

## **Australia grants AUD 15 million to UNHCR Jordan to support Syrian refugees in the country**

AMMAN, 15 August 2017 - UNHCR Jordan today welcomed the Government of Australia's generous donation of AUD 15 million (US \$ 11.8 million) over three years (2017-2019) to reinforce a range of the services provided to Syrians in Jordan. The support will ensure the provision of life-saving assistance, including cash assistance and health care for the most vulnerable, as part of UNHCR's ongoing efforts to safeguard the well-being of Syrian refugees in the country.

This contribution was announced by Australia's Ambassador to Jordan, H.E. Mr. Miles Armitage during a visit by Mr. Lloyd Brodrick, Assistant Secretary of the Middle East Branch at the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. UNHCR accompanied Mr. Brodrick and Mr. Armitage to the largest refugee registration centre in the Middle East, where 5,000 refugees can be received every day to access vital assistance and services, and later on a visit to a refugee family benefitting from UNHCR monthly cash assistance.

Agostino Mulas, UNHCR Deputy Representative in Jordan, thanked the Government of Australia for its support at a time when funding levels are dangerously mismatched with refugees' needs. *"UNHCR is grateful for this generous contribution from the Australian Government which will provide continuity to the crucial assistance available for Syrian refugees in Jordan. The needs of this highly vulnerable population are increasing as time in exile grows. Assistance remains key to avert refugees from adopting negative solutions"*, he said.

UNHCR is the Australian Government's largest partner in response to the Syria crisis both in Jordan and across the region. This latest contribution is part of Australia's three-year AUD 220 million (US \$ 174 million) response in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria to meet both the short and long term needs of affected populations.

Mr. Armitage said, *"Australia is pleased to be working in partnership with UNHCR Jordan over the next three years. As the crisis in Syria persists, many refugees and their host communities continue to require assistance to meet their basic needs. We are committed to supporting the Government of Jordan's efforts to address these immediate needs while also helping to build the resilience of communities into the future."*

Jordan's population of Syrian refugees registered for assistance and protection is now over 660,000. The majority live in poverty in towns and cities across Jordan on less than US \$ 100 a month. Seven years into the conflict and with no meaningful form of income, most are finding it increasingly difficult to pay for a roof over their heads and afford a daily meal.

Crucially, UNHCR's monthly cash assistance programme currently supports over 145,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees, one fifth of the registered population, and represents their most critical form of income. As the Syrian population is becoming increasingly vulnerable, over 16,500 families are still on the waiting list for assistance.

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For more information please contact:

[ENG] Olga Sarrado, UNHCR External Relations, [sarrado@unhcr.org](mailto:sarrado@unhcr.org), +962 79 761 7799

[ARA] Mohammad Hawari, UNHCR External Relations, [hawari@unhcr.org](mailto:hawari@unhcr.org), +962 79 895 6781