



A GATHERING PLACE  
FOR SHORT-TERM MISSION ARTICLES,  
RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## **Adaptable Planning for Donations**

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In recent years, everyone had to learn to adapt and find creative solutions instead of relying on how things have always been done. We can choose to see this as a blessing, but how do you plan when the rules keep changing? An adaptable plan is one which accommodates several paths, allowing adjustments as you progress.

### **Plan for receiving all types of donations:**

Having a plan also applies to receiving donations. Are you ready with a plan to receive all types of gifts: cash, checks, online (credit card/debit card), wires (international and domestic), stock gifts, gifts-in-kind, Qualified Charitable Distributions? Do you have protocol in place for the proper receipt wording for the various types of gifts? Being prepared helps you say, “Yes! We can accept that type of gift; here are the next steps.”

### **Plan for future appeals:**

Use connection points with your donors as an opportunity to update contact information and keep your donor database up to date. Be sure your donors know how to connect for address updates, receipt reprint requests, credit card expiration updates, etc. If you’ve just returned from a mission trip, be sure to follow-up with your donors to share what God did through their generosity. This can inspire them to help support your next mission trip.

### **Plan ways to communicate needs clearly:**

I love it when missionaries include pictures, convey specific needs, tell what life is like “in the field” and show how God is moving around the world. Sharing specific needs with donors encourages them to pray or send additional funds for the special need. Once that need is met, your donors can celebrate God’s provision with you. This is a faith building experience for both your donor and you.

### **Plan ways to stay connected:**

Donors who feel a stronger connection to the mission work you do are typically more faithful, committed donors—even in uncertain times. This connection is built by engaging them in the work you are doing. Share news, prayer concerns, needs, praises and funny tidbits from your experience. Imagine creative ways to keep in touch with them.

Receipts are being sent anyway, why not include a message on your receipts or include a newsletter-type insert with your print receipts? For email receipts, a link to the electronic format may be included.

In-person visits are always great, but have you considered leveraging your time with video meetings to connect to your donors individually or as a group? One missionary found it helpful to do a live video meeting with a supporting church during the Sunday service. Members loved it because they could ask questions in real-time. Another missionary sent video clips to their supporting churches for use during worship services, mission team meetings, and during Vacation Bible School's Mission moments. What a wonderful way to open the eyes of the children to missions--remember, they are the next generation of church leaders and missionaries!

**Plan ways to redirect funds if the trip is cancelled:**

If the missionary has properly conveyed the mission work to the donors, it is an easier transition to get approval for redirecting the donations to continue the work even though the missionary they are supporting is unable to travel. The missionaries can help with this messaging and reassure their donors that the goal is the *work*; we are just God's conduits (contributing either time, hands/feet, money, etc.). This helps the mission-sending organization continue their important work even if a trip must be cancelled due to travel restrictions.

**Plan ways to appreciate your donors:**

Let your donors know they are a vital part of your Team and acknowledge and appreciate their sacrifice to the Lord. Let them share the accomplishments for God because of their gifts. We are all part of God's team—each using our skills, time, talents, and blessings to further God's work around the world.

Donors are hard to get and important to keep. By having a plan, you can have informed donors who are engaged in God's work and inspired to help support you in your mission.