

QUESTION ON NOTICE / Spoken

001 – Public Hearing 10 November 2021

Topic: Aid and diaspora communities

Page 21

Senator Janet Rice

Question

Senator RICE: Have you given any consideration to or done any work with diaspora communities to deliver aid through their relief programs?

Mr Innes-Brown: Not that I'm aware of, but it's certainly something we can take on notice and talk to our humanitarian division about.

Answer

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has been active in engaging the Ethiopian diaspora community, including conducting thirteen meetings with community representatives and responding to over 100 pieces of correspondence since the start of the current conflict in November 2020. Advocacy by diaspora communities provides valuable insights into the conflict and helps to inform our understanding of its impacts and the scale of the humanitarian crisis in northern Ethiopia.

Although DFAT has not worked directly with diaspora communities to deliver aid through their relief programs in Ethiopia in the lead up to or during the current crisis, we are making substantial contributions to humanitarian relief efforts.

Australia provided \$3 million to the World Food Programme in March 2021 to provide urgently needed food supplies to those facing the gravest food insecurity. Australia also provided \$3 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross in October 2021 to reinforce critical health and medical services, support survivors of sexual violence, and address the essential needs of the most vulnerable. Recently, Australia provided \$118,000 to the International Planned Parenthood Federation to deliver sexual and reproductive health services to Ethiopian refugees in Sudan. Additionally, Australia has deployed humanitarian specialists to several United Nations (UN) organisations operating in Ethiopia under the Australia Assists program. This is in addition to the support provided each year to the UN and other international organisations to fund humanitarian action and development activities.