



Charity: Andrew Forrest

Jumpers on way to help cold refugees

■ Sam Tomlin

Fresh off his \$65 million donation to WA's tertiary education sector last week, mining magnate Andrew Forrest has turned his attention to the refugees fleeing war-torn Syria.

Teaming up with the Salvation Army, the billionaire's Minderoo Foundation has launched the Sweaters for Syria campaign.

Thousands of jumpers and hoodies are set to be stowed in Perth cupboards as the weather warms, but Mr Forrest is hoping they could be put to better use in refugee camps gripped by freezing winter temperatures.

"It was simple for us," Mr Forrest said. "If we could help alleviate the crisis, in an effective way, we would."

More than two million refugees have fled Syria since the violent civil war between the regime of President Bashar al-Assad and rebel forces erupted in 2011.

Most are in camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt, with Jordan's Zaatari refugee camp one of the country's biggest cities. As icy winter conditions hit the region, foundation staff hope the jumpers may save lives.

Minderoo strategic communications director Ranya Alkadamani said the initiative started with her and her brother wanting to send jumpers to Beirut for the United Nations refugee agency.

"When Andrew and Nicola Forrest heard I was sending a suitcase over, they immediately suggested setting up the WA initiative," Ms Alkadamani said.

"I was blown away. It's small compared to the humanitarian crisis but it's helping nonetheless." Jumpers can be donated at your local Salvation Army store.