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ADRAnews is published quarterly by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia.

# Message from the CEO

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Happy children in Laos

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Because ADRA exists to positively change lives, change futures, and change the world, we talk a lot about “change” at ADRA. Each day we interact with a world with great needs, read dire statistics of hunger, poverty, and poor health, and partner with individuals and communities to seek solutions so that those statistics can change.

In this issue, you’ll read of lives changed in Laos. By the introduction of select animals and new feeding systems, training, and education, ADRA has brought great change to lives in South-East Asia. Lives once caught in poverty and hunger are now experiencing the change of increased income and thriving gardens.

Read on to see how ADRA is restoring smiles in Nepal, assisting earthquake survivors in Pakistan, and changing not only futures for the poor in Mongolia but also the way the banking industry there interacts with this new clientele.

Here in Australia, volunteers continue to enable ADRA to bring about change...through a myriad of ways such as collecting for the annual ADRA Appeal, holding benefit concerts and making sure teens are “Getting Connected.”

The ADRA office here in Sydney has experienced change, too. We’ve welcomed and farewelled staff and board members, with gratitude for what those leaving have contributed and appreciation for what new people will bring to the furthering of ADRA’s mission.

ADRAnews itself is undergoing change and we appeal to you, our readers, to be a part of it. We want to be sure we’re keeping you informed in the best possible way, and have included a reader survey in this issue. We value your opinion and consider it vital to producing a newsletter of significance. So, please, take a moment to fill it out and return to us.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in the work of ADRA. Each day, lives here in Australia and around the world are changed because of your prayerful and financial support.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "D Jack". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

David Jack  
Chief Executive Officer  
ADRA Australia



*ADRA helps earthquake survivors in Pakistan.*

# Raising Rabbits and Income in Laos

The Laos People's Democratic Republic is one of the poorest countries in South-East Asia. The average annual income is \$584 per person. In the remote north western province of Luangnamtha, people live in isolated mountain villages and do not have the same opportunities as people in urban areas to earn an income. This is why ADRA is working to improve the livelihoods of people in nine rural villages in Luangnamtha Province. These villages are made up predominantly of Khamu people, who are an ethnic minority in Laos.

ADRA's Rural Income Generation project uses appropriate livestock to help families generate income. The animals, chosen according to their suitability to the environment and the people, are introduced to the village, raised to maturity, and then sold to provide income. Commencing in August 2005, the three-year project has already introduced some small livestock and is testing and demonstrating livestock feed production.

The project began by providing rabbits for village schoolchildren to raise. Rabbit pens were constructed in school

grounds and mature breeding-age rabbits were provided by ADRA. Raising rabbits is easy, since they can survive on only grass, which means the school children enjoy feeding and looking after the fluffy animals.

As part of this project, the children are also taught to collect the rabbits' manure to be used as an excellent natural fertilizer. The manure is easily collected from under the pens and the fertilizer is used on new vegetable gardens, benefiting the wider village community.

Implementing good development projects not only requires that ADRA provide resources, but also the training and education required to use and maintain those resources. Through public awareness campaigns and in-village demonstrations, ADRA empowers village members to continue development projects on their own.

For example, the Rural Income Generation project has provided an excellent opportunity to introduce the new 'cut-and-carry' livestock feeding system, which helps to ensure income

and provides health benefits for both animals and people. Previous to learning the 'cut and carry' system, villagers often allowed animals to roam the village area to seek their own food. This meant that the animals' food intake was often low, and they were more susceptible to disease and predators. Their droppings also had health implications for the villagers. The 'cut and carry' system, which includes fencing animals, teaches people how to produce a crop specifically for livestock feed. By having feed readily available, villagers simply 'cut' the crop and 'carry' it to the animals. Through increased feeding, the animals mature faster, which enables villagers to secure more income more frequently.

As these new techniques are introduced to the village, larger livestock such as goats, cows and buffaloes will be incorporated into the project.

*Quentin Campbell is an International Program Coordinator for ADRA Australia, who recently completed a two-year internship for ADRA Laos.*



*Raising rabbits for income, using the 'cut-and-carry' feeding system.*



*As new techniques are learnt, larger livestock will be used to generate income.*



## Network News

The ADRA network has a presence in 125 countries. Recent projects implemented by other ADRA offices within the network include:

### LIBERIA

ADRA is revitalising the educational system by rebuilding schools, reconstructing kitchens for school feeding programs, and providing training for kitchen staff in schools that were damaged or destroyed during the 14 years of civil unrest in Liberia.

### MEXICO

In Mexico City, ADRA is teaching young mothers skills that will enable them to become financially independent, as well as provide better care for their children.

### BULGARIA

ADRA is working to improve the health care of the Roma population in the Iztok District of Kyustendil by providing improved access to quality health care and promoting health education among the community.

### PAKISTAN

ADRA has donated 60 heavy duty winter tents, 2,795 family tents, 4,183 shelters, 30,000 heavy duty blankets, 72,390 quilts, 120 wood-burning stoves for school tents, 1,000 wood-burning stoves for family tents, 6,000 hygiene kits, 300 food packages, and 300 water carriers for desperate families in the Kashmir region. These supplies have met the needs of 68,450 earthquake survivors in the region of Kashmir.

# International Program

The following projects are a part of the international program of ADRA Australia.

## Cambodia

### *Clean Water for Health and Food Security*

This project, valued at \$30,000, is targeting over 234,000 people vulnerable to sanitation and hygiene related diseases and food insecurity, in Kampong Thom Province, Baray and Santuk Districts, as well as 20 Child Friendly villages of ADRA Cambodia's Child Survival Project area. By the project end, 30 June, 2006, it will have provided 270 water points (100 wells, 120 water tanks, 50 treadle pumps) and 140 latrines.



ADRA provides water for communities in Cambodia.

## Nepal

### *Youth Volunteer Counselling and Testing (VCT) for HIV and AIDS*

This project, valued at \$25,000, aims to address the HIV and AIDS problem in Nepal by working with youth through three strategies: 1) mobilise youth to participate in the provision of HIV, sexual and reproductive health education and awareness, 2) provide a quality, comprehensive VCT service to the district of Kavre, and 3) provide support to individuals and families with the greatest need.

### *Plastic Surgery Transition Project*

ADRA Nepal's Cleft Lip and Palate (CLP) surgery program has re-opened after a one year break, having previously run for 11 successful years. In partnership with Scheer Memorial Hospital, which will provide a venue and skilled support staff, this project will facilitate visits by overseas volunteer surgery teams to conduct operations free of charge for the poorest

people in Nepal. In addition, there will be a greater focus on capacity building and cross-training with Australian medical staff training Nepali staff. This two-year project, valued at nearly \$43,000, seeks to treat 300 patients with CLP or other conditions, such as burns, that require plastic surgery.



A Nepali patient with cleft lip and palate thanks ADRA.

## Mongolia

### *Ulaanbaatar Micro Economic Development (MED)*

This 12-month project will address the needs of Mongolia's urban poor who fall just below minimum commercial loan requirements. The project, targeting selected districts of Ulaanbaatar, aims to improve individual's business skills and facilitate the improvement of pro-poor financial services and outreach in the banking sector. By project end, it is expected that a minimum of 150 previously unqualified small business owners will have gained access to formal financial sector services. Furthermore, it is expected that the banking sector, having experienced a new source of reliable and profitable clientele, will have changed attitudes toward loaning to the ultra poor. ADRA Australia has contributed nearly \$43,000 to this project.



ADRA aims to help ultra-poor Mongolians access loans.

# National Program

The following projects are a part of the national program of ADRA Australia.

## Operation Spring Boost

Operation Spring Boost, a project undertaken by Sydney volunteer Brigitte Perik in collaboration with ADRA, has helped to pamper community members struggling with the effects of drought in areas around Narromine, Nyngan and Cobar, NSW.

With the help of other committed volunteers from both Sydney and Narromine, Brigitte organised the packing and distribution of 125 pamper hampers for affected communities in western NSW. The packs, valued at around \$200 each, included things such as personal toiletries, laundry powder and some non-perishable food items. Some hampers,

containing puzzles, crayons and other toys, were also packed for children.

Operation Spring Boost provided an excellent opportunity to partner with other groups committed to helping affected communities: SDA churches from across Sydney coordinated the packing and collecting of hampers; courier companies Exel and Star Track Express transported the packs free of charge; and the Cobar Baptist Church, Cobar Drought Relief Committee, a Narromine volunteer organisation, and surrounding SDA churches all helped to distribute the packs to identified community members.



Brigitte Perik (centre) and Sydney ADRA staff with drought relief pamper packs.



Volunteers in Narromine help distribute pamper packs to drought-affected households.

## Getting Connected

One of ADRA Australia's youth resiliency programs, Getting Connected, has entered a more comprehensive research and development phase, involving the expansion of the school pilot program into more schools. Getting Connected has been piloted for the past two years at Kellyville State High School, Sydney, with great success and is now moving into five more schools in the greater Sydney region.

Getting Connected is a "whole-of-community" approach to building resiliency among young people, by addressing the underlying issues that affect resiliency and lead to at-risk behaviour. The approach

aims to support the growth and development of young people by instilling protective factors such as school and family connectedness, respect, a sense of belonging and the sound development of life skills. Getting Connected aims to utilise local resources and support, such as community workers and volunteers.

Getting Connected is the result of partnerships between ADRA Australia, psychologist Rose Cantali, staff and students of Kellyville State High School, and volunteers from Mile End Community Church.

## ADRA Volunteers assist NSW Bushfire Evacuees

The summer bushfire season 'fired up' on January 1 this year when temperatures soared into the 40's across NSW. Scores of fires broke out, including major outbreaks on the NSW Central Coast around Gosford and at Junee in the state's south west.

Under the coordination of emergency services and the Dept. of Community Services (DoCS), ADRA volunteers helped coordinate accommodation for evacuees and stranded travellers on the Central Coast.

ADRA's work, organised by Acting Central Coast Area Coordinator David Lambert, included assisting at temporary evacuee centres, where mostly holiday makers gathered to await news of road and rail closures and clearances. ADRA also made arrangements for the most acute needs of evacuees requiring placement into accommodation. In all, over 700 people were assisted at evacuation centres over the New Year weekend.

*Chris Olafson, ADRA's Australia's National Program Development Manager, is also the Disaster Recovery Coordinator for NSW.*

**getting Connected**  
BUILDING RESILIENT YOUTH | GROWING STRONG COMMUNITIES



Kellyville High School students learn resiliency through Getting Connected.

# Getting Involved

## Acoustic Experience for ADRA

On 21 January, the Fox Valley Community Centre hosted four artists in an Acoustic Experience LIVE! concert. The concert organisers and artists generously donated a portion of their ticket proceeds to ADRA's projects for at-risk youth.

The featured artists included 2004 Australian Fingerstyle Guitar Champion and multi-award-winning guitarist, singer and songwriter, Dale Willis, talented kiwi singer and songwriter Bryce Wastney, acclaimed local Spanish guitar guru Jean-Pierre Martinez and the soulful vocal artist, Melissa Otto.



Jean-Pierre Martinez and Dale Willis strum up support for ADRA.

Photo courtesy of Kent Lock.

"As a high school teacher, I have come to recognise that there are a lot of kids out there that live under pretty tough circumstances. And having youth-in-crisis programs, such as the ones ADRA supports, is really important to these kids' lives who may not otherwise have the opportunity to better their situation," commented Wastney. "I choose ADRA to benefit from our concert because I think ADRA is a wonderful organisation that practices Christianity in a real tangible way. And it does a lot of really great work overseas and in Australia," continued Wastney

ADRA has recognised that increasing numbers of young Australians feel isolated from their peers, families and communities, leading to increased disconnectedness and loneliness. A lack of healthy relationships means youth have limited resources on which to draw when faced with challenges and stress, placing them at risk of developing or entertaining destructive behaviours, including substance abuse and suicide. Recognising the need within Australia to nurture and empower young people, ADRA Australia has initiated, funded, and supported a number of youth resiliency projects. Thanks to the artists and attendees for enabling even more youth to participate in ADRA's projects for at-risk youth.



Soulful vocalist Melissa Otto contributes to ADRA concert.

Photo courtesy of Kent Lock.

## Enduring Appeal Collectors

Ray and Carmelle Creighton, long-standing members of Inala SDA Church, collected \$111 for the ADRA Appeal just by having a collection tin handy in their own home. "If we can do it, everyone else can do it," they explained. With patient and enduring collectors like Ray and Carmelle, their church's ADRA Appeal collections continue to grow every year.



Ray and Carmelle Creighton, members of Inala SDA Church.

# Giving Back through Volunteering

Busy single mother of four, Michelle O'Sullivan, has been volunteering at the ADRA Community Centre for Emergency Relief, Qld, for three years. Michelle says she loves helping other people and there are many benefits. "It is so rewarding to get a thank you card from someone and to spend time with the other volunteers," she says.

Michelle got involved at the Centre after receiving a food parcel. She went back to help out as a thank you and has been volunteering ever since! She now volunteers for about 10 hours a week. "If there weren't any volunteers, these centres wouldn't be able to run," she explains.

Michelle says that volunteering makes her feel more confident and fulfilled. "Sitting at home can make you feel like you're the only person in the world with problems. The feeling I get from helping other people is wonderful."



Photo courtesy of Quest Newspaper Group

Michelle O'Sullivan volunteers at an ADRA Community Centre.

## ADRA Australia farewells Board members

The close of 2005 saw the departure of some ADRA Australia Board members, one of whom has served for almost 10 years.

Margaret Sharpe is ADRA Australia's longest serving board member, providing Development expertise for nearly a decade. She has received the Order of Australia Medal for her work in this field and has previously helped to organise medical training teams to visit developing countries.

Dr. Barry Oliver completed his five-year term as chair of ADRA Australia's Board, having overseen ADRA Australia through a period of great transition and growth. Barry's professional approach and positive leadership has been invaluable to ADRA Australia.

Carolyn Rickett has also served on ADRA Australia's Board for five years, providing

expertise in the area of communication and education.

In their places, ADRA Australia welcomes new board chair, Peter Brewin, a Fellow Professional National Accountant and Administrator at the South Pacific Division, and board members Dr. Liliana Munoz, a research scientist with a PhD in HIV, and Rita Karraz, a TAFE lecturer in Social Welfare.



David Jack with leaving Board members (L-R) Carolyn Rickett and Margaret Sharpe.



ADRA's CEO David Jack thanks Dr Barry Oliver for 5 years as Board Chair.

## How do you Get Involved with ADRA?

We would love to hear from people involved with ADRA in any way. Why not share a few lines telling us what you are doing? Send us your story with a picture. We'd love to share your ideas with others!

(Photos should be a minimum of 300dpi or 3megapixels and cannot be returned. By sending photos to ADRA Australia, you give permission for photos to be published at the discretion of ADRA Australia.)

# Integrity

## our mission

ADRA Australia is a Christian, humanitarian agency that creates opportunities, empowers people and shares hope.

## our values

- ▶ Compassion
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Integrity
- ▶ Transparency
- ▶ Collaboration

## our goals

- ▶ Enhance relationships with partners
- ▶ Facilitate community
- ▶ Reduce conflict, hardship and poverty
- ▶ Improve quality of life
- ▶ Excel in all we do



***“It’s not what we eat but what we digest that makes us strong; not what we gain but what we save that makes us rich; not what we read but what we remember that makes us learned; and not what we profess but what we practice that gives us integrity.”***

- Francis Bacon, Sr



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