

**Compassion Ministries: What Do Pastors Know?  
What are their Perceptions and Attitudes?**

A Survey of Adventist Ministers in North America  
Conducted for the North American Division  
By the Center for Creative Ministry



July 2013

## ***Introduction***

A random sample of 1,649 pastors with Email addresses was extracted the eAdventist data base. A total of 94 percent of the pastors listed had an Email address included in the record, so fewer than six percent of the pastors in the NAD are not represented in this sample.

The sample was twice sent an Email asking for participation in the survey and providing a link to a dedicated Web page set aside for this survey. A total of 514 responses were received by June 30, 2013. This represents a response rate of 30 percent, which matches established professional standards for a reliable study. In reviewing the results it should be kept in mind that at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of reliability, the standard allowance for sampling error in a survey of this size is five percentage points, plus or minus.

Nearly a third of the respondents indicated that they were not pastors. Why they were respondents in a survey based on the eAdventist list of pastors might be explained by at least two possibilities. It is possible that in some cases the Email address on record may actually be received by a volunteer or local employee who serves as church secretary. Another possibility is that the pastor Email address in some cases is actually managed by a local elder or lay pastor. Nonetheless almost all of the respondents answered the survey questions as the leader of a local congregation.

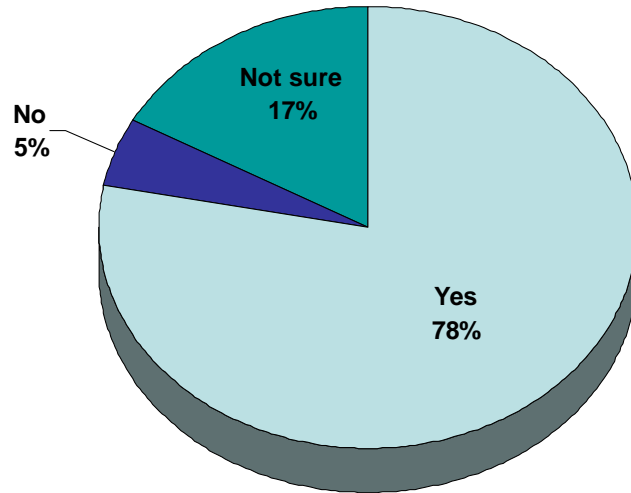
All of the respondents are long-term Adventists. More than 85 percent have been baptized members for more than 20 years and more than 97 percent have been baptized members for more than 10 years. Two thirds of the respondents have completed a graduate degree and another 26 percent have a college degree. These data are consistent with previous surveys of pastors in the NAD.

Asked about their primary ethnicity, 45 percent of the respondents indicated a minority group and 55 percent said they were white and not Hispanic. One in five identified themselves as black or African American, 11 percent as Hispanic or Latino, eight percent as Asian or Pacific Islander and seven percent as other, including those of multiple ethnicity. This is close to the profile in previous surveys.

Asked to identify their year of birth, seven percent indicated they were born in 1980 or later which places them in the Millennial generation, today's young adults. About one in four (24 percent) were born from 1965 through 1979, placing them in "Gen X." A total of 56 percent were born from 1946 through 1964 and are part of the middle-aged Baby Boom generation. The other 13 percent indicated they were born before 1946 and these are today's senior citizens. Previous surveys of Adventist ministers have not found such a high percentage of seniors and together with the fact that 22 percent of the respondents identified themselves as women, it appears that a number of pastors may have older women volunteering as office secretaries who receive the pastor Email listed with eAdventist and may have been told to respond to the survey on behalf of the pastor.

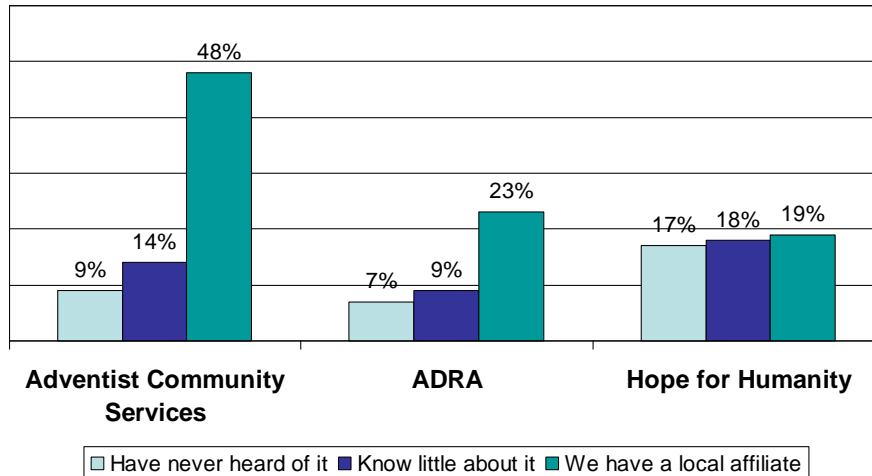
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## Should the Adventist Church Do More to Meet Needs?



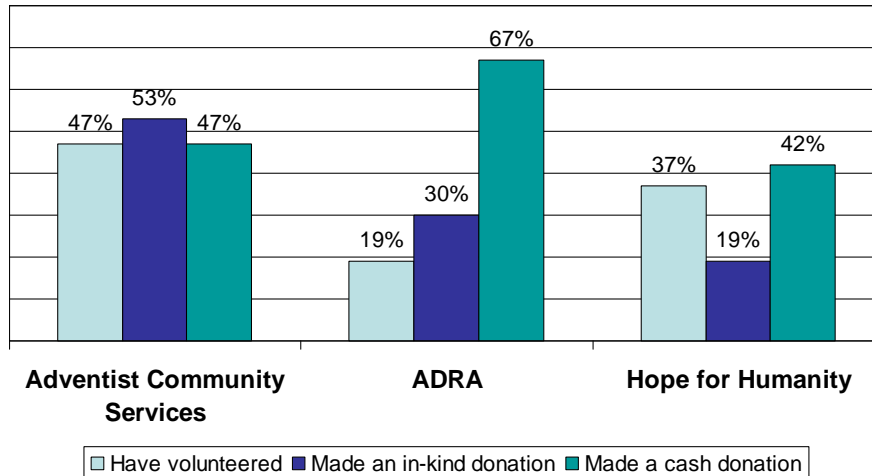
More than three out of four respondents think that the Seventh-day Adventist Church should be doing more to meet the needs of homeless, the unemployed and the inner-city neighborhoods. Only a five small percentage disagree, while the rest indicated that they are not sure. It is likely that this uncertain 17 percent feel that they lack knowledge about the topic and are not in a position to make up their minds. Clearly there is a strong mandate from the field for compassion ministries in the North American Division.

## Awareness of Compassion Ministries



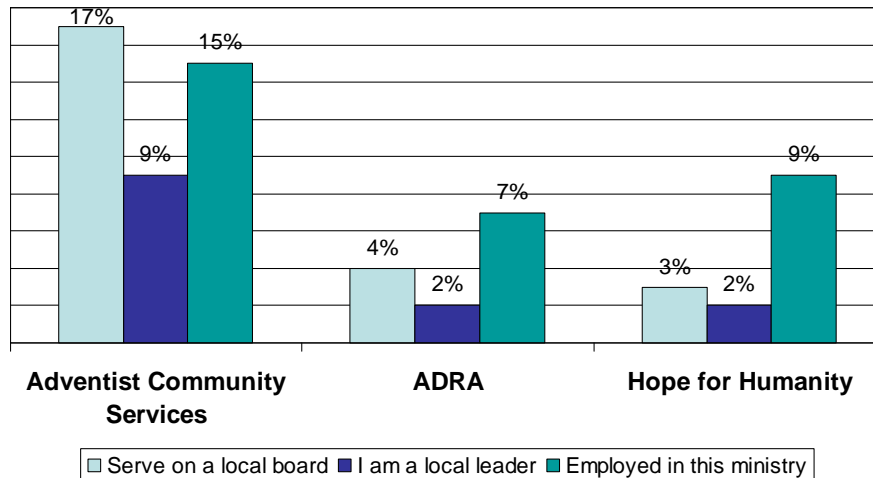
Adventist Community Services (ACS) is the ministry that the largest number of respondents feel they have direct knowledge about. Less than half that number feel they have similar knowledge about the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). Awareness of Hope for Humanity is the weakest of the three ministries. A significant portion of the respondents ignored the items about awareness perhaps because of uncertainty about what they really know about these ministries.

## Support for Compassion Ministries



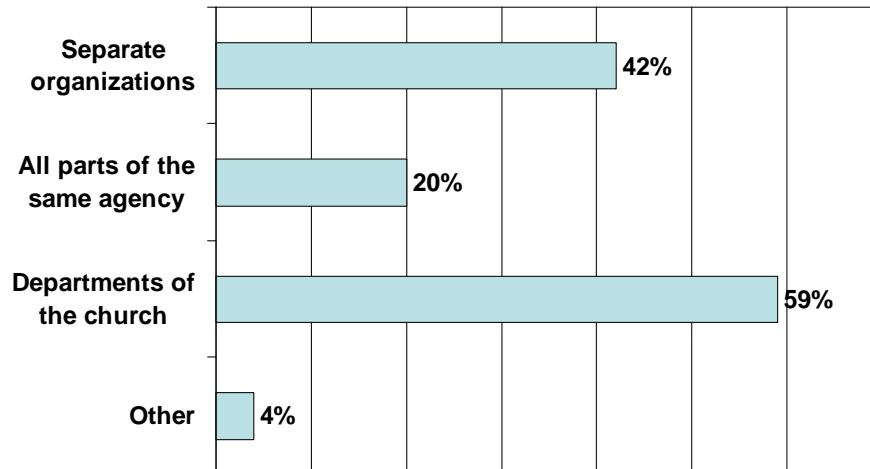
About half of the respondents have invested time, money or in-kind donations in ACS. A significantly larger share have given money to ADRA, which has clearly won out in the competition for cash, in part because ADRA's programs may be seen as more professional and effective than the programs of ACS. This is one of the reasons why in the general comments there are requests to get ADRA resources for projects in North America. Support for Hope for Humanity is less than for the other two ministries and there is considerable confusion about it. One in five respondents indicate that they have made an in-kind donation to Hope for Humanity when, in fact, the program has not included donations of this type. Almost all of these in-kind donations likely went to local ACS programs and those who made this response in the survey are simply confused about the identity and relationships among the three ministries.

## Involvement with Compassion Ministries



In a number of places across the NAD pastors serve on the boards of local ACS centers and agencies. In Canada and a few other places these programs operate under the name of ADRA. There are also a small number of clergy in the NAD who have a conference leadership assignment related to one or more of the compassion ministries. In some cases this minister also has a pastoral responsibility. These categories do not explain entirely the raw numbers displayed in the responses in this graph. It appears that about one in five of the pastors who received the Email asking them to respond to this survey forwarded that Email to a lay person who has a key role in a local program and those responses are also included in this survey.

## Understanding of Compassion Organizations

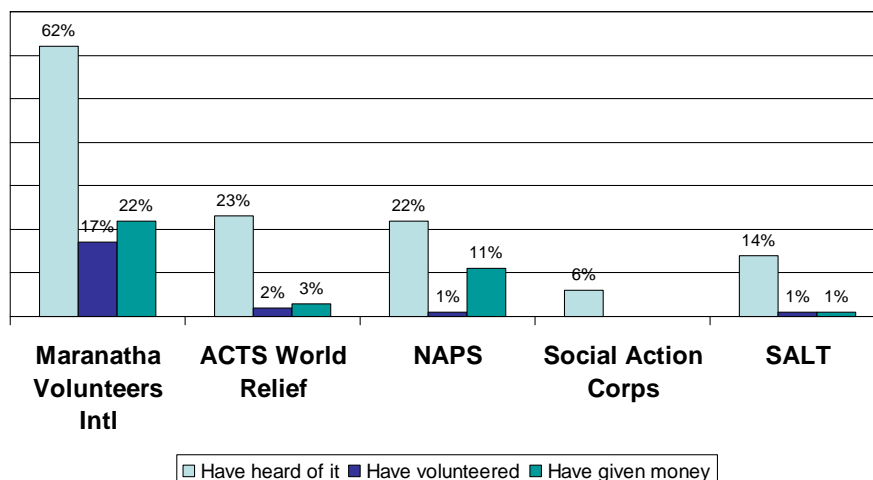


There is considerable confusion among pastors about the organizational status and relationships of Adventist Community Services (ACS), the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and Hope for Humanity. About one in six actually gave more than one response which is evidence of a lack of clarity on this topic.

The majority of respondents indicated that these three compassion ministries are departments of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Departmental programs are a familiar organizational arrangement within the denomination and it appears that most pastors simply assume this to be true for these three ministries. This is further evidence of confusion, although it is true in many local conferences that ACS and Hope for Humanity are departmental programs and in Canada there are conferences where ADRA conducts certain activities that have long been seen as departmental activities.

About 43 percent of the respondents understand these three ministries to be separate organizations, while one in five respondents said that these three ministries are all aspects of the same organization. Again, this is evidence of confusion and a lack of organizational identity or "branding." It must be taken into consideration that in some local conferences there are arrangements in place that do fall into each of these categories, so there is a basis for pastors in various places to have a different perception of the organization of these ministries.

## Awareness of & Involvement with Independent Compassion Ministries

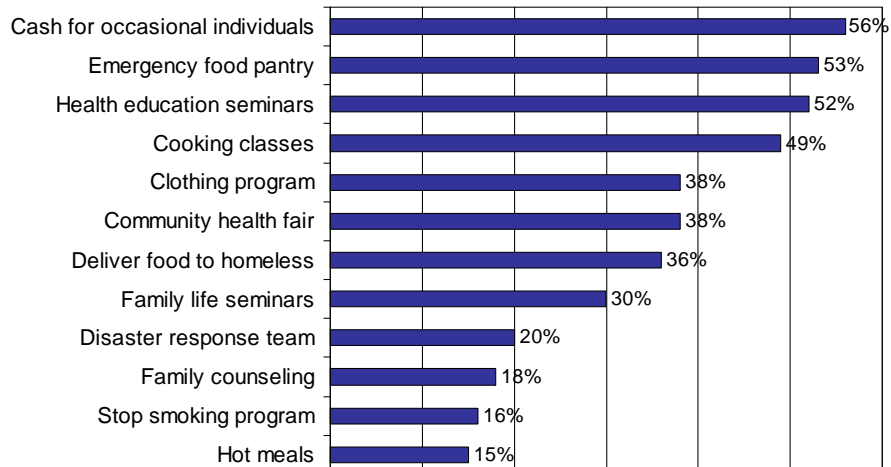


NAPS = National Assoc for the  
Prevention of Starvation

Maranatha Volunteers International is the best known of the independent compassion ministries that were tested in this survey. ACTS World Relief and the National Association for the Prevention of Starvation (NAPS) were known to about one in four respondents with small numbers who reported giving time or money. NAPS is based at Oakwood University. The Social Action Corps, which is based at Loma Linda University, operates a number of community clinics, was recognized by just six percent of the respondents. SALT (Social Action Leadership Team) is a concept for local churches to use as an alternative to the traditional Adventist Community Services programs of food pantries, clothing programs, etc. It was recognized by about one in seven respondents with only one percent reporting actual involvement in this approach. All of these ministries can be classified as denominationally affiliated or “supportive” independent ministries. A total of 18 respondents used the “other” box for this questions, but many of the write-in responses were organizations listed above or denominational programs and agencies mentioned in previous questions. Two individuals in each case listed Christian Record Services for the Blind, Native Ministries and the One-day Church program. There was one mention each of International Children’s Care and Adventist Frontier Missions, as well as a few organizations that could not be identified.



## Adventist Compassion Ministries Being Implemented by Local Churches



A majority of Adventist local churches in North America cash assistance to occasional individuals and families, operate an emergency food pantry for the community and sponsor health education classes. These are the most common methods by which compassion ministries are implemented in local communities across the NAD, although they are not necessarily the most effective methods. Professionals are often critical of the ways that many of these activities are conducted.

Roughly one in three local churches provides recycled clothing for community, organizes a community health fair on a yearly basis, delivers food to the homeless at various locations in the community and conducts family life seminars on occasion to which non-members are invited. Smaller numbers of local churches operate other kinds of compassion ministries.

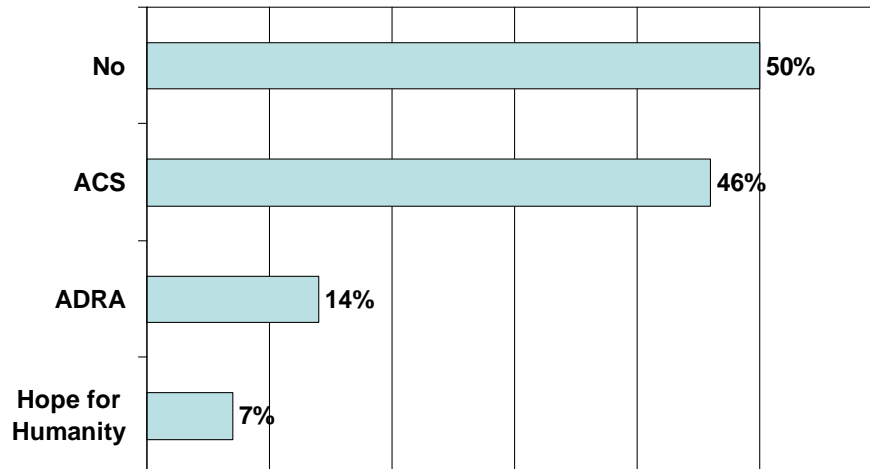
## Adventist Compassion Ministries Being Implemented by Local Churches

- 10% Thrift store
- 9% Grief recovery
- 9% Multi-service center
- 8% Preschool or child care
- 8% Self-help groups
- 6% Tutoring program
- 6% Medical or dental clinic
- 6% 12-step groups
- 6% Help for people with disabilities
- 5% English classes
- 4% Immigration assistance
- 4% Homeless shelter
- 4% Job training classes
- 3% Support group for the unemployed
- 3% Job-finding service
- 3% After-school program
- 2% Adult literacy program
- 2% Diabetes support group
- 1% Youth drop-in center
- 1% Refugee sponsorship

Very small numbers of local churches are engaged in some of the most effective and professional types of community-based ministries. On this page are a number of the methods that previous research has shown have a strong correlation with church growth as well as high effectiveness in meeting human needs as evaluated by professionals. One of the goals for a stronger emphasis on compassion ministries in the NAD might be to increase the number of churches involved in a number of the types of programs listed above.

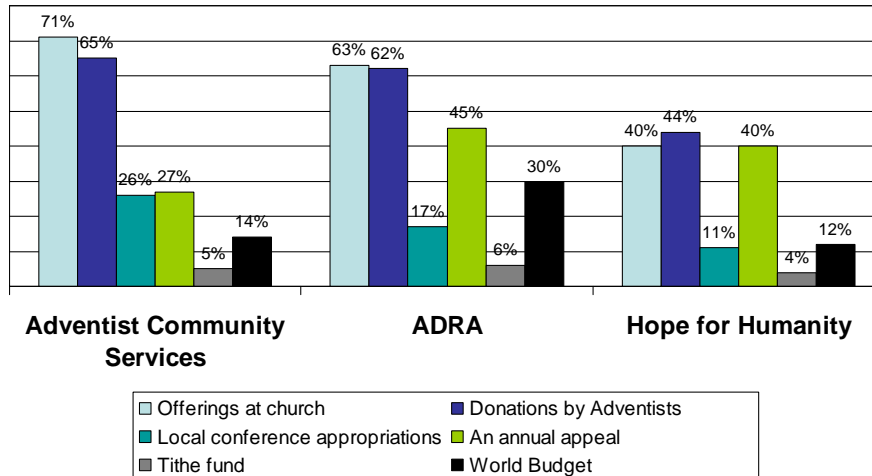
A total of 68 respondents wrote comments into the “Other” area in response to this question. Of these, the largest number simply repeated items listed above and on the previous page. Nine of the respondents wrote that their local church provided volunteers for other organizations in the community or overseas and six said that their church donated cash to other community charities. Four respondents reported that their local churches has done projects in the community that involved repairing homes and three described programs of creating “care packages” for distribution at hospitals or an institution for children. Nine unique programs were also mentioned, indicating the creativity and innovation present in some places. At the same time, five respondents felt that “singing bands at nursing home” was an appropriate answer to this question.

## Are these activities affiliated with the compassion ministries?



Half of the respondents are of the opinion that the activities they reported as currently being implemented by local churches to meet the needs of non-members are not affiliated with any of the three compassion ministries. Further evidence of confusion is the fact that about one in six respondents actually answered “No” and then also indicated an affiliation with one of the ministries. A total of 14 respondents selected “other” affiliations, but upon examination almost all of these were identified as local programs that operate under a local name, but are, in fact, part of Adventist Community Services in terms of NAD policy and structure. Two respondents indicated that their local health outreach was affiliated with the Health Ministries Department not ACS, which reveals an additional element of confusion. One respondent indicated that their program was affiliated with Medical Teams International, a faith-based international relief and development organization which has no connection or history with the Adventist Church. Another response perhaps best illustrates the real attitude of many pastors and local lay leaders; “We are involved with whatever denominational programs ... are available to assist us in reaching our community and elsewhere.” Unless an organizational structure is very responsive to local needs, it is likely to be perceived by many pastors and lay leaders as irrelevant at best if not an unnecessary complication.

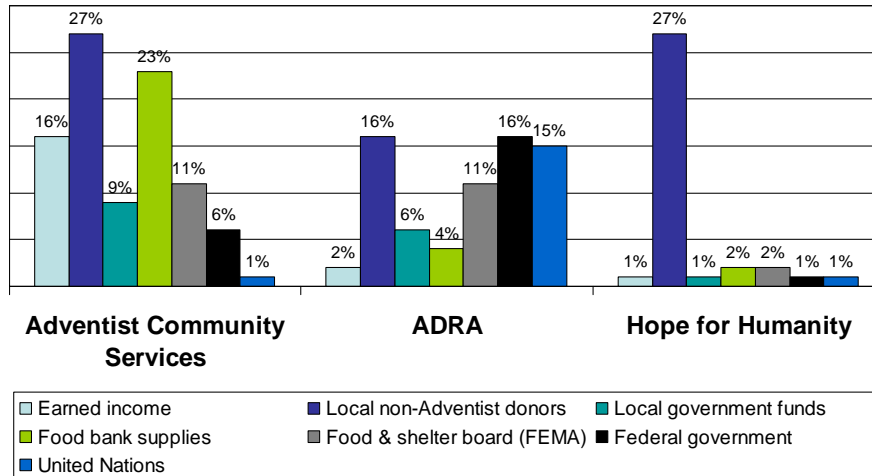
## Understanding of Sources of Funding for Compassion Ministries [Adventist Sources]



Most pastors are clear about the fact that much of the money for all three compassion ministries comes from offerings at church and the donations of Adventist members. Clearly the annual appeals for ADRA around the time of the yearly Famine and Disaster Relief Offering and the history of Ingathering connected with Hope for Humanity continue to have a place in the minds of many pastors, while the annual offering for ACS (what was once the Inner City Offering) is less well known.

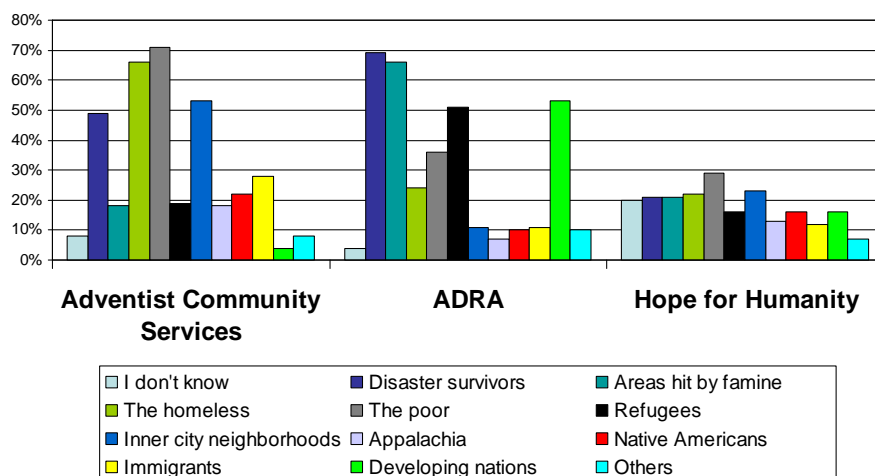
The largest confusion surrounds the role of the World Budget in funding these ministries. In fact, a percentage of the World Budget does go into the annual offerings for ADRA and ACS, but nothing goes to Hope for Humanity. This confusion is very likely the result of three ministries that are perceived as quite similar and perhaps even in competition for the same space in the minds of church members. The respondents who see conference appropriations and the Tithe Fund as sources of money for these ministries are most likely reporting particular local arrangements in some conferences, not a generalized practice.

## Understanding of Sources of Funding for Compassion Ministries [Outside Sources]



In general, it is clear to the pastors across the NAD that local ACS projects earn some of their own income through operating thrift stores or charging fees for certain programs and raise funds from local, non-Adventist donors and the systems that community food pantries are connected with—regional food banks and the Emergency Food & Shelter Boards in the United States; Hope for Humanity raises some money from the local donations of non-Adventists; and in addition to non-Adventist donors, ADRA raises funds from a variety of government and United Nations sources. At the same time there are clearly some respondents who are confused about where funds come from. For example, ADRA does not get any funding from the Emergency Food & Shelter Boards in the United States. Where one or two percent of the respondents indicated that they believe a specific kind of funding is used, it is most likely due to confusion and misinformation. It is a known fact, for example, that nowhere does any ACS project received United Nations funding.

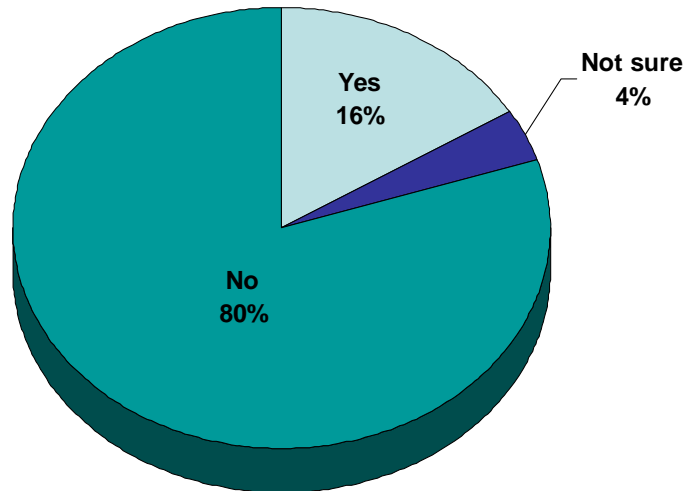
## Who is served by each of the NAD's compassion ministries?



Adventist Community Services (ACS) is perceived as the ministry that addresses poverty, homelessness and the needs of the inner city in North America, while ADRA is perceived as the ministry that addresses world hunger, the needs of developing nations, refugees and international poverty. Both ministries are seen as addressing the needs of disaster survivors while Hope for Humanity has no distinct image with relatively equal numbers indicating all of the possibilities.

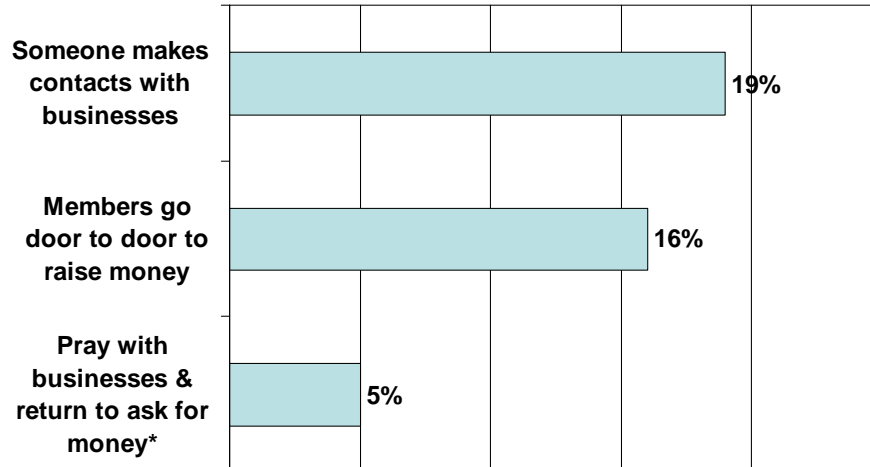
Clearly, these data show the possibility of a partnership between ACS and ADRA with a domestic/international logic. But these data about perceptions create good reason to question the need for the third ministry to exist as a separate program. It suggests that study should be given to the idea that the resources of Hope for Humanity could be restructured to run a joint annual campaign for ACS and ADRA.

## Does your local church go door to door to raise money each year?



The pastors were asked, Does your local church go door to door to raise money each year for Ingathering, Hope for Humanity, ACS, ADRA or a similar program? Only 16 percent of the pastors responded that their local church is doing this. Respondents from an ethnic minority group are more likely to report that their church does so, although no more than one in four in any ethnic group gave this response. Door to door fund raising is mostly a thing of the past for Adventists in North America.

## Pastors Who Report that Their Church Engages In ...

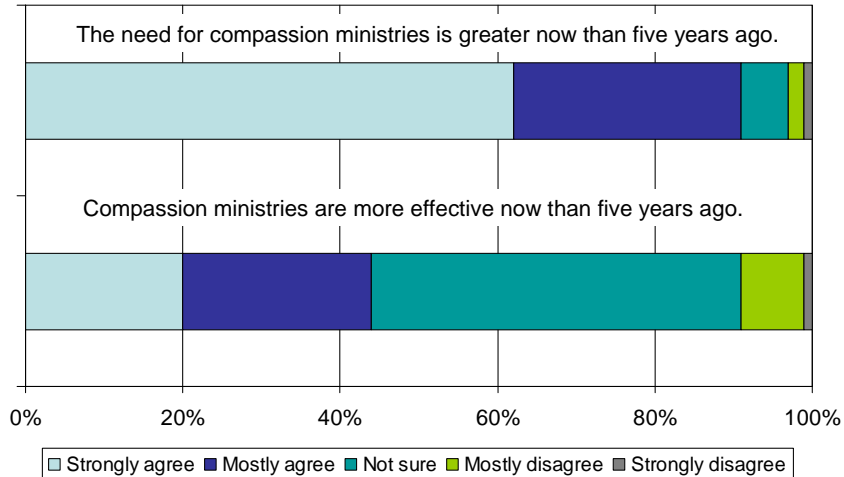


The practice of contacting certain businesses in the community each year to seek donations for Hope for Humanity, started nearly a century ago under the old Ingathering program, has survived in more local churches than going door to door to raise money. In many cases this is kept going by one church member (often an older person) who has established long-term relationships with certain business people. Soliciting donations door to door is a practice that has become less and less acceptable in middle class communities in North America. Clearly the majority of local churches have concluded that this method bring more disrepute on the Adventist Church than it is worth.

Hope for Humanity has encouraged individuals in each church to make more than one visit each year with local businesses, praying with the business people in early visits and then making additional visits to ask for donations later in the year. Just five percent of local church leaders report that someone in their local church is implementing this recommended approach. Only three pastors responded to a follow-up question about what the response has been to this approach. "Positive ... well received ... praise and thanks from business owners," said the three pastors. No pastor reported a negative outcome.

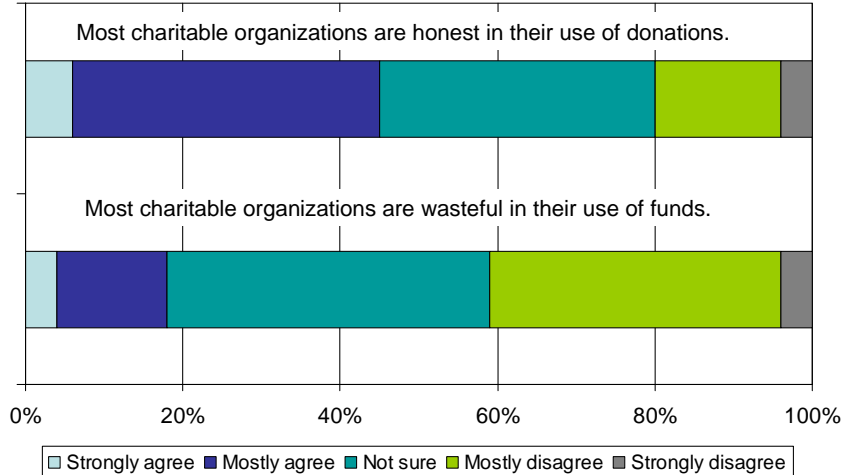


## Basic Attitudes about Compassion Ministries



The respondents clearly see the need for compassion ministries, but they are ambivalent about the effectiveness of these ministries. This indicates a need for further research. There are several possible explanations for this opinion. One is that they feel the compassion ministries they are most familiar with, those closest to their local churches and communities, are not conducted in a very professional and effective way. Many local ACS projects are quite amateur in character. Another possibility is that many Adventist pastors have been exposed to the writings of Christian leaders such as Tony Campolo, and would like to see Adventist compassion ministries using the transformational community development approach these writers advocate instead of traditional “handouts” such as the food pantries and clothing programs that are most widely present in ACS.

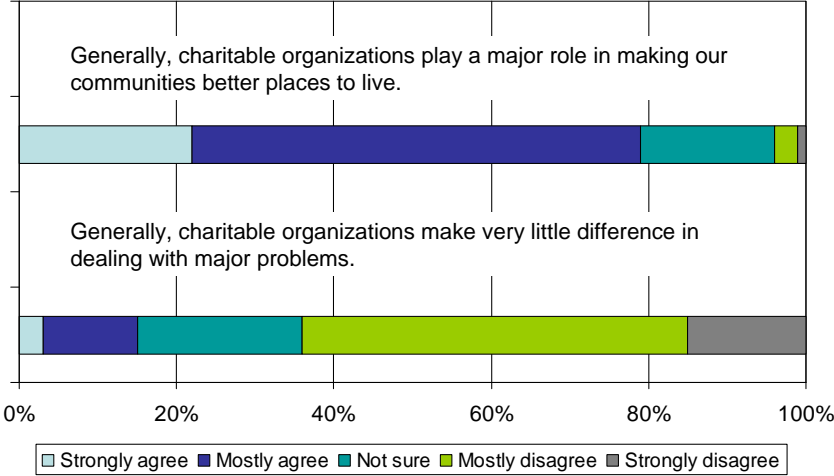
## Basic Attitudes about Charitable Organizations



The majority disagree with the negative statement that most charitable organizations are wasteful with their funds, but only 44 percent agree that most charitable organizations are honest and ethical in their use of donations. More than a third (35 percent) are not sure on the positive statement, while a larger number (42 percent) are undecided on the negative statement.

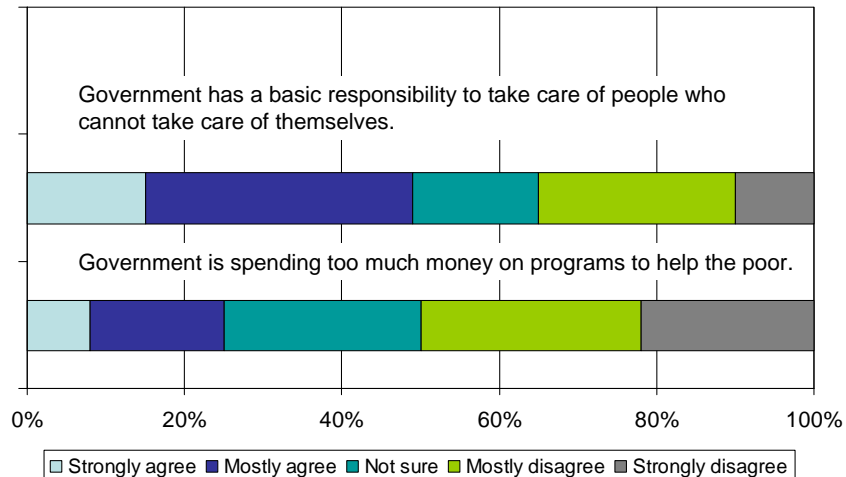
There is an overall ambivalence among Adventists in North America about the honesty and trustworthiness of charitable organizations in general. This is a somewhat more skeptical attitude than the general population. It means that an Adventist charity or charities with a strong reputation for transparency, ethical behavior and effective programs is more likely to get support from Adventists in general than charities not affiliated with the Adventist Church.

# Basic Attitudes about the Impact of Charitable Organizations



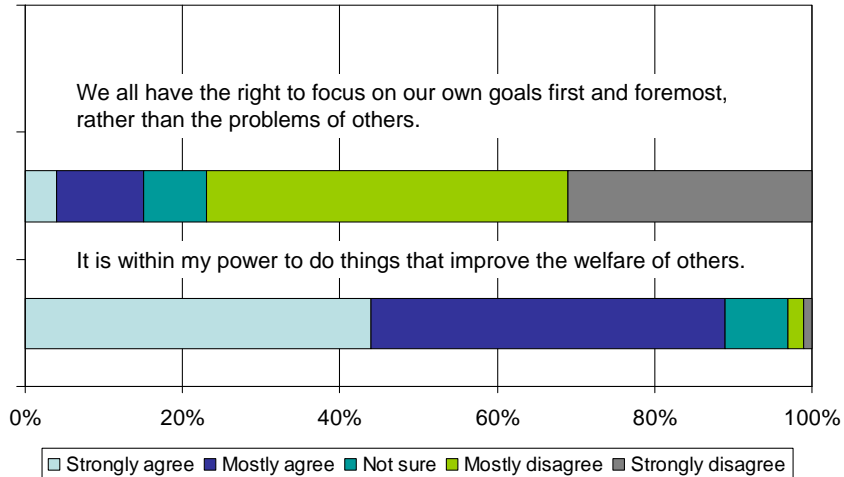
Nearly four out of five respondents agree that charitable organizations contribute significantly to the quality of life in local communities. Only four percent disagree. Almost two thirds disagree with the negative statement on the same topic, while 15 percent agree. The difference is in part due to a certain level of skepticism about organizations in general, and especially those related to social issues, which makes negative statements somewhat more attractive to many North Americans today.

## Basic Attitudes about Government Antipoverty Programs



Nearly half of the respondents (49 percent) agree that government has a basic responsibility to provide a safety net for the unemployed, homeless and disabled, and half disagree with the negative statement that government is spending too much money on programs to help the poor. In both cases a smaller number (a quarter to a third of the respondents) take the view that it is not the responsibility of government to provide a safety net and that too much money is being spent by government for this purpose. This reflects the overall division of opinion among the general public in the United States, although polls in Canada and Bermuda show a decidedly different view. There are significant reasons why people on both sides of this public policy divide would support increased efforts by faith-based organizations to provide such services.

## Libertarian vs Communitarian Values and Attitudes



Standard statements of libertarian and communitarian values were used in this survey to measure the most basic attitudes of Adventists in North America. Nearly nine in ten agree with the communitarian statement that emphasizes helping to improve the welfare of others and only three percent disagree. Only 15 percent agree with the libertarian statement that emphasizes the right of individuals to ignore the needs of others, while 77 percent disagree. An overwhelming majority of Seventh-day Adventist local church leaders in North America have communitarian values and reject libertarian values. Another way of looking at these data is that they constitute a strong correlation between Adventist faith and communitarian values. One of the reasons why compassion ministries are important (but certainly not the only reason) is because they provide a major avenue for the expression of this key element in Adventist faith.

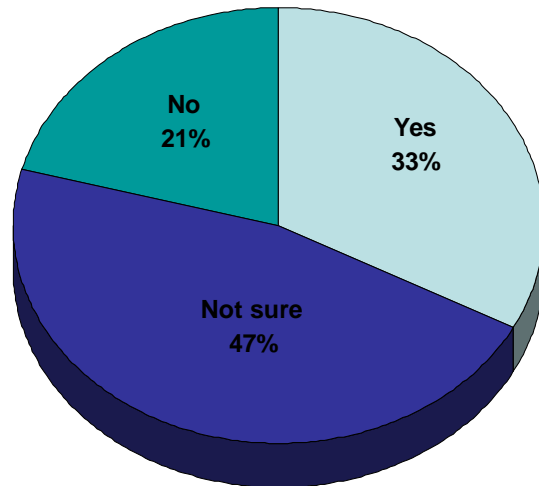
## What would you recommend about how these ministries should be organized?

21%	They should remain as three separate ministries
21%	They should be merged into one organization in the NAD
24%	Merge ACS and Hope for Humanity, leave ADRA separate
6%	Merge ADRA and Hope for Humanity, leave ACS separate
1%	Merge ACS and ADRA, leave Hope for Humanity separate
27%	I do not know

The respondents are split among several options and the largest number (27 percent) simply say they do not know how to respond to this question. This is a situation where leadership cannot simply count heads, but must make a more carefully crafted and reasoned decision.

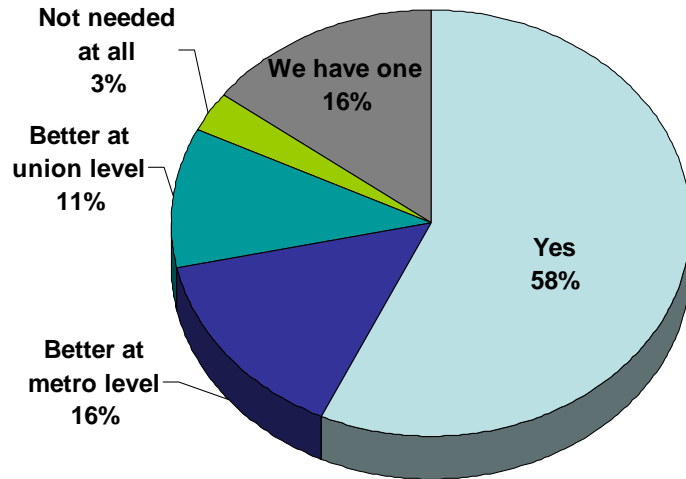
A total of 46 percent of the respondents would support merging all three ministries or at least ACS and Hope for Humanity. Perhaps this option, along with a closer partnership between ACS and ADRA, is the best path forward.

Does your conference have a staff member with a professional background for compassion ministries?



The respondents were asked, Does your local conference have a staff member who has professional education and experience in social work, community organizing or nonprofit management who can help develop these ministries in your area? Nearly half of the pastors do not know, while about a third believe that their conference does have such a resource person. This may be one of the areas that any reorganization of compassion ministries should seek to strengthen.

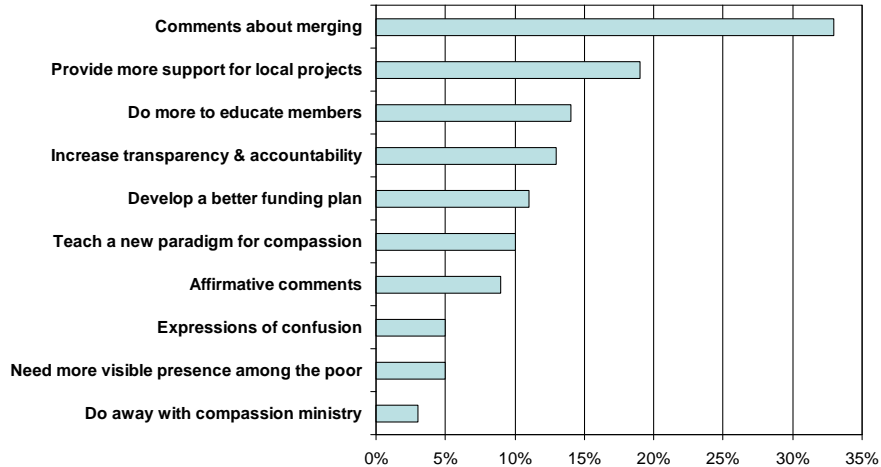
## Is there a need for a compassion ministries specialist in your conference?



The majority of pastors feel that there is a need for a specialist in their conference with professional training and experience in fields relevant to compassion ministries. Another 28 percent see the need for this resource, but suggest that it might work better if it were placed at the metropolitan area or at the union conference level. Only three percent of the respondents see no need for this type of resource person.

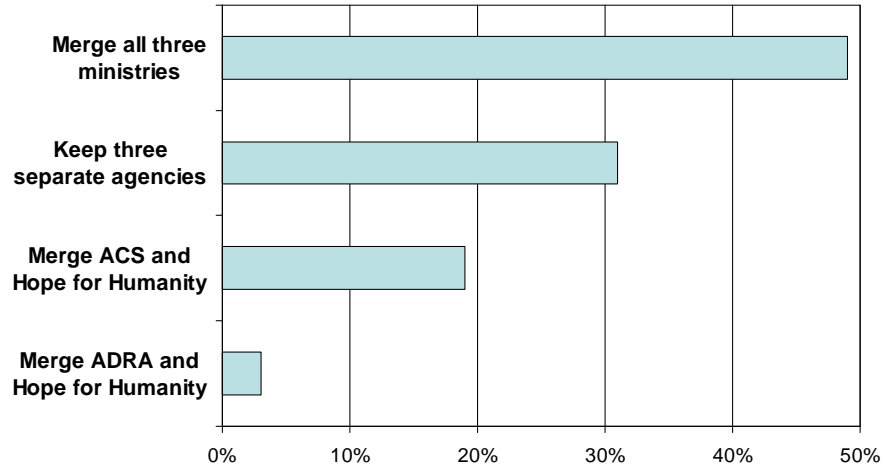


## Suggestions for NAD Leadership in Response to Open-Ended Question



A total of 118 respondents wrote an answer to the final, open-ended question in the survey, or about a quarter of the overall response (23 percent). But 16 of these responses simply indicated that they had no suggestions, in effect not answering the question. So the percentages below are based on the 102 real responses to the request for suggestions to the NAD leadership. Verbatim comments are included in an appendix to this report. The suggestions about merging the compassion ministries are further broken out on the next page.

## Suggestions for NAD Leadership about Merging the Compassion Ministries



A third of the suggestions written in response to the open-ended question addressed directly the question of merging the compassion ministries in the NAD—Adventist Community Services (ACS), the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and Hope for Humanity. About half of these urged that the three ministries be combined into one. A third of the respondents said that the three organizations should continue as separate ministries, while one in five recommended that ACS and Hope for Humanity be merged while ADRA continues as a separate organization. Just two individuals suggested merging Hope for Humanity with ADRA and leaving ACS as a separate agency. The verbatim comments for each of these categories is included in the appendix to this report.

## Appendix

### **Do you have any suggestions for the North American Division leadership regarding the best way to organize compassion ministries, especially ACS, ADRA and Hope for Humanity?**

A total of 118 respondents wrote an answer to the final, open-ended question in the survey, or about a quarter of the overall response (23 percent). But 16 of these responses simply indicated that they had no suggestions, in effect not answering the question. So the percentages below are based on the 102 real responses to the request for suggestions to the NAD leadership. Verbatim comments are in quotation marks with ellipses between individual responses. A few duplicate responses have not been reproduced.

**1. A third of the responses spoke specifically to the possibility of merging two or all three of the compassion ministries, Adventist Community Services (ACS), ADRA and Hope for Humanity.** About half of these urged that the three ministries be combined into one. A third of these respondents (about 10 percent of the total survey) said that the three organizations should continue as separate ministries, while one in five recommended that ACS and Hope for Humanity be merged and ADRA continue as a separate organization. Just two individuals suggested merging Hope for Humanity with ADRA and leaving ACS as a separate ministry.

*1-A. Verbatim suggestions to merge all three ministries:* "I feel strongly that church organizations need to stop competing for money and control in this area and start working together. Why not put all compassion ministries under ADRA International, and create a North American country office (instead of ACS), as we have ADRA country offices in every other divisions around the world? I don't see any purpose in having a separate Hope for Humanity organization. The way it now exists these organizations are competing for programs and resources instead of working together on a common mission. It seems that some time in the past the North American church leadership did not want to be under the control of an international organization, so instead we have splintered interests and confusion. Most members don't understand the operational scope of these different organizations or how they are funded. How much more effective it would be if they were consolidated, reorganized, and a comprehensive plan for branding and marketing were developed. Although ADRA has been facing administrative challenges lately, they do have a world-wide organization already in place. And I pray that God will provide the leadership for them to develop into the efficient, effective, healthy organization He wants them to be. I would strongly encourage North American Division leadership to work with ADRA to develop one strong organization that can be the face and hands of compassion ministries for the church world-wide. **Please!** I am praying for you. ... Combining the ministries as suggested would work only if the current leadership and culture of each ministry is in

line with and actively supportive of the mission of the church. If they are, then combining might help reduce redundancy, as long as it was structured to take advantage of the expertise and specialization that may exist in the different organizations with their different areas of focus. ... ACS and ADRA get so confused in the NAD. If members have given to ADRA they think they have given to ACS and that is not the case. I would like to see ACS (especially the Disaster Response wing of ACS) much more involved with ADRA or at least ADRA funding coming to ACS Disaster Response for disasters that happen here in the NAD. It is confusing to our members when both ADRA and ACS ask for disaster donations. ... We need less bureaucracy, more workers (paid or volunteer) and a wholistic vision of the call to serve both spiritual and physical needs. ... If the goal is to share Christ's love and compassion, the three organizations ought to be centralized for effectiveness. ... Merge all three into one and do the best! ... The three departments can be put as one with three sub-groups. There is some misunderstanding about the reasons for each, and they do the same type of work. ACS is local and ADRA is world-wide but local as needed. ... ***I would appreciate working as just one organization rather than three separate ones. It is confusing because at times we get materials from all three ministries and do not know which to support and sometimes we do not get any information about any of them.*** ... Let these three organizations be merged as one large organization. ... Identify an Adventist professional that has experience with merging organizations and hire them as an consultant to help us do this. The person should have a track record and be evidence based in their work. If they cost a lot of money, but can do the job with excellence, then we should pay the money and let them do the job. In my estimation there should definitely be a merger. I am not positive on which organizations, but with the overlap, they definitely do not need to be separate programs. ... Streamline and simplify the structure. ... The time has come for us to put all our Compassion Ministries under one umbrella and make a concerted and intentional effort to really impact communities for Jesus. It would even be more effective in my view to invite Maranatha and ASI to consider joining forces with the other Adventist agencies and do something together instead of each doing our own thing and thus diluting the real impact of the Adventist compassion ministries to those in need. I hope and pray that closer collaboration can begin to take place sooner rather than later and that together we can impact society in a real way with acts of true benevolence. ... First and foremost, we should consolidate these three ministries into one strong and effective ministry, and make it known across our nation and across the world since our church is worldwide. Adventists should say "present" the minute a disaster happens. We should not only focus on helping our affected church buildings and members, but the general population. If we have one well-organized ministry, with today's technology, every Adventist can be informed what our church is doing word-wide. ***Every*** Adventist Church should have a leader (a board position) who works directly with this new, combined ministry in keeping it vibrant, useful and effective."

*1-B. Comments recommending no merger:* "These three ministries should continue to exist separately. ... I suggest they continue as they are and ACS and Hope for Humanity be replicated in other divisions. ... Fund all three and leave them as separate entities. ...

They do a good work as they are, as far as I know. ... Continue to support ADRA, ACS and Hope for Humanity. ... They should remain separate. ... We need the three ministries (ACS, ADRA, Hope for Humanity), but also nontraditional ministries like some mentioned in the survey. ... ADRA is OK the way it is, organized from the GC. Hope for Humanity should be organized from the Union with mission trips to foreign fields, sister Unions overseas and missions to Native American, Appalachia, the Inner City. ACS should continue to be organized from local conference and bridge rural, suburban and inner-city churches with food banks, county initiatives, recruiting and networking of volunteers. ... Keep ACS separate from ADRA. ACS is primarily volunteers. ADRA is a corporation. We do not need another level of management, but we do need funds for ACS to operate effectively, especially in disaster response. ... All three are needed. All have specific targets. Coordination and some overlap is needed so people do not fall between the cracks.”

*1-C. Suggestions to merge ACS and Hope for Humanity:* “Start with combining ACS and Hope for Humanity. Make them work as one entity within the structure of the church from the GC down to the local church and let ADRA do its own thing in the developing world. ACS and Hope for Humanity can also be structured and empowered to do relief work here in North America. ... Keep it simple! The church has too many programs doing the same thing, that they are not effective. The competition for funds is out of control. ... It would be best to treat Hope for Humanity like a campaign attached to the ministries it supports, or a program of them, but not as a separate ministry. ... I think that more emphasis should be given to Hope for Humanity. I get the sense that few of our members have ever heard of it. It may be more effective to unite Hope for Humanity with ACS. On the local church level the Hope for Humanity drive could become a part of our Community Services department. ... Drop Hope for Humanity all together and focus more on the other two. ... It seems that Ingathering (Hope for Humanity) has faded away in most congregations. Maybe phase it out completely; I think many members think that is the case already. And then let ACS and ADRA continue their unique and complimentary ministries. ... The purpose for ADRA is very clear. I do not understand the difference between ACS and Hope for Humanity. Need to merge those two and focus on a single message. Too many organizations is confusing.”

*1-D. Suggestions to combine ADRA and Hope for Humanity:* “ACS, formerly Dorcas Society, should remain with the local church and focus on the surrounding community. ADRA and Hope for Humanity should be joined into one organization focusing towards underdeveloped countries. .... Drop Hope for Humanity all together and focus more on the other two.”

**2. A few individuals wrote long, detailed responses that included a number of ideas. These more complex and sophisticated responses are displayed verbatim here, although each item does not necessarily represent the view of more than one person.**

2-A. "My experience with the current ACS Disaster Relief program here in the U.S. has been very disappointing. I have found the leadership to be close minded and not open to innovation such as providing the various levels of disaster relief certification training online so that persons who want to become certified can do so without dedicating a whole weekend plus travel and accommodation expense. I was told that this cannot be done because they have to maintain 'control' so that dangerous persons are not certified. If college degrees can be obtained online, surely there is a way to make it possible to be certified and not open the door to potential terrorists. Having to be authorized by the person's Adventist pastor would be just one way this objection could be overcome. Also, persons who have been very effective in running disaster relief warehouses, who did some things 'outside of the box' in working with other organizations, have been unfairly criticized, black-listed and not allowed to work in any new warehouse operation. National personnel have tried, on more than one occasion, to shut down warehouses without consulting the local personnel who were authorized by their state government officials to run them. Such goings on make it embarrassing for the Adventist church and give it a bad reputation. Also, having just one or two people who are qualified to train all levels of certification is a serious mistake. People who have been in control for too long are seemingly holding a death grip on the organization and not allowing younger, more innovative people to lead out. Having just one person who can add items to the online inventory system is another area of grave concern. When that person cannot be reached, input at existing warehouses slows to a stop. Then when they are reached, they have been known to be rude and act as though the volunteer who has been putting in hours of free labor is in the wrong for insisting that changes be made in a timely fashion. Just the little experience I have had in working with national leadership has been disappointing to say the least. Either we need to get out of the disaster relief work altogether, or we need to revamp the entire system so that we can be responsive in today's world, not yesterday's. We bring reproach on the church and discourage volunteers when the system is operated as it is currently being operated."

2-B. "Several suggestions: (1) First teach members to be more caring. (2) Teach members to look outwards rather than just focusing on self and their own needs. (3) Get proper leadership, people who have a heart for these ministries, yet can lead and manage projects and people. (4) Churches must be more aware of the needs in their communities through being in touch with the community and learning first hand about them. (5) Assistance must be based on relevant needs not what someone from an office feels should be given out. (6) Use people who want to be used. Do not just elect people without real interest. (7) Training is of great importance."

2-C. "We need more pastors and conference administrators who are missionary minded. Leaders who have the desire to go into the local area and work with the people and help them with their needs and lead the local church into this type of ministry. We could have a vice president for mission at the conference level."

2-D. "We need the three ministries listed (ACS, ADRA, Hope for Humanity), but also nontraditional ministries like some mentioned [in the questionnaire] that meet felt needs of the particular community the church resides in. We need principles and a general framework that allow for flexibility to implement compassion ministry in the context the local church is in."

2-E. "I would like to recommend that the North American Division assist in setting up strong local community centers. We have a food pantry, but we need money to launch a tutoring program for young people in the community, English classes, to help adults find jobs, health classes, and cooking classes. We have a lot of people in our area who are very ill and need help immediately with their health issues; diabetes, heart disease, and cancer are very common among the people I serve as a pastor."

2-F. "I don't have great hope or confidence in the ability of my church organization to truly inhabit compassion ministries separate from its evangelistic thrust. And I no longer have faith in a church that leaves half a gender out of its ordained workforce. Don't create more positions; don't gather more money from local churches; give more money back to us and let us get on with the work Jesus highlights in his view of final judgment (Matthew 25). It seems to me that we don't really cherish the life of our surrounding communities, unless they see the wisdom of joining the movement."

**3. About one in five of the responses to this open-ended question suggested that compassion ministries need to be organized to provide more support for the local church and local projects.** "The best way I see to attract interest in helping others is to locally start a **visible** help program such as rebuilding a home that includes local business involvement and media coverage. This generates the support, communication and involvement. Just providing funds usually goes unnoticed by the community and is not productive in building community trust. ... Recognize local talents and gifts and make sure they are developed and supported. ... ADRA and Hope for Humanity should be more involved in the local church. We need more training from all three ministries so we can be more involved at the local church. We need more ADRA warehouses in our communities to work together for the community. .... I know it is harder for the small churches to operate a compassion ministry. They often do not have the volunteer help available or the funds needed for operation. ... A new structure should be church-based. ... Leave more money in the local church to help meet the innumerable local needs. ... Help each church find their area of ability to work in their community. ... Get more involved in the community and organize local churches to get involved. Visit local churches and talk about the different programs we have. ... We need a better and easier

way of get help to get local programs running, especially in smaller churches. ... I just want to know more about these ministries and how I can get my church involved so we can help. ... Promote some sort of outreach in every Adventist Church. Too many of our churches are not doing any kind of outreach on a consistent basis. We can do something even if we just open our doors daily for prayer at certain hours of the day. Our churches have no intentional mission in the area of outreach, no true purpose for existing. Just having evangelistic meeting does not disciple the body for mission. We are some what detached in our comfort zones. Without outreach how can we feel the pain of our members, neighbors and families? ... How can we receive help from ADRA? ... Prepare programs similar to franchises whereby local church groups can follow a model and have materials to guide them rather than each inventing an approach and then not having enough similarity in several locations. Need to strengthen the effectiveness and reduce the time for administering and this would help with that. ... **Help the local church to thrive!** Teach churches to serve and care for their city as God has equipped them to do. The average local church in Adventism is so unfocused and diluted (with 27 different offerings listed on the Tithe Envelope), and very little is being done in the city in which the church exists. Perhaps if we did not send away more than half our income via tithe and spending 50 percent of our local budget to support our church schools (which most members with kids do not care about or are home schooling), and decided to serve our cities, effective compassion ministries would increase. ... Don't gather more money from local churches; give more back to us and let us get on with the work Jesus highlights in Matthew 25. ... I think we need more diversity and local, grass roots initiatives that are honored and not frowned upon by local conference administration. ... Emphasize mobilizing volunteers in churches and communities. Help individuals and local congregations carry out ministry in the six areas listed in Matthew 25:31-46. ... A recent webinar from the NAD ACS director was excellent. I would like to see him in conference workers meetings. A short video for workers meetings might be useful as well. One theme would be the pastor as local ACS leader in his/her community; how to pastor more than your church members, enlarging your field of pastoral work, etc. There was a model for this in that webinar. I think more pastors are ready to hear and see that model. A short series of videos with best practices, other pastors and leaders can be planned for workers meetings, maybe camp meetings as well. Ask the conference leaders to show these in future workers meetings, surely they can fit in a short video to their schedule."

**4. About one in seven respondents to this question suggested that more should be done to educate members about ministries of compassion.** "From my own answers to this survey, I see that there needs to be a vigorous educational campaign within the church to inform members of the work of these ministries, maybe a DVD that integrates information on all the compassion ministries that comes out quarterly with the Sabbath School materials. This is the first time that I have heard them referred to in this way. ... Advertise and promote workshops, seminars, and conferences. ... Everyone should read *Tattoos on the Heart* by Gregory Boyle! ... Continue to capitalize on our denomination's print and electronic media to maintain the presence and awareness of



ACS, ADRA and Hope for Humanity. Is volunteering for these compassion ministries a Pathfinder honor? Are we tapping into the people resources available in our youth and young adults for ACS, ADRA and Hope for Humanity? ... There is the need for more promotion, awareness and education about the existence, benefits and functions of these practical Christian ministries. I am convinced many members do not have much insight into these ministries and more importantly, what they can do to help. We need a regular, systematic and inclusive way of getting all members involved in one of the ministries. This has to be everyone's business as demonstrated by Christ. At the moment, it appears they are one of the ministries and therefore is the problem of the ministries leadership to get their work going. That has to be changed. Members must be educated from the General Conference to the most remote part of the world to understand the need for everyone to help not once in a while but as an integral part of our everyday Christian life. There must be a system or program where individuals can comfortably do their part outside the church as well as inside. It appears most members do not know what they can do privately to support these ministries. ... This survey is not going to get you truly helpful answers if people (like myself) have minimal awareness of ACS and Hope for Humanity. ... Promote it from the NAD level to the local churches like you are promoting evangelism. A member of the NAD team can do a felt-needs seminar that helps in educate the church and community about ACS, ADRA and Hope for Humanity, and also help launch these ministries if they do not exist in that local area. ... Make it the **number one type of evangelism** and it will work otherwise, you are wasting your time. Seriously! ... Church members need to be taught that we're not doing this to get members, but to simply help those in need. As opportunities arise, we will share Jesus with them. But they need to know this isn't a gimmick for church growth. ... Send a conference representative to our churches to inform the members of the importance of these essential services. People at times need to be more motivated. The members in my local church are very aware of the need for these services and will support them financially and physically. It does not hurt however to give reminders on occasion. ... We must urge church members to actively participate with ACS and ADRA. We need to work together for the finishing of this cause. ... Focus on developing a youth oriented ACS focus and training. ... Help individuals carry out ministry. ... Help people understand that it's broader than Dorcas. Encourage and highlight professions dealing with these aspects, such as psychotherapists and social workers, as ministers. Currently we only highlight education, medical, and pastoral work as 'noble' Adventist professions and there are so many other needed ways to encourage people to serve."

**5. About one in seven responses to this question wrote about accountability and transparency in ADRA and all compassion ministries.** "There must be more accountability! From the inside out. ... Provide reports that make it easy to understand where the money goes—transparency and accountability. ... ADRA could be more transparent about its mission and funding sources. Most church members don't understand the international grant system that is ADRA's lifeblood. If there is a more direct correlation between funds donated by local churches to the projects ADRA is involved in, it needs to be made clear. I'm proud of ADRA most of the time and try to

explain its place in the mission of the church and how it is funded. Whatever can be done to separate ADRA from the cloud of suspicion that rests on all NGOs would be appreciated. Lots of info can be found out now, so we might as well be transparent. ... It seems strange to call Ingathering 'Hope for Humanity.' I haven't heard of Ingathering going directly to 'help humanity' in the way the name suggests. If it is simply Ingathering with a different, more humanitarian name, that seems to be lacking a little in transparency and honesty. If it is now simply a way to fund raise for compassion ministries, it would probably be best to separate it from historical Ingathering in our rhetoric and practice. ... The purpose for ADRA is very clear. However, I would like to see more transparency in the way money is used and allocated. ... We need sincere dedication in the ADRA leadership. They need to be trusted with the funds at their disposal. Periodic evaluations and audits should be done. People in the position should understand that church's name is at stake when funds are misused. ... Our organizations have gone the way of the rest of relief agencies. While we do some good, we seem more interested in what the organization thinks than really getting the aid where it is needed. My son is a medical doctor and I have listened to him share that everywhere he has gone to help (on his own dime) ADRA seems to slow down the process of getting help to victims and not just serve those who are serving. If you really focus on mission and serving others, not just your jobs or making the cover of the *Review*, maybe we as a church would begin to trust you more. Word of mouth from the body is not that great about these agencies. ... However they are organized, their structure and funding should be transparent and NAD leadership need to allow the new organization to be autonomous to avoid recent infractions at ADRA. Let pastors be pastors; let administrators be administrators; let teachers be teachers, etc. ... Good documented oversight is needed as well as markers along the way as to ascertain results and cost effectiveness and efficiency. Reporting from eyes and hands on the ground are essential. Tracking needs and supplies, along with distribution tracking, is vital. Working with professional business partners as well as trained church members and volunteers given clearly defined objectives and protocols led by God will achieve positive lasting results. ... Do we study the effective practices and policies of other, non-SDA agencies that serve the same purpose? And if so, how does our leadership implement those findings so that we are learning from the best and improving? Do these three Adventist agencies have stated goals? How are the leaders and support staff evaluated based on those goals? How are our leaders systematically released from politics, bureaucracy and over-management thus freeing them to work toward the agency's goals? What are the criteria for employment and leadership at these agencies? .... I know more about the inside workings of ADRA than the other two organizations. ADRA has a great vision, but how they treat their employees and volunteers is deplorable. Secondly, ADRA's use of money is frightening. Example: building a wall around the hospital in Haiti instead of using the funds to meet the real needs of people. What a huge waste. People will stop giving if they know these abuses. ... In the case of ADRA there is a lot of good that is being done, but sadly there is a lot of money that is being mishandled at different levels of the organization. This is well known, especially in Latin America and other third world countries. My suggestion; better accountability and transparency at all levels. It will help build trust, which is why

ADRA is not receiving more funding from local churches and other organizations. ... Someone needs to get their act together in regards to ADRA. In the past six to 12 months the entire organization has been floundering. Those that work in the Silver Spring office do not have a spirit of camaraderie; they are watching their back waiting to see who will be fired next. The Christian attitude is nearly nonexistent. I have not been impressed by the lives lived by many of those employed in that office. They talk the talk but do not walk the walk. How can we as a church reach out in a humanitarian effort when we can't even get along with each other? ... Today's society has become very hardened toward donating to charities because of the excess fraud being done."

**6. About one in ten of the responses emphasized the need for a better funding plan for compassion ministries.** "Seek funding from outside the denomination whenever and wherever possible. Above all, be sure to stand apart from others by resurrecting the old concept of 'disinterested benevolence.' Ultimately you will 'have 100 conversions where now there is only one,' not because of what we say, but because of who we are revealed in what we do. ... A lot of what passes as compassion ministry is merely to get public awareness of our church. You have to get the money for these community programs from somewhere, and a lot more congregational training. ... I have always hated Ingathering, having gone door to door as a child singing 'Give it if you have it, give it with a willing heart,' etc. So, I think it should be revisited as to the purpose and methods to be used. ... **We need to acknowledge that door to door solicitation is dead. People are afraid to go out asking for money; it is dangerous!** ... Hope for Humanity (Ingathering) is pretty much a non-issue in the churches I pastor, as most people are unwilling to go out. Some will still give, but basically getting people to solicit is not going to happen. ... Financial help is really needed as more refugees come to this country (Canada). Our food bank needs financial support, as well as manpower to help the less fortunate than we are. ... We need funds for ACS to operate effectively, especially in disaster response. Hurricane Sandy and the disasters following should teach the church this. The annual disaster relief offering should be split 50/50 between ADRA and ACS. ... Tap donations/grants from non-Adventist sources as ADRA has been so effective in doing."

**7. Another one in ten of the responses to this open-ended question asked for the Adventist Church to teach a new paradigm for compassion ministry because church members are not focused on compassion to others.** "My perception is that many members tend to be focused on their own 'goodness' and 'salvation' and leave compassion and the business of helping others on a regular basis to 'the church.' As individuals we do what is convenient to us in helping others, but don't see this aspect of mission as an integral part of discipleship or our responsibility as Adventist Christians. ... Compassion for those less fortunate than us is at the heart of imitating Christ in this world. ... I believe we should focus much on the golden rule and encourage true courtesy from the heart and strive for our personnel to develop excellent personal

relationships as they minister. ... We need a paradigm shift in the way we view compassion ministries. Usually, they are regarded as a means of evangelism, as activities which are nice to do. They should be regarded as the way Christians express their faith in Christ and reflect the character of God in the world by caring for the less fortunate. We view the Remnant as those who believe in a set of doctrines, rather Jesus says in Matthew 25 that Remnant people care for the less fortunate. ... Encourage local programs but keep the balance between these kinds of ministries and evangelistic proclamation. ... I believe that as Christ our example centered on this area, it is important that as a church we focus on the physical needs of non-Adventists as much as their spiritual needs. As such organizing this department to function as an entity within the church would bring great results. We could ask members to contribute as well as the wider community and be more visible in our own church community as well as the wider society. ... Make practical Christianity part of worship. Allocate more funds and resources to help our neighbors and community, and humanity in general. Let's try and build the kingdom of God from this earth. ... I think we need to do more for the poor and the homeless."

**8. Another one in ten affirmed the work being done by the compassion ministries, as well as the survey and the fact that the NAD leadership is open to input on this topic.** "Basically you are doing a great job. We keep you in our prayers that the Lord will continue to bless you and your ministry. ... I particularly appreciate the ministry ADRA does around the world. ... I have no suggestions, but that does not prevent me from commending you for thinking about these issues and seeking to find solutions. Keep up the good work. The need seems greater now than when we were better organized. However, it will not be easy; but do not let that discourage you. Step boldly into the 21st century. ... Some of your questions were leading which indicates you're facing some tough decisions in the near future. We'll be praying for you. ... Thanks for asking. ... Just glad someone has started thinking about how to make this more useful. ... Surveys like these help bring fresh focus to programs. Have sunset periods for institutions that force us to consider their effectiveness and provide needed retooling. ... Thank you for doing this survey."

**9. About five percent of the responses to this question expressed confusion on one kind or another.** "I have not understood Hope for Humanity to be a ministry in its own right. I was under the impression that it is a fund raising campaign that supports ADRA and ACS. My understanding is that having ADRA and ACS as separate agencies facilitates obtaining grants that need to be fire-walled against direct support of religious outreach. ... When there is a disaster it is confusing where to send the donations. Most people in church think that ADRA is the organization to send the money to, especially among Spanish churches. ... ACS and ADRA get so confused in the NAD. If people give to ADRA they think they have given to ACS and that is not the case. I would like to see ACS (especially the Disaster Response wing of ACS) much more involved with ADRA

or at least the funding coming for disasters that happen here in the NAD. It is confusing to our members. ... ACS should have a clearer understanding in NAD. ... We hear more of ACS and ADRA but not much about Hope for Humanity. ... Clarify to the members and the community exactly what each of these ministries roles are. What do they do and whom do they reach? There seems to be confusion concerning overlapping roles.”

**10. Another five percent of the responses urged that the compassion ministries have a stronger visible presence in low-income communities in North America.**

“Be present in localities with dysfunctional families, joblessness, health crisis, drug addiction, unhealthy street corners, providing mentoring to encourage small compassionate ministries for local churches and for the community at large. **Don’t be present only in huge disasters or emergencies.** People live the above challenges every day and accumulate problems over time. In order for these agencies to be felt locally and palpably, they need to have a presence felt in sustainable projects in the local churches, helping them to minister and reach the communities around them. ... People want to see the money they give benefit their own community. ... Use compassion ministries as evangelism in our local churches. ... Bring things down to a local level from the General Conference to help better support and give aid to the communities. ... Focus on giving skills, training, encouragement and mentoring to the poor.”

**11. A few responses took an opposite few and urged less emphasis on ministries of compassion.**

“Based on mailings I receive, it would appear that disaster response is the most important thing going on in our denomination. Of all the things for which my financial reserves could make a difference within our church, I doubt that disaster response is the most important, but it sure is prominently and aggressively solicited. I wish for a better balance between ADRA and the other ministries/organizations of our denomination. ... We live in a time that people get government aid very easily. It is not as if there was no help from social service agencies. How much if any church money should be given away? We know ministry to the poor is fulfilling, but there are many who take advantage of the system. It’s a very deep subject. ... There are many segments of society that will see to this important need but there is only one organization that will spend money to advance the Three Angels Message, only the SDA Church. These things are important, but temporal. The eternal need that is to be addressed by our church has to be the place we put our resources, and let the individual churches and church members help those whom the Lord places before us with other needs. ... I believe that this is a form of Social Gospel that is best left to organizations such as the Salvation Army. We as Christians should be involved in this in only a minor way. It has been my experience that most folks seeking help are only coming for the ‘loaves and fishes’ and not for a better lifestyle; a few are, but very few. Evangelism seems to work better for the kingdom.”

**12. Three of the pastors responding mentioned the need to work for greater awareness among the general public of the Adventist compassion ministries.**

“There needs to be better public awareness of what these ministries are actually doing. They are virtually invisible to the general public. ... Keep working on getting the word out. We need more public awareness. ... In the recent Oklahoma disaster, the media only gave coverage to the work being done by the Red Cross and how quickly they were there the minute the disaster happened. Adventists got a report from the *Adventist Review In Touch* email as to how our churches were affected, not what we were doing for the communities.”

**13. Three of the pastors suggested a greater focus on urban communities by the compassion ministries.** “Focus on needs in the cities. ... Focus on urban and inner city areas of North America. ... Make the faces of the ministry a true reflection of the landscape of the American community. There are too many white faces who seem to be out of touch with the needs of minorities, who are the first to be pushed aside and marginalized by the laws enacted by the U.S. Congress.”

**14. Three of the respondents suggested the need for more collaboration by the NAD compassion ministries with outside organizations.** “Our ministries should link with local health and welfare agencies for purposes of understanding, co-ordination, and sharing of vision. Hope for Humanity is so Adventist focused, so that we get the glory. Many more powerful organizations exist that could greatly benefit from Adventist involvement and vision; more of a salt and light spreading approach. ... We should not try to reinvent the wheel at the local level, but plug into existing ministries and services already provided. This leaves us with the volunteer burden, but not the administrative, facilities, fiscal, legal burdens, etc. This also gives us an ability to match up specific gifts and ministry passions with multiple outreach "flavors" and opportunities. It also gives us much-needed credibility as we minister alongside people from other faiths and backgrounds in the community. Unless there is no existing food pantry, we should not start a new one. Unless there is no literacy program, we should not start a new one. Unless there is no homeless meal program, we should not start a new one. We should instead send our church members out into the world to serve in and build up these existing ministries. ... Avoid being organization-centric. Seek to meet the need where and how it exists. This means learning from organizations that are doing effective ministry in the areas under discussion. It may even mean acknowledging that we might need to look outside of the church to leverage expertise not currently taken advantage of. If we are not willing to do what it takes to be successful, we should not involve ourselves in those areas and focus on some other areas of ministry.”

**15. There were also a number of single comments that are unique and do not fit with any comments:** “My suggestion is to let each union conference take the lead with its local conferences in organizing the work that needs to be done at the local level. It is very difficult for the NAD to work with local conferences since the relationship is always through the union and they are basically as an organization unable to coordinate it at the local level. If other unions have needs that their local conferences are unable to resolve, because of a major disaster or continual down turn in the economy in that region, then let this union communicate with the other unions and come up with a plan to help these communities. ... I think NAD leadership should clarify how to interact with them for the local pastor. How do we get training, certification, an ongoing relationship and communication with NAD ACS? The NAD ACS website has a fair bit of resources and information but is not well designed. Sorry for being so blunt, but get a designer in there and rework it so that it builds a network instead of remaining static and informational. Maybe this is on someone's to-do list. I hope so. I've seen info on training out in California, that looks good. Can we make it division wide by using webinars, etc? Keep at it, we're catching on? ... I think these organizations should survey and see what professionals reside in congregations and their expertise and their networks. Everything does not have to be done by employees. In fact, maybe more could be accomplished by people who have the knowledge, expertise and passion to minister to people's needs. ... Incorporate compassion ministries into Sabbath Schools. ... Offer help to rural areas, working with the homeless, etc., is primarily aimed at cities. Rural areas get little or no help. ... I think our disaster relief efforts in the NAD should be separate and apart from ACS. ... Offer scholarships or financial support for local students who express interest to serve in the community outreach ministries. Curriculum in elementary and middle and secondary schools and financials support for students and schools. Award educators and schools from K to 12 who demonstrate outstanding community projects.”