

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

FOCAS CANADA



Food Hamper Program

As a legacy of the COVID -19 pandemic, the food hamper program became one of our regular activities. Currently, we are providing food hampers to 360 families on regular bases. Unlike other services, the majority of food hamper recipients are not African. They are Middle Eastern, mostly Syrians, Iraqi, Yemenis and Lebanese. Thanks to The Edmonton Food Bank which provides us with all the food we distribute as well as snacks for our tutoring and mentoring programs on a weekly basis. In addition, FOCAS would like to gradually reduce the number of customers who heavily rely on the food hamper, through job training and employment.

Fundraising and Donations

Fundraising is a big part of FOCAS. Through our members, and the community we serve, we have been able to make fundraising once or twice a year possible. In 2023, we held two fundraisers. The first one, (continued from 2022) ended in 2023. The last one, was held in September of 2023. Both times we were able to raise close to \$50,000.00!!!

Tutoring & Mentoring

Tutoring and mentoring was one of the first programs that FOCAS started and has continued to make a legacy in our community. For instance, the kids FOCAS started tutoring and mentoring seven years ago are now graduating from high school. Most of them have become honor students and have been accepted into various known universities. Through this program FOCAS CANADA has been working with approximately 25-30 students at a time.

Currently, we work with heritage languages such as Afaan, Oromo and Arabic. We also have partnered with the University of Alberta who has sent both a professor and a PhD student to complete research about how children who are new to Canada perform in school. FOCAS looks forward to seeing how this study advances the future of the immigrant community.



Adult Language Class

Language classes for women: Adult Language Classes are another key program we run at FOCAS. Language classes are fundamental for newcomers as the waiting list for LINC and ESL schools is overwhelming and there is a great demand for basic English communication skills and conversation. As a Sponsorship Agreement Holder organization, sponsoring hundreds of refugees annually (and receiving hundreds more of individuals), we seek to provide a solution to the excessively high numbers of newcomer women awaiting these services. We are quite prepared to continue our expansion from the program that launched with five women many years ago.

The program's main aim is to bring a positive impact to so many women who have to overcome multiple challenges by learning successful communication skills in order to meaningfully resettle in Canada. Currently, we have more than ten women in our classes which includes activities within and outside the classroom.



Tutoring and mentoring for school children will remain one of our core programs

Seniors Program

Seniors are the most challenged demographic of newcomer communities when it comes to settlement and integration. The reason it becomes specifically challenging for this demographic to settle and integrate is because the majority of them were traumatized in their original countries as well as in exile. When they arrive in a new country, they have to start all over with the limitations that retirement ages face..

Health challenges, economic uncertainty and communication barriers make their resettlement journey almost impossible. They need support in multiple ways. With a grant from the New Horizon Seniors Program, we initiated a seniors weekend engagement and health snack program.

More than 20 seniors were involved in the program to comfort each other, share life experiences and accumulate wisdom. One support worker and more than five regular volunteers have made this program very successful.



Membership Fees

We initiated FOCAS with a membership fee that began with 10 people. In 2023, we had 148 new members join which caused our GROWTH in our membership to 200 PEOPLE and we keep on growing. Through this, FOCAS has been able to collect \$58,311.00. dollars in membership fees.

SPONSORSHIP AND RESETTLEMENT

FOCAS has been a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) since 2019. During this time, we have sponsored more than 250 refugees from all over the world. Close to 100 of those people have arrived in Edmonton. FOCAS has provided all the resettlement support for these people without having required settlement support from the IRCC.

SAH 2023 was a very important year as we passed the validation test with an 'A' score and we were able to renew our contract for the next five years. In 2023 we sponsored 123 refugees. 75 of these refugees will arrive in Canada in 2023. We have also taken a series of training and certifications including police clearance. As fiduciary responsibilities are very high with sponsorship and settlement, our staff continue to receive ongoing training as well as updating the systems.



Grants & Contributions

Grants and contributions are major revenue streams for FOCAS. For example, we have been given grants from SBCCI and a collection of small grants from public and private foundations. From municipalities and all different levels of the government. Overall, the total grants we received in 2023 sum up to \$342,169.89

Volunteers

For non-for-profit community services agencies and charitable organizations, voluntarism plays an essential role. FOCAS was originally established and has always been sustained by volunteers. With more volunteers joining in 2023, we were able to accomplish so much more. For example, all food hamper work including logistics were covered by volunteers. We would like to recognize Mr. Abdisamad Mumme and his team, Mohammed — Afghani and the many other volunteers for their services in always supporting the loading and stocking of the food hampers for this important work.



We would also like to thank the volunteers on our FOCAS board of directors for their dedication and determination in providing direction, support and governance in enlarging and expanding this very valuable organization.

Partnership

In a multicultural society, collaborations and partnerships between different ethnocultural organizations has been key to better serving the community. At FOCAS we have understood that from the very beginning. In 2023, we contacted more than 50 different organizations including many MNFI organizations and requested forming partnerships with them. Through this, we have been able to forge strong formal partnerships with Horn Youth Services Foundation (KULAN) and Sinkunia Community Development Organization. And many other informal relationships with other groups.

Events & Galas

Events and galas create community engagement. In 2023, we reached out to include a very large number of community participants in our various membership activities. This included; summer outdoor events, a volunteer appreciation dinner gala and community cultural nights. The hundreds of community members, political figures, community veterans and other different dignitaries made these events tremendously successful. And we are keeping this community focus as a goal in 2024.

Our Funders



Information & Training Events

Collecting information and resources for our youth, seniors, the board, and the membership through community training are central to our community's sense of empowerment. Politicians and policy makers often come and meet with our members to address the contemporary issues of our society.

Here are three examples: First, an Edmonton Police Services representative visited our members to share about keeping our community safe within our city. Then, experts from banks and financial institutions came and gave lessons on financial literacy and money management. Later, experts from the social services sector came and shared about their experiences and provided advice. Many of these small events happened on a weekly basis.

Our Achievements

FOCAS' biggest achievement for 2023 was receiving an AGLC casino license after a very long struggle in the process. Typical for a new organization, there was a lot to clear with the AGLC officials in understanding our mandate and purpose. However, finally, despite this challenge, our patience has paid off and we have been accepted by the AGLC and now we are licensed for new sources of fundraising such as community Bingos etc. FOCAS is very thankful to the AGLC for accepting the value this growing organization brings.

In 2023, FOCAS CANADA was also able to purchase their first service vehicle. The vehicle was purchased by a matching grant from CIP. We would like to thank the Alberta government for this grant and the endorsement of some of our partnership organizations in securing it. Give us a wave or a beep, when you see our well labelled FOCAS service truck in your neighborhood.

Additionally, we started Arabic and Quran classes for our kids on the weekend this year.

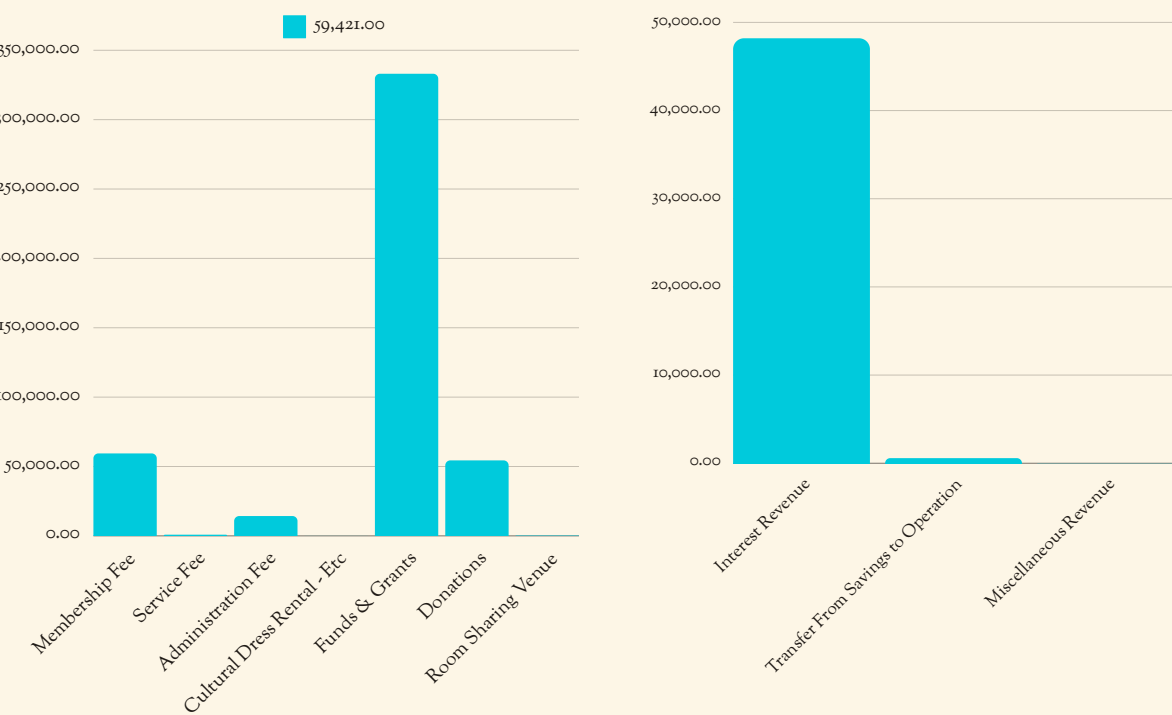
Our Impact

FOCAS has seen a significant impact through its various programs. To start with, their tutoring and mentoring project has brought about many high school honor students. Competition among youth and children for positive outcomes are also very high today as a result of our services. Various FOCAS achievements have additionally encouraged many further organizations in the community to do the same. Furthermore, FOCAS has also greatly contributed to newcomer women's abilities to speak and write English in the broader Albertan community.

Finances

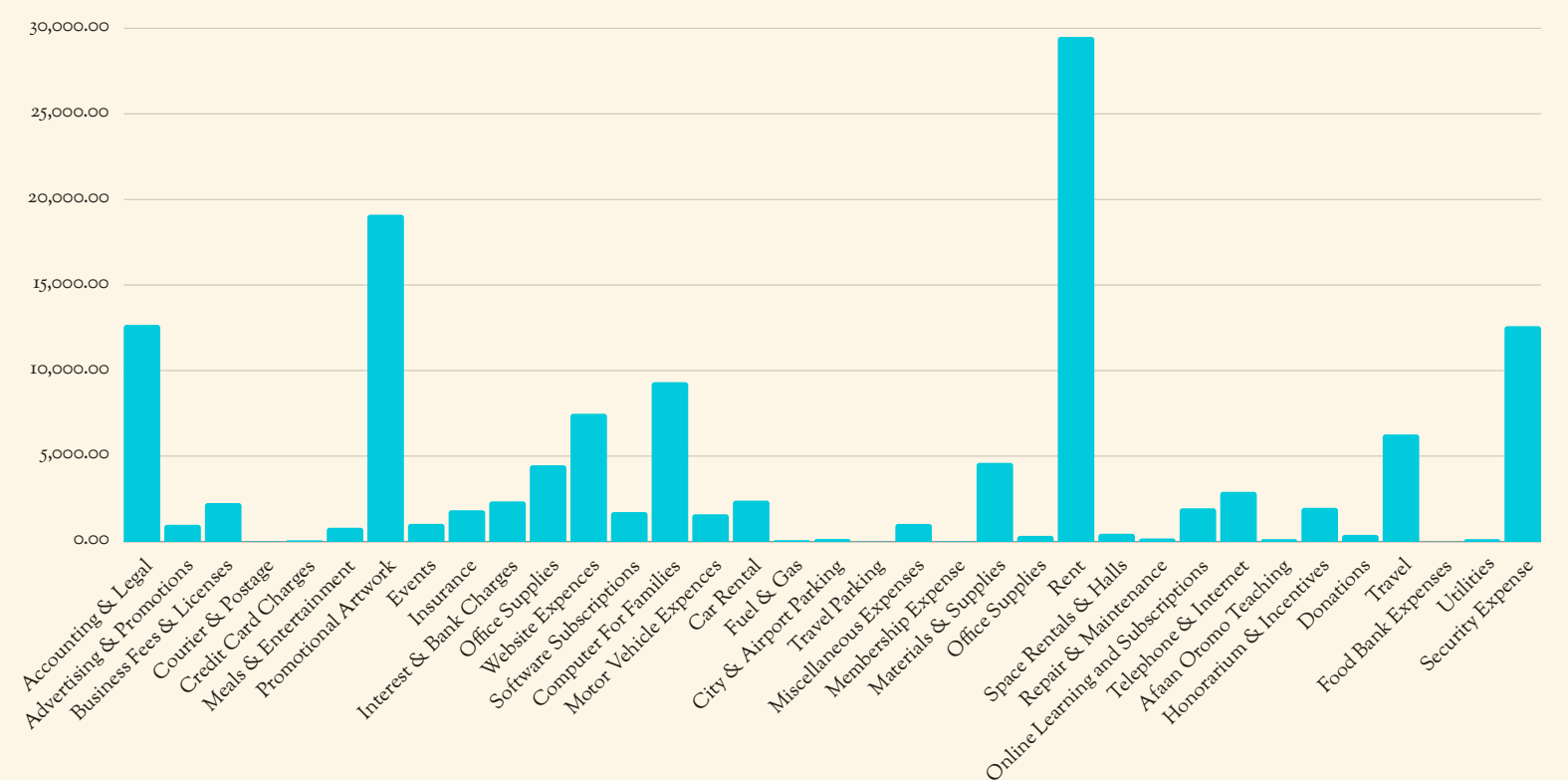
Net Revenue: 462,277.39

Other Revenue: 48,786.90



Total Revenue: 511,064.29

General & Administrative Expenses



Contact us

FOCAS CANADA

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