



Only 3% of donors give based on charity effectiveness

But some charities are **100 times** more effective than others.

Effective Giving Guide 2021

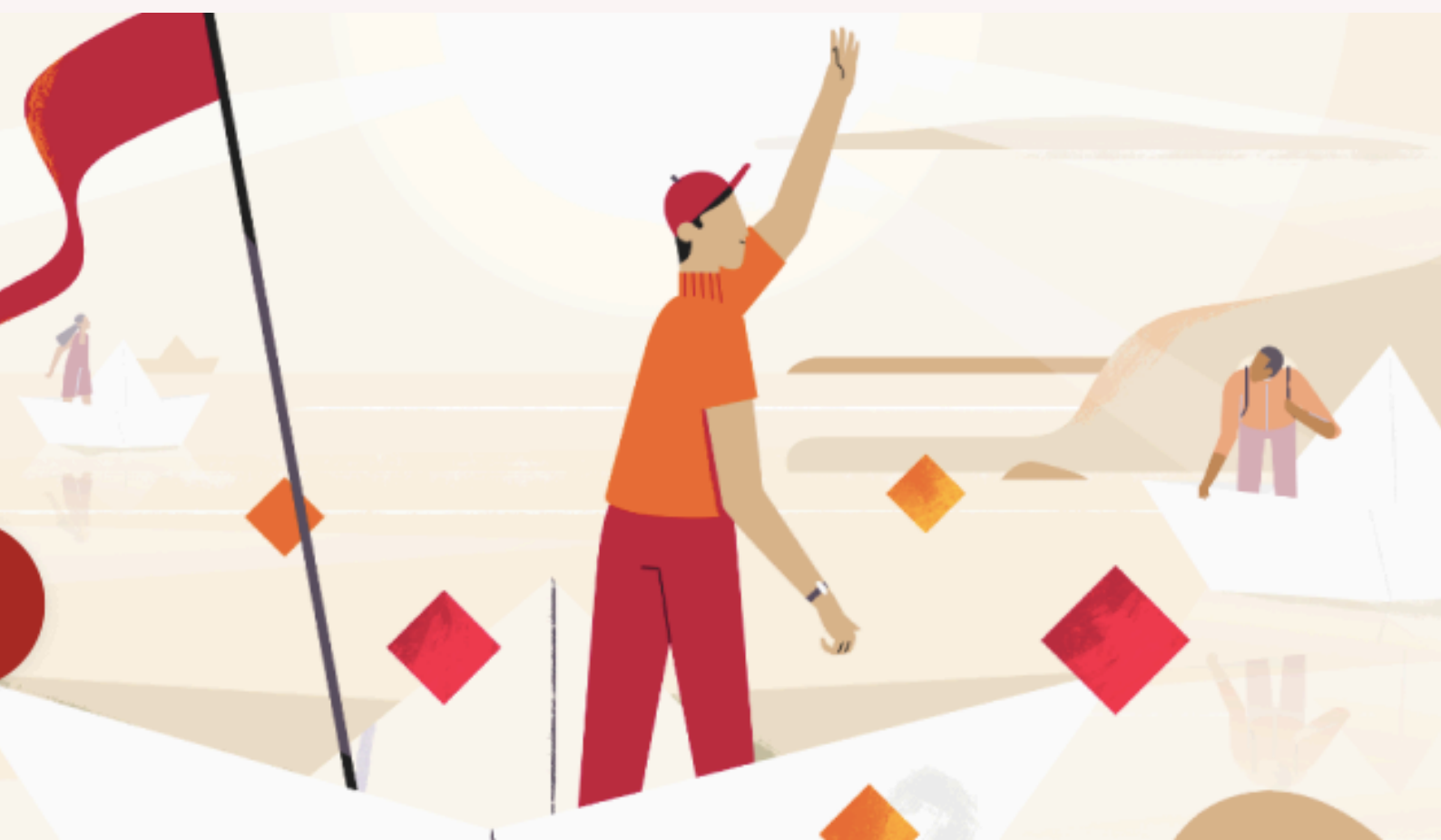
Learn how to give effectively with practical advice from effective giving experts.



Giving
What We Can

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Why give to charity?

Because you care about helping others

You're reading this because you care about helping others and want to make the world a better place.

You're the kind of person who doesn't plan to sit idly by: you want to take action to solve pressing global problems.

You take meaningful steps to improve the world and care that what you do actually helps.

You are a compassionate person, and that's what the world needs.

Unfortunately, the world is facing many pressing problems. For example:

- ◆ Over 700 million people live in extreme poverty
- ◆ Climate change is causing ecological and economic disruption
- ◆ Our food systems cause suffering to hundreds of billions of animals

These big problems affect so many people and animals whose lives we want to be free of suffering, and full of joy. When we care so much, this can feel overwhelming.

But these challenges give us opportunities to make a difference. None of us can change the entire world on our own, but each of us can change the world for those we can help, and together we can make substantial progress on many of the world's problems.

[Learn more](#) about why you should give.



Why give effectively?

*You can make a
bigger difference*

Experts estimate that the best charities are often 10 to 100 times more effective than a typical one¹. Worse, some charities even do harm. Given that the purpose of charity is to help others, we need to make sure we support the ones that help the most — because lives are on the line.

If you take this opportunity seriously and give a meaningful amount to the most effective charities, you could have an enormous impact.

*Simply put:
giving effectively makes sense.*

**The best charities are
often 10 to 100 times
more effective**



¹Caviola, L. & Schubert, S. & Moss, E.T.D. & Faber, S.G.N.S.. (2020). Donors vastly underestimate differences in charities' effectiveness. Judgment and Decision Making. 15. 509-516. 4



How can I be an effective giver?

*Identify the **most important** causes*

To find the most effective charities we must first focus on the most important causes. The huge differences in effectiveness don't tend to come from things people often are concerned with, like CEO pay and administrative costs. Instead, they almost always come from the kinds of interventions the charities pursue.

*Choose **outstanding** charities*

Even charities that focus on the same problem can vary significantly in their effectiveness. Because of this, it's worth taking the time to figure out which charities are the most effective at solving the problems they work on.

*Promote **effective** giving*

Finding and funding highly effective charities working on the world's most pressing problems can allow us to make a tremendous difference. But you can further multiply your impact by promoting effective giving to others so that they too can take this incredible opportunity to improve the world.

How do I choose a cause?

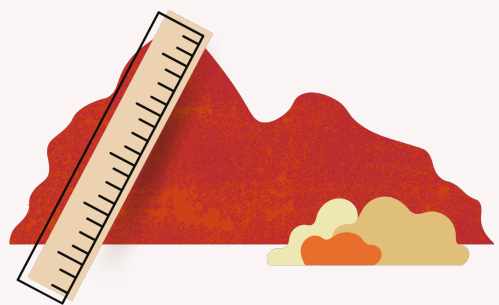
Find big, tractable, and neglected problems

It helps to fund promising solutions to the world's most pressing problems in order to do the most good with your donations. These problems are generally bigger, more tractable, and more neglected.

Scale

Solving bigger problems helps improve more lives, by a greater amount, for a longer period of time.

You can have more impact by working on bigger problems.



Tractability

More tractable problems have known solutions, or at least ways of making progress.

You can have more impact on problems that are easier to solve.

Neglectedness

Neglected problems are more in need of funding and likely have lots of low-hanging fruit.

You can have more impact by funding solutions that other donors miss.



What are the most important problems?



High impact cause areas

These big, neglected, and tractable cause areas are where your donation could have the most impact.

Global health and development

There are hundreds of millions of people in low-income countries whose lives could be improved (and, in some cases, saved) by evidence-based, cost-effective interventions. By supporting charities carrying out these interventions, you can protect a child from suffering from preventable disease, or substantially change a family's economic situation for the better.

Some high-impact solutions:

- *Malaria prevention with insecticide treated bed nets*
- *Pills that get rid of intestinal worms*
- *Direct cash transfers to people living in extreme poverty*

Animal welfare

Every year around 31 billion land animals are raised and slaughtered in horrid conditions in factory farms. Countless wild animals experience unnecessary suffering. There are effective ways to reduce this suffering, yet only a tiny proportion of charity goes to helping non-human animals.

Some high-impact solutions:

- *Corporate outreach campaigns*
- *Scientific research on alternative proteins*
- *Research on wild animal suffering*

Safeguarding the long-term future

Our actions today can affect future generations, yet very few resources are spent ensuring that the future goes well. Promising work in this area involves preventing global catastrophes and making our world more resilient to threats.

Some high-impact solutions:

- *Artificial intelligence safety research*
- *Biosecurity policy*
- *Addressing climate change*

How do I choose a charity?

*Find the most **cost-effective** charities*

These big, neglected, and, tractable cause areas are where your donation could have the most impact.

Cost-effectiveness

*How much “good”
can we expect from
the money we
donate?*

The most important factor to consider when researching charities is **cost-effectiveness**, which describes how much benefit the end recipients can expect to get for a given amount of money. For example, if it costs the same for one charity to save 2 lives as it does for another to save 20, then the second charity is 10x more cost-effective.

By giving to the most cost-effective charities, we can get more out of our donations.

$$\frac{\text{Benefit}}{\text{Cost}} \times \text{Donation} = \text{Impact}$$

There are other factors that matter when evaluating charities, such as:

Transparency

Track-record

Quality of
evidence

Theory of
change

Room for
more funding

What are the most cost-effective charities?

There are many organisations operating within these high-impact cause areas, however, we recommend the following charities because they have been described by expert evaluators or grant-makers as being especially cost-effective:

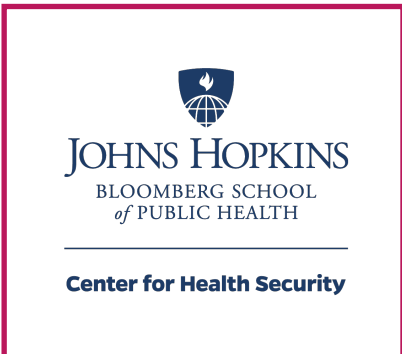
Global Health and Development



Animal Welfare



Safeguarding the Long-Term Future





Who can help me to donate effectively?

Charity experts and the effective giving community

Charity evaluation is a difficult task, often requiring specific expertise and many hours of research. Fortunately, individual donors can rely on the expertise of charity evaluators, grant-makers, and the broader effective giving community.

Charity evaluators

Charity evaluators are dedicated to assessing charities based on how effectively they use donations. They provide transparent research and cost-effectiveness analyses.



ANIMAL CHARITY
EVALUATORS

We particularly recommend using the advice of GiveWell, which evaluates charities working on global health and development, and Animal Charity Evaluators, which evaluates charities working on animal welfare.



Expert grant-makers

Expert grant-makers manage funds for specific cause areas and make grants to organisations or individuals with a high potential for impact.



Founders
Pledge

Using a grant-making fund is similar to using a diversified investment fund instead of trying to pick which individual stocks will be the best investments. The fund distributes your donation among multiple grantees.



EA Funds



Effective giving community

Joining an effective giving community surrounds you with people who care about helping others effectively. You can stay up to date on charity effectiveness, learn from other effective givers, and receive the support you need to give more effectively.

Since launching in 2009, the Giving What We Can community has donated over \$200 million and pledged to give over \$2.5 billion to effective charities.



**Giving
What We Can**



Effective Altruism



How can I multiply my impact?

Spread the word about effective giving

By promoting effective giving you can have even more impact than you would by donating alone. You can help develop a social norm where people give more effectively. This will benefit the beneficiaries of charity, who will end up receiving more of the help they need. **It also benefits those who you share it with as giving effectively can be incredibly meaningful: it empowers people to help make the world a much better place.**

Together we can make the world better for all its inhabitants, for generations to come.



[Share this guide](#)

[Take an effective giving pledge](#)

[Share our giving recommendations](#)

Start your effective giving journey today

[Donate](#)

Frequently asked questions

Are donations tax-deductible in my country?

How else can I get involved?

How big is the difference between charities?

Should I donate anonymously or publicly?

Which charities are most effective?

Can an individual donor really make a difference?

Does charity make people dependent on handouts?

Why take a giving pledge?



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What We Can**