



THE RELEVANCE OF FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

[Humanitarian pitch by ADRA to the United Nations' Humanitarian Country Team on 15th April 2021]

Last year, the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Development stated that faith-based organizations play a unique role in bringing people together around the common values of our shared humanity – solidarity and compassion.

This role is even more vital in a country like the Philippines, where the overwhelming majority of people experience the pandemic and other disasters within a framework that is shaped by a faith community. Faith can be a huge source of personal comfort and community resilience in times of crisis, aiding quicker and more effective recovery.

As an Adventist organization with close ties to faith communities, and their schools, hospitals, and media across the country, ADRA has engaged these communities to provide positive sources of solidarity that foster resilience and meaning in this pandemic.

Faith groups are often central to ***strengthening resilience*** and reinforcing the local processes of identity and connection for communities disrupted by disaster or conflict.

Embedded in communities, faith leaders have ***unparalleled knowledge*** of local-level needs, and it is essential that they are proactively engaged in the planning process for recovery.

Faith leaders' understanding of the complexities of psychosocial issues and pastoral care experience serve as a strong foundation for ***psychosocial support*** to communities in disasters or conflict.

As ***trusted sources of authority*** within the community, faith leaders play a vital role in promoting behavior change.

And we see faith communities as pre-established networks with the ability to ***respond immediately***, helping to design, implement, and monitor response activities.

Therefore, ADRA calls on UN agencies and Humanitarian Country Team members to increase their support of and improve early engagement with faith-based organizations, utilizing their unique networks and abilities to strengthen a localized humanitarian response.