



ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The Motivation

In September 2004, CAN-DO was founded by CEO, Eric Klein, in response to his disillusionment with large charitable organizations. In his opinion, the “big agencies” lack accountability to their donors as well as the communities they serve during times of disaster.

Klein’s concerns were only reinforced while leading CAN-DO’s grassroots tsunami relief efforts in Sri Lanka just a few months after he founded the organization. There he and his team witnessed first-hand how politics and bureaucracy hampered the efforts of large agencies.

Directly following CAN-DO’s extensive tsunami relief effort, Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast of the U.S. The CAN-DO Team immediately arrived on scene to implement “common sense” solutions. There again, they witnessed a failure by large agencies to provide critical aid.

The Response

CAN-DO (Compassion into Action Network – Direct Outcome Organization) is 100% accountable with zero red tape. Through video, photographs and paper documentation available on the CAN-DO website, the organization enables people who make charitable donations to actually see how their money is being spent and track progress every step of the way.

CAN-DO does not get involved in the politics or bureaucratic “red tape” that delays and often prevents large agencies from delivering critical aid. The team does not wait for approvals or a green light. They do what needs to be done to provide immediate relief where it is needed most.

Each relief project is unique. The community might need food, toiletries and shelter or they may require long-term care such as rebuilding homes, businesses. While the scope of each CAN-DO project largely depends on donor support and budget and time, the organization does everything it can to maximize results through its resources and those of its partners.

CAN-DO involves the community from day one. Upon arrival, the team begins speaking with survivors to determine their needs and immediately implements “common sense” solutions. CAN-DO also invites community members to participate in the relief effort if they wish to do so.

The Relief

Klein backed CAN-DO's initial relief projects with a settlement check he received following a car accident with a drunk driver. Instead of having surgery, Klein went to Sri Lanka where he spent \$65K to provide immediate aid where large agencies failed to do so in the tsunami-devastated fishing village of Galle.

From the first day, CAN-DO was meeting with locals, solving immediate problems and rebuilding the community of Galle. There, Klein met Former U.S. President Bill Clinton, from whom he received a written commendation. They continue to correspond about global relief.

CAN-DO then spent a year on the Gulf Coast providing relief in response to Hurricane Katrina. There, Klein spent another \$100K of his settlement money to set up more than 25 relief distribution centers, covering 8,000+ miles throughout Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

The CAN-DO Team's "get it done" approach caught the attention of North Face CEO, James Fifield, who supplied the organization with clothing and equipment valued at \$150K, which CAN-DO distributed to hurricane victims.

On the Gulf Coast, CAN-DO also arranged animal transports out of the region to reunite hundreds of misplaced pets with their companions. CAN-DO continues to work on the Gulf Coast and the organization's projects can be viewed on the CAN-DO website.

CAN-DO most recently aided nearly 3,500 refugees in Rwanda, Africa, where floods devastated the village of Bigogwe and 100 perished. Tents, building supplies, survival packs and food were delivered with donor names attached to each gift. CAN-DO has since returned to the village where they are working to rebuild schools and a soccer stadium to reunify the community.

The Network

In addition to CAN-DO's "direct-impact" grassroots relief, the organization also offers a Virtual Volunteer Program at <<http://Virtualvolunteer.tv>>, which allows individuals and businesses to choose a project that's important to them and donate, track progress online. It is the first interactive website that enables individuals, donors, corporations and organizations to participate virtually in live humanitarian projects and critical disaster zones.

CAN-DO's Virtual Volunteer network includes a growing list of trusted, ethical grassroots organizations and groups that enable CAN-DO to expand its resources and deliver aid together as needed. Donors can view videos, and even live streaming footage of how their donations are directly impacting the communities and individuals whose lives they have touched.

The Example

On behalf of CAN-DO, Klein has written proposals on Community Revitalization Centers (CRC) and Pet Evacuation and Transport. Both received the support of Mississippi Governor, Haley Barbour, and have been passed through the offices of President Clinton, FEMA, MEMA and heads of federal, state and local agencies throughout the Gulf Coast and Washington D.C. CAN-DO's proposal for CRC's has been is now being used as a blueprint in Mississippi.

CAN-DO's concepts have been emulated in both political and relief arenas as straightforward solutions to disaster relief worldwide. The organization's grassroots approach has also gained wide recognition and continued support from politicians and civic leaders including: Former U.S. President, Bill Clinton; Mayor of Galle, Sri Lanka, M.I. Mohamed Ariff; Mississippi Governor, Haley Barbour, and First Lady, Marsha Barbour; Biloxi Mayor, A.J. Holloway; Rwandan Minister of Education, Jeanne D'Arc Mujawamariya.

The Ongoing Challenge

The large charitable organizations remain one of the least regulated business sectors. Klein continues to challenge their practices, demanding they be more accountable for their actions. According to Klein, there is simply too much money changing hands, and the full sum donated out of people's compassion is nowhere near the amount used to provide aid.

According to Klein, three of the largest disasters in recent history occurred almost back to back - 911, 2004 Tsunami and 2005 Hurricane Katrina - with billions of dollars in relief worldwide, yet the majority of funds have yet to reach the intended targets. They provide no burden of proof—no paper evidence of expenditures or video documentation of relief efforts—to show people where their donations are being spent. Meanwhile, CAN-DO is committed to providing immediate relief.