



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT FOOD SECURITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd), announced AUD 12.5 million in Australian humanitarian aid for Jordan over the next three years. This funding will provide emergency food and nutrition assistance, protection services and livelihood support for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians, with a specific focus on women and children. The announcement was made during an official visit by the Governor-General and Lady Cosgrove to Za'atari refugee camp, where Australia's partnerships with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) were launched.

"The Australian aid announced today will help make a difference in the lives of many here in Jordan," the Governor-General said.

"Our partnerships with WFP and UN Women will reach beyond the camp to assist refugees and their host communities in urban areas. Australia is pleased to be supporting the Government of Jordan's efforts in meeting the needs of all vulnerable people in the Kingdom."

The visit began with a tour of the WFP-run Healthy Kitchen in the refugee camp, where the Governor-General observed the preparation of nutritious healthy meals for students at the camp schools. He then participated in the distribution of food at a primary school for girls in the camp, where he interacted with students on the importance of nutrition awareness and healthy eating habits. WFP complements the National School Feeding Programme, which supports over 350,000 schoolchildren aged between 5 to 12 years attending government schools in Jordanian communities. In refugee camps, WFP is supporting around 25,000 Syrian children attending formal schools through the provision of fortified date bars and healthy meals prepared by Syrian women.

Their Excellencies then visited the 'Women and Girls Oasis' – one of the three safe spaces operated by UN Women in Za'atari camp, where the Governor-General met with Syrian women engaged in cash-for-work production of baby kits presented to new mothers in camp hospitals. He also learned about the specific challenges faced by women and girls in the camp, including access to livelihood opportunities, concerns regarding women's safety and security, and the impact of isolation. Serving around 19,000 refugees per year, UN Women's Oasis model seeks to address the immediate needs of Syrian refugees through livelihood opportunities, while also building their skills for finding longer term employment and providing support services such as child care, remedial education, and outreach and referrals for survivors of violence. Cash-for-work opportunities thus become an important entry point for women's resilience and empowerment.

With this funding, the Government of Australia will support WFP to provide General Food Assistance through e-vouchers to around 135,300 Syrian refugees vulnerable to food insecurity in both the camps and in host communities through the period 2017 – 2019 and will support UN Women's Oases in Za'atari and Azraq camps to provide 150 daily cash for work opportunities to refugee women and 150 monthly

child care spots. In addition, Australia will support a business incubator to be established in the Oasis to support refugee women to apply skills learned in cash for work opportunities to establish their own microbusinesses in their communities. •The project will also support longer-term opportunities in Jordan's hosting communities to provide sustainable employment for vulnerable Jordanian women in poverty pockets surrounding each refugee camp.

This funding announcement is part of Australia's AUD 220 million three-year package of assistance for Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

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