

HOLIDAY GIVING DOS AND DON'TS: CAFAMERICA OUTLINES 5 TIPS FOR SMART DONATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CHARITIES

Great Resource for Donors: Sortable Database of 1,503 Charities Around the Globe.

ALEXANDRIA, VA.///November 23, 2009///Are you interested in giving to a charity in another nation ... but you don't know where to focus or how to do your homework in checking out an overseas nonprofit? If so, you will want to review "*Holiday Giving Dos and Don'ts: CAFAmerica's 5 Tips for Smart Donations to International Charities.*" CAFAmerica promotes borderless charitable giving as part of the CAF International Network, which spans six continents and has over \$4 billion of charitable funds under management.

CAFAmerica CEO Susan Saxon-Harrold said: "**For many, the holiday season involves making a round of charitable donations. But, being a smart donor involves much more than just writing a check or sending money online. The good news is that doing your homework about an overseas charity doesn't have to take the joy and fun out of making a donation. As donors often don't know what they should consider before making a donation, here are some tips from CAFAmerica to make the decision less confusing.**"

1. **Focus on a charity that makes sense for you.** Charities have an obligation to provide detailed information to interested donors. Never give to a charity you know nothing about. You may wish to pick a charity or an initiative in one field of interest and in one geographic area and then stick to it. To get started finding a charity that is a good fit for you, go to <http://www.cafamerica.org/cafa/SearchModule/NpPublicProfileSearch.aspx>. This Web tool allows you to search more than 1,503 charities by nation, region, focus (religion, education, social services, health and medical research, the environment) and other key factors.
2. **Consider giving more to fewer charities.** If you do give to many non-profits, consider donating larger sums to single organizations. In the world of small- and medium-size charities, a \$1,000 donation to one charity may achieve a much bigger impact than \$100 given to each of 10 different charities. There is no right or wrong answer about which charity you should give to and at what level. However, it is generally true that a few large gifts will generate a bigger impact than several small gifts.
3. **Do your homework and donate safely.** There is no substitute for due diligence when it comes to charitable giving. Donors who give via CAFAmerica can be reassured that any foreign or U.S. charity that they want to support will be reviewed to make sure that funds are used for their intended purpose. We look at how long a charity has been working, what risks are associated with giving to a specific country, can we independently verify a charity's mission? These are a few of the many questions we ask before we make an advised grant. As a donor you should also ask questions before you give. Ask the charity in which you are interested and find out more about it. Talk to friends, family and neighbors, and use the internet to learn more about a charity or issue that interests you. Ask the charity about its achievements, what has failed, and how it is financed. Many charities provide some of this information online or you can email them. If they are being transparent they will tell you. Then you will be able to find out whether the charity is likely to use your gift wisely. If you're interested in a major donation to a charity or for an initiative in a country then there is no substitute for seeing their work in action. So consider making a visit or a country tour to find out what you really would like to support.
4. **Focus on sustainability – not "one shot" giving.** If you are considering a larger donation, it's important to think about what happens after your money is spent by a charity. Do the services offered decline? Do programs get dismantled? This is why "sustainability" is increasingly an important issue for donors who don't want to see their gift go to waste. Think about the long term but ask the charity how they spent your gift and what was achieved by it.

5. **Review your giving plan regularly.** Look back over the past year -- did you fulfill your goals for cross-border giving? Do you need to make changes? Do you need more help in establishing your goals? If so, what worked and what will you change for next year? It's important to avoid the "check off the box" syndrome of charitable giving, where you simply go back each holiday season to the same charities and write them the same check as the previous year.

ABOUT CAFAMERICA

Charities Aid Foundation America (CAFAmerica) was founded in 1992. As a member organization of the United Kingdom based Charities Aid Foundation network of offices, which provide charitable financial services to individuals, global corporations, charities, and foundations. CAFAmerica is dedicated to expanding borderless charitable giving by providing guidance and international grant making solutions for donors and charities. Together with its UK subsidiary for dual US/UK taxpayers, the CAF American Donor Fund makes over \$40m in grants to charities in 76 countries around the world. CAFAmerica's range of charitable solutions include Donor Advised Gifts, Donor Advised Funds, Matching Donor Advised Funds, Designated Funds, Bequest planning and a 'Friends of' Charity Fund. In October 2009, CAFAmerica made the Chronicle of Philanthropy's "Philanthropy 400" list of U.S private fundraising charities.

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