



WCS DONATIONS - IN - KIND

Project Planning Tips

Each type of donations-in-kind project requires different considerations in planning. The following guidelines include questions to help donors in their planning process and assist beneficiaries in their communication with donors. For additional information on donating appropriate items, go to [Global Hand's Web site](#).

FOR ALL PROJECTS

Are the items in good condition?

Are the items appropriate for the recipients' physical and cultural environment?

Can the items be imported? Will there be excessive duties or other taxes on them?

Avoid wasting time and money collecting and shipping items that the recipient cannot use. Keep in mind that the quality of your goods is always more important than quantity.

BOOK PROJECTS

What language do the recipients speak?

What type of books do your recipients need? For example, are you stocking a primary school library or collecting for an adult literacy project?

Has the beneficiary discussed book needs with students, instructors, school administrators, and librarians?

Has the beneficiary appointed a librarian or someone who will organize, distribute, and care for the books?

Have you screened the books for culturally inappropriate images?

For school textbooks also ask:

What measurement system does the country use?

Does the recipient require a certain number of copies of each text?

Will the recipient accept slightly outdated materials, and what can be defined as current? As a rule, textbooks for general use should be less than 15 years old, but medical and technical texts must be more current.

Other factors to consider:

Books about the donors' national government and history are not useful in other countries.

Donors should stamp the inside cover of each book noting that it's a gift from their Rotary club. Such books are likely to get through customs faster and less likely to be stolen.

ACADEMIC, SCIENTIFIC, AND TECHNICAL JOURNALS

Which core journals in the field of study are most needed?

Have faculty, students, and librarians played a role in selecting the titles?

If you are sending back issues, have you made every effort to compile a complete set?

To overcome unreliable mail service, provide a subscription of at least three years to a respected journal that the recipient can access online.

**CLOTHING AND
BEDDING**

Are these new items?

If you are sending used items, make sure they are in good condition.

Have you sorted and labeled the items by type, gender, and age?

Standard bedding sizes vary from culture to culture; did you get bedding measurements from the recipient?

Are clothing items appropriate for the recipients' climate, culture, religion, and lifestyle?

Remember, quality items are durable and low maintenance, not designer chic.

**COMPUTER
EQUIPMENT**

Because computer equipment can become obsolete very quickly, this type of specialized donation is best channeled through an organization that has the capacity to refurbish or recycle high-tech equipment. In lieu of an in-kind donation, consider donating funds to help your international partner purchase computer equipment locally.

FOOD

Rather than food, consider sending food production implements or seeds that are appropriate for local growing conditions. If you do send food, ask these questions:

Is the food nonperishable?

Is the food familiar to the recipients?

Are the packages easy to open?

Are the items labeled clearly in the native language of the recipients?

Is the food appropriate for the local conditions as well as the local religion and culture? For example, do not send food that needs to be reconstituted to a locale with contaminated water.

**MEDICINES, VACCINES,
AND VITAMINS**

Pharmaceutical donations are highly specialized and should be channeled through an experienced relief or development organization. In lieu of an in-kind donation, consider donating funds to PolioPlus Partners or an established medical organization.

**MEDICAL, DENTAL,
AND ELECTRICAL
EQUIPMENT**

Is the equipment functional? If it has not been in use for a while, have a biomedical engineer check to make sure that it works. If it doesn't, refurbish it before sending it abroad or donate the item to a development or relief organization that can refurbish it.

Is the equipment compatible with local power frequencies?

Will the recipient need surge protectors, emergency generators, or adaptive wall plugs?

Will the cost of running and maintaining the equipment be within the recipient's budget?

Do you have clear, written instructions for installation, use, and maintenance? Have these translated, if necessary.

If you do not have the operating manual, have you requested one from the manufacturer?

Are there experts in the recipient's country who can operate and service the item?

Is it possible for your club to send a technician to the site to set up the equipment and train workers?

Will someone from your club be available for long-term technical assistance?

Are necessary spare parts available in the recipient's area? Your club should consider sending some commonly needed spare parts and accessories with your donation or some nonfunctional pieces of similar equipment that can be used to harvest spare parts.

Other factors to consider:

Because aging equipment needs to be repaired more frequently, think carefully before sending equipment that is more than 10 years old.

**MEDICAL, DENTAL,
AND SURGICAL
SUPPLIES**

Do the supplies best fit the needs of the recipients?

Are the items sterile?

Will the recipients understand the related instructions or do you need to have them translated?

Also consider these factors:

Send large quantities of the same item(s). If you only have smaller quantities of supplies, donate them to an established relief or development agency or a local animal welfare organization.

VEHICLES

Will right- or left-hand drive be appropriate for the recipient?

Is the vehicle in very good condition?

Is it suited for the recipient's local terrain, road conditions, and climate?

Will the proper type of fuel — diesel or gasoline — with the optimal octane levels be available in the new location?

Does the vehicle come with an operating manual?

Are there experts in the recipient's country who can operate and service the item?

Are repair and maintenance parts readily available? Your club should consider sending some commonly needed spare parts and accessories with your donation. Alternately, send some nonfunctional pieces of similar equipment that can be used to harvest spare parts.