

We are in this together



Brussels, 17th April 2020

The last few weeks have caused fear, isolation, pain and loss, creating an uncertain future. ADRA exists for moments like this: to bring hope, relief, and innovative solutions to complex situations and 'to serve so all may live as God intended'.

As we confront this pandemic crisis with our partners, we are serving on the frontlines by providing shelter and food for the homeless, supporting healthcare and mental health services, providing education, and helping vulnerable seniors, youth, children and families across the world.

As a global grassroots network and a faith-based organisation, ADRA is active locally, and on an international scale. Our development and humanitarian efforts have always been closely connected with local communities, and we expect that our response to the COVID-19 pandemic is going to accelerate long-lasting and sustainable solutions.

A Call for Solidarity

We are calling on to decision-makers and people of influence to consider the following:

1. EDUCATION FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE AND MARGINALISED

The nationwide closures of educational institutions is impacting over 90% of the world's student population. It is creating unimaginable barriers for access to education for millions of children and youth. We are calling on the European and global communities to ensure safe and secure access to education for all, while considering all necessary protective health measures.

2. UNIVERSAL WELFARE SUPPORT

For as long as required, all health and social services should remain available, affordable, accessible, and of high quality for all who need them. Exceptional efforts should be made to adequately finance public services, as well as

social and health services provided by non-profit and non-governmental organisations. Access to health care, social care, and social protection must not be compromised by discrimination, on any grounds.

3. SUPPORT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

The economic fallout from the current crisis is threatening to hamper the good efforts of the civil society sector. Many organisations will be forced to lay off employees and will no longer be able to support those in need during, and post the COVID-19 crisis. Humanitarian and development agencies are particularly vulnerable because they rely on a steady stream of donations, business support, and government investments. These revenue sources are threatened. Humanitarian organisations are the most active community partners, who are well-positioned to respond to, manage, and help aid the recovery efforts at home and globally. Without them, more vulnerable people will be at risk, which in turn will worsen and deepen the impact of COVID-19, across all societies.

An Appeal for Responsibility

Today's crisis brings an unprecedented test of human solidarity. As an ADRA global community, we are expressing our appreciation to every individual and organisation for protective measures, quick adjustments, sparkling humour and spontaneous expressions of thankfulness. And, still there is a long way ahead of us. So, we are appealing to all decision-makers, persons of influence and every individual to act responsibly in the following three areas:

*We appeal
for a mature
and responsible
global solidarity
that puts people first.*

1. We appeal to governments and individuals to consider measures to support the vulnerable and economically challenged when designing strategies to overcome economic damage caused by COVID-19. The economic consequences of the public-health measures through business closures and lockdowns will be borne disproportionately by those who are economically disadvantaged.
2. We appeal for effective intergenerational solidarity. The seniors of our society are much more affected by the complications of COVID-19 and death rates are much higher among the elderly. Our young people are committed to show solidarity and self-isolate to prevent the spread of the virus itself. This pandemic may be an opportunity for intergenerational solidarity. On the one hand, young people remain dedicated to drastic short-term measures during the outbreak. On the other, the older generations need to make medium-term commitments for ambitious climate action. We appeal for lifestyle changes that will secure a more sustainable future for the younger generations.



3. We appeal to the global community, governments and decision-makers to express tangible solidarity toward developing countries. At a time when national economies are experiencing severe losses, commitments to keep Official Development Assistance (ODA) might be diverted to other pressing national needs. However, developing countries will have to face even harder economic challenges and a longer road to recovery as their economies are more fragile.

Solidarity with developing countries is a moral decision. Failure to pass this global solidarity test will leave deep wounds in countries left behind, paving the way for all manner of extremism and new crises – from pandemics to conflicts – which would threaten everyone.

Developed countries need to continue to work with international institutions and

non-governmental organisations to create sustainable strategies for helping the developing world.

Grants and rounds of debt forgiveness are also needed. International institutions must ensure that all countries get the medical equipment and other support – including the continuation of the food programme. The progress achieved in the last decades, in reducing inequalities and alleviating poverty, must continue, so that the accomplishment of the Agenda 2030 may become a reality.

The world and its inhabitants are currently learning a painful lesson of a deeper understanding of human ties. We are all interconnected and are members of one human family. We, as ADRA, appeal for a mature and responsible global solidarity that puts people first.

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