



Love Thy Neighbour – Perri’s Story

“We went into hardship on our mortgage and my sick pay ran out, my annual leave ran out, everything ran out, and we were living off nothing.”

Perri and her husband were living the Australian dream: they had a mortgage on a home and Perri was facing a promotion that would secure the couple’s future. But an injury turned her whole world upside down.

“Life changes very, very quickly,” Perri says. “I had a very comfortable job and I was due to have a promotion. Unfortunately, I had a fall at home

and I fractured my right leg very, very badly. It took 18 months for me to recover.”

Perri is a nurse, and her injury prevented her from working. During this time, Perri used all her leave from work before falling back on her savings. Her husband was working casually, but his work was unreliable. When their savings were depleted, Perri and her husband faced the reality of not knowing where their next meal was going to come from.

“It got to the point where we just could not live any more,” Perri says.

CEO Message



In August, I participated in ADRA's Active August Challenge.

It provided me with a great opportunity to get physically active and engage in raising funds for those we serve. I want to say thank you to everyone who also took on the Active August Challenge and helped to raise funds to fight hunger.

I can feel a direct correlation between my mental and physical wellbeing. When I cycle to my local National Park or play basketball with my son Breno, I am rejuvenated. I feel like I have rebooted my system and it feels good to get my happy endorphins flowing, all things which help with my personal relationships and work life.

Sometimes, I need a challenge like Active August to disrupt my usual day-to-day life, something that encourages me to leave my desk and my computer for a moment to get outside and move my body. Taking that first breath of fresh air and immersing myself in nature is one of the best stress-reducers I can think of!

It is also when surrounded by nature that I feel a stronger connection to God, as I can truly appreciate his handiwork.

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. (Psalm 19:1-4)

While we all connect with God in different ways, surrounding ourselves in His creation and disconnecting from the world is an exercise that benefits us all. We can all benefit from more physical exercise and more time spent in nature, and I would encourage you to be more intentional about it. The flow on effects are very positive and result in living life to the full, as God intended!

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. (Romans 12:1)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "DGrellmann." The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a horizontal line.

Denison Grellmann
CEO, ADRA Australia



Contact Us

146 Fox Valley Road
PO Box 129
Wahroonga NSW 2076
Australia
ABN 85 109 435 618

T: 02 9489 5488
1800 242 372
E: info@adra.org.au
www.adra.org.au
www.facebook.com/ADRAAustralia

Editor **Ashley Stanton**
Contributors
Ashley Stanton
Denison Grellmann
Lara Ahmad

“I had to try and find help. One of the hardest things I ever had to do in my life was to ask for help.”

By looking at her local council’s list of food services, Perri found herself on ADRA’s doorstep. The relief that she felt was instant.

“I got bags and bags and bags of groceries that I wouldn’t have been able to buy,” she says. “I came in here in tears and left with food and a smile on my face and a full belly that night. And that made all the difference.”

When Perri recovered, she applied for a new job. But before her new career could get off the ground, her husband suffered a stroke.

“Not long after I was able to return to work in a new job, my partner had a stroke and subsequently he’s had two further strokes,” says Perri. “So I’m his full-time carer now.”

Perri now receives a carer’s allowance and her husband receives the age pension. But when compared to the cost-of-living, their budget was still tight and they were still considered to be food insecure. ADRA’s food support is helping to relieve that pressure.

“That extra money that we’re not spending on food I can spend on electricity and gas,” she says. “It still hasn’t changed us to where we can go out for a restaurant meal or get takeaway, but we still get a roof over our head.”

Over time, Perri was so touched by the support she received from ADRA that she felt moved to give back in any way she could. And so, she decided to join the team of ADRA volunteers.

“I love being a volunteer and it warms my heart,” Perri says. “I go home on a Monday absolutely exhausted, but my heart is full.”

As a client and a volunteer, Perri is in a unique position. Her experience allows her to connect with the clients that walk through the door every Monday in a personal way.

“I’ve been there, that’s the bottom line,” Perri

says. “I’ve felt like a failure of like, what do I do tomorrow? Am I going to lose everything? And that’s how a lot of them come here.

“People are really embarrassed asking for help because, you know, yesterday they were fine, but today they’re not. And to ask for help is embarrassing.”

Over the past couple of years, the number of people seeking ADRA’s support has increased vastly. The impact of COVID-19 compounded by the cost-of-living crisis has new people coming through ADRA’s doors every week.

“Our clientele has doubled, if not tripled, with the cost of living going up now,” says Perri.

For so many like Perri that are staring at empty shelves, ADRA provides essential food support. But equally important to the clients is the love and support they feel every time they step through ADRA’s doors.

“ADRA is food support. But more than food support, it’s emotional support for me,” Perri says.

“It’s seeing friendly faces every Monday, whether they be clients or the other volunteers that are here. It makes me whole again after a long week as a carer and it just makes me happy and fulfilled when we close the doors and we know people have got full tummies.

“I just want to thank you for your support for people like me and for the people that walk through our doors. It means so, so much.”

The increasing cost of living is putting more pressure on families than ever before. You can help Aussies like Perri with the support they need to get back on their feet. Give now at adra.org.au/appeal

Walya's Story

“Before ADRA, we were harvesting maize, but it was never enough. There was only enough for our family to eat. There was nothing left to sell.”



Walya and her family live in rural Zambia.

Like so many in Zambia, Walya and her husband farm for a living. But their harvest was only ever enough for their own consumption. With nothing left to sell, they struggled to provide for their family.

To pay for essentials like school fees, clothes and medicine, Walya's husband did manual labour. But it was physically taxing, with very little income.

Walya says, “My daughter would come home from school crying because her uniform was ripped and her classmates made fun of her. ‘Every time I go to school my friends laugh at me’ she says. She asked me if she could stop going to school.”

When ADRA started a farming project in Walya's village, she was eager to join. The project, which is supported by the Australian Government through



the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), taught participants farming techniques so they could get the most out of their harvest.

Crucially, the project also introduced cassava and black-eyed peas, known locally as cowpeas. Cassava and cowpeas are staple crops that are resilient to the harsh Zambian weather.

“Through ADRA, I learned how to produce cowpeas and cassava,” Walya says. “It was challenging at first, and my husband feared it was a waste of time. But I followed the farming training I received from ADRA exactly and soon after I brought home my first harvest.”

Unlike many of the farmers around her, Walya sells her



cowpea not for consumption, but for the seed. Walya is among a handful of farmers whose seed is certified by the seed control and certification institute (SCCI).

“We grow our cowpeas for their seeds,” she says. “Three weeks after our seed was certified, we had people buying our seed.”

The first thing Walya purchased with the sales from her cowpea seed were school uniforms.

“After I bought the new uniforms, my daughter started going to school again,” Walya says.

“School starts at 9am but my daughter goes earlier because

she is so excited by her new uniform and school supplies. She is no longer bullied by her classmates.”

These new crops provide enough income for Walya and her family that her husband no longer has to do manual labour. Instead, he stays home and helps her with the farming.

“We are able to make much more than when he was doing manual labour,” says Walya.

The diverse crops have also helped improve her family’s nutrition.

“Our health has improved, and when we stand on a scale our weight has gone up.”

The cowpea crops in particular

have been life-changing for Walya’s family.

“I have seen the change that the cowpeas have made for my family. I hope to increase my production of cowpeas as I have seen how it has helped my family.

“Without the project, things would have been very difficult. I cannot imagine how hard it would have been. Thank you to ADRA and Australian Aid for bringing this change to my family. ADRA has rescued my family.”



School 2 School Program



Seventh-day
Adventist
Schools in

Australia are supporting schools in Ukraine through ADRA's School 2 School Program.

Over 500 days have passed since the outbreak of war in Ukraine, and ADRA has reached more than 1 million affected individuals. ADRA's aid includes providing emergency supplies, shelter support, and psychosocial support for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

While ADRA's day-to-day response activities remain constant, there is also a focus on reducing the long-lasting impact of the war on children and their education.

In a school in Lviv, ADRA Ukraine is running a program for 400 internally displaced families. The program includes free tuition, meals, and social activities for children who are IDPs. Food parcels and psychosocial support is available for the students and their families.

Tetiana, her ten-year old son Artem*, and Tetiana's retired



mother were forced to relocate when the war broke out in their hometown of Kherson. Her son attends school in Lviv thanks to support from ADRA.

"The period of adaptation in the new city was very difficult financially, psychologically, and emotionally," Tetiana says.

"Being a displaced woman raising a young child on my own, I would not be able to afford my son's education at such a school without sponsorship."

When Tetiana and Artem first arrived in Lviv, Artem was

completing his studies online with his school back in Kherson. But a missile strike caused widespread blackouts for six months, and Artem's online classes were cancelled. Without a way to access education, Artem would have been further isolated from his peers and at risk of falling behind in his studies. Thankfully, Tetiana received support from ADRA to help enrol Artem in school.

Attending school has helped Artem adjust to life in Lviv. Tetiana has seen the positive



change in her son since he first started attending, thanks to support from the principal, teachers, counsellor, and being surrounded by peers.

“His emotional and psychological state improved significantly compared to when he first started studying at the school,” she says.

Artem’s school is a mix of local students and IDPs. This

balance has helped Artem adapt to life in Lviv while also being surrounded by peers who understand all he has been through.

“He does not feel alone in his status of ‘displaced child’ because there are enough children in his class and throughout the school who had survived the terror of war and found shelter here,” Tetiana says.

“I like to spend time with my friends in the school yard,” Artem says. “I also like it when we go on an excursion with the whole class. Recently, we went to the Museum of Science, which was very cool.”

ADRA Ukraine is seeking funding to roll out the program at Artem’s school into other regions, particularly in the western areas with large populations of IDP children and families as there isn’t as much conflict there.

Seventh-day Adventist Schools in Australia will be helping to support these schools and children like Artem, so they can look forward to a bright future.

“I like physical education and classes called ‘Learning Together’ where we talk about relationships,” Artem says.

“Now I dream of either becoming a professional football player or starting my own business.”

*Name changed for child protection purposes.

**For privacy, images shown are from our general Ukraine response, not from our School 2 School Program

To learn how your school can participate in the School 2 School Program to fundraise for schools in Ukraine, email info@adra.org.au or call 1800 242 372.

Toowoomba Op Shop school feeding program

The ADRA Op Shop Toowoomba is helping to feed children who have come to school without eating breakfast.

The op shop is partnering with two schools in the area to run breakfast programs – Darling Downs Christian School and North Toowoomba State School – and the food programs operate differently in each school.

“We currently run a breakfast program at Darling Downs Christian School on Wednesdays and Thursdays, but we’re looking into doing it every day,” says Lisa Booth, manager at the ADRA Op Shop Toowoomba.

The breakfasts are coordinated and distributed by a group of dedicated senior students who have taken on the program. The food is served in individual packs with Weet-Bix, a fruit cup, a muesli bar, either soy or regular milk, and a bowl and spoon. Importantly, the breakfast is offered to all students.

“Making the breakfast available to everyone puts everyone on



the same level, so no-one feels singled out,” Lisa says.

Principal Heidi Mazz says, “So many kids start the day without breakfast. This can have a detrimental impact on learning and social interactions. But now, students can start the learning day with food in their belly. We also see some students having breakfast and then asking to take a second pack for lunch as they don’t have lunch.”

The Darling Downs Christian School breakfast program was introduced in the second term of 2023, and although it’s a new initiative, it has gained a lot of traction.

Lisa says, “A senior student at the school approached me and said, ‘Lisa, I’d really love to do a special breakfast once a term.’ She told me that there are so many kids that are not eating breakfast and then on sports days they’ve got to do a

three-kilometre run on an empty stomach.”

Looking ahead to big event days on the school calendar, the plan is for the ADRA Op Shop Toowoomba to source the food and supplies, and then the senior students will help to prepare and serve the food.

“We can provide shake-a-pancake mix and some fruit and toast and spreads, and the seniors will cook the toast, they’ll flip the pancakes, they’ll serve it all,” Lisa says. “It’s really important to the success of the program that they have taken ownership.”

Heidi adds, “It has been a wonderful, service-oriented opportunity for our students to become involved. I cannot thank ADRA enough for the time and resources they have invested in supporting our school community in this way.”

At North Toowoomba State School, breakfast and lunch is offered every day in a discreet manner for students who would otherwise go without. In collaboration with SecondBite, food is delivered to the community liaison officer, Vida Suhan, who is well known by the students.



“We have many students and families here that struggle to provide breakfast or lunches on a daily basis,” Vida says. “The economy is getting worse, and our families are struggling with everyday expenses as it is.”

If a student is sent to school without any food, they can seek out Vida who will provide them with a sandwich, a piece of fruit, and a snack item like a muesli bar.

“(ADRA) provides extra care and food, so our students can come to school to learn and be happy,” says Vida.

At the end of the year, the ADRA Op Shop Toowoomba also partners with Darling Downs Christian College for its Christmas hamper drive.

A basket is left in each classroom and students are invited to contribute an item to go into the Christmas hampers.

“I did a talk at the school last year and gave them ideas of what to contribute to the hampers,” Lisa says. “So, don’t just donate a tin of baked beans, donate something you’d like to eat on Christmas Day. Something that kids will unwrap and go, ‘Yay! I get some chocolate biscuits.’”

The Christmas hampers are distributed to families doing it tough so they can have a Christmas celebration.

“The tears flow every time someone comes to pick up a hamper,” Lisa says. “It makes such a difference.”

The ADRA Op Shop Toowoomba is one of over 100 Australian community projects, run in collaboration with local Seventh-day Adventist Churches. To learn more, visit adra.org.au

Türkiye/Syria Earthquakes - Ibrahim's Story



“I felt the walls shaking and the doors breaking,” says Ibrahim.

“I rushed to my wife and kids to wake them up. Some of the bricks in the ceiling started to fall down on our heads. Luckily, we live on the first floor, so we got out fast.”

Ibrahim is one of the millions of people affected by the 7.8 earthquake that struck Türkiye in the early hours of 6 February 2023.

Later that day, a secondary 7.7 earthquake struck 95km north-east from the first. The devastation caused by the earthquakes affected central and southern Türkiye and northern and western Syria.

“We took a shelter in a mosque nearby,” Ibrahim says. “We were very shocked and confused... we could not believe that we lost our house. After a few days, we went to (a collective shelter) and we have been here ever since.”

Ibrahim and his family lost their home in Syria to the earthquake. Months later, they are still homeless. Losing his home and his job to the earthquake was tough; Ibrahim had to rely on the kindness of others to get by and provide for his family.

“During our stay here, we've been relying on the



food baskets that we receive from organisations, but we prefer the one that ADRA distributes due to its good quality,” he says.

As well as providing food hampers, ADRA has started a work-for-cash program which is helping to employ internally displaced persons. Ibrahim is now working under ADRA's RELIEF program as a cleaner, and it has made a world of difference.

“When I received my first salary from ADRA, I was very happy and immediately got some stuff that my family needed,” Ibrahim says. “I also gave my son money to buy books so he can prepare for the exams.

“I'm very grateful that I got to work for ADRA, I can work with dignity and provide for my family.”

Major disasters like the Türkiye earthquakes can take years to recover from. ADRA continues to support those who were affected in a variety of ways, such as through food support and work-for-cash programs. To read more about ADRA's response, visit adra.org.au/syria-turkey-response

Maurie Ibbott



“I waste nothing. I won’t have a shower; I have a bath. And the bathwater I use on the pot plants.”

This zero-waste mentality has shaped Maurie Ibbott’s life. He grew up on the land and from his tenth birthday he helped his dad with the hard labour.

By the time he turned 14, Maurie’s father determined he would join the navy. But Maurie wanted to finish school and become a doctor.

So, the two struck a deal: as long as Maurie could cover his school fees, he could stay.

Maurie worked at Woolworths and sold tomatoes grown in his own garden to support his studies. He worked hard to keep his grades up, but was unable to study chemistry, physics and maths, all subjects needed to enter medicine. And so, he studied nursing.

“I did very well,” he said. “I loved nursing. I was the clinical manager at Broughton Hall Clinic, managing all the nursing homes in the Canterbury District.”

After paying off his home, at no point did he increase his personal spending. Satisfied with his quality of living, Maurie’s entire mindset shifted to consider how he could be a blessing to others.

“Being charitable comes from my mum,” he says, “and I found myself gravitating towards ADRA.”

Maurie is now retired, but living on the pension



has not stopped his generosity. His budget is carefully planned, down to the two car trips he does per week.

“On Saturday I go to church, and on Sunday I do my shopping,” he says. “If I have enough fuel, I drop off my cans and bottles at the Return and Earn. All the people in my retirement village save cans and bottles for me. And every penny I save goes to ADRA.”

“I have always enjoyed saving. Everything I do, I think ‘it goes to ADRA.’”

Maurie’s passion for ADRA’s work is why he made the decision to include ADRA in his Will.

For supporters like Maurie, knowing that their legacy can make a long-lasting difference in the lives of others motivates them to leave a contribution to ADRA in their Will.

Just like Maurie, you can leave a gift in your Will to ADRA as a life-changing legacy for people in need. Find out more at adra.org.au/wills or call us on 1800 242 372 to request a brochure.

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