

IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION NSW INC.

29th Annual Report

2013–2014





Who is Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW?

Immigrant Women's Speakout Association ((SpeakOut/IWSA)) is the NSW peak advocacy body representing immigrant and refugee women of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. It empowers these women to achieve gender equality in all areas of their lives. SpeakOut provides education, information, and other direct services to women of non-English speaking backgrounds in NSW.

SpeakOut is an independent advocate representing the issues and ideas of immigrant and refugee women at all levels of government, in community services and industrial sectors, and to the media.

SpeakOut hopes to create and sustain lasting change by:

- Giving women the tools and confidence to achieve complete political, social, and economic autonomy,
- Creating awareness of the issues that face our clients and their communities through policy research and advocacy, consultation groups, and training programs,
- Educating and protecting immigrant and refugee women who want to live free from domestic and family violence, and
- Providing a forum and opportunity for these women to have their voices heard.

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Chairperson's Report

Chairperson: AURELIA GALLARDO

Support CALD Women and Children in their Journey to a Life of Safety and Respect

The Immigrant Women's Speakout Association (SpeakOut/IWSA) has two core services: the NESB Women Domestic Violence Project and the Immigrant Women's Resource Centre. On behalf of the Management Committee and staff I inform you that Speakout continues to support CALD Women and Children in their journey to a life of safety and respect. The SpeakOut still receives funding from the NSW Family and Community Services to run activities within the service framework of Community Builders – the state government's action plan to build resilience and social cohesion of communities.

The two categories of activities that SpeakOut runs under Community Builders are community hub and community skills development projects. The SpeakOut community hub is called Immigrant Women's Resource Centre which is based in Harris Park in the Parramatta Local Government Area. The SpeakOut community hub provides a place where local women's groups and associations meet and undertake their community education and training for their members and network. Our community skills development projects include but not limited to providing training in how to establish and manage community organisations, mentoring leaders and recruiting and training volunteers.

The key to building resilience and social cohesion is achieving a considerable level of safety and respect individually, within family, in the community and workplace. SpeakOut has imbedded the value of upholding safety and respect in all its activities in the community hub and in community skills development.

What happened to the NESB (Non-English Speaking Background) Women's Domestic Violence Project after the introduction of the Going Home Staying Home – the state government's strategy to improve its response to homelessness? It is with the deepest sadness that we inform our members and the community that SpeakOut has not been selected as one of the preferred service providers in implementing the Going Home and Staying reform. The result of this non-selection is that SpeakOut's NESB Women's Domestic Violence Project no longer exists from 1 August 2014. The 25 years of specialised expertise in working with CALD women in eliminating domestic and family violence has to be properly documented so that we can continue to take other forms of service provision.

The staff members' account of a NESB woman and an Aboriginal woman – both who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and who came and sought support at the SpeakOut centre - is a situation that lin-

gers in mind as I reflect on the transition process that we are now implementing. They came to us after the new preferred service provider in their area refused to assist them and sent them to us. My heart cries with these two women and with the staff members who have to tell them that our DV service is in transition and FACS has instructed us to stop taking new clients. Those two women did not want to leave the SpeakOut premises. They broke down in tears and begged us to assist them.

Through these concrete examples of the challenges facing NESB and culturally diverse women, we noted a gap in service delivery which may have been overlooked in the reforms. In the allocation of funding for CALD clients going predominantly to mainstream services, there will be a loss of expertise in serving these particularly vulnerable women. The transition was rushed, despite the process of tendering and awarding contracts. The new service providers were not ready to meet the needs of CALD women, especially the most vulnerable. The ongoing referral of these women to Speakout will mean the organisation will take up the most complex and difficult cases without any funding support. The outcome is that the most vulnerable women will be left without any service.

I call on all politicians and bureaucrats in all levels of government to rethink the unintended negative consequences of the GHSR reform and reinstate the renewable and ongoing funding for Immigrant Women's Speakout Association so that we can continue to support CALD Women and Children in their journey to a life of safety and respect. I also call on the rest of the peoples of NSW to support the cause of migrant and refugee women for equitable access to community services. To overcome this complex situation, we will all need to work together. Specialist service providers need the appropriate legislation and political determination to continue assisting migrant and refugee women facing homelessness and violence.





Executive Officer's Report

Executive Officer: JANE CORPUZ-BROCK

SpeakOut's work with the Going Home Staying Home (GHSB)

The Immigrant Women's Speakout Association (SpeakOut /IWSA) has been invited by the NSW Family and Community Services to apply for the Service Support Fund (SSF) in the Western Sydney District. If our funding application is successful, the SSF will provide SpeakOut the financial resources to deliver a service model that will complement the work of Going Home Staying Home service providers and contribute to the reduction of homelessness as a whole. In the course of service provision with SSF, SpeakOut will have the opportunity to use its specialist knowledge and skills to act as a resource to better serve in the areas of multicultural competency for service providers, as well as continuing to manage complex cases of service users from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

SpeakOut prospects for the future

We are exploring training new GHSB workers in working with CALD communities on the issue of domestic and family violence. This training is geared to upskilling GHSB workers in utilising cultural knowledge and skills of different ethnic communities in dealing with prevention, early intervention and post crisis of domestic and family violence.

Another component of upskilling GHSB workers is providing them with advice and mentoring on actual cases that require other forms of support for CALD women who are escaping domestic and family violence that have migration issues. SpeakOut has the capacity to coach GHSB service providers in assisting service users who have complex needs such as accessing the Family Violence Provisions (FVP). The FVP is part of the migration regulations that allows marriage migrants leave a violent partner and continue their application to stay in Australia permanently. The marriage migrant needs support in preparing their evidence of their domestic and family violence experience from their partner-sponsor.

The production of resources for the prevention of domestic and family violence can be a component of this service delivery under the SSF. The work of SpeakOut in prevention of violence against women and children has been acknowledged and recognised at the Violence Against Women Prevention Awards 2005. SpeakOut was presented the prevention award for its production of educational resource in the form of radio plays promoting equitable, safe, healthy and respectful relationship. The award was presented at a ceremony at the Parliament House on 25th of November 2005 marking the 16 Days of Activism in Eliminating Violence Against Women and Children.

Organisational change and the GHSB reform

On the 27th of June 2014 the SpeakOut Management Committee underwent training in managing organisational change in the framework of the GHSB reform and transition. One of the major components of the training was assessing risks in the process of transitioning SpeakOut service users who are ongoing and are escaping violent relationship. It was evident that ongoing service users face the potential risks of being re-traumatised if the transition were not be managed properly. Aurelia Gallardo - SpeakOut Chairperson and I have assisted the staff in ensuring prevention of retraumatisation during transition.

Vote of Thanks

I wish to thank the SpeakOut Management Committee for their support to staff members in this deeply challenging period. My gratitude also goes to the following: Speakout staff members and volunteers, all membership, our partners in the community sector, in particular those who supported our funding applications – the Settlement Services International (SSI) and the Bonnie Support Services Ltd



Treasurer's Report

Treasurer: KYUNGJA JUNG

The resilience and persistence of the members of SpeakOut Management, staff and volunteers is commendable. Facing heavy and competing pressures during the Going Home Staying Home transition process we continued to provide support to CALD women seeking our assistance within the parameters of the GHSB reform. The transition in service provision has had unsettling effects on staff members' future employment and in managing organisational change on the part of the Management Committee and the Executive Officer.

SpeakOut places high importance on our partnerships with all the government agencies that support us at Federal, State and Local Government levels. These partnerships provide us resources in delivering our services to immigrant and refugee women, children and families. In this light, on behalf of the SpeakOut Management Committee and members at-large, I wish to send this plea to the Minister for Family and Community Services Gabrielle Upton and to NSW Premier Mike Baird to reinstate the renewable and ongoing funding to Immigrant Women's Speakout Association's support services to migrant and refugee women who want to end domestic and family violence in their lives.

SpeakOut sends its gratitude to Jane Brock-Executive Officer, Emina Kovac-Admin Officer, Chris and Mohan Pakianathan – our Accountants and to Sandra Grollmus - our Auditor, for monitoring and supporting me in my role as Treasurer. Our achievements are possible because of the great team of staff with the leadership of Jane Brock. We have sound governance and assistance from a hardworking and dedicated Management Committee. I thank all members of the Management Committee for their support.

Overall, SpeakOut is a financially sound organisation and will have no problem paying its payables as and when they fall due. I present these short form Financial Reports for the year ended 30 June 2014, which was extended until 21 July 2014 due to the GHSB Transition process.

Community and Working Together

Networking with other organisations

SpeakOut convenes the Non-English Speaking Domestic Violence Network (NESB DVN), which meets throughout the year to discuss issues around domestic violence as specific to CALD communities and their experiences. Throughout 2013-2014, the Network met to discuss changes to the Crimes Act regarding Information Sharing, changes to victims compensation, the Family Violence Provisions, Financial Assistance for Temporary or Bridging Visa Holders in Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) as well as legal assistance available. The network meets every two months on the second Tuesday in various host locations based on its membership. To attend or join the network, contact SpeakOut on women@speakout.org.au with subject 'NESB DV Network'.

SpeakOut attended and worked with networks and committees to advance the issues of migrant and refugee women in NSW. These include: NSW Women's Alliance, Settlement Services Coalition, Sydney Alliance, the Multicultural Affairs Advisory Group, Outer West DV Network and community services meetings and forums.

Classes and Activities

In 2013-2014, SpeakOut continued to run its activities and classes. Women from diverse backgrounds were able to visit the centre to practice and learn English conversation, basic computer skills and work on their sewing projects.

An advanced English conversation group ran from February 2014 to June 2014 in order to accommodate CALD women who were already conversational in English, but wanted to improve on their vocabulary, grammar and reading and listening comprehension. They covered topics related to employment and interviews, colloquial Australian English and expressing and exchanging one another's different values and beliefs.

The beginner class graduated to intermediate topics including basic consumer laws, health and biology vocabulary and continued working on learning about discrimination and human rights in Australia.

Students in the computer skills workshops covered Microsoft Word, Youtube and email, as well as browsing the internet generally. They completed the basic skills course in June 2014. This course provided students with confidence to use computers and interact online with friends and government services (including search engines to find contact details and forms). Students continue to visit the office to make use of their new skills and use the computers at our community hub. The next computer skills course will commence in January 2015. For more information or to register interest, contact the office.

Sewing workshops at SpeakOut bring together women with an interest in gaining skills to assist them with starting private tailoring businesses, or simply for personal needs. More than this, the groups give women space to explore their creativity and gain confidence to work independently on individual sewing projects. SpeakOut also hosted community events locally in Granville and Blacktown, including a Mother's Day celebration, a Nawroz Celebration and organised the One Billion Rising event in Western Sydney to raise awareness of violence against women.

Sylvia's Success:

Gaining financial independence and contribution to family income

In May 2013, Sylvia* has joined the sewing class at Immigrant Women's Speakout Association. Sylvia has been living in isolation for many years because she has put priority on looking after her children and doing all the housework. Sylvia decided to undertake activities outside of their home after her children had all grown up. On 14 February 2013 during the "One Billion Rising" campaign on ending violence against women, Sylvia picked up the SpeakOut flyer on the sewing classes from the information desk. The event was held at the Parramatta Town Hall square on Church Street.

The following is Sylvia's testimony:

During the first sewing class - I have learned the parts of the sewing machine and how to operate and use it. In the second session I have learned how to make a pattern for a blouse/top and the following sessions I have sewn my own blouse.

Our sewing group later decided to learn how to do alternations. I have learned how to shorten and lengthen a pair of pants, skirt and sleeves of a shirt. Our sewing teacher, Ms Amna Khurram has also taught us how to earn money by doing alterations service at home.

By the end of May 2014, I bought my own sewing machine and got my ABN from ATO. I have lodged my application to ATO online. Then, I have done my flyers and distributed in the neighbourhood letter boxes. Now I have constant inflow of clients and I am earning from my alterations business.

I still participate at the Immigrant Women's Speakout Association sewing class because I want to learn more sewing different kinds of clothes and other projects and do more advance alteration techniques. Most of all I want to have a chat with participants and share my sewing experiences.

Thank you to Immigrant Women's Speakout Association and to Ms Amna Khurram – our sewing teacher.

**Sylvia is not the real name*

Mentoring and Leadership Training

Mentoring is a powerful personal development and empowerment tool. It is an effective way of helping people to progress in their careers and to develop themselves holistically. Mentoring allows the mentee to explore new ideas. It is a chance to look more closely at oneself, explore issues and opportunities. Mentoring is about becoming more self-aware, taking responsibility and being decisive.

Once again in 2013-2014, Speakout has been instrumental in the personal development of student in placement, CALD women, and other service users as well. Speakout has tailored our mentoring program to the identified needs of our mentees. We made a commitment to mentor women in a caring way, which involved taking part in the learning process side-by-side. Speakout has made sure that each participant understood the skills or activities delivered and have awareness of what has been learnt. Speakout has focused its mentoring in 3 areas: 1. Self-Transforming Capabilities and Getting Job Ready (2) Basic Communication Skills and Negotiating Skills for Services and (3) Self-Care and Negotiating in Family and Intimate Relationship.

“Job Ready” has been delivered in 10 sessions to various CALD Women and students. The mentees have learnt how to prepare their own resume/curriculum vitae; how to look for a job with the use of internet and newspaper including local newspaper; and how to prepare for an interview. We also have helped them to identify their career goals and have introduced them to various workplace cultures.

In basic communication skills and negotiating for services, we have delivered five sessions with a total of 31 attendees. We have introduced to them the different government services they can avail of like Centrelink, Housing NSW, Legal Aid and many more. They have gained knowledge of the different services that is accessible to them.

Speakout has helped the mentees to understand the benefits of a healthy relationship. A strong and healthy relationship with others can help manage stress effectively. This enables people to establish solid foundation for an intimate relationship with a partner, ensuring that both people have a good sense of personal identity and self-esteem, and that both contribute to and benefit from the relationship in a balanced way. It is one of the ways to minimise domestic and family violence. With this program, we have conducted three

Maria's Success:

Mentoring after escaping domestic and family violence

Maria* is a domestic and family violence survivor. In August 2013, she was referred to Immigrant Women's Speakout Association (IWSA) by a volunteer community-based organisation in Central Coast. She and her son were homeless. They stayed with friends for accommodation. They did not have permanent place to stay.

Maria has undergone a mentoring program with SpeakOut mentor while undergoing therapeutic counselling with another service provider. The mentoring sessions have been tailored according to Maria's needs after she escaped domestic and family violence.

Maria's mentoring program has the following components:

- Child's well-being and protection
- Self-care and designing a safety plan
- Homelessness and domestic violence
- Self-confidence and Getting Job Ready
- Tenancy

While Maria was undergoing therapeutic counselling and mentoring sessions, SpeakOut assisted her to connect with her community for support. She started socialising with other people in her community. She also participated in SpeakOut's activities and met other women from different backgrounds. She became self-confident and finally regained her self-esteem. She got a paid job as a cleaner. Later, she got her own ABN number and has since set up her own cleaning business.

In June 2014, Maria was able to arrange a two-bedroom unit in private rental. She exited from the Immigrant Women's Speakout Association's mentoring program in September

*Maria is not the real name

Connected to Community: Social Media

SpeakOut continues to utilise its social media to connect its followers and members to news and events. It remains an important platform to share knowledge regarding the CALD community and any changes that may affect them. It also allows for two-way communication between the public and our organisation, to receive feedback and any issues they face that SpeakOut may advocate for on their behalf.

We encourage our members to like, share and follow our pages for the latest updates on SpeakOut activities and its affiliates.

THIS YEAR ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:

- 376 likes
- Invitations for our clients, supporters and the public to join our events
- Pictures from events including the Mental Health Month Laughter Yoga and a Nawroz Celebration
- Public messages or 'noticeboard' posts from our supporters and members about achievements and community events

THIS YEAR ON @IWSAwomen:

- 488 followers
- Keeping our followers and members up to date on relevant news and current affairs, including events and training as well as information on policy reforms
- Promoting our campaigns to reduce violence against women such as One Billion Rising and White Ribbon Day



Find us on
Facebook



follow us on
twitter



Policy and Social Change

This year SpeakOut has continued to strive to influence policy affecting CALD communities and women from Non-English Speaking Background. As a peak body in NSW concerned with advocating on behalf of immigrant women, we connected with government and non-government agencies to provide advice and feedback on issues affecting our members and service users.

Racism Symposium

In October 2013, SpeakOut hosted a symposium concerning racism and its effects on CALD women in NSW. Attendees heard Senator Concetta Ferravanti-Wells, Member for Ryde Victor Dominello and Gillian Triggs, president of the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), speak of their concerns regarding racism, but also of the value of CALD women in Australian society today. The impact of racism concerns not only human rights, but also affects the economic participation of CALD professional women, with Triggs noting the multifaceted effect of disadvantage that is faced by migrant and refugee women when differences in culture and language are combined with gender inequality. SpeakOut has collated papers and formed a journal with a summary of recommendations gathered from the symposium.

457 Visa Holders in DFV

In August 2013, SpeakOut participated in the “Workers Forum” held in Bankstown with Asian Women at Work. This was attended by CALD women and politicians from different parties. During this forum, SpeakOut presented to the attending politicians our 457 campaign paper. The paper focused on the status of secondary applicants of 457 visa holders who have experienced domestic and family violence. Under the current legislation, these visa holders are unable to apply for permanent residency under the Family Violence Provisions (FVP) of the migration program. This is a major concern for CALD women who are dependents of 457 visa holders (primary visa 457 holder). Moreover they are ineligible for assistance considering their visa status. Recommendations were made and SpeakOut hopes that the Federal government will develop independent pathways to permanent residency for applicants on 457 visas who have been subjected to domestic and family violence.

Consultations and the NESB DV Network

SpeakOut has also attended various consultations regarding reforms to voice concerns and needs of its membership; of particular interest were those affecting the homelessness sector. The Going Home Staying Home (GSHS) reforms have changed the way in which women affected by domestic violence have contact with the system. In cases involving DFV, the challenges are varying and difficult, but are especially so for women from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds or those in marriages which are dependent on visas and immigration issues. The reforms require each preferred service provider to have the capacity to work with CALD clients experiencing DFV.

The NESB DV Network convened by SpeakOut provided a means for community workers to exchange concerns and take action regarding issues faced by their clients or future CALD victims of violence. A key area of interest at the meetings was the GSHS reforms and how this will affect **domestic violence victims with limited access to services**. These included difficulties with interpreters, visa restrictions and limitations, as

well as cultural barriers that may be present in accessing mainstream services. Other areas of the Network's contribution include the Crimes Act Information Sharing amendments and the NSW Domestic Violence Framework response.

Domestic and Family Violence: Prevention and Client Support

The past year has been one of the busiest years for the Domestic Violence Project at SpeakOut. This project supported and assisted 183 ongoing CALD women and their children over this period. Over 80% of support periods delivered by SpeakOut were for clients escaping domestic and family violence. Domestic and Family Violence and homelessness continues to be a widespread and intensifying problem in Australia. Our support and assistance to women and their children to live in a safe and healthy environment was our priority.

Many CALD women who are on temporary visas are not eligible to receive appropriate services and legal advice from Legal Aid due to their temporary visa status. Most of these clients who come to SpeakOut presenting family violence are highly vulnerable considering their visa status. In these cases, sponsors have taken advantage of women on partner visas and who are still on a two-year waiting period – a residential period that relies on the continuation of the relationship related to the visa. Women suffering from DFV can be manipulated by their sponsors because of their visa status. SpeakOut caseworkers assisted and supported them to access different services like the Department of Immigration, Centrelink, Housing NSW and others. Besides providing vital support SpeakOut always focuses on the following important issues:

- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Safe and healthy environment for women and their children
- Empowering women and their children for a better future

The SpeakOut DV project has strategic plan for the Prevention and Early Intervention through the community awareness programs around the issues and impact of domestic violence on women and their families. SpeakOut DFV project officers worked to increase awareness of domestic and family violence in the community by delivering presentations and information sessions in places such as TAFE, English colleges such as Navitas, and at community gatherings for women and their families. In these sessions, important topics such as what is domestic violence, how to apply for apprehended domestic violence orders (ADVOs), what is the impact of DV on children and several others were presented to the participants. Over 451 participants benefited from these trainings and information sessions between 2013-2014.

Developing and strengthening relationships with other services, SpeakOut also participated in relevant networks such as inter-agencies, housing forums, DV conferences all over NSW.

To commemorate the number of women who lost lives as a result of DV over the past year one Billion Rising, and Empty Shoes events were showcased in different locations to raise awareness in public at NSW.

SpeakOut proudly stands behind the women and families it has assisted over the last several years to achieve safety and confidence in their struggles against violence. This DV project has continued to provide unwavering support to families facing homelessness who may otherwise have fallen through the service gaps faced by migrant and refugee women.



Margaret's Success:

Safe place to live is the best Christmas gift she ever had....

On 29 January 2013, Margaret* a Pacific Islander woman has sought the support of DFV Caseworker at Immigrant Women's Speakout Association. Margaret was referred by a Migrant Resource Centre to Immigrant Women's Speakout Association. During the first intake session Margaret has disclosed to SpeakOut Caseworker that every time her partner's wishes were not fulfilled, her partner threatens her and shouts: "I will kill you and nothing will come out of it because you are just on a (partner visa)". During the latest incident before her first support session with SpeakOut caseworker, her partner turned off the electricity of the house after he said that he will kill Margaret. It was at this time that Margaret went to the police station to report that her partner was threatening her.

Margaret has moved to her friend's place. Throughout the support sessions Margaret has shown progress in the manner she viewed her situation. She diligently followed the case plan and safety plan that she and the SpeakOut caseworker has done after the first two support sessions. One of the key actions on her case plan was for her to undertake therapeutic counselling. After 5 therapeutic sessions with a psychologist she regained self-confidence and applied for jobs in different workplaces.

In November 2013 Margaret has successfully got employment as a cleaner in a nursing home where she worked part-time but casual. At the end of December 2013, Margaret got a full-time and regular job at a government hospital in Western Sydney. Immediately she rented a two-bedroom apartment through a real estate agent. Her SpeakOut caseworker provided advice to Margaret on where she could get information about tenancy.

Margaret and her daughter continue to live in this two-bedroom apartment. They ensure that they have a safety plan to prevent domestic and family violence from happening again. Margaret said that having a full-time job and a safe place to live is the best Christmas gift she ever had.

*Margaret is not the real name

Aisha's Success:

Grieving from the loss of her child and now building a new home

Aisha*, a 22-year Afghan woman was referred by her sister to Immigrant Women's Speakout Association (IWSA) on 31 of January 2014. She was assessed and provided an SpeakOut client-centred support she needed. The case worker at SpeakOut advised her to go to police and to apply for AVO. In the first session Aisha disclosed that Mr K - her husband was very controlling and constantly abusing her. Aisha was not allowed to attend any English class and her husband has been isolating her from her sister and community.

Background of Aisha's case:

In 2013, Aisha has been sponsored to migrate to Australia, by her partner – an Australian citizen. Months after Aisha's arrival, her husband prevented her to contact her sister in Sydney and also stopped her in calling her parents in Afghanistan. Her husband threatened her saying that "I will cancel your visa and send you back to Afghanistan if you are not obeying what I instruct you."

Due to her husband's abusive behaviour and controlling attitude she got depressed and had a miscarriage of her first child. Aisha became pregnant for the second time and it was a baby girl. As soon as her husband found that she is pregnant with a girl, he started abusing her physically and verbally yelling and swearing at her that "I hate girl for a child! and I do not want this baby at all." She was very scared and her feelings of anxiety became constant.

Her partner tricked her and forced her to travel to Afghanistan when she was eight months pregnant. Her husband abandoned her in Kabul and her passport was kept by her husband. Aisha contacted her sister in Sydney and asked for help. Her sister came to SpeakOut for advice. It is also through her sister that SpeakOut made correspondence through email to Aisha. She was advised to go to Australian Embassy in Kabul and report the situation. With the help of the SpeakOut caseworker Aisha was able to return to Australia sort out her permanent residency.

Police intervention and AVO application:

In 2014 Aisha went to the police and sought assistance for safety. She was granted the AVO on 1 April 2014. Throughout the support sessions Aisha diligently followed the safety plan and her welfare case plan. Aisha and her SpeakOut caseworker both designed her case plan.

Loss of her child:

Her daughter was born on 25 February 2014 with a life threatening heart condition at Auburn Hospital. Later her infant was transferred for treatment to Westmead Children's Hospital. After almost five months the baby died on 11/08/2014. Aisha was traumatized and devastated. She has fallen deep into trauma due to her grieving. She was referred for grieving counselling to a Persian speaking psychologist on a regular basis at her clinic or during home visit sessions at the house of Aisha's sister. Aisha undertook therapeutic counselling sessions regularly. Her trauma and grieving affected her whole being. Attending sessions with the professional psychologist enabled her to regain self-confidence and join group activities with SpeakOut's women group sessions.

Building a new life and new home:

Aisha is currently studying at NAVITAS to improve her English and look for a job to be self-reliant in the future. She is temporarily living with her sister. However she started a part-time job recently to earn money. She is very keen to rent her own accommodation soon after saving some money.

*Aisha is not the real name

NESB Domestic Violence Project: 1990-2015

The overhaul of the homelessness sector under the Going Home Staying Home (GHS) reforms has seen changes to the delivery of services to women experiencing domestic and family violence, particularly women of CALD background.

Immigrant Women's Speakout Association is disappointed to announce that it will no longer be funded to provide specialist domestic and family violence case management to CALD women in NSW. CALD women and children escaping DFV will instead be directed to newly funded preferred service providers who will work with them to combat homelessness in their locality. The transition of service providers and changes will take effect in early 2015.

SpeakOut is proud of its work within the homelessness sector over the last several years. We have been a safe haven for women and children in distress and prevented CALD clients from falling through the gaps in the system that has been, in most cases, difficult for them to navigate. Our specialist domestic violence service for CALD clients will no longer have an equivalent service covering all of NSW. Provision of case management for victims and advice for community workers with CALD clients will no longer be delivered by SpeakOut under the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) funding.

The NESB DV Project has always focused on several core components including Prevention and Awareness, Early Intervention and Post-Crisis DV and homelessness support. It has also used its experience with case-work and translated this into policy work and advocacy at both state and federal levels. SpeakOut has always worked with the most challenging and complex CALD domestic violence cases, receiving case management referrals and providing advice for respected community organisations and government departments over the years such as Auburn Diversity, various Migrant Resource Centres and Women's Health Centres, Muslim Women's Association, NSW Spanish and Latin American Association for Social Assistance (NSW SLASA), Jessie Street DV, Westmead Hospital, Navitas English Colleges, Youth Block, Asian Women at Work, Green Valley DV Services, Mt Druitt DV Services, Sutherland Shire Family Services, Settlement Services International, the Philippines-Australia Community Services Inc (PACSI), Centrelink, Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Relationships Australia, the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre (IARC), Legal Aid NSW, NSW Police Child Wellbeing Unit and DV liaisons, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (formerly DIAC), and refuges such as Elsie Women's Refuge, Woy Woy Women and Children Refuge, Bonnie's Support Service and Dolores Single Women's Refuge. It has been a pleasure to assist and work with such organisations over the years to provide CALD women with support and security.

Between August and October 2014, SpeakOut commenced transition from an SHS provider to a support role. In this case, the organisation had been notifying and matching our existing clients with preferred service providers in their local area under GHS. SpeakOut began the process of matching clients to the preferred homelessness service providers in August but with limited success because these services were not ready to accept new clients. They said that they would start fully operating by November 2014. At the conclusion of the transition period, SpeakOut will have handed its total of 71 ongoing clients to new services or closed their cases. This does not include the number of clients who have made first contact with the homelessness system through SpeakOut since the outcome of GHS tenders.

SpeakOut made sure that its existing service agreements and service specifications have been applied and fulfilled without change until 31 July 2014. SpeakOut has complied with all the transition activities including reporting.

As to the transitioning of clients, SpeakOut was guided by the following principles:

- The needs of clients are paramount during transition and beyond
- Communication with clients should be timely and should reassure clients that they will continue to receive the support they require
- All clients, including new clients, will continue to receive services until handover to successful providers have occurred, whether that be in the short or longer term
- Clients should be referred to non-SHS service providers where appropriate

The needs of CALD women in homelessness, particularly facing violence, are increasingly complex and varied. It is with great concern that Speakout will monitor these changes to ensure its past and current clients, as well as subsequent CALD women and children experiencing DFV, will be provided the intensive, culturally appropriate support they need.

While Speakout will retain and progress its expertise in dealing with CALD clients, we will be working to ensure that new services catering to CALD women in DFV will be able to access information and discuss arising issues of practice through the Non-English Speaking Background Domestic Violence Network (NESB DVN) meetings. This network was established with other women's domestic violence services and other relevant organisations in order to provide a forum for the factors and concerns unique to the CALD experience of homelessness and domestic violence. SpeakOut will continue to convene and facilitate this network, especially through this transition period, to ensure that services and CALD women are supported during the changes.

Monitoring of the new homelessness sector model is essential to prevent migrant and refugee women falling through the service gaps. There is particular concern for women and families on spousal and temporary visas who may be excluded from accessing crisis payments or housing due to their immigration status, which is often dependent on their abuser. Adequate protections must be provided to prevent violent partners and spouses from taking advantage of these changes.

25 Years of DV Support

The NESB DV Project was first funded in 1990 under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Programme (SAAP) as the Domestic Violence Follow-up Support Workers Project, and will come to a close in January 2015 under SHS. During this time, the organisation has assisted thousands of women and children in accessing services, advice and ensuring ongoing safety and support in NSW.

SpeakOut would like to thank all past and current domestic violence project officers and volunteers for their tireless efforts and advocacy on behalf of CALD women and children escaping violence over the last 25 years.

“Going Home, Staying Home”: The Future of Specialist Homelessness Services

From August 2014 to January 2015, SpeakOut has commenced and will complete the transition of its current clients to the assigned preferred service providers under the Going Home, Staying Home reform. These new service providers for clients will be determined based on their current location or housing arrangements – this will be to ensure those experiencing homelessness will be able to maintain their community connections and life during arising difficulties should they choose to remain in their homes.

Our caseworkers will be working with these organisations to ensure that the women and children currently with SpeakOut can make the transition smoothly, without compromising their safety or needs.

Under the GHSH reforms, the preferred service providers will be upskilling their workforces throughout 2015 to ensure each can meet the needs of CALD women and children in DFV and also those experiencing homelessness. While the focus of GHSH will be on homelessness prevention, these providers will also be required to prioritise safety and work with a trauma-informed care approach. They will offer a range of housing options for DFV clients, including crisis and transition responses as well as the option to remain in the home. Staff will have specialised experience or qualifications to be able to assist clients with their other needs alongside any of these housing arrangements. It is the hope of SpeakOut that cultural and language considerations will remain at the forefront of any casework response for CALD women and children escaping violence.

There have been indicators that this period of transition has been a difficult time and an unsettling experience for existing clients of SpeakOut, as well as CALD women in DFV who continue to make first contact with the homelessness service system through SpeakOut. CALD women escaping violence have expressed discontent and worry upon receiving advice to contact the new preferred service providers. SpeakOut continues to make every effort to pair our clients and CALD women in DFV with the list of preferred homelessness providers, but so far this process has been met with mixed results.

One client was turned away from the local preferred homelessness provider due to this service having limited space at that time. It was advised that the woman would be allocated a place later on within the transition period. Attempts to pair the woman with alternate homeless providers in other regions in Sydney were met with refusals based on her location.

Staff have also reported distress in existing clients with an unwillingness to move to alternate preferred service providers. Staff have experienced clients ‘shutting down’ during the transition period. They no longer wish to retell their stories and fear that they may also be misunderstood or that language and cultural barriers will make the process more difficult, or even jeopardise outcomes for their Family Violence Provisions applications.

It is for these reasons that SpeakOut will strive to maintain a support role during the GHSH transition and

continue to monitor the issues that affect CALD women and children in DFV.

Some issues for work with CALD homelessness and DFV clients include:

- the nature and influence of extended family (both in Australia and overseas)
- the pressures from a woman's cultural community regarding issues of divorce, separation and gender roles
- language barriers and lack of knowledge regarding DFV laws in Australia, including limited personal support networks or isolation from relevant services and misinformation within the community
- partner/spousal visas and trafficking of women through marriage (forced marriage, later occurring incidence of DFV in the relationship, slavery, and others)
- barriers to employment and income due to visa restrictions (during the Family Violence Provisions application process)
- fear of violence to family members or friends living outside of Australia and outside of Australian jurisdiction, including fear of being returned to country of origin after separating in cases of DFV
- fear of authorities and government including a fear of being disbelieved or penalised due to immigration status or status of family members
- the need for intensive support and guidance for Non-English Speaking Background clients using DFV-sensitive and highly qualified interpreters

These cannot be addressed solely by the work of homelessness (SHS) caseworkers and organisations, but it is important for the above issues to be considered throughout the process of eliminating homelessness in CALD communities.

Going Forward through GHSH Transition

For a successful transition under the Going Home, Staying Home reforms, homelessness services working with CALD clients should recognise and understand these external pressures and perspectives. It will take a dynamic and integrated service system to target all of these issues to ensure the safety and wellbeing of DFV victims from diverse backgrounds.

SpeakOut will be encouraging homelessness services working with CALD clients to make meaningful and ongoing connections with local cultural and community organisations and leaders to ensure prevention and education are a top priority. These partnerships will also provide an exchange of perspective to fully understand the context of each CALD client's needs and issues.

Further reading on the impact of transition and GHSH:

Rahimi, S. (2014), "Refuge Lost: The Impact Of The Going Home Staying Home Reform On Culturally And Linguistically Diverse Women's Specialist Services And Discussions On The Necessity Of The Continuation Of These Services", Harris Park: The Immigrant Women's Speakout Association NSW Inc.

IWSA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND STAFF 2013-2014

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Chairperson	Aurelia Gallardo
Vice Chairperson	Pallavi Sinha
Secretary	Laurie Berg
Treasurer	Kyungja Jung
Deputy Treasurer	Kamini Datta
Rural Representative	Pilar McGechan
Members	Ronnie Wang
	Mariam Hii

STAFF:

Executive Officer	Jane Corpuz - Brock
Project Officers	Alexandra Tindick
	Marichu Gloria
	Rukhshana Sarwar
	Mariam James
Accountants	Mohan Packianathan
	Krishna Mohanarajah
Admin Officer	Emina Kovac
Caretaker	Kawkab Jada

VOLUNTEERS:

Olivia Desevida, Olivia Mtacobankurako, Martha Kot, Sally Aljaliely, Safa Rahimi, Kerrie Rabe, Hannah Scott, Angela Cawt, Manju Ahuja, Maureen Singh, Emily Moralli, Tepaeru Cathy Ngature and Rima Awad



SpeakOut MC Members



2014 – 2015 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name/Organisation:	
Contact Person:	
Address:	
Telephone: (H)..... (W)..... (M).....	
Fax:	Email:
Language/s Spoken:	
Enclosed is a cheque/money order for \$..... being payment of membership.	

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Individual membership (unwaged):	Free
Individual membership (waged):	
○ Annual Income less than \$35 000pa	\$11(incl GST)
○ Annual Income \$35 000pa – \$50 000pa	\$16.50 (incl GST)
○ Annual Income more than \$50 000pa	\$27.50 (incl GST)

ORGANISATION MEMBERSHIP: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

○ Unfunded Organisations	Free	
○ Funded Organisations	\$22 (incl GST)	
○ Reciprocal Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Your Organisation is (please tick all applicable):

Ethno-specific Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi-ethnic Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women's Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Domestic Violence Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Membership payment should be made from 1st July 2014.

DONATION

Amount:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

I agree to abide by the aims and objectives of Immigrant Women's Speakout Association Inc.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

PO Box 9031, Harris Park NSW 2150
 Telephone (02) 9635 8022▲ Fax (02) 9635 8176
 Email: women@speakout.org.au

Photo Gallery

2013-2014



One Billion Rising 2014 at Blacktown



Classes at Speakout





Speakout AGM 2013



Celebrating International Women's Day 2014

Celebrating International Women's Day 2014



Afghan Group Activities





Kitchen Table Conversations



DV NESB Network meeting

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