



SEWACS Budjungal Communities, Connection, Belonging

Annual Report 2023-2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

OF COUNTRY

We wish to acknowledge and pay our respects to the traditional custodians of the lands, waterways and airspace of the shires we work in. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge sovereignty was never ceded.

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View from Gulaga Mountain

Chairperson's Report

This year SEWACS Budjungal has continued to grow and evolve in ways that reflect our commitment to supporting vulnerable individuals and communities in the Bega Valley and Eurobodalla. I am proud to reflect on the progress and achievements we have made as an organization during 2023-2024.

A significant focus this year has been the development of our rebranding, which is still a work in progress. We are excited to officially launch our new brand, SEWACS Budjungal, early next year. This rebranding, along with a new tagline, "Communities, Connection, Belonging," reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering inclusivity and support for all those we serve. We are grateful to the local Djirriganj Elders for granting us permission to use the name Budjungal, meaning "belonging," as part of this transformation.

In addition to the rebranding, we have undertaken the significant task of developing a new strategic plan, including a comprehensive review of our mission and values. This process involved extensive consultation with staff and board members to ensure that our direction aligns with the evolving needs of the community and the services we provide. The strategic plan will guide our priorities and actions over the coming years, positioning us to continue delivering impactful support to those most in need.

This year, we also saw the expansion of vital programs, including the extension of the Staying Home Leaving Violence pilot in the Eurobodalla region, which has demonstrated the pressing need for such support services. Our work to address domestic and family violence through case management, court support, and safety planning continues to make a profound difference in the lives of many women and children. We also made strides in providing transitional housing in Moruya, which will offer safe, accessible, and long-term accommodation options for women fleeing violence.

Throughout the year, our dedicated staff have engaged in professional development, ensuring that they are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge to respond effectively to the complex needs of our clients. Training on topics such as non-fatal strangulation, trauma, and coercive control has been essential to the ongoing upskilling of our team.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our staff, board members and volunteers. Your dedication, professionalism, and compassion are the heart of SEWACS Budjungal. I am also grateful to our partner organisations, funders, and supporters whose generosity and collaboration have made our work possible.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to addressing the challenges faced by our clients and communities, continuing our work to provide safe spaces, practical support, and advocacy for those who need it most.

Thank you all for your unwavering commitment to the values and mission of SEWACS Budjungal.

Brianna Van Leeuwen

Executive Officer's Report

This year has held challenges and highlights. We have seen staff come and we have seen staff move on to other ventures. We have spent some time in developing the rebrand, our new vision and value statements and the strategic plan. We have also seen the development of a Better Men program, which will help with becoming accredited in Men's Behaviour Change. This is a testament to the dedication of Lyla, who is becoming an accredited facilitator. We have also hosted the Essential Skills in Men's Behaviour Change run through the Education Centre Against Violence (NSW Health).

Our Staying Home Leaving Violence pilot has been extended for another year. We are hopeful this will become a funded, ongoing program. Feedback and data support our belief that this long-awaited program is much needed in the Eurobodalla region.

SEWACS continues to support students in gaining experience and knowledge through student placements. We have supported three social work students through their placements in both Eurobodalla and the Bega Valley and one Diploma of Welfare student in Bega.

Development of plans for a transitional property in Moruya has reached the final planning stages before going out to tender to start the build. This will see three units built, replacing the three bedroom home that was destroyed by fire several years ago. One of the new units will have disability access.

Angela, Zoe, Vesna and I were privileged to be able to attend Elsie Refuge 50th anniversary conference. Elsie was the first women's refuge in Australia.

Thank you to the staff and board members for their continued commitment to SEWACS Budjungal and the people we support. The level of dedication and professionalism is appreciated.

I would also like to thank our partner agencies and to the people and groups who have made donations and continue to support the organisation.

Caroline Long



Staff and board members gather for our annual Christmas lunch. This year we met at Bermagui.

Board Members

At the last AGM Angelique took a leave of absence from the board as secretary and Andrea was able to fulfil this role. During the year Danya Thompson resigned from the board and her position as vice chairperson due to family and work commitments.

Brianna Van Leeuwen - Chairperson

Brianna is a social worker with over a decade of experience in the field of mental health services. She holds a Master of Social Work and a Graduate Certificate in Child Welfare, along with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts. Brianna is the Director and Principal Clinician at Little Black Duck Therapy and was the former Service Manager at Headspace Bega. She is dedicated to providing therapeutic services to children, adolescents, and families, with a focus on creating tailored treatment plans. Passionate about giving back, Brianna is dedicated to her local community, actively engaging in initiatives to support and uplift those in need.

Andrea Powell – Secretary

Andrea has over 42 years of experience as a social worker in a number of government and community-based NGO settings. She has a strong commitment to supporting the not-for-profit sector to provide quality community services in response to emerging needs and was instrumental in establishing several feminist services in the Bega Valley and Eurobodalla LGA's. Andrea holds numerous tertiary qualifications including a Diploma of Community Sector Management.

Robyn Jamieson - Treasurer

Robyn has over 35 years of experience in the Commonwealth public service, predominantly in data, reporting and program delivery roles. With middle management experience across agencies such as the Bureau of Statistics, Dept of Prime Minister & Cabinet, and the National Indigenous Australians Agency, Robyn brings to the Board a good knowledge of evidence-based decision-making and Commonwealth funding processes and programs. Robyn has a keen focus on simplifying and strengthening systems to ensure easy compliance for staff to focus on their core business. In more recent years, Robyn's involvement in housing and homelessness and employment programs has fuelled her commitment to supporting not-for-profits working directly with people impacted by these issues.

Marjorie McKnight - Member

Marjorie gained a Diploma in Secretarial Studies when she completed school and worked for various companies. After raising her family Marjorie returned to work in the Banking and Finance sector as Personal Assistant to Senior Executives before retiring in 1999. Since moving to the Bega Valley she has devoted much of her time in volunteering in community organisations in various community roles. Marjorie has been an active member of the CWA since 2008. This includes holding an office bearer positions for the last 6 years, Marjorie was chairperson of SEWACS for two years and has been an active board member since 2019.

Ruth Fenwick - Member

Ruth has over 24 years of experience in senior public sector roles including the position of Chief Operating Officer with responsibility for all corporate outcomes including people and financial management, project and program management, corporate governance, assurance

and risk, and high-level strategic advice. Previous roles included leading Ministerial, Parliamentary and Freedom of Information functions. Ruth fosters a service delivery culture and has led the design and implementation of multiple projects and programs in areas such as welfare to work, homelessness research, compliance, grants and housing affordability. Ruth holds qualifications in Workplace and Business Coaching, Project Management and Government Procurement. Ruth is passionate about using her broad skillset to support not for profit organisations.

Achievements

Much effort and time has gone into developing our strategic plan, including updating our vision statement and values. We were fortunate enough to have Nicole Weber as our facilitator of these workshops. Staff and board members participated in this process and were able to help in the development of these working documents. Credit also goes to the board, in particular Robyn, who spent time in developing an initial framework and who ran information and consultative sessions for all staff as part of the preliminary process.

A big achievement that has taken a few years to workshop and achieve consensus is our rebrand. We will be trading as SEWACS Budjungal. We were given permission by local Djirriganj Elders to use Budjungal, which means belonging. Our tag line has also changed. It is now Communities, Connection, Belonging.



Staff development day at Bermagui



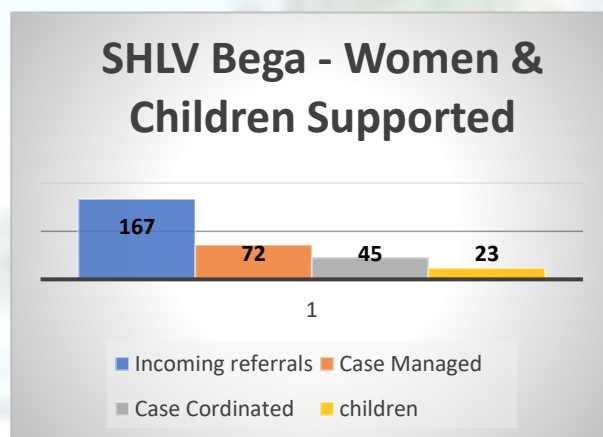
Staff engaged in ongoing professional development and training, upskilling in areas such as recognising issues and impacts associated with non-fatal strangulation, understanding trauma and the brain, coercive control and recognising the ways in domestic abuse presents itself during natural disasters.

Program Reports

Staying Home Leaving Violence Bega responded to 167 incoming referrals. Seventy-two women received intensive case management, and 45 were supported through case coordination. We also provided services to 23 children who had experienced domestic abuse.

SHLV supported clients with:

- Applying for Apprehended Violence Orders
- Court support
- Advocacy with housing, health, finance and education
- Safety planning and risk assessment
- Referrals for counselling supports
- Referrals to Legal Aid and Shoalcoast Community Legal Service
- Provision of educational resources
- Victims' services claims approved (\$9,650)
- Escaping violence payments (\$18,500)
- Vouchers (\$5,390)
- Fines reduced (\$1,516)
- Education grants for Clients (\$1,000)
- Security camera and solar light installations (31)
- Provision of Dash Cams (7)
- Provision of Wesnet phones (4)
- Provision of personal security resources including torches and personal alarms (42)



Staff conducted five information sessions with various community support services and health care providers in the Bega Valley.

SHLV participated in attending important community events including NAIDOC activities and the launch of the “in Our Backyard” Bega Valley Shire Pocket Guide resource to supporting survivors of domestic abuse.



Vesna speaking about SHLV at the “In Our backyard” launch with WDVCS

“Very happy excellent service. Fantastic workers. Was respected supported and understanding”

We worked to continuously improve our system for tracking and ensuring delivery of case plan goals for clients.

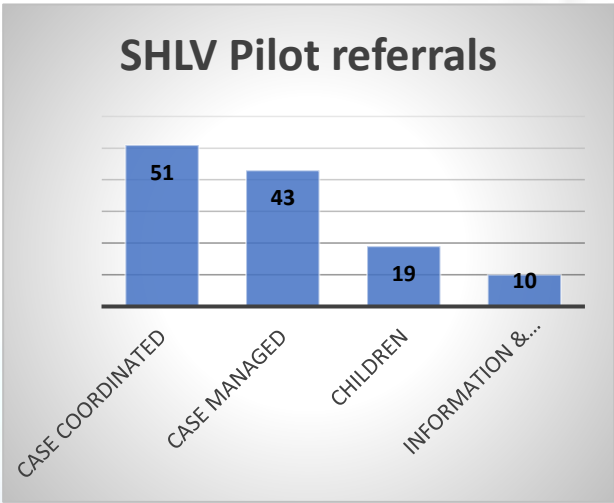
Brokerage was utilised to support children with participation in positive recreational, social and educational activities.

Staying Home Leaving Violence Pilot continued to support women throughout Eurobodalla. The team of two have received 110 incoming referrals this year. Of these 94 received a higher level of support and 10 received information and referral and 6 were not supported as they did not meet the criteria. This is a testament to the need as well as the commitment from staff to provide this essential service.

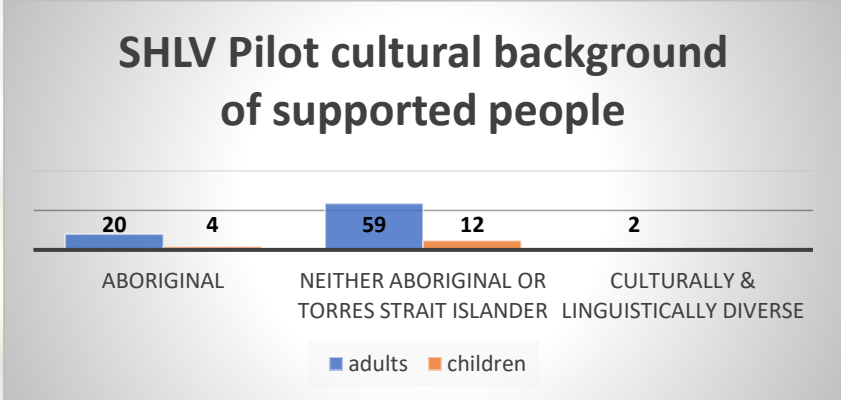
The requirements for this program were to provide case coordination to 30 women, case management to 17 and support to 16 children. In all areas the key performance indicators were exceeded.

The program delivered 10 information sessions to community groups and other organisations throughout Eurobodalla.

"I appreciate all the information & support provided to me by SHLV & since engagement, I feel better equipped & confident to make informed choices for myself, my wellbeing, my welfare & safety."



The SHLV Euro team became upskilled in using tools. A big thank you to Bunnings Batemans Bay

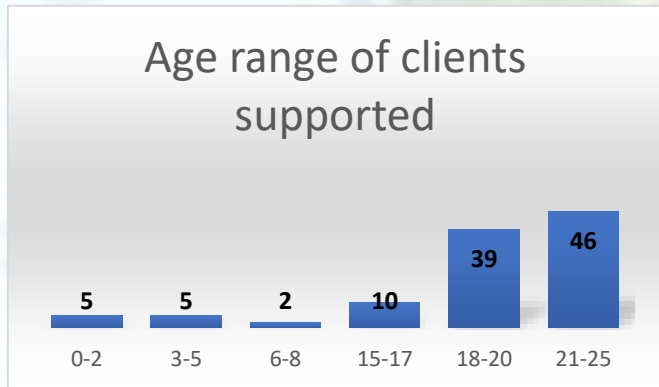


Bega Valley Youth Homelessness Support Service has seen many changes over the last 12 months including new staff joining the team and others moving onto other career choices.

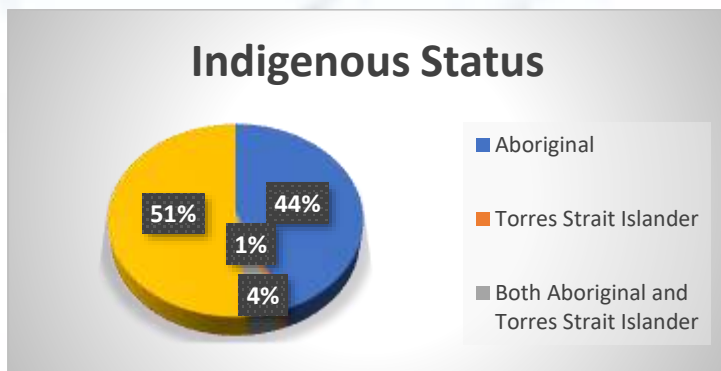
We supported 120 young and families who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. This included 79 young people who were experiencing homelessness and 41 who were at risk of homelessness.

During the year, we actively represented SEWACS on:

- Homelessness case coordination meetings
- Bega Youth Homelessness Partnership Program
- Rent Choice Youth meetings
- Homes NSW



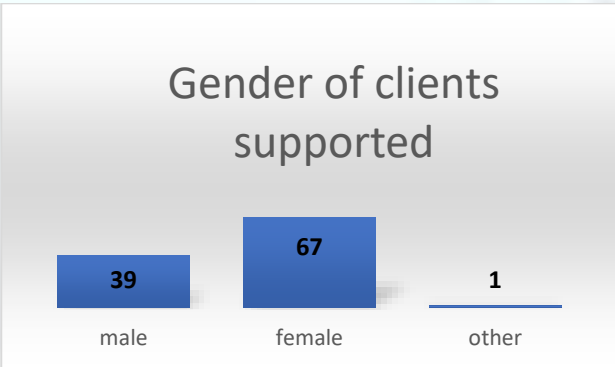
The age range of presenting clients includes young people with small children. There has been an increase in young families being referred.



49% of clients identified as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander people.

"Thank you for everything. I don't think I'd be where I am today if it wasn't for the help I've received from all of you at Bega Youth."

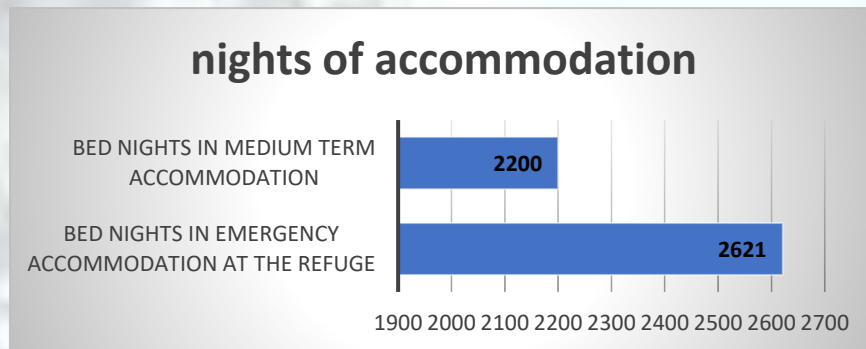
"Thank you so much for all of your support. SEWACS as an organisation, have gone above and beyond to help me from the day I entered your services. I appreciate all the help I have received for myself and my girls from advocating to ensuring we had safe and stable housing. I can't thank you guys enough for what



The majority of clients supported were female

Eurobodalla Domestic and Family Violence Homelessness Support Service supported 206 women, 33 children and 35 men. Clients aged 26-35 years represent the largest client group. 86 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were supported.

What we did:



- Male Outreach visits (155)
- Hampers of donated food or personal items (84)
- Vouchers for food, fuel and homewares (42)
- DV Phones (4)
- Emergency camping packs (2)
- Victims' Services claims approved for clients (\$31,000)
- Escaping Violence Payments (\$115,000)

We provided children’s activities at Mother’s Day and ANZAC day and craft on Saturdays. We also took part in the Southern Cross Tenants Christmas lunch.

We had an afternoon where clients made vision boards. Client feedback was that these boards helped them to be able to think positively and be able to know there is light at the end of the tunnel from their current situation.

We helped to deliver Love Bites, respectful relationships delivered to Batemans Bay High School and St Peters High School.



Eurobodalla Team Building lunch at Moruya were held to foster a sense of cultural safety and have time to share food together. Staff brought in home cooked food with ingredients labelled, to respect the diverse range of food requirements within the team.



A Client's Story

A woman was supported in our refuge for over four months after fleeing an emotionally and physically violent ex-partner. During her stay there were significant challenges including legal issues, significant mental health concerns, suicidal ideation and further intervention by staff, and challenges to securing long-term accommodation due to her lack of a rental history.

We supported her in applying for appropriate financial aid relating to her history of sexual violence, which was revealed while at the refuge. She was also approved for the Start Safely Rental Subsidy and Rent Start Bond Loan and was approved for a rental property closer to her daughter.

While at the refuge, she engaged in a vision board making workshop to plan out her future. When suitable accommodation was found near her daughter, the real estate agent was able to help source some furniture to make the property ready for the woman's arrival. We have linked her in with a local service that offers support groups for domestic violence and mental health. She reported she's both excited and scared for her future but is incredibly grateful to our service for the support she received, saying, "Thank you ladies for everything, you girls saved my life. I will never forget you".

Our Partners and Supporters

SEWACS acknowledges and thanks our funding provider, Department of Communities and Justice, for their continued support.



Communities
& Justice

We acknowledge the work of all our partners and supporters, including the individuals who have made generous donations, including the donation of a car provided to a young person in need, which gave them transport to allow them to continue to work.

This has been greatly appreciated.

Anglicare, APMB, Bega valley Shire Council, Bega Women's Resource Centre, Betta Electrical Bega, Big W Bega, Brighter Futures, Bruno Rocha Design, Bunnings, Campbell Page, Capital Chemist Merimbula, Coastal Therapy Collective, Coles, Community Pantry, Community Mental Health Sexual Assault Service, CWA, Direct Chemist Outlet, Directions, Eurobodalla Shire Council, Eurobodalla Domestic Violence Committee, Eurobodalla Homelessness Forum, Everyman, Flourish, FRRR, Grand Pacific Health, Hair Café, Harvey Norman, Headspace, Hope House, In2 Skin, Katungul, Legal Aid, South Coast Outreach, Local GP Clinics, Marymead-Catholic Care, Mcare, Merimbula Body and Skin, Mission Australia, Monty's Place, Mogo Men's Shed, Next Steps, Ocean Secure Locksmiths, Pacific Furniture, Playability, Police, Plevy's Chemist, Procurements Australia, Rotary, Quaama Dance group, Quota Club Narooma/Dalmeny, SAGE Market Gardens, Salvation Army, Sandy Grant, Sapphire Health and Wellbeing Service, Sapphire Neighbourhood Services, SHASA (South Coast Health and Sustainability Alliance), Shoal Coast Community Legal Centre, Skin & Tonic, Social Justice Advocates of the Sapphire Coast, South Coast WDVCS and Safety Action Meeting, Southern Life Church Pantry, Southern NSW Family Connect and Support, Southern Cross Housing, St John's Anglican Church, St Peter's Anglican Church, Studio 157, Suicide Prevention Outreach Team, Tathra Uniting Church, The Family Place, Triple C Counselling, Victims Services, Waminda Nowra, Wellways, Wesley Mission Escaping Violence Program, Woolworths.



Alex receiving the Street Smart donation of sheets and towels

Zoe and Angela with year 12 school leader students from St Peters school with donated items for International Women's Day. This was an initiative of the students.



All your staff and SEWACS as an organisation as a whole have been lovely to deal with. I work with multiple emergency accommodation and welfare providers at the moment, and SEWACS is easily the most responsive in terms of getting paperwork and payments sorted quickly for me. Also haven't had a single issue with any of the tenants you've sent my way as well. Look forward to continuing our working relationship moving forward.

Treasurers Report

Congratulations to SEWACS Budjungal for another year of good fiscal management.

Budgets

This year we continued to deliver high-quality services within allocated budgets across all of our programs. Annual budgets for each program are developed by the Leadership Team at the start of the financial year. Given the high demand for our programs and the complex needs of our clients, the Leadership Team and staff have done an impressive job to land program budgets almost exactly on target.

Profit and Loss – 2023-2024

SEWACS Budjungal made a small loss of \$58,154 in 2023-24, with expenses exceeding income by less than 3 percent. The rise in expenses was across a range of expense categories and is generally reflective of the current economic climate. It is not uncommon for a not-for-profit to occasionally experience a small loss. While undesirable, SEWACS Budjungal is prepared for such outcomes and well-positioned to manage the impact.

Total Income	\$1,950,366
Total Expenses	\$2,008,520
Net (Loss)	(\$58,154)

Balance Sheet, 2023-24

In addition to managing our budgets responsibly, SEWACS Budjungal continues to keep sufficient cash reserves to meet long-term debt obligations and remain solvent. This is our 'safety net' and is required as part of our financial management. Maintaining our safety net sometimes requires the Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Board, to make very difficult decisions on where our funds should be directed.

The Executive Officer and Office Manager do an excellent job balancing the competing

Total Assets	\$902,067	Liabilities + Equity	\$902,067
		Total Liabilities	\$437,771
		Equity	\$464,296
		Retained earnings	\$522,450
		Current earnings	-\$58,154

financial needs of our organisations. The Board recognises this, and notes their job is made easier by the support of program managers and staff to operate within their financial parameters. As Treasurer, I have seen how this has been achieved – through our policies and procedures, through well run programs, through dedicated and responsible staff, and through strong decision-making by the Executive Team and the Board.

Well done, SEWACS Budjungal!

Robyn Jamieson

South East Women and Children's Services Inc

Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash assets	8	722,574	663,493
Receivables			
Trade receivables		(459)	10,912
Total current assets		722,115	674,405
Non-current assets			
Fixed assets	9	179,952	237,022
Total assets		902,067	911,427
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables			
Trade creditors		(4,798)	(21,000)
SJA rent		-	94
Credit cards		-	682
		4,798	21,776
GST & PAYG payable			
GST collected		125,960	123,688
GST paid		(94,201)	(99,349)
PAYG		20,750	26,174
		52,509	50,513
Provisions			
Employee entitlements			
Annual Leave Provisions		112,521	88,522
Long Service Provisions		84,333	76,650
Sick Leave Provisions		35,899	42,592
Time in Lieu Provisions		2,605	1,183
Total		235,358	208,947
Maintenance provision		-	1,575
		235,358	210,522
Other liabilities			
Accrued funding	15	137,240	99,300
DV committee funds		6,866	6,866
Bond for clients		1,000	-
		145,106	106,166
Total current liabilities		437,771	388,977
Total liabilities		437,771	388,977
Net assets		464,296	522,450
Equity			
Retained earnings		464,296	522,450

South East Women and Children's Services Inc

Statement of changes in equity
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Retained earnings
	\$
2023	
Opening balance	538,736
Result for the year	(16,286)
Closing balance	522,450
<hr/>	
2024	
Opening balance	522,450
Result for the year	(58,154)
Closing balance	464,296

South East Women and Children's Services Inc

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income
For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		\$	\$
Income			
Income from funding bodies		1,789,958	1,797,333
Rental income from properties		25,272	22,688
Rental income from clients		11,776	14,244
Other Income	4	80,262	118,132
WorkCover Reimbursement		43,098	-
Total income		1,950,366	1,952,397
Expenses			
Program Administration expenses	5	1,919,575	1,803,820
Properties expenses	6	11,200	14,898
Resident/client expenses	7	77,745	149,965
Total Expenses		2,008,520	1,968,683
Operating surplus/(deficit) before income tax		(58,154)	(16,286)
Income tax	3,a	-	-
Operating surplus/(deficit) attributable to the members of the association		(58,154)	(16,286)
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		(58,154)	(16,286)

Contact Us

SEWACS Budjungal
PO Box 921, Bega NSW 2550
02 6492 2088
admin@sewacs.org.au
sewacs.org.au