

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. With a presence in 135 countries, ADRA was established to provide community development and emergency management to those in need without regard to their ethnicity, gender, religious or political affiliation.

As part of the ADRA global network response, ADRA provides emergency assistance to victims of natural disaster. Such assistance includes food distribution, water, shelter, clothing, and healthcare. ADRA also works to transition its relief operations into long-term, sustainable development activities such as school and housing reconstruction.

ADRA's success over the years is due in part to its reputation for honesty, integrity, and excellence in conduct of its activities. As a volunteer, contractor or employee of this Agency, you continually represent ADRA in all that you do. Therefore, in your capacity with this Agency, it is extremely important to understand the standards ADRA expects from you in maintaining and promoting a positive image of the Agency and observing these humanitarian principles.

## 2. ADRA's HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES

ADRA strongly believes that our work is grounded in our Christian values and that humanitarian principles are based upon that groundwork. We do not seek to assist only out of compassion but also because of a humanitarian right and responsibility to assist. ADRA is a signatory to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response programmes, of which the following are the principles:

### **1: The Humanitarian imperative comes first**

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all citizens. We recognize our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering among those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster.

### **2: Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind.**

Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.

We base provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of disaster victims and the local capacities in place to meet those needs. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever found; our provision of aid reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing

this approach, we recognize the crucial role played by women in disaster prone communities and ensure this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes.

**3: Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.**

Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. Assistance not dependent on recipients' adherence to particular political or religious opinions. We don't tie promise, or distribution of assistance to embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed. Aid is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed such.

**4: We shall endeavor not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.**

NGOs are agencies which act independently from governments. We formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except it coincides with our own policy. We will never knowingly allow ourselves, or employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. We value and promote voluntary giving of labour and finances by individuals to support our work and recognize the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. To protect our independence we seek to avoid dependence on a single funding source.

**5: We shall respect culture and custom.**

We endeavor to respect culture, structures & customs of communities & countries we work in.

**6: We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.**

All people and communities - even in disaster - possess capacities and vulnerabilities. Where possible, we strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we co-operate with local government. We place high priority on proper co-ordination of our emergency response with those most directly involved in the relief operations.

**7: Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid.**

Disaster response assistance should never be imposed upon beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation best achieved where beneficiaries are involved in the design, management & implementation of programs. We strive to achieve community participation in our programs.

**8: Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.**

Relief actions affect prospects for long term development. So, we implement relief programmes which reduce beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters & help create sustainable lifestyles. We pay attention to environmental concerns. We endeavor to minimize the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

**9: We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.**

We often act as a link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We report on our activities, both from a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We have the obligation to ensure monitoring of aid distributions and carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance. We also report upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programmes will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise to minimize the wasting of resources.

**10: In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects.**

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster situation where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears. We will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over principle of maximizing overall relief assistance. We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

### **3. ADRA'S CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT**

ADRA expects their personnel to comply with the laws and regulations governing ADRA's operations, and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their conduct of such operations, and with a constant regard for ADRA's good name. In this context, it is expected that each employee/volunteer will:

- respect the trust placed in each employee or volunteer of ADRA including ensuring the proper use of ADRA's resources and information;
- avoid any behaviour which is, or might be seen as, less than honourable.

### **4. ADRA PERSONAL CONDUCT**

#### **4.1 Principles of Ethical Conduct**

##### **4.1.1 Responsibility to Donors**

ADRA operates through funds provided by various donors. As such, donors have the right to know that the projects they are supporting are not compromised by behaviour and actions that are dishonest and unethical. ADRA therefore, is expected to conduct its business in an ethical and honest manner.

##### **4.1.2 Responsibility to Development Partners**

The avoidance of misconduct and dishonest behaviour on the part of the Agency staff in dealing with local partner communities is indispensable to the maintenance of the

required standards. ADRA must avoid any activities/behaviour that will threaten to undermine its influence with local communities.

#### **4.1.3 Responsibility to Personal Conduct**

Employees/volunteers are not to use the property of, or employ the efforts of, beneficiaries, or communities for the benefit of the employee or volunteer or the benefit of the employee's/volunteer's family.

An employee/volunteer must do nothing which may cause emotional, physical or financial harm to the individuals, communities, projects or countries that ADRA is dedicated to helping.

Be loyal and honest in his/her dealings with ADRA and will not pursue personal or family gain/advantage in such dealings.

Be loyal and honest in dealings with the beneficiaries of ADRA programs, donors and fellow employees and volunteers;

#### **4.2 Transparency**

ADRA's operation is based on public trust. It requires impartiality in the Agency's decision-making process and openness in its operations. Transparency is manifested in the following:

- Clearly defined Agency policies and procedures that are pursued in a compassionate, objective and consistent manner;
- Decisions that are arrived at through a consultation process with an equal representation of groups within the Agency;
- Honest and timely donor reporting; and
- Impartiality in business relations.

#### **4.3 Child Protection**

ADRA International recognizes and respects the rights of minors as defined by international standards including the UN Convention on the rights of the child. Where children are one of the target groups we meet child protection standards defined by ADRA International. We use caution when taking and using photographs of children to ensure proper respect, dignity, and that they do not reveal the location or full name of the child.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_