

# Annual Report 2017





# Executive Summary

## Indonesia

The situation for refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia continues to worsen. With global displacement at an all-time high, and in the context of Europe dealing with its own refugee influx, the Rohingya refugee crisis escalating in Bangladesh, and restrictive policies around refugee intake from the US and Australia, the number of resettlement places available to refugees in Indonesia is diminishing. As a consequence, asylum seekers and refugees face increasingly long stays in Indonesia, where they are unable to work, and face barriers in accessing education services. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Indonesia has launched a publicity campaign to communicate to refugees that the waiting time for resettlement has increased dramatically, and there is a real possibility that some refugees in Indonesia may not be resettled in their lifetime.

With more refugees and asylum seekers displaced globally than at any time in history, and with limited resources available to support them, I believe that new approaches to refugee assistance need to be explored and embraced. Same Skies' model of providing capacity-strengthening and guidance to refugees to address the issues they face independently is more empowering and cost-effective than existing top-down approaches to refugee assistance. The approach serves to both empower refugees by making use of their skills and experiences, while also delivering sorely needed services to the community in a responsive and cost-effective way.

In December 2017, Same Skies Indonesia was successful in gaining status as an official Indonesian yayasan, or foundation, with a six-member board. I was appointed President, and the remaining board members are Indonesians who bring a range of expertise to the team. Having official status in Indonesia opens up many possibilities for Same Skies to scale up operations in the country, in particular through partnerships with international groups.



**Thomas Brown**  
President Same Skies Indonesia

## Malaysia

Having predominantly worked overseas in the humanitarian and development sector for more than two decades, I have witnessed many refugee programmes that aim to empower refugees. I am attracted to Same Skies' mission to empower refugees, using minimal resources with maximum impact. Malaysians are generally unfamiliar with refugee needs and plights, and often have the wrong perceptions about refugees, and may therefore shy away from supporting refugees. Through Same Skies Malaysia, I will have an opportunity to learn more about the refugees' situation in Malaysia, their needs, and how we can mobilise resources to support them. I believe changing general populations' mindsets through sensitisation and advocacy is one of the ways forward to generate a better understanding of refugees' needs. We at Same Skies Malaysia are taking small steps to make this change, and are excited to be part of this process.

Same Skies Malaysia was established in June 2017 with the support of Julia Frei, Same Skies International Director. It has nine board members, representing different profiles and ethnicities in Malaysia. In March 2018, a Country Coordinator will be hired to oversee the operational aspects of Same Skies Malaysia. Since its establishment, Same Skies Malaysia has started two refugee empowerment projects – in Kuala Lumpur and in Ipoh.



**Uma Narayanan**  
President Same Skies Malaysia

# The Year 2017

## January

Same Skies participates in the **Youth Expedition Week** in Singapore, organised by the Youth Corps.

New board members join Same Skies Australia:  
**Bronwyn:** Treasurer **Alyssa:** Secretary

## April

**Julia** holds a lecture on "Creativity & Innovation" at the Centre for Education and Research in Humanitarian Action in Geneva (Switzerland).

## February

**Julia** and **Brad** conduct a handover visit to Refugee Learning Center & Refugee Learning Nest (Indonesia).

## May

**Brad** holds a talk at KYS Business School in Melaka (Malaysia).

## March

**Tracey** and **Julia** start the remote mentoring programme with Refugee Learning Center.

**Gerry** joins Same Skies Australia as President.

## June

**Same Skies Malaysia** is officially registered by nine board members.

## July

**Monika, Claudio, Brad** and **Julia** hold an event in Winterthur (Switzerland).

**Alex** joins Same Skies Switzerland as Vice-President.

**Brad** and **Julia** hold a presentation for primary and secondary students at Malacca Expatriate School (Malaysia).

## October

New team members join Same Skies Malaysia:

**Annina, Linde, Emily** and **Zulaikha**

The UNHCR-funded Rohingya Women Empowerment Project Ipoh starts.

## August

**Abbas** (former refugee in Indonesia) holds a presentation at Rotary Club of Hall (Australia) and Same Skies receives a small grant.

The Refugee Collaboration Network Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) starts with the help of Swiss volunteer **Jonas**.

## November

**Leah** participates in a 10x10 Philanthropy fundraising event in Sydney (Australia).

An external evaluation of the Indonesian projects is conducted.

## September

Same Skies receives a small grant from **HOST International**.

**UNHCR Malaysia** contracts Same Skies for a project.

**Julia** conducts a scoping mission for a new project in Johor Bahru (Malaysia).

## December

**Same Skies Indonesia** is officially registered by six board members.

**Jen** joins Same Skies as Graphic Designer.

# Notes from our Friends in Indonesia

## Refugee Learning Center

In 2015, a group of refugee volunteers gathered the refugee community members and we told them that we wanted to establish a learning centre to provide education to the refugee children. The community was very welcoming and appreciative. The volunteer group sat together and agreed to jointly pay for the rent of the first few months, even though we all had financial problems of our own.

After we found a suitable location, we started Refugee Learning Center with only 35 students.

The primary goal of the centre was to provide education to children but it has evolved since its establishment. Today, we teach 160 children in the morning shift and more than 100 men and women in its afternoon English classes. Refugee Learning Center includes 15 female teachers in the morning shift, seven male teachers for English classes and 8 management members who are all refugee volunteers.

We also create opportunities to play sports. Especially for women, who were always very interested in sports activities but who could not go outside of their houses freely in their home countries, let alone participate in any kind of sport activity. This is a huge step towards independence for them. Now, the women feel free and can do things for themselves.

We are also trying to bring the community closer and relieve their stress by organising different social activities. Refugee Learning Center provides the facilities for workshops and trainings conducted by diverse stakeholders.

All of these activities and opportunities put together give the refugees something meaningful to do while they wait for their resettlement process. Through our learning centre the community members have a chance to utilise their abilities for a higher purpose. This initiative has brought unity and cooperation between different refugee communities and has made their bonds stronger. Before the establishment refugees were scared to do any kind of activity or even study, but we have proved that claiming your rights is not a crime.

We feel like this is a journey that would not have been possible without our dedicated volunteers and the help of amazing people such as Same Skies and many other friends. We want to thank each and every one for their continuous support.

## Refugee Learning Nest

The Refugee Learning Nest (the Nest) was established in March 2015 by seven members of the refugee community in Indonesia and with the support of Same Skies. The aim of the project is to improve the welfare of the refugee community through provision of various activities and informal learning. It is based on volunteer engagement and community involvement. Refugees from diverse backgrounds are welcome at the Nest to work in different fields and learn more. The Nest is a community-based project, therefore it belongs to people from all races, nationalities, religions and countries. We are happy to be transparent and work with all refugees, including children. The Nest works through the cooperation and support of our community to become a sustainable and lasting project.

It is over three years since we have established the Nest. There are 130 students who are being taught daily in two shifts. We have 17 talented teachers who are volunteers and teach different subjects. We have five other volunteers who run the human resources and manage the school. We have online courses for our teachers and students with native speaker of English. We have several Bahasa and English classes in the afternoon shift for adults which help them to become able to communicate both locally and internally.

We have nine subjects in such as English, Math, Physics, Geometry, Science, History, Biology, Computer and Arts. We have six classes in the morning and five classes in the afternoon.

**Visit their websites:**

[refugeelearningcenter.com](http://refugeelearningcenter.com)

[refugeelearningnest.com](http://refugeelearningnest.com)

# Handover Refugee Learning Center & Refugee Learning Nest

One of the major highlights of 2017 for Same Skies was the successful handover of Refugee Learning Nest and Refugee Learning Center in February. After an 18-month partnership with the former, and a 15-month with the latter, it was extremely satisfying to know that they were now prepared and equipped to independently manage everything involved in the operations of their respective organisations, and to provide essential services and activities for their wider communities.

Julia, Brad and Zheng Wei travelled to Indonesia for the occasion, holding a weekend event at a venue in the mountains to celebrate the wonderful achievements and camaraderie. Games and workshops were held, including the articulation of an ongoing vision and goals, and there were a number of moving testimonials recorded about the transformative impact that the projects have had on volunteers' lives.

Same Skies and Refugee Learning Center signed a partnership agreement as part of the ceremony, committing to continued support and promotion of one another, including regular mentorship for teachers and the management team. All members of the team were awarded certificates and medals of recognition for their selfless dedication to their communities. The evening meal was catered for by their own community members, and everyone enjoyed a traditional Afghan meal of chicken biryani.

Regrettably for Same Skies, Refugee Learning Nest were unable to participate in a handover ceremony and workshop, as their newly installed leadership had decided that letting Same Skies use footage of their community members would have a detrimental effect on their own fundraising prospects, and that without financial incentive, there was no reason for them to engage with Same Skies anymore. The team tried to explain to them that they believed the opposite would be the case, but respected their decision, and passed all their certificates and medals to them to distribute at their own event.

## Mentoring programme

Same Skies' commitment to ongoing support and guidance for Refugee Learning Center has primarily manifested in mentoring teachers and managers.

### Teacher and Manager Mentoring:

- Individual monthly skype calls with twelve teachers and three managers
- Suggestions for challenges
- Resources to address teaching and learning needs
- Encouragement in daily life
- Advice on financial and organisational issues



# Refugee Collaboration Network Kuala Lumpur

Exhibiting their inherent resilience and industriousness, many of the Kuala Lumpur-based refugees have formed their own organisations with the purpose of assisting their own communities during these difficult times. Not only Same Skies but also UNHCR in Malaysia have identified that working with these groups to not only better their own processes but also help them collaborate on their common cause has the greatest potential to improve the lives of refugees in Kuala Lumpur. After all, why should one group have to struggle with the same challenge a fellow refugee group has already overcome?

With this in mind, Same Skies started the 'Refugee Collaboration Network' in August 2017. The main aim is to support the needs of the participating refugee organisations to improve the quality, relevance, reach and sustainability of their services. The groups are from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen but further groups will be invited to join as the project evolves.

Since last September, Same Skies has visited the network every month for a two-day workshop with remote sessions via Skype in between the visits.

In the first meetings, the most pressing challenges for the participating refugee groups were identified and the objectives of the project were defined:

**“I really like your way of teaching and your clever games. We all learnt how to be more active & focused in a project, and at the same time to all speak easily together without being shy”**

**Badria Albadani** Tangible Association for Yemeni Refugees

- Strengthening of the organisational capacities of the groups through Same Skies management training.
- Strengthening of the pedagogical capacities through Same Skies teacher training.
- Effective communication, collaboration and sharing of resources.
- Awareness in the Malaysian population for the refugee topic.

All network participants contribute enthusiastically and friendships have already started to develop.

## 152,326 Registered Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Malaysia

### Where they are from



**Myanmar:** 133,077 **Pakistan:** 5,489 **Yemen:** 2,450 **Syria:** 2,401 **Other countries:** 8,909

Source: UNHCR, Malaysia Factsheet December 2017



# The Rohingya Women Empowerment Project

In October 2017, our team started working with a great group of Rohingya women in Ipoh (Malaysia). The group is very diverse, comprising women between 18 and 45 years old, some of whom have been living in Malaysia for over eight years and speak fluent Malay; others have recently arrived. Some were already friends, while others only met at the start of this project. Yet, the group quickly became a team, working towards a collective goal.

The aim of the Rohingya Women Empowerment Project is to bring a group of women together, enhancing their leadership skills and sense of community, while also developing means for informal revenue streams. Ultimately, the goal is that a small community business is completely owned and managed by the women themselves. Our first few visits were focused on identifying the women's interests, skills and abilities. As they expressed that they enjoy embroidery and cooking, the group decided to continue developing these into a business plan. It has now been decided that their marvellous embroidery skills can be nurtured and put to good use by producing tote bags with embroidered Rohingya faces. Brad made the drawing to be used as templates. The women plan to add a personal story to each of the bags.

This is our first UNHCR-funded project. With the clear improvements in social interaction and growth in language, math, and vocational skills in the time that we have been working with this group of women, it is no surprise that UNHCR had expressed their willingness for the project to continue beyond the current end-date of March 2018. We are excited to see what the next months of collaboration with the women will bring.

**“In this project, I have already learnt what steps I need to take if I want to start a business, and how to react to and work with the people around me... I want to give so many thanks to Same Skies to give me this opportunity for a new experience.”**

**Faridah** Project participant (translated from Rohingya)

## Rohingya Refugees in Malaysia

The largest group of refugees currently in Malaysia come from Myanmar, and most of them are Rohingya. In their latest count, there were 65,250 Rohingya refugees registered with UNHCR, with 3,500 living in the state of Perak. However, there are many more who have not (yet) registered with UNHCR.

### Rohingya refugees in comparison to total refugee population in Malaysia



**Rohingya: 65,250 Total: 152,326**

*Source: UNHCR, Malaysia Factsheet December 2017*

## UNHCR Malaysia

Never having signed the 1951 Refugee Convention or its Protocol, the Malaysian government does not take responsibility to look after refugees and asylum seekers in the country. UNHCR has been in Malaysia since 1975, and is now in charge of all activities related to the reception, registration, documentation and refugee status determination of asylum seekers and refugees. They work closely with partners at all levels, and seeks collaborations with NGO partners in areas of health, education, livelihoods, child protection and gender-based violence. In their 5-year strategic plan for 2016-2020 they set out to enhance and support the capacity of community leaders and community-based organisations.

*Source: UNHCR, Malaysia Factsheet December 2017*

## Board – Switzerland



**Edith Favoreu**  
President



**Alex Doebeli**  
Vice-President



**Monika Frei**  
Secretary



**Claudio Tiziani**  
Treasurer

## Board – Australia



**Gerry Baldock**  
President



**Casey Homann**  
Vice-President



**Alyssa Gijbers**  
Secretary



**Bronwyn McNamee**  
Treasurer

## Board – Indonesia



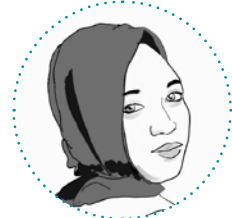
**Tom Brown**  
President



**Anna Robertson**  
Vice-President



**Dhany Soehatarno**  
Secretary



**Shaffira Gayatri**  
Treasurer



**Aldo Januarydy**  
Supervisor



**Janne Siregar**  
Committee Member

## Board – Malaysia



**Uma Narayanan**  
President



**Tan Zheng Wei**  
Vice-President



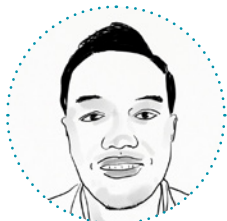
**Izam Zamzuri B. Yaacob**  
Treasurer



**Vanessa Smith**  
Auditor



**Guan Mei Lan**  
Committee Member



**Noremy B. Samat**  
Committee Member

## Operations



**Julia Frei**  
International Director



**Annina Hunziker**  
Project Coordinator



**Tracey Donehue**  
Teacher Trainer & Coach



**Zulaikha Zulkifle**  
Artisanal Business Trainer & Coach



**Soneel Ram**  
Public Relations Officer Pacific



**Jen Vlassis**  
Graphic Designer



**Brad Short**  
Training Development Manager



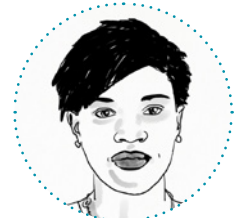
**Linde Lamboo**  
Humanitarian Trainer & Coach



**Emily Gomond**  
Artisanal Business Trainer & Coach



**Sharon Low**  
Health Consultant



**Nana Akyaa Aforo-Banuah**  
Public Relations Officer Africa



# What 2018 Will Bring

After three years of existence that focused on developing and testing a new approach to refugee protection, our fourth year will be used to get ready to scale up our innovation.

We are very excited to announce that as of 2018, a new leadership programme Transformative Leadership in Action will be offered by Same Skies with the support from experts at Monash & Swinburne Universities, the Centre for Research & Education in Humanitarian Action (University of Geneva), HOST International, BOOKBRIDGE & KYS Business School.

Through years of refugee empowerment we have realised that effective leadership equals empowerment. Thus, true leaders require the ability to recognise, value and strengthen capacities. This programme will bring together leaders from all corners of the world and different professional contexts (including refugee leaders living in Malaysia). In this seven-month part-time programme, they will take responsibility for the establishment of a refugee-led community centre in Malaysia to meet the educational, health and social needs of the community. They will share their knowledge and experience to develop and strengthen their own leadership approach – despite and due to their differences.

The expansion and growth of Same Skies brings with it enormous opportunities along with significant challenges. One of these challenges is balancing growth with the retention of Same Skies' fundamental values, and this will be key to our local capacity-strengthening efforts in the coming years. It is exciting to consider the potential that these national organisations will have to impact communities, to change perceptions and ingrained habits, and to unleash a different approach to NGO intervention in South East Asia, one that will hopefully have a lasting and profound effect.

**We have set the following goals for 2018:**

## **Goal 1: Board Engagement Programme**

- Recap & Lessons Learnt
- Review & Articulation of Strategy & Values

## **Goal 2: Local Capacity-Strengthening**

- Strengthening of Malaysian & Indonesian Branches
- Recruitment & Training of Country Coordinator and more local Staff

## **Goal 3: Dissemination of Approach**

- Transformative Leadership in Action
- Refugee Collaboration Network Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia)
- Rohingya Women Empowerment Project Ipoh (Malaysia)
- New: Refugee Empowerment Project Johor Bahru (Malaysia)
- New: Indonesian Projects

## **Goal 4: Expansion of Budget**

- Acquisition & Retention of Private Donors
- Transformative Leadership in Action
- Pursuing new opportunities and partnerships for institutional funding

# Financial Report

The financial statements reflect the consolidated financial performance of Same Skies Switzerland, Same Skies Australia Inc., Same Skies Charitable Organisation Malaysia (Pertubuhan Kebajikan Satu Langit), and Yayasan Same Skies Indonesia from January 1 until December 31, 2017.

## Income Statement

In CHF	2017	2016
<b>Income</b>		
Donations	46,924	10,204
Fundraising Events	786	1,950
Restricted Donations	1,448	-
Other Income	7	11
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>49,165</b>	<b>12,164</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Direct Cost	14,931	8,928
- Personnel Cost	11,129	2,949
- Operational Cost	1,819	5,979
- Other Direct Cost	1,983	-
Indirect Cost	2,152	1,626
- Personnel Cost	0	-
- Marketing Cost	1,212	915
- Financial Expenses	407	407
- Other Indirect Cost	534	304
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>17,064</b>	<b>10,553</b>
Surplus	32,082	1,611

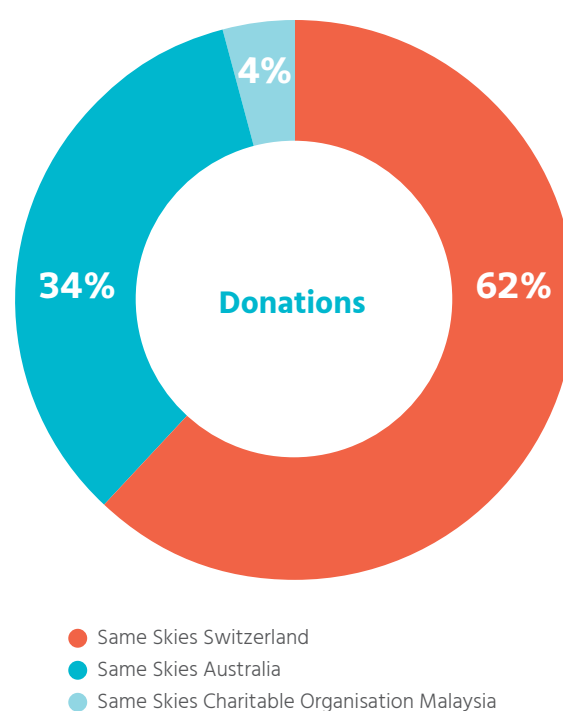
## Balance Sheet

In CHF	2017	2016
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	36,410	7,740
Receivables & Prepayments	1,429	-
Fixed Assets	2,433	-
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>41,932</b>	<b>7,740</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>		
Liabilities	1,731	81
Net Assets	8,100	6,048
- Core Net Assets	-	-
- Unrestricted Net Assets	8,119	6,048
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	9,850	6,129
Surplus	32,082	1,611
<b>Total Balance Sheet</b>	<b>41,932</b>	<b>7,740</b>

## Comments

### Donations

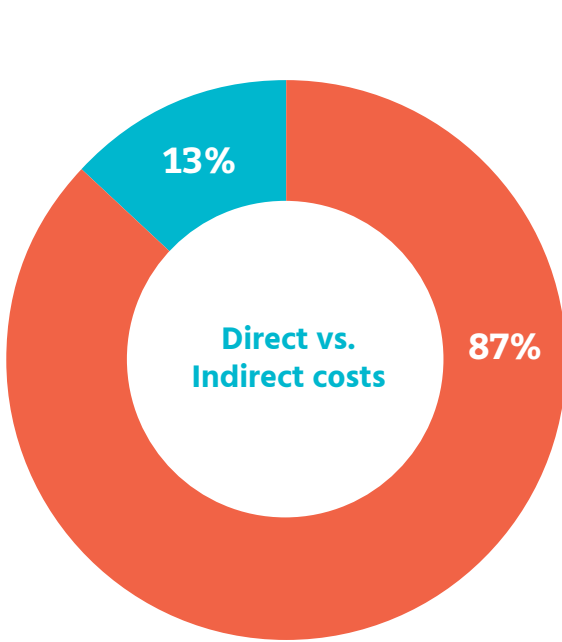
- We received 186 unrestricted donations totalling CHF 46,710, of which 60% were contributed by private donors and 40% by institutional donors.
- We not only increased the number of donors in our database to 250 (vs. 138 in 2016) and the active donors to 152 (vs. 55 in 2016), but also the average count of donations per active donor and average amount per donation.
- Donations were mainly collected by Same Skies Switzerland and Same Skies Australia.



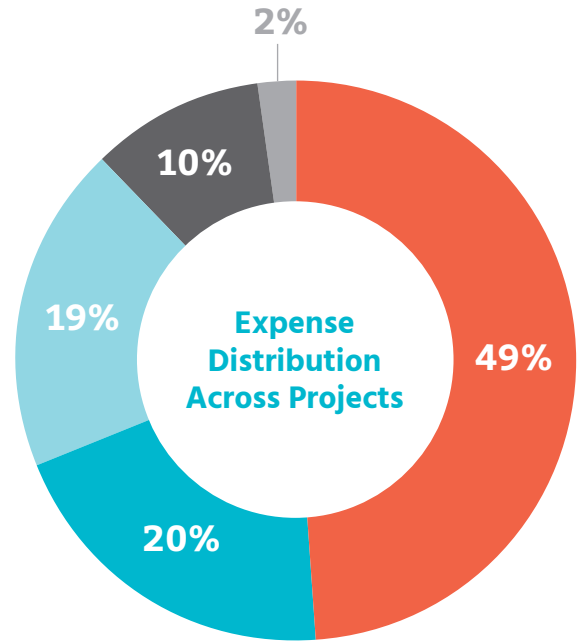
## Comments (continued)

### Expenses

- Direct costs account for 87% of our total expenses (vs. 85% in 2016). Indirect cost remained stable and account for 13% of all cost.
- 12% of the expenses were used for ongoing projects in Indonesia (Refugee Learning Center & Refugee Learning Nest) and 88% for new projects in Malaysia.



- Direct cost
- Indirect cost



- Refugee Collaboration Network Kuala Lumpur
- Transformative Leadership in Action
- Rohingya Women Empowerment Project
- Refugee Learning Center
- Refugee Learning Nest

### Restricted Funds

The restricted donations came from UNHCR Malaysia for the Rohingya Women Empowerment Project in Ipoh, Malaysia.

### Accounting Principles

- Same Skies consolidates all entities in full as they are closely interlinked by its statutes even without cross equity participation.
- Each entity uses its country currency, but Same Skies applies CHF as consolidation currency.
- Internal transactions have been eliminated.
- As only one person in the Executive Committee receives remuneration, it is not disclosed in this report.



# Audit Report

As auditor, I have audited the financial statements of Same Skies, which comprise the balance sheet, income & expenses statement and the underlying transaction details and documents for the period of January 1st – December 31st, 2017.

## Management's Responsibility

The management is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of Swiss laws and the association's statutes. This responsibility includes designing, implementing and maintaining an internal control system ensuring financial statements free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. The management is further responsible for selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

## Auditor's Responsibility

The auditor's responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on the audit. The audit was conducted in accordance with Swiss laws and auditing standards. The standards require that the auditor plans and performs the audit in order to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. An audit involves performing

procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers the internal control system relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control system. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

## Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statement for the period of January 1st – December 31st, 2017 complies with relevant laws and the association's statutes. I recommend the financial statements for 2017 to be approved.



**Charles Sarasin**  
Auditor  
March 29, 2018

# Thank You

A huge thank you goes out to all the amazing refugees we have had the privilege to meet and work with this year, to our incredible international team of volunteers and staff, and to all of our individual and institutional partners and supporters. Your tireless efforts, your friendship and your continued financial support keep us going.

Thank you!

## Partners & Supporters



## Refugee-led Organisations & Partners



2017 Annual Report Acknowledgments:

Photos: Same Skies 2017 and Abdullah Sarwari. Text: Same Skies 2017 and page 8 by Refugee Learning Center & Refugee Learning Nest. Graphic design: Jen



# Contact Us

## Social

**Website:** [sameskies.org](http://sameskies.org)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/sameskies.org](https://facebook.com/sameskies.org)

**Twitter:** [twitter.com/same\\_skies](https://twitter.com/same_skies)

**LinkedIn:** Same Skies

## Addresses

### Australia:

1700 Princes Highway, Buckley  
Victoria 3240

### Switzerland:

Schiblerstrasse 10, 8444 Henggart

### Malaysia:

39, Jalan Kampung Hulu, 75200 Melaka

### Indonesia:

Jalan Raya Casablanca Kav. 88 Jakarta Selatan 12870

## Bank Details

### Same Skies Australia Inc.

Westpac

Account number: 218623

BSB: 033608

### Same Skies Switzerland

PostFinance

Konto: 89-506036-1

IBAN: CH76 0900 0000 8950 6036 1

### Same Skies Malaysia

(Pertubuhan Kebajikan Satu Langit)

Public Bank

Account number: 3205570020

