

# ADRA Madagascar

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## PETER DELHOVE

Peter Delhove is currently (2020) serving at the ADRA International head office at the Seventh-day Adventist Church headquarters in Silver Springs, Maryland, USA. He served as ADRA Madagascar Country director from 2004–2019.

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The Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA-I) Madagascar is one of the 130 country offices operating worldwide as a humanitarian non-governmental organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## Organization of ADRA Madagascar

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency office in Madagascar (ADRA Madagascar), is a branch office of ADRA International, headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA. The Indian Ocean Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists recommended the establishment of the ADRA Madagascar office in 1991. The government of Madagascar officially recognized it as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) on February 20, 1992.<sup>1</sup> The ADRA Madagascar office is situated in Antananarivo, the capital city of the Republic of Madagascar, and it maintains regional offices at Fianarantsoa in the southern-central plateau, and at Betroka, Bekily, and Ampanihy in the south of the island.

Since 1992, the ADRA Madagascar office has served the Indian Ocean island where 75 percent of the populations live on less than \$1.90 per day<sup>2</sup>. For more than 25 years now, ADRA Madagascar has been implementing projects to break the cycle of poverty and make positive changes in Malagasy lives. As a cyclone-prone island, Madagascar often needs immediate disaster response. But as a poor nation, it also requires long-term development in infrastructure, as well as for the health, livelihood, and education of its people. ADRA Madagascar has accordingly specialized in projects in the areas of food security, economic development, and health, in addition to disaster response.

## History of ADRA Madagascar

In its early years of its existence, ADRA Madagascar established projects in education, agriculture, women's education, and infrastructure that ADRA International and its network mainly funded. ADRA Madagascar started promoting primary school education in 1996, employing funds from ADRA International and ADRA Netherlands. Every year, ADRA Madagascar assists three Adventist schools in the capital city--Orion Avaratetetezana Adventist Primary School, Orion Ambohijafy Adventist Primary School, and LYPARS Soamanandrany--with textbooks and

teaching materials, school furniture, and infrastructure. Additionally, hundreds of school children from needy families receive support in the form of tuition fees assistance, school supplies, and the provision of hot meals. Since October 2013 TOMS Shoe Company in California, USA, has donated more than 120,000 pairs of shoes to school children every school year. Moreover, ADRA Madagascar has helped distribute 22 metric tons of rehydrated rice donated by the “Rise Against Hunger” organization to both public and private primary schools to support their school feeding programs.<sup>3</sup>

In 1998 ADRA Madagascar experienced a tremendous expansion. The staff grew from eight to 120 people. Consequently, ADRA Madagascar expanded its program focus and started to implement larger scale public-funded projects in food security and health in other regions of Madagascar. New regional offices opened in the eastern part of the country.

Between 1998 and 2006 ADRA Madagascar ran three infant-maternal health projects funded by United States of America International Development (USAID) on the east coast. The projects aimed at improving the health of mothers and children under 5, promoting family planning, and preventing HIV/AIDs among vulnerable groups. ADRA Madagascar also implemented a supplementary feeding project funded by the World Bank for children being treated for acute malnutrition in the main public hospitals of the region.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, between 1998 and 2017, ADRA Madagascar implemented four food security projects funded by USAID. They targeted regions with high malnutrition rates in the eastern and southern parts of the country by implementing health and nutrition, hygiene, agriculture, agribusiness, infrastructure, resilience, and environment activities. SALOHI, the third project which started in 2009, benefited 57,000 households. It distributed nearly 9,000 metric tons of commodities to curb malnutrition<sup>5</sup>. In 2014 ADRA Madagascar launched the fourth project, called ASOTRY, which seeks to improve the livelihood and food security for 264,380 farmers in the Amoron'i Mania, Haute Matsiatra, and Atsimo Andrefana regions.<sup>6</sup>

Then from 2014 onward, ADRA Madagascar managed a food security project funded by the European Union that aimed at reducing poverty and improving the livelihood of 225,000 people in Betroka in the south of the country.<sup>7</sup> The agency also extended its presence in southern Madagascar, a region hit by chronic drought, since 2007. With funds from the World Food Program, OFDA, Food and Agriculture Organization, and USAID, ADRA Madagascar implemented a number of short-term health and agriculture projects, as well as emergency relief distributions.

When the food crisis took a turn for the worse in early 2015 as a result of El Niño, ADRA Madagascar stepped up its interventions to assist the vulnerable populations affected by it. With support from USAID, the agency provided about 4,000 metric tons of life-saving food to more than 19,000 households in Bekily and Ampanihy<sup>8</sup>. ADRA Madagascar also helped 7,600 households recover from the drought through distributions of drought-resistant seeds and by providing conservation agriculture training.<sup>9</sup> From 2015 onward, ADRA Madagascar

partnered with the German Federal Ministry for Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to implement the ZINA project, with the objective to increase access to food and build resilience to drought among 22,500 people.<sup>10</sup>

## ADRA Madagascar's Role and Place in the Country

Since its founding, ADRA Madagascar has responded to major disasters that have struck the island. During the flooding in Antananarivo at the beginning of 2015, the agency distributed critical relief supplies to 1,550 displaced households.<sup>11</sup> When intense tropical cyclone ENAWO hit Madagascar in March 2017, ADRA Madagascar responded by providing commodities, cooking and hygiene kits, and shelter kits to 380 households in Antananarivo and 700 households in Antalaha in the north of the country<sup>2</sup>.

ADRA Madagascar's partners have repeatedly praised the agency. At its twenty-fifth anniversary ceremony, the USA ambassador described ADRA as an important partner for USA, having employed funding from the American government to achieve many great outcomes. The official noted that ADRA had worked extensively with communities to prepare development plans. In partnership with farmers, ADRA had increased the quality and quantity of food being grown by rehabilitating irrigation canals, using improved seeds, and employing better agricultural techniques. ADRA had also helped those farmers to take their crops to market through the improvement of farm to market roads. And ADRA had made communities healthier by promoting sound hygiene, nutrition, and healthy behavior. Thus, through the years, the United States government has stood arm-in-arm with ADRA to improve the health and livelihood of millions of children and adults across Madagascar.<sup>13</sup> At the same event, the presence of many dignitaries testified to the significant role and contribution ADRA has made to the country. The *Adventist News Network* reported:

The appreciation of ADRA's significant contributions to the nation was evident with the presence of several officials, including the Prime Minister of Madagascar, Olivier Mahafaly Solonandrasana, and the Ambassador for the U.S. Embassy in Madagascar, Robert Yamate. The government representatives warmly welcomed and thanked the ADRA delegation for the agency's commitment toward improving the nation's food security, education, health, and economic development.<sup>14</sup>

## List of Directors

Richard Ranarivelo (1992-1993); John Ravelomanantsoa (1993-2003); Peter Delhove (2004-2019).

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## NOTES

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