



Evangelism and Development

Department

Sections (inc. All sections where this document is located.)

Corporate Services

Core Documents/International Program

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Mark Webster

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Purpose

This document describes the difference between evangelism and development and offers a guideline to determine whether proposed interventions should be accepted or not on the basis of their nature and linkages to broader community development programs.

Definitions

Evangelism (also called proselytism and missionary work) is the practice of attempting to convert people to another religion or faith or promotion of a particular religious adherence and/or affiliation to another religion or faith. Evangelistic activities may discriminate on the basis of belonging to a particular group or aim to persuade or develop religious beliefs and faith practices among project beneficiaries.ⁱ

Development is a dynamic process of change and growth that improves the quality of life of the participants and is generated from within the system. It is a process that helps people to remove obstacles that prevent them from achieving their full potential. ADRA’s function is that of an enabler or catalyst, assisting in providing room for human growth by removing obstacles to that development.ⁱⁱ

To guide ADRA Australia in its choice of interventions, the following development principles are central to our thinking and approach. Our interventions should be:

- **Developmental** – facilitating a *hand-up*, rather than a hand-out (eg providing small sums of finance to kick-start a small business rather than making a large cash donation – the former facilitates the recipient working for themselves, the latter swamps them and causes dependency).
- **Empowering** – the intervention/assistance should enhance the potential of the beneficiaries to help themselves. Do they have the means and skills to change things? (The solutions in most communities lie *within* the communities.)
- **Community-based** – the focus should be on communities (often defined by geography but could be defined by a common characteristic) rather than individuals, which often causes envy and disaffection in a community.
- **Participative** – will the intended beneficiaries be participating throughout the intervention process – in planning, in implementing and in revising? Do they wish to have the intervention? What do they perceive as their need/s? What will be their role in the intervention?
- **Inclusive** – as Seventh-day Adventists entities we should include all regardless of religion, race, gender etc. This is a ‘creedal’ position of ADRA at the international and national levels.
- **Sustainable** – will the benefit continue after the original intervention has long gone?
- **Appropriate** – will the intervention fit in with the local culture, environment and economy?
- **in Partnership** – we work primarily with selected ADRA implementing partners in Asia, South-eastern Africa and the South Pacific, and occasionally with other entities in the geographic territories of these partners.ⁱⁱⁱ



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Policy

ADRA Australia is driven by values which arise out of its understanding of the Holy Scriptures that undergird the Judeo-Christian ethics. ADRA Australia supports non-discriminatory international and national development programs that contribute towards poverty and suffering alleviation. ADRA Australia will abide by pre-determined criteria (below) in order that funding, support and facilitation of programs are not construed as 'evangelistic'.

Application

The following criteria will be applied to decide program/project acceptance and support or not:

1. ADRA Australia believes that the compassionate delivery of humanitarian non-discriminatory assistance to people in need, whether for purposes of relief or development, is in itself, a sufficient demonstration of Christian values and fulfils its given mandate as the humanitarian agency of the Seventh-day Adventist World Church.
2. ADRA Australia will use neither its own funds nor other donor government funds, including AusAID grants, to support any kind of ecclesiastical, evangelistic, infrastructural or organisational activity that is not directly related to relief or development programming.
3. ADRA Australia will not use religious preference or similar ideological discrimination either as a pre-requisite to providing assistance or as an incentive for engagement in a project or program
4. ADRA Australia expects every project/ program partner to comply with these principles of operation and such ongoing compliance will be monitored from time to time.

ⁱ Overseas Aid Gift Deductions Scheme (OAGDS) May 2009
<https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/oagds-guidelines.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Source: ADRA International Operations Manual

ⁱⁱⁱ Source: ADRA Australia Partner Operations Manual – August 2008