



European Union



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Joint News Release

Enhancing Access of Children to Education and Fighting Child Labour

EU & WFP VISIT GROUND-BREAKING SCHOOL FEEDING PROJECT TO STOP CHILD LABOUR IN EGYPT

BENI SUEF – The Ambassador of the European Union (EU) and the head of United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Egypt made their first field visit yesterday to their joint project to help end child labour in the country through enhancing access to education, especially for girls. The EU has financed this project through a generous €60 million contribution.

WFP's EU-funded school feeding project encourages 100,000 children previously working, or at risk of entering the labour market, to attend community schools (informal schools established in remote areas) by providing them with a daily nutritious snack in class as well as take-home food rations for their families.

"Through the financing of this programme with a €60 million grant, the EU is contributing to the ongoing efforts to tackle some of the most critical issues affecting Egypt's poorest children: undernutrition, access to quality primary education, and child labour," said Ambassador James Moran, Head of the European Union Delegation to Egypt. "We are proud to be part of helping 100,000 children – and particularly young girls – to pursue their education and maintain their rights."

During a visit to a community school in Beni Suef, 150 km south of the capital, Cairo, the delegation visited four of the 651 schools supported by the EU in the governorate. WFP is implementing the four-year project in 16 of the most vulnerable governorates in Egypt.

"Today we met some wonderful children who are eager to change their lives for the better," said WFP's Representative and Country Director in Egypt, Lubna Alaman. "Through partnerships like this, WFP hopes to make a child's simple dream come true. It is thanks to generous grants -

like this one from the EU - that we can work each day among the most vulnerable communities in Egypt,” she added.

The project, ‘Enhancing Access of Children to Education and Fighting Child Labour,’ aims to provide families with incentives to send and keep their children, especially girls, in school -- as opposed to putting them to work to support their families.

Up to 400,000 family members of children who maintain an 80 percent attendance rate, will receive a monthly take-home food ration, consisting of 10 kg of rice and one litre of oil. The value of the take-home ration compensates for the wage a child would earn at work.

The daily in-school snack – date bars enriched with vitamins and minerals – provides the children with 25 percent of their daily required nutritional needs. For some children, this quick meal at school is often the first thing they eat in the day and helps them concentrate on their lessons.

Looking towards sustainable solutions, the joint project will provide 50,000 mothers with training on income-generating activities to help them provide for their families rather than send their children out to work.

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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 around 75 countries.

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