



MEDIA RELEASE

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ACFID APPLAUDS INCREASED AID FOR FOOD CRISIS

Aid agencies today welcomed the announcement of an additional \$30 million in humanitarian assistance for the drought and food crisis in the Horn of Africa.

The peak body for Australian aid and development organisations, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) said the funding was urgently needed as the United Nations is on the verge of declaring famine in parts of Southern Somalia.

“Famine has not been declared in the region since the 1980’s, when about one million people in Sudan and Ethiopia perished. So this additional funding could not be more timely,” said Marc Purcell, ACFID’s Executive Director.

“Australian aid workers are already working in affected areas, providing child protection, emergency health and nutritional care, food distribution, immunisations, water, sanitation and hygiene.”

The announcement of additional aid takes the current humanitarian contribution of the Gillard Government to \$41.2 million, some of which will be channelled through Australian non-government organisations. “This recognises the central role that Australian NGOs play in delivering life-saving assistance,” said Mr Purcell.

“Australian aid agencies have a long history of working in humanitarian crises in Africa and we commend the announcement of funding which will allow them to scale up their programming for the most vulnerable,” he said.

“While the UN has called for a total of US\$1.8 billion to support the scale of humanitarian relief required, appeals for the Horn of Africa remain largely under-funded.”

“At least half a million children are at risk of death across the region. People continue to flee their homes and are moving into over-crowded refugee camps, where they seek access to basic necessities like food and water.”

“As the numbers of affected people continue to increase we are encouraged by the Australian Government’s recognition of the need for rapid relief. We call on other Governments to respond in kind and hope that further determinations of the scale of need will continue to guide Australia’s assistance to the region,” Mr Purcell concluded.

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A full list of ACFID Members with appeals for the crisis can be found at www.acfid.asn.au