



The ADRA network

Partnership and independence



ADRA



1. Who is ADRA?

As a civil society organisation integrated into a global, federally organised network, our strategic objective is to build and maintain long-term and sustainable partnerships. ADRA stands for Adventist Development and Relief Agency.

ADRA Deutschland e.V. is an organisation that is active worldwide. Our projects support people in need – regardless of their political or religious beliefs, their ethnic origin or their gender. Together, we use many years of experience to

provide fast, effective and lasting assistance in emergency situations and to build sustainable infrastructures.

ADRA is represented all over the world, with each ADRA office having its own legal identity and role, all of which are committed to our overarching quality framework. ADRA Deutschland e.V. is an association based in Weiterstadt and Berlin and listed in the German register of associations (Vereinsregister).

The international network

ADRA Deutschland e.V. and the entire ADRA network is affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Our core values are based on the foundation of Christian convictions. We see ourselves as a „value-based“ NGO rather than a „faith-based“ NGO. A conscious distinction between form

(individually shaped faith) and content (value-based) is crucial for us as a value-centred organisation. In line with our human rights-based approach, people are at the heart of our work. The „WE“ always takes precedence over individual interests: „leave no one behind“!



Power-critical debate and localisation

Like the sector as a whole, the ADRA network is questioning existing norms and power structures in our profession. We started a process of internal reflection of responsibilities and decision-making powers. Those power structures influence our projects, which need to be inclusive, needs-based, fair and effective for the affected population. As written in the ADRA network's five-year plan the concept of localisation and locally-led action plays a central role in our further development and continuous professionalisation. It will therefore be crucial to take future decisions jointly with local actors and communities on the ground in order to strengthen capacities on the long term.

2. Cooperation – What constitutes a partnership at eye level?

Within the ADRA network, we bring together different competences and strengths and reach a large number of people through our work. A respectful partnership of equals is central to ensuring sustainable and successful programme work based on a shared understanding of cooperation. Our federative structure enables long-term and strategic commitment while still allowing each individual office a high degree of independence and autonomy. The local communities and organisations ensure broad expertise and networking. Thanks to its roots in communities, the network can draw on established structures and capacities, employees and volunteers in many places. The majority of ADRA offices have developed from these very communities and local structures. This is a great strength of the network.

The network has established nine regional offices to pool the network's diverse technical capacities, ensure knowledge management and facilitate joint transnational programme and policy work. Although these offices have no authority to issue directives, they feed regional challenges and perspectives into a network-wide committee (NetCom). This committee consists of ADRA senior management from around the world and takes a stand on global or organisational issues that affect the entire network.

Linkages to external international, national or regional processes and discussions are crucial to





us. We use network-wide working groups (Technical Learning Labs) to ensure the continuous development and distribution of this expertise. By sharing knowledge and capacities within the network, we are able to work together as partners. Some offices also act as liaison offices for bilateral donors and advise other ADRA offices on fundraising processes for example vis-à-vis the UN.

The partnership-based work in our network also entails the understanding that there are offices with different strengths and weaknesses in a globalised world. We see this heterogeneity as an opportunity. It is important to us to promote this and to support local structures and staff, as

we are an organically growing and learning organisation that focuses on continuous and joint development.

Our network strategy states that the network's members come together across national boundaries in the name of social justice. It underlines the relevance of partnership as the basis for managing power and leadership, therefore many of us wear 'two hats'; being able to think local and global at the same time.

This network is a valuable frame of reference for each individual office and gives us the privilege of always being able to put forward local voices and expertise in Germany, for example.

3. Mode of operation – How does the network work?

Our way of working throughout a project or programme cycle is characterised by our shared understanding of independence and partnership. The legally independent, implementing ADRA offices are part of local civil society and receive technical, administrative or financial support from other offices in the network. The decision-making powers remain with the local offices, which are also generally responsible for project planning and local/national coordination bodies. Projects are implemented by the respective ADRA office based in the country or by a local NGO partner (outside the ADRA network), but not by international structures.

Network-wide quality standards

Our ADRA internal quality assurance system is our common framework and allows for individualised consideration of existing strengths and weaknesses. The ADRA Accreditation and Licensing (AAL) tool incorporates existing international standards, such as the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS). AAL was designed by various ADRA offices and has a clear focus on capacity-building. It is not about reporting to selected offices or international structures in the sense of a top-down approach, but instead focuses on a transparent review of uniform standards.

AAL is a central precondition to ensure a quality minimum standard. It enables a presentation of the status quo and customised support for the respective partners as part of individual capacity-building. It reflects the diversity of our network!

Practised localisation

The name ADRA is an important and established trademark with a claim to reliability, quality and efficiency. At the same time it allows each office to maintain its deep roots in local civil society. It proves once again: „as local as possible and as international as necessary“.

However, it is also certain that not all implementing offices in the ADRA network see themselves as local actors or are registered as such. This is weighed up and decided on a context-specific basis. In order to support the local population and complement local structures, it is essential that ADRA works with local organisations outside the network depending on the situation. This is why many partner offices at national level work together with other local NGOs.



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