God answered our prayers, so that through us He can answer theirs

John Howard
Founder, Advisor, and Former Executive Director, ADRA Canada

You will always encounter people who will say to you, ‘It can’t be done’. But I knew that the idea to start a humanitarian agency in Canada came from God.

It all started during my seven years of service in the Congo, in central Africa. Seeing the needs motivated me to return to Canada and look for ways to effectively improve lives overseas. Between 1977 and 1985, I worked with both the Alberta and Federal Governments, leading to the beginnings of what countless miracles later came to be known as the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Canada.

Through this agency, Canada became one of the first countries to go beyond immediate food and medical relief by engaging in humanitarian development—helping communities attain self-sufficiency and self-sustenance. I could spend hours recounting the many miracles it took for ADRA Canada to become what it is today. As the founder and former Executive Director of ADRA Canada, I have experienced how God can lead and provide in mighty ways. The Meritorious Service Medal I received from the Queen I attribute to God. All I can say is if you hear that sure voice, just press on, because nothing can hinder efforts that are initiated and blessed by Him.

Message from Dan Jackson

Dan Jackson
Chairman of the Board, ADRA Canada, President, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada

It is an honour for me to congratulate and extend my best wishes to ADRA Canada on its twentieth year of giving a brighter future to many. One of the goals of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada is to serve humanity. ADRA Canada has been doing that both at home and beyond the country’s borders. As I have travelled and seen the work of ADRA Canada, I know that lives are improved because of your generosity. I want to thank all our donors, board members, volunteers, and all others who help reflect the love of Jesus through ADRA Canada.

Twenty Years of Growth: ADRA Yesterday / ADRA Today

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ADRA Global

Serving Humanity Abroad

Lisa Mercer
International Program Director

Women are sewing and selling their handcrafts to earn an income. Children go to school each morning with a full belly, excited and ready to learn. Polio victims are walking, running, and smiling again. Families are growing their own vegetables. The list goes on and on. ADRA Canada has helped the poor and destitute! They are living better lives because you helped provide them with much-needed resources. The agency is celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year, and we are pleased and proud to say that we have made a difference in thousands of lives.

Cambodia
Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)
Today, thousands of individuals in Cambodia actively participate in smoking cessation and prevention, as a result of ADRA Canada’s promotional and educational techniques to combat tobacco use.

Togo
Rural Health and Income Generation
Thousands in Togo are being educated about disease prevention, sanitation/hygiene principles, and the importance of gender equality. Many villages are significantly cleaner, healthier, and more supportive today.

Honduras
Small Enterprise Development
3,000 low-income Honduran women are enrolled in a program that teaches business skills and management. The program is helping to improve the standard of living, encourage discipline and self-confidence, and increase income generation.

Mongolia
Youth Education
ADRA Canada is determined to make education an integral part of Mongolian rural youth by standardizing informal education, increasing enrollment, and reintegrating school dropouts. Approximately 95% of the 1,200 participating students remain in the educational system today.

China
Animal Bank for Economic Development
200 families received husbandry training, assistance with the purchase of livestock, as well as education on animal disease prevention, management, and nutrition to ensure sustainability of herds. As a result, an entire community of 10,000 people are benefiting with increased family income.

Yemen
Assistance for Physically Challenged
Physical deformities are unfortunately common in Yemen, due to landmines, birth defects, and faulty immunization practices. But with the provision of surgery and prostheses through ADRA Canada’s referral and rehabilitation system, many people, some for the first time in their lives, no longer suffer as socially outcasts.
ADRA National

Serving Humanity at Home

Twenty years after its humble beginnings, ADRA Canada is not only serving thousands of individuals around the world, but also meeting the needs of the less fortunate here in Canada. Today ADRA Canada funds over 150 projects across the country. Many lives are being touched as a result of faithful volunteers and support who give so generously of time and finances. It is a continual goal of ADRA Canada to bring awareness about the plight of the poor, both overseas and at home, to the people of Canada. Martin Luther King Jr. once said: “An individual has not yet started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.” Thank you for reaching out to a hurting world. Thank you for truly living.

Breakfast Program

Thanks to our volunteers and community centres, many children across the country have breakfast every school day of the year. This service leads to improved academics and attendance in Canada’s elementary schools.

Volunteer Networks

ADRA Canada promotes the spirit of giving all year round. Volunteers, young and old, across the country join with ADRA Canada in bringing hope and happiness to underprivileged Canadians.

Computer Training

ADRA Canada supports centres that provide free or low-cost computer training to those who cannot afford an education. The newly acquired skills boost trainees’ confidence and skills, and the majority of graduates become gainfully employed.

Youth Involvement

Youth campaigns across the country receive tools and funding to engage in community service—mission work right here in Canada. Service To Others Really Matters (STORM) Co., is a prime example of such projects supported by ADRA Canada.

Community Health

Adventist community health services receive funding to conduct health screening programs, bringing health awareness to Canadians and guiding them in making proactive choices to live better, healthier lives. ADRA Canada also supports the Cardiovascular and Improvement Program (CHIP).

Community Centres

ADRA Canada funds numerous community centres that provide food, clothing, furniture, and other necessities to the less fortunate in Canada. Many of these community centres have now expanded into shelters that accommodate and educate homeless Canadians, leading them to eventually become employed and live better, independent lives.
What Our Donors and Partners Have to Say

Robert Moore, former owner of a welding business in Red Deer, Alberta, has been integral to the success of the rehabilitation projects in Kernde Bay, Kenya. Not a Seventh-day Adventist himself, Moore helped establish a wheelchair manufacturing and repair facility in Kernde Bay and has traveled to Kenya with ADRA Canada several times. “I am very impressed with the commitment and organization of the Adventist church in humanitarian work.” He says. “I had no idea that is what the [Adventist] church was up to!”

Elona Katsman is the president and founder of Smiles Foundation and Sontus, sister charitable organizations that work towards improving health and education in the Democratic Republic. “ADRA Canada has been a backbone to Smiles Foundation since the beginning,” says Katsman. “Without ADRA Canada’s support, we would not be who we are today. Thanks to ADRA Canada, we have helped over 1 million people, mostly children, in the Democratic Republic.”

ADRA Canada Honours

ADRA Canada wishes to honour Dr. Kenneth Hill, a retired physiotherapist residing in Salmon Arm, B.C. In 1990, Dr. Hill and his wife, Hazel, started ADRA Canada’s rehabilitation clinic for physically handicapped children in Kernde Bay, Kenya. For fifteen years, the couple has dedicated their time and finances to sustain the project.

20/20 Vision: Looking Forward

Oliver Lefson-Brook
Executive Director

Before I met John Howard in 1986, I knew little about ADRA. Several years later, I accepted a call to serve in Bangladesh as ADRA country director; that’s where my wife and I learned that ADRA was really about Christianity in work boots. Upon our return to Canada in 1996, I became ADRA Canada’s Executive Director. Over the years, I have had the privilege to personally visit over 40 countries to see the difference ADRA Canada has made.

I have also witnessed immense growth in our organization, and in the next 20 years—or until Christ returns—this growth can only continue. By 2025, ADRA Canada’s budget will perhaps expand to 10 million dollars per year, the staff to about 20 personnel; and the number of countries with active projects to roughly 60. Our main thrust in international development to alleviate poverty will continue to be Education. This, combined with our Christian approach, will mean much in the future of our world.

In Canada at least 350 churches will be involved in community services with components for youth, health, indigenous peoples, care for the needy, and disaster response. Our national approach will be more developmental in “helping people stand on their own feet.”

Disasters are on the increase, and by 2025 perhaps as much as 25% of ADRA Canada’s work will be in this area. We will be trying to cope with the ever-increasing number of people suffering due to corruption and uncontrollable climate and weather.

ADRA Canada—the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—will continue to show the love of Jesus as long as this world “grows old as a garment.”

Global Impact

Global Impact is a publication of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Canada. ADRA Canada welcomes comments, suggestions, and contributions for ADRA news publication.

Executive Editor—Oliver Lefson-Brook
Editors—Eric Rajpal, James Asdelford
Design—Christopher Landry

Contact

ADRA Canada
148 King St E
Oshawa, ON L1H 1B8

Telephone: 905.433.2004
Toll Free: 1.888.770.2172
Fax: 905.723.1903
Online: www.adra.ca
E-mail: info@adra.ca