CICT
Communities in Cultural Transition Project

STARTTS
NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

CICT FORUM 2024

"LISTEN & CONNECT"

EXPLORING THE RICH TAPESTRY OF CULTURAL HISTORIES WITHIN OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Granville Centre
2A Memorial Dr, Granville NSW 2142

MAY | 30 | 2024

5 pm to 8:30 pm

Welcome

Welcome to the 2024 STARTTS CiCT Forum. Under this year's theme, 'Listen and Connect,' we invite you to deeply engage with stories of struggle and resilience, to listen with intent to understand and not just to respond. Through such understanding, we aim to build bridges across diverse backgrounds, strengthening the fabric of our community through inclusivity and variety.

The CiCT Forum is more than an event; it is a commitment to action and a promise to enhance the well-being of refugees and migrants by honoring your voices and contributions.

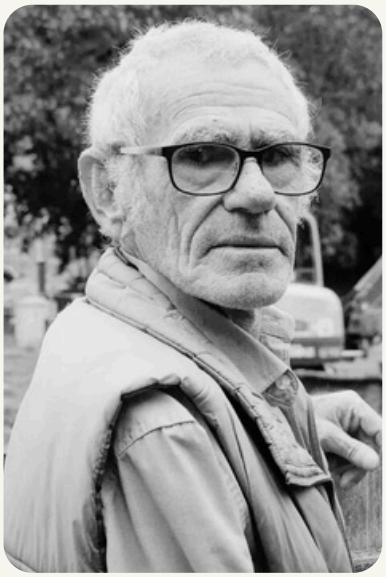
Today, we come together to listen to tales of survival and hope. We will hear each others histories, we will learn about the power of advocacy, and be moved by the cultural expressions that narrate tales of old and new homelands. Each session, each story, each performance is a thread in the larger narrative of our collective journey towards understanding and collaboration.

Together, through listening and connecting, we can transform challenges into opportunities for growth and understanding, paving the way for a future where every community member is valued, heard, and connected.

Our Speakers

Our Keynote Speaker, Om Dhungel is a respected consultant and community engagement expert whose strength-based approach has empowered individuals and organisations. A Bhutanese refugee, Om leverages his personal and professional experiences to advocate for community integration and support.

Abang Anade Othow, harnesses her diverse experiences to inspire resilience and change. A respected MC and speaker, she also leads initiatives like "Coloured Buckets of Hope" and "Bring the Teachers Home," focusing on empowering refugees and disadvantaged communities globally. Abang is an ambassador for multiple organisations, promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion.



Uncle Des is a Darug Elder whose life journey took him from the Gully in the Blue Mountains to various roles in community service and education. He's been a pivotal figure in court support, police liaison, and youth support, and has educated on Aboriginal history and culture at various institutions.

Jasmina Bajraktarevic-Hayward, a Social Worker and refugee from Bosnia-Herzegovina, manages STARTTS' Community Services Program. With vast experience in community development and mental health initiatives, she leads diverse teams and projects, enhancing support for refugees. Jasmina is also the President of the Refugee Council of Australia and actively contributes to several advocacy networks.

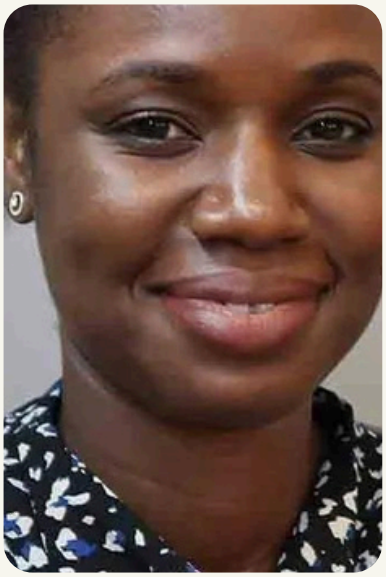
The Auling Drora Tamo Tibetan dance group is composed of enthusiastic young Tibetans dedicated to preserving and sharing the rich traditions of Tibetan culture through dance.

B-Ann S. Echevarria is the Refugee Women's Health Project Officer at the NSW Refugee Health Service. She coordinates the delivery of education sessions to newly resettled women refugees, undertakes health projects in partnership with other agencies to promote women's health and well-being and engages and advocates with health and settlement services to facilitate better health outcomes for women refugees and their families.

Farhad Arian currently serves as the Stakeholder Engagement Manager at CORE Community Services, where he leads multicultural engagement and advocacy initiatives. His extensive experience spans roles in community development, academia, and international development organisations.

The Avazan Music Group promotes Middle Eastern music, celebrating cultural diversity and the therapeutic aspects of music, especially in supporting the mental health of women.

Kumva and Kwibuka aim to foster empathy and inclusion through sharing the harrowing personal stories of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. Their programs are designed to educate and facilitate understanding of genocide's impacts.



Adama Kamara is an experienced community development practitioner skilled in engagement and capacity building across diverse groups in Western Sydney. Adama has also led the Sierra Leone Youth Group, addressing the needs of young humanitarian entrants. She joined RCOA in 2021, advocating for asylum seekers and refugees.

Najeeba Wazefadost fled Afghanistan at 10 and sought asylum in Australia. A founder of the Global Refugee Network and an advocate for refugee-led initiatives, she uses her background in Medical Science and policy to empower refugee women and improve refugee policies globally. Najeeba is the Founder of APNOR.

Dr. Atem Dau Atem, PhD, is STARTTS' Acting Senior Communities in Cultural Transition Project Officer. He previously worked for Fairfield City Council and Bayside Council in roles including Multicultural Officer, Social Planning and Advocacy Officer and Community Development Inclusion Specialist. Before working for local government, Atem worked for various settlement support services.

Lucky African Dance offers a vibrant blend of African rhythms and dances, enriching audiences with dynamic performances that celebrate African cultural heritage and the power of dance.

Rachel Hennessy is a key member of the Multicultural Education team at the NSW Dept of Education. She oversees the support for refugee students in NSW government schools, coordinating professional learning for staff and designing training programs. Her work focuses on fostering successful educational and settlement outcomes for refugee students through collaborations with various agencies and research initiatives.

Forum Program

5:00 PM:	Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country by STARTTS representative Jasmina Bajraktarevic and Uncle Des
5:15 PM:	Keynote Speech by Om Dhungel
5:42 PM:	Connect with: Afghanistan
5:48 PM:	Performance by Auling Drora Tamo Tibetan Dance Group
5:58 PM:	Panel Discussion 1: Building Bridges, Strengthening Communities
6:23 PM:	Q&A for Panelists
6:38 PM:	Connect with: Ukraine
6:39 PM:	Performance by Avazan Music Group

6:44 PM:	Dinner Break
7:04 PM:	Connect with: Kumva and Kwibuka
7:34 PM:	Q&A with Kumva and Kwibuka
7:44 PM:	Panel Discussion 2: Voices from the Ground, Refugee-Led Advocacy
8:09 PM:	Q&A for Panelists
8:14 PM:	Closing Remarks
8:19 PM:	Closing Performance by Lucky African Dance
8:39 PM:	Informal Networking and Close of Event

Panels

Panel Discussion 1: Building Bridges, Strengthening Communities

This panel will focus on the necessity of collaboration between service providers and refugee communities, groups, and organisations. Representatives from NSW Refugee Health, NSW Dept of Education and Core Community Services will discuss what makes collaboration meaningful and effective. The panel will explore, from the perspective of service providers, what they consider when deciding which refugee community groups or organisations to collaborate with. Furthermore, the discussion will highlight what service providers expect from these groups once the partnership has commenced, clarifying the roles, responsibilities, and mutual expectations to ensure successful cooperation.

Panel Discussion 2: Voices from the Ground - Refugee-Led Advocacy

This panel brings together representatives from the Refugee Council of Australia (RCoA) and the Asia Pacific Network of Refugees (APNOR) to discuss the pivotal role refugee-led organisations play in advocacy. The panel will discuss refugee advocacy at the national, regional, and international level identifying trends and areas where refugee-led organisations could make impact. Panellists will highlight grassroots led initiatives. The dialogue aims to shed light on how national and regional advocacy is evolving and the significance of engaging in this transformative advocacy space.

As we draw the STARTTS CiCT Forum to a close, we reflect on the insights shared, the stories told, and the connections forged. Today's event was more than just a gathering; it was a dynamic exchange of experiences and wisdom that deepened our understanding and cooperation. We hope that the discussions, performances, and presentations have equipped you with the tools you need to effectively navigate interactions with service providers, external agencies, and government entities.

This forum highlighted the crucial roles of listening and connecting - not only as core principles but also as practical strategies for advocacy and collaboration. Armed with these practices, we are prepared to articulate needs, manage complexities, and advocate vigorously for our communities. As we move forward, let us apply the insights gained today to real-world challenges, inspiring every negotiation and advocacy effort with newfound confidence and determination.

Thank you for your engagement and dedication to making a difference. Together, we strive to create a society where every voice is heard and every individual is valued.

About STARTTS

STARTTS is a specialist not-for-profit organisation that was established in 1988. It provides culturally relevant psychological treatment and support, and community interventions, to help people and communities heal the scars of torture and refugee trauma and rebuild their lives in Australia. STARTTS also fosters a positive recovery environment through the provision of training to services, advocacy and policy work.

GET IN TOUCH

HEAD OFFICE - CARRAMAR

152-168 The Horsley Dr
Carramar NSW 2163
Ph: (02) 9646 6700 | (02) 9646 6800 (Referrals)

OTHER OFFICE LOCATIONS

Albury
Auburn
Blacktown
Fairfield
Liverpool
Armidale
Coffs Harbour
Newcastle
Wagga Wagga
Wollongong

FOLLOW US ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

CICT
Communities in Cultural Transition Project

STARTTS
NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors