

## Media Release

Friday 26 January 2010

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### FFA GIVES 'FOOTBALL UNITED' A KICK START

Football Federation Australia (FFA) today announced details of a new partnership in support of *Football United*.

Football United, an initiative of the University of New South Wales, is a program that uses the magic of football to support refugee and other disadvantaged youth. A *Football United* team will represent Australia at the first ever 'Football for Hope' Tournament during the final week of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa.

Introduced by FIFA for the first time as part of this year's FIFA World Cup, the 'Football for Hope' Tournament brings together 32 teams from around the world that represent the power of football for social change.

CEO of FFA, Ben Buckley said FFA was very proud that an Australian team had been chosen to participate in the Tournament.

"The kids in this team are all refugees from places such as Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, the Pacific, as well as Australia. They are inspiring individuals who have been chosen for this once in a lifetime experience due to their commitment to the *Football United* Program and their playing ability," added Buckley.

*Football United* needs to raise \$150,000 to send their 15 team members to South Africa. This will cover flights, accommodation, equipment and training camps.

"To help *Football United* on their way, and kick start their fund raising activity, FFA will today make a starting donation of \$20,000 to their 'Football for Hope' fund.

We also encourage others – whether businesses or individuals – to donate to *Football United* and help us send a second Australian team to this year's World Cup," added Buckley.

On hand today to offer words of wisdom and few tips to the *Football United* team were representatives of Australia's two national teams – Heather Garriock, Sarah Walsh and Lydia Williams from the Westfield Matildas together with Josh Kennedy, David Williams and Matt Thompson from the Qantas Socceroos.

Both teams are in camp on the Gold Coast preparing for matches - March 3 (Qantas Socceroos v Indonesia at Suncorp Stadium) and March 6 (Westfield Matildas v DPR Korea at Ballymore Stadium).

Businesses or individuals wishing to donate to *Football United* are asked to visit [www.footballunitedprogram.org/](http://www.footballunitedprogram.org/)

### About Football United

*Football United* is an initiative from the University of NSW that uses the power of football to help improve social cohesion and harmony in communities with high proportions of refugee, immigrant and indigenous people.

The *Football United* program was started 3 years ago by Ms Anne Bunde-Birouste from the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at the University of New South Wales.

It currently consists of 5 programs in Sydney's western suburbs involving over 600 humanitarian refugees, immigrants and disadvantaged children and youth. *Football United* also supports programs in Cameroon and Southern Sudan.

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