



## Fighting Hunger

**At eight years of age, Zira knows the pain of feeling hungry. And her mother knows the desperation of seeing her children starve and the shame of them being chased away from school. The family lives in a remote province in Zimbabwe and this is their story.▶**

### A Daughter's Story

My name is Zira and I live in Bulawayo with my family. My brother and I were often hungry and I didn't like being hungry. To get money for food, my father used to sell things in the city. And my mother used to go around town asking for mealie meal\* so she could make some food for us. But it wasn't enough.

### A Mother's Story

I am Sibiu, Zira's mother. We were starving. My husband would look for piece jobs to get money for food. Once, he tried to sell flowers – he was desperate. We couldn't feed the family and pay for school. My children were frequently chased away from school. I wanted a better life with good food and beautiful uniforms for my children, so people wouldn't know our hardships.

# CEO Message

A few years ago, one of my children had to complete a science project for homework. Unaware of my poor academic record in science, they asked me for help.



“Buoyancy” was the topic, and the extent of my simplistic knowledge was the fact that my surfboard floated. So, we started to read and learn about buoyancy together. It was much more fun than I expected – we

created experiments and recorded our findings – eventually confirming one of the scientific principles of buoyancy to be true.

Now, years later, all I remember is the simple fact that buoyancy is an upward force. A strong force, capable of supporting massive ships loaded with passengers and cargo. A constant force that never appears to tire or reduce with time.

Since learning about buoyancy, I have often pondered some similarities with God. God is a constant and never-ending source of strength and He offers that strength to lift each of us up. I have this image of God standing on the ocean floor, feet firmly planted and His arms outstretched above His head holding and supporting us above the inevitable waves of life.

Every day, as I go to work at ADRA, I rely on God in this way and I am so grateful for His firm footing and His strength that overcomes my weakness. When we know God is helping us like this every day, there is something really satisfying about passing help on to someone else. When God makes us stronger, we should use that strength to lift someone else up.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus highlighted our responsibility to give someone in need a lift, regardless of borders or differences in beliefs.

ADRA’s ministry is all about lifting others up, being a neighbour and serving so that all may live as God intended – free from poverty and disadvantage. And this ministry is only possible when you and I choose to make a difference.

You chose to make a life-changing difference to others through your support of the ADRA Appeal this October. Thank you! Your time, efforts and donations will indeed help lift up thousands of people in need.

I pray you will be moved to further action as you read the stories in this newsletter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Rubessa". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Paul Rubessa**  
CEO  
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*Sibu and her family*

## Then One Day...

**Zira says:** “My mother started to grow our own garden. She worked really hard every day to get the plants to grow. Soon there were enough vegetables to feed my whole family. She is now growing many vegetables of all different colours.

My mother is very good at selling her vegetables.

I like the garden because it brings us food on the table, it gives us money to buy bread and mealie meal and it even pays for our school fees.

Before, my brother and I got chased away from school because we couldn't pay for our school fees. But now we can go to school with new books, wearing new uniforms!”

**Sibu says:** “Then one day, we received training in growing vegetables and in marketing when ADRA came to our community.

I focused on marketing because I understood it so well. I later discovered that there were gaps in the supply of some vegetables at some periods. So I started my business by sourcing what the buyers wanted.

ADRA gave me a skill that is very useful in life. It made me realise the income I could get from

tapping into farming activities. Even if I cannot grow everything by myself, I have found some gaps in the market that are now earning me a living. My life has improved greatly as I now have a reliable source of income. I am happy that my family is no longer sleeping on an empty stomach.

This change in my life means so much to me because education is very important for my children's future. It was education that brought change in our own home through the training we received.

What ADRA gave me is worth much more than just a one-off food hamper. Knowledge is power and no-one can take that away from me now.”

**This Christmas, you can help feed other children like Zira by enabling their parents to earn a living.**

**Visit [adra.org.au/christmas](http://adra.org.au/christmas)**

†Stories about people are real, but sometimes names are changed to protect their privacy.

\*Mealie meal is a relatively coarse flour made from maize.

# It's a Win-Win



**Debra Fricke**, coordinator of the Pakenham café in Victoria, knows firsthand that there are people in her community who are struggling.

"We've got one guy who rides his bike 10-15kms to come into town to have food," says Debra when talking about the Friday night community meal operating from Soul Food Kitchen. "There's obviously a need here and we're meeting it."

A partnership between ADRA and Afri-Aus Care sees volunteers and members of the police force come together to prepare and serve fresh and nutritious food every Friday night to people who otherwise would go hungry or be lonely.

And on Mondays, women, girls and youth from the local community come together to learn how to resolve generational and cultural conflicts, how to create healthy family relationships and how to secure employment.

"We have seen that there is a gap between African mothers and the young women living in this community," says Selba Luka, founder and CEO of Afri-Aus Care. "Some of our young people are growing out of the traditional African values. So there's generational conflict."

The program helps people from all ages overcome the barriers that hold them back.

According to Rebecca Auriant, the Conference ADRA Director in Victoria, these groups are important for the women and youth in the community to help bridge the generational gap and to address other important issues in culturally appropriate ways.

"Discussions around mental health and family violence must be treated sensitively," she says.



*Friday night meals bring the community together in Pakenham, Victoria.*



*A women's group discusses real-life challenges.*

People coming for a meal or to attend a women's or youth group are forming close connections and sharing about their challenges.

"When you have food and programs together, it helps the mothers, the young women and others to better understand what everyone is going through," Selba says.

Rebecca, Selba and Debra believe that the Pakenham community meal and women's and youth groups are having a positive impact in the community.

"The idea is to help each other out," says Debra.



# Does ADRA share the Gospel?

As the official humanitarian agency of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, ADRA's understanding of justice and of helping vulnerable people is shaped by our biblical understanding of the gospel – Jesus, the good news for all.



As Christians, in response to this good news, we have been called to help the poor, love our neighbour as ourselves, and tell others about the hope that we have in Jesus.

So, does ADRA share the gospel? Yes, we do.

And here is how!

ADRA's role in any community is to help end suffering and enable people to break the cycle of poverty for themselves and for others. And, if it is true that "actions speak louder than words", then we believe that ministering to the pressing needs of communities is sharing the love of Christ – but in a very practical way.

1 John 3:18 (CEV) summarises this beautifully: "Dear children, you show love for others by truly helping them, not merely talking about it."

Showing, rather than speaking about, the love of Jesus is also a reminder of the good advice in James 2:14-17 about the need to help alleviate pain and suffering as an evidence of our faith. By following Jesus' example with our actions, according to John 13:35, others will know that we are Jesus' disciples.

ADRA's approach to development and relief is motivated by our Christian identity and entrenched in best current development practice. We are proud of our purpose to serve humanity so that all may live as God intended – free from poverty and disadvantage – in the most effective, loving ways.

And we are thankful that you choose to partner with ADRA in achieving this purpose.

Find out more about our purpose, values and mission at [adra.org.au/about-adra](http://adra.org.au/about-adra)



# Shatha's New Vision



Last week Shatha's older sister's glasses were stolen. At just 6 years old, Shatha knew she had to do something.

She didn't chase down the thieves or make 'lost-and-found' posters – instead she promised her sister that one day she'd become an eye-doctor so she could help.

This was the latest in a series of traumatic events in the life of this little Syrian girl who is living as a refugee in Lebanon with her family.

Last year, Shatha's father had a stroke. One side of his body was paralyzed, and the little paying work he had once been able to secure quickly disappeared.

The family left everything behind when they fled their war-torn home, and now they had no breadwinner. Worse for the children was the vivid and daily reality of a father living in chronic pain.

Shatha, who is particularly close to her father, was shattered. She cried continuously, hoping – wanting – to make life better for him.

Today, Shatha's older brothers bear the weight of providing for the family on their young shoulders. The eldest, 18, earns just \$133 a month cleaning in a beauty salon. The other, at just 16, completes dangerous tasks at a local garage.

But at ADRA's Sed el Bouchrieh Centre in Lebanon, Shatha and her sister are receiving support to learn and the opportunity to dream of a brighter, more peaceful future.

"When the girls go to the centre they find relief and hope," Shatha's mother said. "ADRA is one of the reasons that my daughters have got through this hard time. Shatha's relationship with her classmates and teachers helps a lot too."



*Shatha enjoys going to school.*



*Shatha with her mother and sister.*

And it is at the ADRA Centre that she is taking the first steps towards her dream to become an ophthalmologist. As her life changes, Shatha is already planning to change the lives of others for the better too.

Shatha's life is better because someone like you gave the gift of an Essential School Supply pack for just \$10! It's that simple.

**When you purchase a gift through ADRA Australia's new Gift Catalogue, you can do something life-changing too. Request a copy of the catalogue by calling 1800 242 372.**

**OUR NEW GIFT CATALOGUE IS  
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Visit [adra.org.au/gifts](https://adra.org.au/gifts) to buy your Christmas gift today.

# Anne and Wal Cram



Wal and I have been ADRA supporters for a number of years now.

As Christians, we understand that we have an obligation to consider the plight of the poor and disadvantaged.

We try to not further just our own needs and wants, but want to be aware of the hardships that others are facing and try to do something to help. And we feel that through supporting ADRA, we can have a small part in achieving this.

We have witnessed first-hand the difference that ADRA makes. When we visited an ADRA project in the Solomon Islands, we saw the difference a water tank and standpipes have made to a community. Before, obtaining a daily supply of water required a canoe trip to another island for fresh water. Now, the community has access to clean water without having to leave their island.

Wal and I have been so blessed, and so we feel a responsibility to share something of the benefits we have with others. When we give a donation, we want to know that our gift has been used efficiently so it can have the greatest impact possible. Wal and I both consider ADRA to be an entity we can trust to disperse our donations in a trustworthy and efficient manner.

All of this is why we have left a contribution to ADRA in our Wills.

**By leaving a gift in your Will to ADRA, you can leave an amazing legacy for people in need. Find out more at [adra.org.au/bequest](http://adra.org.au/bequest) or call us on 1800 242 372 to request a brochure.**

**Thank you for your ongoing and vital support.**



# Volunteer Profile



After a year of prayer, Abigail Brinkman and her husband made a very big decision.

"We decided to be content with one income and to dedicate the time where I would otherwise be doing a paid job to doing community and ministry work," says Abigail.

Despite her qualifications, Abigail did not return to full time work. Now, her typical day involves home-schooling their five children and helping to run the Tumut ADRA Community Centre.

A few years ago, members of the Tumut Seventh-day Adventist Church wanted to find out how they, as a church, could help with the needs of their local community.

"We as a church have a long legacy of knowledge and skills in the area of health and wellness, and we have seen that health is a big issue, especially in rural communities." So, the idea for a health centre was born.

What started as a health centre is now a thriving Community Centre thanks to the dedication of Abigail, her family and the Tumut Adventist Church community.

"This is my main work," Abigail says.

The Centre now offers a café, a community massage clinic, dance, and mums and bubs exercise classes. Other service providers in the area are also looking to collaborate with the Centre. But more than that, through the hard work of Abigail and the team of volunteers, the Centre is making a real difference.

"We've gotten a lot of good feedback from the community," Abigail says. "It has broken down a lot of barriers."

**We love our ADRA volunteers. Thank you for giving of your time, energy and skills in service to vulnerable people in your communities.**



## Share Your Story

We would like to profile your volunteer story. Do you have one to share? Email [news@adra.org.au](mailto:news@adra.org.au)

# Fundraiser Profile



What is a **2500spins** bike ride all about?

**Keryn McCutcheon** tells all.

Keryn participated in her first 2500spins ride in March 2019. The four-day charity cycling event took her from Auckland, along the Coromandel Peninsula, and back to Auckland. We asked Keryn about her experience.

## What made you decide to sign up to do a 2500spins ride?

I have watched over the past few years a number of friends participate in the Queenstown ride in New Zealand, and thought it looked amazing. But I was always too scared that I wouldn't be able to do it, and I didn't want to spend all the money to get down there with a bike and not complete it. So, when the Coromandel one close to home came up,

I thought I would give it a go. At least if I failed I hadn't invested too much.

## How did you find the fundraising element of the ride?

I am a big supporter of ADRA, having seen first-hand a number of your development initiatives in Cambodia, so I always talk about the huge impact ADRA is having and how every donation is being used for great causes.

I offered to do a ton of baking for people in exchange for some of my donations. It is always tricky asking for money as there are so many charities out there, and so many 'give a little' pages for personal needs, so everyone is bombarded with requests. That is why I offered something for the donations. I also ended up having a few anonymous donors who gave generously at the end of the ride – maybe they were motivated by the awesome pictures and



videos we were sharing on Facebook! I have always tried to be generous when people ask me for my time and resources, so I hoped that others would also give when I asked.

### **How did you find it doing a multi-day group ride?**

I haven't been on a bike for about 20 years, let alone road cycling with a lot of people in lycra! I did a lot of training on my own just around roads locally and then four training rides with a small group. I was nervous about the bigger group and cycling day after day, but there was no need to be as there were really experienced riders in the bunch and they shared loads of tips and tricks. I paired up with another experienced rider (similar pace as me) and she mentored me all the way – it was awesome.

The camaraderie and fun atmosphere along the routes was special. The distances were not too strenuous each day, and the route and stops provided us with opportunities to experience some great sights and spots! Having it over a few days means you can get to know others and

holiday together with mates who have signed up too.

### **What was the most challenging aspect of the ride?**

Maybe the training pre-event. I was determined not to have to get off my bike on the hills, and we were told there was some killer hills. The other challenging thing was getting used to riding close to another cyclist to 'draft' – a wee bit scary and requiring some skill. I also was challenged by learning to ride with 'clip in' shoes. I had a couple of embarrassing falls when I forgot to 'clip out' when we stopped and ended up on the gravel – looking rather sheepish (but unhurt apart from my pride).

### **What was the most memorable moment from the trip?**

I think making it without stopping or walking to the top of the last hill of the Coromandel Mountain range – 6.7km and a 400m elevation – and then watching as fellow riders also made it to the top was one of the best highlights. The social time at the end of the ride - lunch at Coromandel and a celebration dinner in Auckland - where we ate and shared memories together was also great.

### **What would you say to someone who was considering joining a ride?**

Just do it! You won't regret doing something for your personal fitness, meeting new people, getting to experience some great parts of the country, and supporting a charity like ADRA who is helping people live a life free from poverty.

## **Exciting rides are coming up in 2020!**

The Alps-to-Ocean Adventure begins on February 13, 2020 in Christchurch, New Zealand, and Murray-to-Mountains ride begins on March 19, 2020 in Albury, Australia. Both rides will support Syrian children living in refugee camps in Lebanon to gain an education. Find out more and register at [2500spins.com/trip-finder](http://2500spins.com/trip-finder)

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