



Country Women's Association of NSW

*Incorporated in 1931 by an Act of NSW Parliament
Constituent Society of the Associated Country Women of the World*

ABN 82 318 909 926

Media Release

14 October 2015

CWA highlights refugees on International Day of Rural Women

The Country Women's Association of NSW (CWA of NSW) is focusing on the plight of rural refugees, particularly women and children, to mark the **United Nations International Day of Rural Women** on **15 October 2015**.

Tanya Cameron, CWA of NSW President, says that while in developing countries women make up around half the agricultural workforce, they have far less power, recognition and financial reward than their male counterparts and are often more heavily impacted by poverty, war and natural disasters.

"Rural women across the world are working to provide food, clothes and water for their families. In developing countries, women and children often walk hours every day just to carry fresh water," she says.

"It's been shown many times that if you help rural women – particularly by providing accessible fresh water through a tank or bore – then whole families and villages can be moved out of poverty.

"Through its membership of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW), the CWA of NSW is helping to improve the lives of women and families in South Pacific countries such as Timor-Leste, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Papua New Guinea by providing water tanks, garden equipment, clothing, education, and funds.

"However, when rural women and children become refugees, their lives become even more challenging. It's critical that these vulnerable people aren't overlooked in the current refugee crisis."

Tanya says the CWA is ready to advise and help the government on how to best settle rural refugees in Australia.

"While CWA is not a provider of direct services to refugees, we have worked closely with women through the South Pacific, educating them, raising their skills and improving their lives – plus we know well what must be in place for rural resettlement efforts in Australia to be successful," she says.

"Rural Australia is ready to take refugees and do our part in this current world crisis – and regional Australia has a tradition of strong communities, personal support, and friendship, all of which will help new arrivals settle in.

"However, the government must ensure that vulnerable people aren't shifted to the regions without the support they need.

“With the infrastructure, services, jobs, and support for translation and language learning, we know that rural refugees can be welcomed into Australia’s rural and regional communities, and start rebuilding their lives.”

Ends.

Media background

The United Nations International Day of Rural Women on 15 October was established by the UN General Assembly in 2007 and first observed in 2008. For more information: <http://www.un.org/en/events/ruralwomenday/>

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