SITARA'S STORY

ANNUAL REPORT

2024/25
AND
2025/26

Acknowledgment

We (SiTara's Story) acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of ACT.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Vision

SiTara's Story is an organisation of multicultural women working to advance the rights and status of multicultural women in Australia. We are a non-religious organisation reflecting the sectarian, cultural and linguistic diversity within the multicultural community.

We aim to inspire positive action by others and aspire to continuously enhance the quality, impact and effectiveness of our work.

SiTara’s Story seeks to build the self-esteem and self-worth of women, children and men within the community and beyond by changing their outlook on life, broadening their horizons, and helping them to empower themselves.

We work to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

Executive Committee

Dr Shamaruh Mirza

Founder, President



Dr Shamaruh Mirza is a Bangladeshi-Australian medical scientist, regulatory specialist, policy professional and community leader based in Canberra. An alumna of Australia's Pathways to Politics for Women program, she was named the 2023 ACT Local Hero in recognition of her community contributions. Her work bridges science, public policy and community advocacy, with a focus on gender equality, social justice and democratic values.

Samira Rahman

Co-founder, Secretary



Samira is a Senior Accountant in the Australian Government who combines her love for numbers with a genuine passionfor people and their mental well-being. She believes mental well-being and empowerment transcend borders and cultures. As a migrant, she understands the challenges faced by multicultural communities, particularly for adolescents and women, and committed to support by encouraging self-care, confidence, and emotional well-being.

Ashik Hasan

Treasurer



Originally from Bangladesh, Ashik moved to Canberra in 2023 and has volunteered with Sitara's Story since 2024. Drawing on his background in Marketing and Sales, Ashik contributes his strategic communication skills to a meaningful cause and supports mental health advocacy. As the only male volunteer in this female-led initiative, he believes in the power of storytelling to challenge cultural stigma, empower individuals, and foster a more inclusive community.

Members

Evana Rahman
Nazia Khan
Dipika Nand (stepped down)
Fatima Waqar (stepped down)
Wafa Ben Slimen
Ritoja Das Rusha
Rozana Azad (stepped down)

Advisors

Zainab Farouk
Dr. Shaista Waqar
Alicia Lweis
Heidi Prowse
Mohammed Ali
Nigar Reza
Hasnat Jahan
Rezwana Farha

Volunteers

Aisha Setipa
Soelily Consen-Lynch
Rumaan Zaman

Founder's note



I hope this note finds you in good health and high spirits. As the Founder of SiTara's Story Inc. (STS), it is my pleasure to present to you the Annual Report for the financial year 2024-25 and 2025-26.

We continued to build a safe space for women from diverse cultural backgrounds, enabling them to express themselves. In FY25 and FY26, STS successfully collaborated with the ACT Government and communities. Our priorities included mental health awareness, reducing intergenerational gaps in multicultural families, empowering women through skill development in ACT, promoting cross-cultural understanding through resilience and unity and so on.

Australia Chapter

Further to FY24s 'Breaking the Barrier' policy paper publication, SiTara's Story organised a Policy Paper launching ceremony along with a panel discussion. This event marked the culmination of three years of dedication and community engagement with multicultural migrant families in ACT, which uncovered the unspoken emotional burdens and intergenerational disconnect within their families. This policy paper filled a desperately needed gap of culturally grounded understanding, and the panel discussion addressed intergenerational trauma and communication in migrant families, as well as strategies to support parents and young people to minimise the intergenerational gaps.

Followed by identification of the intergenerational gap, SiTara's Story organised 'Bridging the Gap', a three-day workshop focusing on minimising intergenerational gaps between the Canberran migrant community to enhance a sense of identity as culturally diverse

Australians whilst communicating their challenges and aspirations effectively with their elderly generation. This workshop aimed to develop an awareness of the differences between generational viewpoints experienced by the youth growing up as culturally diverse ACT residents along with their families of a previous generation.

SiTara's Story also organised a community event 'Stories of New Citizens and First Nations Peoples' to honour the resilience and journey of new Australian citizens while fostering connection with First Nations perspectives. Reflecting on resilience and unity, this event focused on embracing new citizens and multicultural communities and promoted cross-cultural understanding.

Bangladesh Chapter

In January 2026, SiTara's Story, in partnership with Agami Education Foundation and Innovation for Wellbeing Foundation, delivered a Mental Health First Aid Training programme in Bangladesh, successfully training and certifying 47 teachers from seven schools.

The programme equipped teachers with practical skills to recognise and respond to mental health challenges among children and adolescents, including anxiety, depression, emotional distress and suicidal tendencies.

Key outcomes included:

- Improved mental health literacy: Greater awareness of student mental health challenges and early warning signs.
- Enhanced practical skills: Increased confidence in empathetic communication, early intervention and appropriate referrals.
- Classroom application: Teachers reported adopting more supportive approaches to student wellbeing and emotional needs.
- Strengthened school capacity: Improved readiness to provide initial mental health support, alongside strong demand for refresher and advanced training.

The initiative marks an important step towards building sustainable school-based mental health support systems and fostering safer, more inclusive and emotionally supportive learning environments for vulnerable children in Bangladesh.

Fundraising Twilight Gala

In 2025 SiTara's Story Inc. has made substantial progress in forging partnerships with corporate organisations as part of our fundraising gala, Together at Twilight. These collaborations have provided us with crucial financial support enabling us to broaden our reach and impact across Australia and Bangladesh.

EmpowerHER

iBreaking Silence, Building Strength – ACT Government-Supported Initiative
With support from the ACT Government, SiTara's Story has undertaken Breaking Silence, Building Strength, an initiative addressing domestic violence, mental health and coercive control within migrant families.

The initiative includes a podcast series, a community symposium and a documentary aimed at raising awareness, encouraging dialogue and strengthening understanding of the challenges faced by migrant communities.

To date, two podcasts exploring domestic violence and coercive control have been produced, alongside a symposium bringing together community voices and perspectives.

A documentary examining domestic violence and coercive control in migrant communities is currently in production, with a public screening planned for early 2027.

Through storytelling, community engagement and education, the initiative aims to break the silence surrounding abuse, empower affected individuals and promote healthier, safer relationships within migrant communities.

The year ahead

The experience of FY25 and FY26 highlighted the direct impact our work has on the lives of multicultural communities in ACT. We're committed to improving our collaborations, finding new partners, and using new technologies to be more effective and impactful.

Financial Performance

Please see the financial report.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to each executive member, shareholder, donor, volunteer and well-wisher whose unwavering support has enabled SiTara's Story Inc.'s achievements. The success we have achieved is a testament to our collective dedication and commitment to fostering education and supporting multicultural communities.

Best regards
Shamaruh Mirza

SiTara’s Story
Financial Report

FY2024-25

In FY25, SiTara’s Story’s income was $23.5k, a decrease of $14.7k from last financial year. This income consists of mostly grants and donations. Unfortunately, we were unable to organise any fund raising event during this financial year.

During FY25, one of the grants SiTara’s Story received was $10k Australia Day Grant from National Australia Day Council Limited for community event “Stories of New Citizens and First Nations Peoples” in January 2025. This event celebrated resilience and unity by welcoming new citizens and fostering multicultural understanding within diverse communities.

We were also able to secure another grant of $10.5k ACT Women’s Safety grant from Community Services Directorate (CSD) for our “EmpowerHER: Breaking Silence, Building Strength” project which was held in 2026. This symposium, followed by a documentary which is currently being prepared, focused on exploring domestic violence, mental health and the impacts of coercive control.

SiTara's Story Incorporated
Income Statement
1 July 2024 - 30 June 2025

Income	
Donation (Cash & Online transfer)	$656.00
Fund raising and promotional event	$0.00
Grants	$20,500.00
Membership fee	$2,300.00
Overhead Admin	$116.18
Bank Interest	$0.00
TOTAL INCOME	**$23,572.18**
Expense	
Preparation for fund-raising and promotional events	$16,212.06
Transfer to IWF (Project: Mental Wellbeing for children of CSW)	$0.00
Overhead Admin	$2,932.93
TOTAL EXPENSE	**$19,144.99**
Profit / (Loss)	**$4,427.19**
Opening Bank:	**$24,240.87**
Closing Bank	**$28,668.06**

SiTara's Story Incorporated
Financial Position
1 July 2024 - 30 June 2025

Asset	
Cash (Bank balance as at 30 June 2025)	$28,668.06
Total assets	**$28,668.06**
Liability	
Other Liabilities	$0.00
Total Liabilities	**$0.00**
Equity	
Current Year Surplus (Profit from Income Statement 2024-25)	$4,427.19
Retained Earnings (Total equity from FY 2024-25)	$24,240.87
Equity	**$28,668.06**

SiTara’s Story
Financial Report

FY2025-26

In FY26, SiTara’s Story’s income was $22.2k, a decrease of $1.3k from last financial year. This income consists of donations and fundraising gala Together at Twilight at The Red Shed. We were not able to secure any grant in this financial year.

The only fundraising event we organised in FY26 is the annual charity gala dinner, ‘Together at Twilight’ at The Red Shed, dedicated to building bridges across cultures and mental health awareness. This gala dinner in conjunction with the exhibition and auction of various items from multicultural community was a success with around $1.2k fund raised.

We have resumed our activity in Bangladesh through project ‘Mental Health First Aid Training for Teachers’. During FY26, to fund this project we have transferred $9.5k to our partner in Bangladesh, Agami Education Foundation. This project aims to at strengthening school teachers’ capacity to identify, respond to, and support students experiencing mental health challenges.

SiTara's Story Incorporated
Income Statement
1 July 2025 - 30 June 2026

Income	
Donation (Cash & Online transfer)	$100.00
Fund raising and promotional event	$21,182.69
Grants	$0.00
Membership fee	$1,000.00
Overhead Admin	$0.00
Bank Interest	$0.00
TOTAL INCOME	**$22,282.69**
Expense	
Preparation for fund-raising and promotional events	$24,525.36
Transfer to IWF (Project: Mental Wellbeing for children of CSW)	$9,579.58
Overhead Admin	$1,906.22
TOTAL EXPENSE	**$36,011.16**
Profit / (Loss)	**-$13,728.47**
Opening Bank:	**$28,668.06**
Closing Bank	**$14,939.59**

SiTara's Story Incorporated
Financial Position
1 July 2025 - 30 June 2026

Asset	
Cash (Bank balance as at 30 June 2026)	$14,939.59
Total assets	**$14,939.59**
Liability	
Other Liabilities	$0.00
Total Liabilities	**$0.00**
Equity	
Current Year Surplus (Loss from Income Statement 2025-26)	-$13,728.47
Retained Earnings (Total equity from FY 2025-26)	$28,668.06
Equity	**$14,939.59**

It is important to note that SiTara's Story relies on the membership fee to run the overhead admin of the organisation. While in comparison with FY24 the membership fee has slightly increased in FY25, from $1.7k to $2.3k, it has significantly decreased in FY26 to $1k, leaving us with less to move forward. For perspective, we had membership fee of $3.2k in FY23. All Executive Members of SiTara's Story are responsible to pay a monthly membership fee of $25 to our bank account, while this is voluntary for all advisors.

Through fund raising gala dinner, other donations and sponsors SiTara's Story raised a total fund of around $23.5k and $22.2 respectively in FY25 and FY26. Respectively, we incurred an expense liability of $19.1k and $36k to organise fund raising and various other events, maintain professional membership with relevant agencies, running projects in Bangladesh and continue to fund our ongoing projects. This resulted in a profit of $4.4k during FY25, a 22% increase in compared to FY24. However, in FY26 we have suffered a loss of $13.7k mostly due to lack of any grant. Please refer to attached Income Statement and Financial position for further details.

We thank all our sponsors and donors for the grants and donations, which are so essential for us to continue providing much-needed services to the communities.

Australia: Together at Twilight
Annual Gala 2025

Together at Twilight was held on 19th October 2025 at The Red Shed. The evening was dedicated to building bridges across cultures and mental health wellbeing. Proceeds will benefit the multicultural communities in Australia and the mental health support programs in underprivileged schools and among marginalised groups in Bangladesh.

The evening presented thrilling speeches from Craig Foster and Rashedul Hasan, celebrating diversity and highlighting connection, empathy, inclusion and kindness. The night offered a delightful three-course meal complemented by fantastic activities and the chance to connect with incredible people and learn about their fascinating stories. The evening was sold out.

Bangladesh: Mental Health First Aid Training for Teachers

We have resumed our activity in Bangladesh through project ‘Mental Health First Aid Training for Teachers’ in collaboration with Agami Education Foundation and Innovation for Wellbeing Foundation. Through a MoU, we have funded this project. This project aims to at strengthening school teachers’ capacity to identify, respond to, and support students experiencing mental health challenges. In January 2026, 47 teachers from seven schools participated in two batches of three-day in-person training on recognising mental health concerns among children and adolescents and developing skills in empathetic communication, early intervention, and referral.

for details pls see the report.

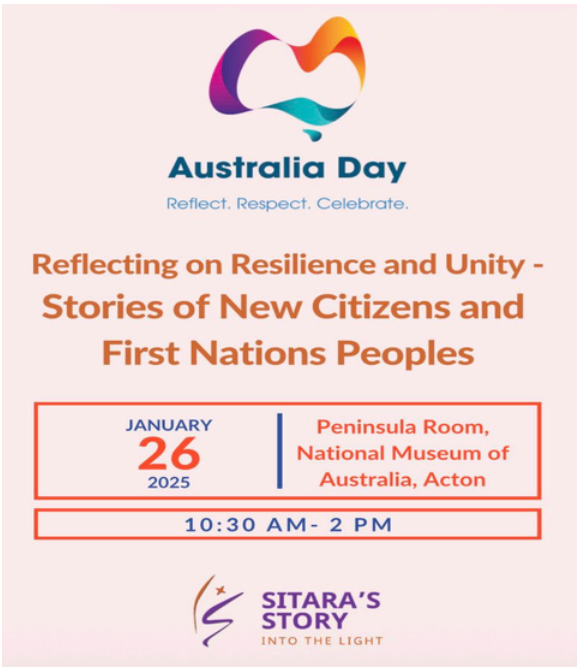
Gallery

Stories of New Citizens and First Nations Peoples

Australia Day, January2025











Sun, Jan 26, 2025

Reflecting on Resilience and Unity - Stories of New Citizens and First Nations Peoples

Stories of New Citizens and First Nations Peoples

Australia Day, January2025













Stories of New Citizens and First Nations Peoples

Australia Day, January2025











Stories of New Citizens and First Nations Peoples

Australia Day, January2025











Bridging The Gaps

Workshop on minimising intergenerational gaps

March 2025





Marisa Paterson MLA
March 3, 2025 ·

🎀 Cozy Crafts with SiTara's Story 🧵

Had an amazing time at the SiTara's Story cozy crafts session this weekend! 🌸 It was an afternoon filled with culture, creativity, and meaningful connections across generations. Don't miss their final 'Bridging Intergenerational Gaps' workshop, which will include a picnic and scavenger hunt! Head over to the SiTara's Story website for more details. ✨

Bridging The Gaps

Workshop on minimising intergenerational gaps

March 2025











Breaking the Barrier

Policy Paper publication

May 2025











Together at Twilight

Annual gala, October 2025















Together at Twilight

Annual gala, October 2025







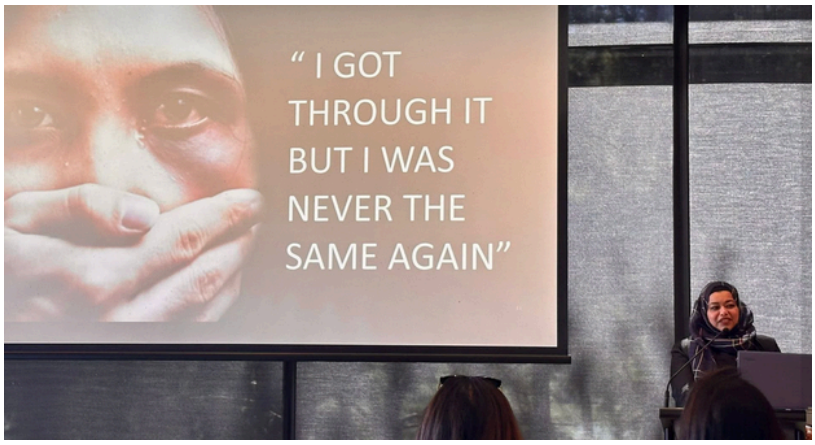






EmpowerHER: Breaking Silence, Building Strength

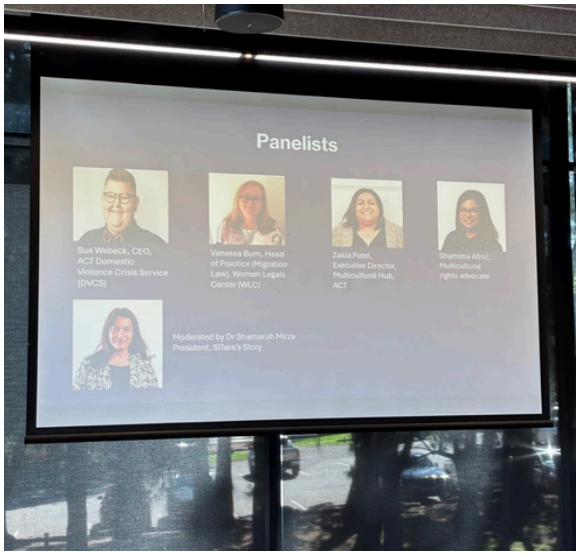
March 2026













Bangladesh: Mental Health First Aid Training for Teachers

January 2026







Sponsors and partners











