACCOUNTANT

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**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF
ARAB COUNCIL AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED
ABN 65 538 322 175**

We have audited the accompanying special purpose financial report of Arab Council Australia Inc. which comprises the Balance sheet as at 30 June 2020, the Income & Expenditure statement and cash flow statement for the year ended 30 June 2020, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement of Board members.

The Board's Responsibility for the financial report

The Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the financial reporting requirements of the Association Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Board's responsibility also includes establishing and maintaining such internal control as they determine necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a fair presentation, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by [those charged with governance] as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.



Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional accounting bodies.

Electronic publication of the audited financial report

It is our understanding that the Arab Council Australia Inc. intends to electronically present the audited financial report and auditor's report on its internet website. Responsibility for the electronic presentation of the financial report on the Arab Council Australia Inc. website is that of those charged with governance of the Arab Council Australia Inc. The security and controls over information on the website should be addressed by the Arab Council Australia Inc. to maintain the integrity of the data presented.

The examination of the controls over the electronic presentation of audited financial report(s) on the Arab Council Australia Inc. website is beyond the scope of the audit of the financial report.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report

- 1) presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Arab Council Australia Inc. as at 30 June 2020 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended on that date and
- 2) complies with Australian accounting standards to the extent described in Note 1 and the Association Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW).

Basis of accounting and restriction on distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Board's reporting responsibilities under the constitution. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Edward Chahoud, CPA 841305

Dated this 27th day of November 2020



ARAB COUNCIL AUSTRALIA Inc.
ABN 65 538 322 175

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2020

Current Assets	2020	2019
C'wealth Bank a/c 062334 10737766	13,916.23	14,142.95
C'wealth Bank a/c 062334 10752309	656,902.54	401,179.66
C'wealth Bank Term deposit a/c 233450125705	100,837.30	99,844.60
C'wealth Bank Term deposit a/c 233450181694	17,124.49	17,243.30
Petty Cash	500.00	500.00
	<u>789,280.56</u>	<u>532,910.51</u>
Security Bonds	-	5,434.00
Total Assets	<u>789,280.56</u>	<u>538,344.51</u>
Current Liabilities		
Corporate Credit Card	-	1,814.79
GST payable	8,257.28	5,570.79
Superannuation Payable	8,783.73	8,215.40
PAYG Withholding	14,764.00	10,860.00
Provision for Program costs	70,000.00	41,488.12
Provision for Annual leave	83,191.75	42,548.63
Provision for Annual Leave Loading	14,558.56	12,837.55
Provision for Long Service Leave	80,521.10	67,558.92
Provision for Community Bus	-	7,288.37
Provision for Equipment	35,180.00	-
Provision for Relocation & Repairs	10,000.00	36,121.21
Provision for Legal Costs	10,000.00	-
	<u>335,256.42</u>	<u>234,303.78</u>
Non Current Liabilities		
Provision for Long Service Leave	34,386.00	15,746.41
Provision for Community Bus	14,000.00	14,000.00
	<u>48,386.00</u>	<u>29,746.41</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>383,642.42</u>	<u>264,050.19</u>
 Net Assets	 <u><u>405,638.14</u></u>	 <u><u>274,294.32</u></u>



ARAB COUNCIL AUSTRALIA Inc.

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INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

INCOME		2020	2019
Grants	note 2	1,673,512.29	1,669,441.45
Administration Charges		26,546.19	3,266.43
Client Contributions - ASSIN Group		9,656.00	11,970.00
Consultancy		8,000.00	-
Donations		166.00	655.00
Equipment & Furniture charges		3,682.33	-
Events /Seminars / Training		56,867.65	-
Hall Hire		200.00	-
Interest		3,295.21	2,976.41
Management Charges		29,203.88	-
Membership		118.22	547.26
NDIS Income		9,634.61	17,109.73
Other misc. receipts- Reimbursements		390.54	-
Sponsors		29,000.00	-
Ticket Sales		20,463.64	-
		<u>1,870,736.56</u>	<u>1,705,966.28</u>
EXPENSES			
Audit		6,400.00	5,350.00
Artwork & Design		1,381.82	1,120.00
Bank Charges		1,213.51	1,344.96
Bookkeeping Fees		1,689.55	1,395.00
Books, Reports & Resources		-	31.82
Bus Running Costs		11,084.03	16,191.91
Bus Hire		1,959.62	2,984.08
Childcare		1,130.00	410.00
Cleaning		8,058.15	11,243.28
Computer Purchase & Maintenance		-	3,098.64
Conference		-	759.09
Consultancy & Supervision		32,570.00	9,040.00
Dietician, Fitness and Speech Therapy services		7,776.19	7,676.00
Electricity		6,028.00	10,007.50
Equipment Purchase & Hire		38,912.66	22,707.64
General Expenses		- 0.09	- 1.23
Hall and Venue Hire / catering		19,805.22	13,680.41
Insurance - General & Public Liability		11,403.21	12,658.43
- Workers Compensation		17,724.83	38,671.36
Internet and Networking		33,726.77	32,542.22
Legal fees		19,090.91	-
Meeting Expenses		4,176.84	5,491.90
Organisational overheads		- 2,476.10	-
Program & Project Activity costs		103,158.32	47,895.25
Project Evaluation		-	50.24
Postage		519.18	245.80
Printing & Photocopying		7,537.82	10,425.64
Rent		71,325.34	99,211.34
Repairs & Maintenance		10,000.00	7,299.37
Salaries & Wages		1,134,499.27	954,536.86
Staff Amenities		1,756.56	1,035.78
Stationery		2,431.90	1,663.03
Subscriptions & Membership		6,510.45	7,209.23
Superannuation		99,604.84	90,047.76
Telephone		37,125.93	37,750.29
Training		981.82	647.16
Translations		770.00	-
Travel, Transport & Parking Fees		6,597.23	6,664.42
Video Production		31,168.96	5,000.00
Website		3,750.00	-
		<u>1,739,392.74</u>	<u>1,466,085.18</u>
Operating surplus / (deficit) for year		131,343.82	239,881.10
Brought Fwd Surplus/(Deficit) last year		274,294.32	34,413.22
Accumulated Surplus/Deficit @ 30.6.20		405,638.14	274,294.32



ARAB COUNCIL AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

ABN 65 538 322 175

Suite 2, Level 2 44-46 Mandarin Street, Fairfield East NSW 2165 Australia

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STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

2019	INFLOWS / (OUTFLOWS)	2020
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
1,702,990	Receipts Grants & other	1,867,760
1,399,670	Payments to suppliers & employees	1,614,685
303,320	Net cash provided by operating activities	253,075
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
2,976	Interest received	3,295
-	Payment for property, plant & equipment	-
2,976	Net cash used for investing	3,295
306,297	Net increase / (decrease) in cash held	256,370
226,614	Cash at beginning of reporting period	532,911
532,911	Cash at end of reporting period	789,281
 RECONCILIATION OF NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES TO OPERATING PROFIT		
239,881	Operating profit after tax	131,344
	Add/(less) items classified as Non-operating activities	
- 2,976	Interest received	- 3,295
236,905	Cash derived from operating activities	128,049
	Add / (less) non cash items	
16,838	Provision for accrued leave	73,966
253,743		202,015
 Changes in assets & liabilities		
-	Decrease / (Increase) in Security Bond	5,434
11,422	Decrease / (Increase) in Debtors	-
1,775	(Decrease) / Increase in Corporate Credit Card Deposits paid	- 1,815
- 202	(Decrease) / Increase in GST Payable	2,686
37	(Decrease) / Increase Superannuation Payable	568
2,608	(Decrease) / Increase PAYG withholding	3,904
36,241	(Decrease) / Increase in program costs	28,512
286	(Decrease) / Increase in provision for community bus	- 7,288
- 2,590	(Decrease) / Increase in provision for equipment	35,180
-	(Decrease) / Increase in provision for Relocation & repairs	- 26,121
	(Decrease) / Increase in provision for Legal costs	10,000
303,320	Net cash provided by operating activities	253,075



Arab Council Australia
المجلس العربي استراليا

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NOTES TO & FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2020

NOTE 1. Statement of Accounting Policies

This special purpose financial report was prepared for distribution to the members to fulfill the Board's financial reporting requirements under the Arab Council Australia Inc. constitution and the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW).

The accounting policies used in the preparation of this report, as described below, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Arab Council Australia Inc. constitution and with previous years and are, in the opinion of the Board, appropriate to meet the needs of members:

- (a) The financial report was prepared on a modified accrual basis of accounting, including the historical cost convention and the going concern assumption.
- (b) The requirements of accounting standards and other professional reporting requirements in Australia do not have mandatory applicability to Arab Council Australia Inc. because it is not a reporting entity. The Board has, however, prepared the financial report in accordance with Australian accounting standards

Fixed Assets are expensed fully in the financial year they are paid for.

A provision has been made in these Accounts for Statutory conferred employees' entitlements.



ARAB AUSTRALIA COUNCIL INC.
ABN 65 538 322 175

**NOTES TO & FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020**

NOTE 2. GRANTS RECEIVED	2020	2019
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES & JUSTICE		
1. Community Builders - Arabic Welfare Centre	114,456.62	111,185.77
2. EIPP - Child, Youth & Family Support Project	388,201.03	377,107.33
DEPARTMENT OF GAMING & RACING		
1. Problem Gambling - South West Sydney	162,600.00	159,412.00
2. Problem Gambling - Coastal Sydney	68,811.00	67,462.00
3. Problem Gambling - Western Sydney	68,501.00	67,158.00
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES - Via Uniting		
Arabic Seniors Social and Information Network	166,622.76	164,381.24
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH		
Arabic Seniors Social and Information Network	41,251.99	40,597.72
THE SMITH FAMILY		
Stronger Connection: Family, Children & Communities	113,600.00	99,700.00
NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE AGENCY		
AwarAbility	52,591.26	428,172.74
Arability	358,375.00	-
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND JUSTICE (WOMEN NSW)		
DV - From the Ground up to Equality	133,501.63	130,883.95
MINOR GRANTS		
RMS - Child Restraint workshop	-	6,299.96
RMS - Seniors Walking Safety Workshop	-	6,253.80
NSW Health - Sydney Local Health District	-	6,500.00
Transfers From Provisions NDIA Gateway	-	4,326.94
Department of Communities & Justice (Multicultural NSW) - Food Aid	5,000.00	-
	1,673,512.29	1,669,441.45

ACCUMULATED FUNDS AS AT 30 JUNE 2020

Project Name	Job #	2020	2019
General a/c	9	120,088.63	38,113.22
Food Aid Project	16	5,000.00	-
In Fitness and In Health (Sydney Local Health District)	40	-	3,020.91
AwarAbility	42	-	223,282.55
From Ground Up to Equality	43	-	19,154.23
ASSIN (DSS via Uniting)	116	1,308.51	1,308.51
Stronger Connections: Families, Children & Communities	119	-8,109.00	- 10,585.10
Arability	142	287,350.00	-
		405,638.14	274,294.32



Board

Mary Shalhoub	Chairperson
Imad Berro (Dr)	Deputy Chairperson
Rana Saab	Deputy Chairperson (Stepped down July 2020)
Nasser Shakhtour	Secretary
Jamal Hamdan	Treasurer
Ramzi Barnouti (Dr)	Board Member
Jack Boutros	Board Member
Wafa Jeha	Board Member
Joshua Karras	Board Member
Amir Salem	Board Member
Randa Kattan	Chief Executive Officer & Public Officer

Personnel

Randa Kattan	Chief Executive Officer
Hala Alduleimi	Health and Disability Unit Manager (returned from leave Nov 2020)
Hiba Ayache	Direct Services Manager
Josette Bechara	Community & Service Development Manager Stronger Connections Project Coordinator
Rebecca Semaan	Operations and Administration Unit Manager
Amira Shahid	AwarAbility and Arability Project Manager (Aug 2018 – Oct 2020)
Sivine Tabbouch	From the Ground Up to Equality Project Manager (Jul 2019 – Oct 2020)
Yassmen Yahya	From the Ground Up to Equality Project Manager (Oct 2020 - Present)
Nena Al-Bazi	Administration Officer
Djimi Barber	Seniors Group Coordinator
Mary-Ely Bechara	Child, Youth & Family Support Officer/RESP Coordinator
Zahra Cheikh Ali	AwarAbility Case Coordinator & Playgroup Coordinator (Nov 2018 – Apr 2020)
Zeinab Hourani	Problem Gambling Counsellor/Casework Officer
Reem Khalil	Problem Gambling Counsellor/Casework Officer & NDIS Support Coordinator
Lina Merdawi	Child, Youth & Family Support Officer
Hana Moukahal	Child, Youth & Family Support Officer From the Ground Up to Equality Project Coordinator
Heshmat Shahid	Problem Gambling and Financial Counsellor/Casework Officer
Yorka Manjah	Seniors Group Coordinator
Nehme Mrish	Community Bus Driver (repurposed during COVID-19 Administration Support & Arab Cancer Care Project Worker)
Qais Al-Shakarchi	Facilitator - MUSAWAT Gender Equality Program
George Georgees	Facilitator - MUSAWAT Gender Equality Program
Anaam Halabi	Facilitator - MUSAWAT Gender Equality Program
Nahari Samano	Facilitator - MUSAWAT Gender Equality Program
Nahla Toma	Facilitator - MUSAWAT Gender Equality Program
Asmaa Yousif	Facilitator - MUSAWAT Gender Equality Program

Consultants and Contractors

Dr Nahed Fraitekh	Consultancy Services – Gender Equality Program
Maria Katrivesis	Consulting and Training Pty Ltd – AwarAbility Project
Robyn McEwan	Consultancy Services
Art Resistance	Video Production - AwarAbility Project
MK Graphics	Graphic Design
Nomad Tribe	Graphic Design Studio

Volunteers

Zaid Hanoody
Victor Ishak
Daad Karaali
Fadia Samia
Halima Shmait

Students on Placement

Bilal Abdelraheem
Farzaneh Eskandari
Sherry Raghieb
Rabab Sayed-Hassan
Ashour Namato
Fatme Osman

Funding Bodies

Canterbury Bankstown Council - Stronger Communities Fund
Department of Communities and Justice - Targeted Early Intervention
Department of Communities and Justice - Women NSW
Department of Health - Commonwealth Home Support Program
Department of Social Services - via Uniting
National Disability Insurance Agency - Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Program
NSW Department of Customer Service - Office of Responsible Gambling
Sydney Local Health District - Connecting Communities Challenge
The Smith Family - Bankstown Region Communities for Children Facilitating Partner
Cancer Institute - Cancer Screening and Prevention Grant
Multicultural NSW - COVID 19 Community Support Grant

The background features a teal color on the left side, transitioning into a white area on the right. The white area contains several overlapping, light blue geometric shapes, including rectangles and trapezoids, some of which are tilted. The text '2020 ANNUAL REPORT' is positioned in the white area, oriented vertically.

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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