



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION PRETORIA

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 2 December 2009

Australia to donate Lapdesks to local Cape Town school

Australia will tangibly demonstrate its support for the 1-GOAL Education for All campaign at a handover tomorrow of 1700 Lapdesks to primary school children at a local school in Cape Town.

Media are welcome to attend the handover ceremony, which will take place at **10am** at the **Tafelsig Primary School**, Olifantshoek Street, Tafelsig, **Mitchells Plein** on **Thursday 3 December 2009**. Those attending the handover will include:

- the Australian Minister for Early Childhood Education, Childcare and Youth; and Minister for Sport, Ms Kate Ellis MP;
- Australia's High Commissioner to South Africa, HE Ms Ann Harrap;
- the Australian Socceroos coach, Mr Pim Verbeek and Football Federation Australia officials;
- 8 young Australians aged between 8 and 12 years old, winners of a Football Federation Australia writing competition – "Come Write! Come Play!"

Lapdesks are light-weight, portable writing surfaces, ergonomically designed to fit comfortably on a student's lap. Lapdesks were created to help increase literacy and directly improve the quality and outcome of South African and African education by addressing the shortage of learning infrastructure.

The **Australian Government is proud to support the 1-GOAL Education for All campaign**. The campaign seeks to use the power of football in the lead-up to the FIFA 2010 World Cup as a means of raising awareness and promoting the right of all children – boys and girls – to have access to a quality education. Everyone can register their support on the 1 Goal website – www.Join1GOAL.org.

This assistance for education in South Africa comes at a time when **Australia is expanding its development assistance program in Africa**, as part of a commitment to broaden its engagement with Africa.

Education, in particular capacity building through tertiary education, will be one of the principal areas of focus of Australia's growing development assistance program to Africa.

Australia has committed to increasing by 10-fold the number of scholarships for African students – from 100 each year last year, to **1000 each year** by 2012-2013.

The Australian Government will provide an estimated A\$163.9 million in development assistance to Africa in 2009-10, a substantial 40 per cent increase on the previous year. Despite the international economic downturn, Australia's commitment to increasing its development cooperation efforts on the continent remains strong.

Education is identified as a flagship sector of Australia's growing aid program, because it is one of the highest impact development investments with far-reaching social returns and will shortly become the aid program's largest sector. It will be worth more than A\$690 million in 2009-10, or approximately 18% of our total Overseas Development Assistance - an increase of 29% from the previous year.

For further information, please contact William Blomfield on +27 83 409 3619.