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MEDIA RELEASE: Labor acts to protect critical overseas aid, Saturday 21 May



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LABOR ACTS TO PROTECT CRITICAL OVERSEAS AID PROJECTS

A Shorten Labor Government will act immediately to protect overseas aid projects facing closure due to the Liberals' funding cuts.

A \$224 million cut to overseas aid in the Liberals' last Budget will mean critical projects delivering maternal and child health, schooling, clean water and sanitation risk being axed from 30 June this year.

If elected, Labor will reverse the \$224 million cut – to keep these projects going in 2016-17.

Since coming to Government in 2013, the Liberals have gutted Australia's aid program. It is now the weakest in history.

Sadly, the Liberals' cuts have been so deep that it is impossible to fix the aid program quickly.

Labor's commitments are designed to help start rebuilding Australia's aid program.

In addition to today's \$224 million announcement, Labor will:

- Provide \$450 million, over three years, to support the important work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, placing Australia in the top five global contributors.
- Invest an extra \$40 million a year, from 2017-18, to help Australian NGOs deliver frontline services to some of the world's poorest people.
- Legislate to restore accountability to Australia's aid program by reintroducing the annual Ministerial Budget Statement on overseas aid, after it was axed by the Liberals in 2014. Labor will release the Statement at the same time as each Federal Budget to show how aid is allocated by sector, country and region.
- Legislate for an independent evaluation of Australia's aid program, as well as the measurement and reporting of effectiveness.

Over the next four years, Labor will provide around \$800 million more for overseas aid than the Liberals.

Labor supports a strong aid program because as a good global citizen Australia has a duty to help reduce poverty and inequality, and respond effectively to humanitarian crises.

Labor supports a strong aid program because it helps keep Australia safe, by working to tackle serious diseases and violence in our region, and in our world.

Labor supports a strong aid program because it benefits Australia's economy when countries go from being aid recipients to trading partners.

It tells you all you need to know about the values of the Liberals that they are happy to spend \$50 billion on a tax cut for big business, while cutting aid to the world's poor.

In contrast, Labor puts people first.



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