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AUSTRALIA BOOSTS WFP EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN FATA

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has welcomed a three year contribution of USD4.5 million from the Australian Government to support food and nutrition security among displaced communities in Pakistan.

Australia's contribution will be used for WFP's education programme in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Frontier Regions (FR). The funding will enable WFP to provide food-based assistance in schools and to alleviate the burden on families of having their children attend school.

"We are very grateful to the people and Government of Australia for this contribution. These funds will address critical education needs in FATA and FR for the returnee communities," WFP acting Country Director Stephen Gluning said.

Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Margaret Adamson said Australia had a long-standing history of working with the Government of Pakistan to provide humanitarian assistance to people affected by crisis. "Since 2010 Australia has provided more than AUD95million in humanitarian assistance to Pakistan, in partnership with the WFP, to support the victims of earthquakes, floods and displacement. Australia's assistance has also helped provide nutrition to acute malnourished women and children, livelihood support and school feeding programmes," High Commissioner Adamson said.

In 2016, Australia has contributed US\$ 9 million to WFP programmes, placing it among the top five donors to WFP Pakistan.

"The Government of Pakistan extends its gratitude to the Australian Government for its unshrinking support," the Federal Minister of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) Lt. Gen. (R) Abdul Qadir said.



Australian High Commission
Pakistan



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Under the programme, WFP will provide more than 312,000 children with a mid-morning snack of High Energy Biscuits (HEBs) during the school day and monthly take-home rations of vegetable oil fortified with Vitamins A and D, in seven FATA agencies and four regions in the Frontier. Providing children with HEBs has proven to significantly increase children's enrolment and retention rates in WFP assisted primary schools of FATA. These are strong incentives for parents to send their children, especially their daughters, to school which helps to improve the long-term prosperity of these children.

With an overall literacy rate of 33.3%¹, (national average 58%, 2013-14), and an adult literacy rate of 28.4% (national average 57%), education indicators in FATA are not only far below the national average, but place FATA among one of the least literate areas of the world.

Through this programme, WFP also aims to strengthen the government's capacity in the utilisation of cash for supporting girls' education, contributing to the increased ownership of the programme and facilitating its future hand-over. WFP has also supported the Government and leading UN Agencies in the rollout of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" in Pakistan. To the possible extent, WFP's education programme is integrated with teacher training, nutrition and water and sanitation interventions implemented by WFP's partners, particularly UNICEF and UNESCO.

WFP has been implementing education programmes in FATA since 2008.

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. Each year, WFP assists some 80 million people in 80 countries.

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