



## Transform Their Tomorrow, Today

**The sound of roosters crowing fills the air long after the sun has risen. Maria leads us between the wooden houses of her village to an open space in the shade of palm trees. Although missing a leg, she sits with barely any difficulty.**

We are in a rural village in Timor Leste.

“In 1975 I fled the village and ran into the forest because of the war,” Maria says. “When I was fleeing, I got a wound on my leg. It started small but grew over time. Years later, I was taken to Dili where they cut off my leg. Otherwise, I would have died from the infection.”

Over the years, Maria had to learn how to walk again - with a crutch as her only aid. With just her husband, Florindo, to care and provide for her, Maria was forced to get back to work.

Maria and Florindo are farmers, and growing crops in rough terrain under the harsh Timor sun is hard work.

For years they struggled to grow enough food to feed their family and to send their eight children to school. Maria took the vegetables that she grew to the market to sell, in the hope that she would get enough money for food and education. But, despite her hard work, the yield was never enough.

# CEO Message

I love being a parent. And I usually jump head-first into whatever activities my kids show interest in – although there have been a few exceptions.



So last September, when Abbey invited me to join her on a challenge to go without chocolate for one year, I said “yes” - without thinking.

The first few days were the most difficult – particularly when I had

to resist chocolate brownies at our church supper. I suggested to Abbey that a brownie was cake rather than chocolate, but to no avail. Her official ruling? “No brownies allowed!” I wondered what I had got myself into...

Christmas tested my resolve but I persevered, and, by the time the Easter eggs were in the shops, I was not even tempted. In fact, I felt more connected to the real Easter story without the chocolate distraction. Abbey’s idea led to a decision which turned into commitment, and finally, it became a habit. It started as a challenge but it became easier.

Going without chocolate is a healthy choice that has highlighted to me how (relatively) easy it is to

go without a few luxuries – and to save money in the process. And what a significant difference the money saved could make to people living without clean water, food, income or access to healthcare and education services that we take for granted.

A friend of mine likes to start sentences with the words “Imagine if...”. The sentences often end in crazy ideas that lead to laughter and great memories. But *imagine if* our faith community of 60,000 members sacrificed a luxury to give \$5 each per week to help someone else. I challenge you to grab a calculator and work out the impact we could have on the lives of those who need a hand up. I know this is a simplistic example and that not everyone is in a position to give away \$5 per week, but it illustrates the collective power of our community of faith to courageously and compassionately help others so that all may live as God intended.

I love our church. We are not perfect, but we have a heart for serving others which I find inspiring. Thank you for continuing to make amazing things happen for people in need.



**Paul Rubessa**

CEO  
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*Maria and Florindo with their children who live at home*

“It is difficult to earn money because of my leg,” says Maria. “Paying for my children’s school was very difficult.”

So when an ADRA project began in her village, Maria and Florindo were eager to participate.

With ADRA’s help, Maria’s community received access to clean water. Before, Maria had to walk for more than half an hour to collect dirty and contaminated water from the river. People in her family were often sick with water-borne diseases and diarrhoea.

To Maria and her family, clean water meant good health and an opportunity to expand their garden.

“Before, when we had to fetch water from the river, we felt heavy-hearted,” says Maria. “But now water is close. We can plant a garden near our house so we feel good.”

Maria’s garden is now flourishing. Once she could only sell chilli, round eggplant, cassava leaves and spinach. Now, with the seeds and agricultural training that she received from ADRA, Maria is also growing corn, tomatoes, mustard greens, cabbage, long and mung beans, and other varieties of eggplant.

Her yield has more than doubled.

“After the harvest, we sell some of the vegetables and keep some at home to eat,” says Florindo. “When we get the money from selling the vegetables I am happy because we can save some, we can put some into the savings group ADRA started, and we can use some to pay for the children’s school.”

With the right tools, skills and know-how, Maria and Florindo can meet their daily needs, send their children to school, and save for the future.

But Maria is still worried that her children will experience poverty like she did. She is desperate for her children to go to school so they can have opportunities that she never had.

“I want my children to continue their schooling,” Maria says. “I want them to have a good education.” And with your help, they can.

**Please donate now to help people like Maria and her family.**

**Call 1800 242 372 or visit [adra.org.au/transform](http://adra.org.au/transform).**

# Blacktown Centre equips next generation of counsellors



The ADRA Community Centre in the heart of Blacktown is supporting Sydney's most vulnerable people.

Run predominantly by volunteers, the Centre offers a range of services from food parcels to social work, but is best-known for its *free* quality counselling.

"Financial stress is common among people who receive counselling from our Centre," says the Centre's Supervisor, Grace Copoceanu. "Ensuring that our services remain free - and therefore accessible - is crucial." To help maintain the demand for counsellors, the ADRA Centre has partnered with the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP).

Although the Centre's primary concern is meeting the needs of the community in Blacktown, the Centre is in the unique position, where, by helping the community, it can also contribute to the training of the next generation of counsellors.

Aaron Connelly, the National Placement Relationship Manager for ACAP, appreciates the Centre's way of helping his students.

"ADRA's continuous support and accommodation of our ACAP students does not go unnoticed," he says.

According to Pamela Lopez, a counselling volunteer at the Blacktown Centre, and to Meghna Datta, who recently graduated ACAP



*Pamela Lopez, a volunteer counsellor at ADRA Blacktown Centre*

with a Masters of Counselling and Psychotherapy, ACAP students really value doing a placement with ADRA.

"Students all want to do their placements at ADRA," says Pamela. "It's always their first choice."

"It was such a great experience to work at ADRA," says Meghna. "I have learned so much. If it wasn't for my full time job, I would still be volunteering there."

But for these students, their time at ADRA isn't just about finishing their placements.

"What really attracted me to ADRA is the purpose statement," says Pamela, who is a practising Christian. "Here is something that I really related to. I really want to help these people."

This is the kind of helping that goes both ways.

To learn more or to donate, visit [adra.org.au/project/blacktown-community-centre](http://adra.org.au/project/blacktown-community-centre)



# Development vs. Welfare

Most Australians are familiar with the analogy: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”

This simple concept is the basis of development work around the world. While it is human nature to want to help others who are in need, aid agencies like ADRA are learning that it is not enough to merely address the symptoms of poverty. Rather, for real and effective change to be made, ADRA works to address the root causes of poverty.

So, what does this look like? If we go back to the analogy, the symptom of poverty is hunger. But the reason the man is experiencing poverty is that he doesn't have the skills or know-how to feed himself. In this instance, ADRA would work with the man to teach him to fish, so that he can feed himself for the rest of his life.

ADRA's projects are geared towards this kind of development. In Timor Leste alone, ADRA is teaching families gardening techniques, with an incredible flow-on effect. Not only are families producing yields that are enough to feed the family, they are also earning income from selling



*A man in Timor Leste participating in a sanitation project*



*Women in Nepal participating in an ADRA savings group*

excess crops and their overall health is improved by adding nutritious vegetables to their diet.

While it may be more time consuming to invest in teaching someone to fish, or farm effectively, rather than to give them a meal, the long-term benefits of development projects far outweigh a hand-out.



# Disaster Updates

A relentless tide of disasters has affected millions of people around the world recently.

In Australia alone, you have enabled ADRA to respond to the ongoing drought, the Townsville floods, bushfires in North NSW, and the storms that struck Sydney in December 2018. Globally, ADRA has helped those affected by Cyclone Idai in southern Africa, the Malawi floods, the Indonesian tsunami, an Ebola outbreak in central Africa, and the cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe.


None of this would have been possible without your generous support. Whether you donated to support a particular disaster response or contributed to our Disaster and Famine Relief Offering, *thank you*. You are the reason that ADRA is always ready and always there when disasters strike.

The ADRA Network promptly distributed food and clean water and provided psychological support to thousands of traumatised and displaced people. So far, ADRA has secured 16.5 tonnes of corn soya bean porridge to combat moderate malnutrition, and 75% of families in the Zimbabwe town of Chimanimani now have access to clean water.

***ADRA Australia raised in excess of \$100,000 to help with the response.***


## Cyclone Idai



 In what has been described as the worst natural disaster to hit the southern hemisphere, Cyclone Idai left 1.85 million people in need after it swept through Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi in March.

## Townsville Floods



 In February, the city of Townsville was faced with some of the worst flooding in its history.

Thousands of houses were affected, schools shut down, and families were evacuated. The ADRA Op Shop in Townsville opened its doors to give free clothing and goods to those affected. Teams of ADRA volunteers went from door to door, helping the community with sandbagging and clean-up efforts. Some 80 ADRA volunteers were involved.

## PNG: The Long Road to Earthquake Recovery



In February 2018, a 7.5 magnitude earthquake devastated the Southern Highlands of PNG. The mountainous area was completely isolated.

544,000 people were affected, 26,000 were left without a home, and 200 people were killed. Homes and other vital infrastructure crumbled, and locals were faced with the enormous task of cleaning up and rebuilding.

ADRA and the Adventist Aviation Services partnered to fly food kits into remote areas that were not accessible by road, and by providing communities with hygiene kits.

As the severity of the earthquake was realised, ADRA secured funding from the Australian and New Zealand Governments to focus on community rehabilitation with the goal of 'building back better.'

With ADRA's help to access clean water, to build latrines, and to provide psychological support, the people of the highlands began the long and tedious process of rebuilding.

ADRA's regional humanitarian coordinator, Michael Peach, recently visited the affected areas and was blown away by the change he witnessed.

"Most of my interactions with communities occur immediately after a disaster, where food, water and shelter are critical," Michael says. "It's not often I get to see the long-term impact, or attend community events to celebrate recovery and rehabilitation milestones."

In particular, the impact of water has been transformational. "For many mountain communities, their only access to water is a two-hour walk down to the river in the valley, limiting how much water they can carry back up the steep paths," says Michael. "Inevitably, water is prioritised for drinking and cooking, not for toilets and bathing."

But, thanks to your generosity in partnership with ADRA, these villages now have fresh water and improved hygiene and sanitation practices. "Talking with the community about how this has impacted their life is a very emotional experience," Michael says.

But while the majority of houses have been rebuilt, road repairs and many larger community buildings like churches and schools, still require a lot of attention. And, according to Michael, the emotional impact of the earthquake is still tangible.

"Many people fear further earth tremors," he says.

It is anticipated that ADRA activities will be completed by June 2019.

***It is thanks to our generous supporters that ADRA is able to help people affected by disasters such as these.***

**Help ADRA be always ready and always there in times of disaster by giving a monthly donation. Visit [adra.org.au/donate](http://adra.org.au/donate) or call 1800 242 372.**

# Rosemary's Ongoing Kindness



Rosemary Greene lived a life of service. A long-term ADRA supporter, Rosemary gave what she could to help people in need thrive. So, when Pastor Robert Stankovic first talked about establishing an ADRA Community Centre in Belmont, Rosemary wanted to help.

And true to her word, Rosemary included a thoughtful gift to ADRA in her will so that she could make an important difference even after her passing. With the blessing of her three daughters, Rosemary's gift was used for urgent kitchen renovations at the Belmont Community Centre. Without her gift, this vital work would not have happened.

The Centre is now flourishing, and thanks to the kindness of Rosemary and her family, hundreds of disadvantaged people who have fallen on hard times receive food parcels, meals and vital fellowship every Tuesday. This is often the crucial first step for them to regain control of their life.

"Half our volunteers mingle amongst the people, eat with them and listen to their stories," says Robert. "What we think is small is actually making a huge impact. People are finding a sense of belonging."

There is now a plaque in memory of Rosemary in the kitchen of the ADRA Belmont Centre – a reminder that her kindness and compassion continue to improve the lives of the people



receiving help, and the experience of the ADRA volunteers at the Centre *every week*. Rosemary's generosity will not be forgotten.

**You can learn more about leaving a Gift in your Will to ADRA Australia by emailing Stephen Pollack at [stephenpollack@adra.org.au](mailto:stephenpollack@adra.org.au), calling him on 0408 633 082 or at [adra.org.au/wills](http://adra.org.au/wills).**



# New Purpose Statement. New Motto. Same Motivation.

For over 60 years, you, together with ADRA, have served people affected by poverty, by disasters, and by hardships because you believe that God created all people to thrive. We at ADRA do too.

This simple but profound approach to serving humanity now spans the globe, impacting lives in more than 140 countries. No matter the location, language or challenge, we strive for a world in which all people may live life as God intended – free from poverty, able to thrive and with hope.

Reflecting this deeply-held belief, ADRA's new purpose statement is: **Serving humanity so all may live as God intended.**

Our new motto of **Justice. Compassion. Love.** is based on Micah 6:8, which calls us to "...act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God".

*Justice*, so that every action is chosen for the impact it will have on others.

*Compassion*, because a commitment to serving others brings the best out in ourselves and in those around us.

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JUSTICE  
COMPASSION  
LOVE



And *love* so strong that all may see the reflection of God's character in our service.

***Thank you for supporting ADRA to continue bringing justice, compassion and love to disadvantaged people in Australia and around the world.***

Join us in this journey by making monthly contributions to our Where It's Most Needed Fund. Visit [adra.org.au/donate](http://adra.org.au/donate) or call 1800 242 372.

# Volunteer Profile



**Maxine Abblott** always wanted an active and meaningful retirement.

For the last eight years, the 73-year-old from Tasmania has maintained a busy but happy lifestyle by volunteering for ADRA.

Maxine started out by helping a few people every week, but now she is helping more than 200 people per week.

"I'm an on-the-ground type of person," Maxine says. "I do love to get out there where people hurt, listening to their stories, trying to solve

issues, trying to get people housing and helping them get jobs."

Maxine provides fresh produce to people with low incomes. After seeing the financial struggle many experience to access fresh and healthy food, Maxine began sourcing and selling vegetables at wholesale prices to low income earners and pensioners. With support from the ADRA Op Shop in Ulverstone, Maxine delivers over 200 food parcels to people in the towns of Burnie, Wynyard, Somerset and Waratah.

"Other churches have been recommending that people get in touch with me to get fresh food," Maxine says. "ADRA is now known as having the fresh veggies that people want!"

Maxine is also passionate about helping people out of employment to find work. With Maxine's help, many people have been able to secure work, especially in the food industry.

And if all of this is not enough, a group of church members, including Maxine, are now looking to open an ADRA Op Shop in Waratah.

"It's exhausting, but it's rewarding," Maxine says.

**Our ADRA volunteers are amazing. Thank you, Maxine! And a big 'Thank You' to you, our hundreds of volunteers, for your heart of service.**

If you would like to become an ADRA volunteer, register at [adra.org.au/volunteer](http://adra.org.au/volunteer) today.



## Share Your Story

We love our volunteers and want to profile your stories. Do you have one to share? Email [news@adra.org.au](mailto:news@adra.org.au)





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THEIR TOMORROW  
TODAY**

TO DONATE VISIT [ADRA.ORG.AU/TRANSFORM](http://ADRA.ORG.AU/TRANSFORM) OR CALL 1800 242 372