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Joint News Release

Enhancing Access of Children to Education and Fighting Child Labour

FIRST STEERING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN UNION FUNDED PROJECT ATTENDED BY KEY MINISTERS

CAIRO – The Egyptian Minister of International Cooperation chaired today the first Steering Committee for the European Union (EU) funded project “**Enhancing Access of Children to Education and Fighting Child Labour**” implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP).

The Ministers of Education, Manpower, and Social Solidarity participated in the committee that reviewed the key achievements and main challenges since the starting date of the project in July 2014.

The €60-million project targeting 16 of the most vulnerable governorates in Egypt aims at ending child labour through enhancing access to education, especially for girls.

The project provides 100,000 children in community schools with a daily in-school snacks (date bars fortified with vitamins and minerals) as well as take-home food rations (10 kg of rice and 1 litre of oil) to their families. Over the four-year duration of the project, up to 400,000 family members will receive the take-home rations, the value of which compensates for the wage a child would earn if sent to work.

In-school snacks and the take-home rations serve as incentives for families to send their children, especially girls, to school to boost school enrollment and retention rates. Children who attend a minimum of 80% of school days each month are entitled to the take-home ration.



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“Through financing this programme, 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 stopping 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 in primary schools – to pursue their education and maintain their rights.”

This project is part of a €90-million Financing Agreement between the EU and the Government of Egypt signed on the first of December 2013.

“Over the past nine months we have been able to reach 58,000 children in 8 governorates and are scaling up to reach 82,000 children in 13 governorates by the end of June 2016,” said Lubna Alaman, WFP Representative and Country Director. “This EU-funded project has enabled WFP to significantly expand its school feeding activities and to boost its support to the government’s national school feeding programme – a key safety net for poorer households.”

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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 80 countries.

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