

GUIDE - SERVICE PROJECTS OF CLUBS IN D9455

Doing good in the world (while having fun!) can take a huge variety of forms. This note deals with International Service but some familiar principles apply in all Avenues of Service.

To be successful all projects need a champion - a Club member with the desire, energy and skill to lead the planning, execution and evaluation of the project. Naturally the Club as a whole should support the project.

The project should be about meeting a need as expressed by its intended beneficiaries. When a possible project idea emerges it is critical that contact is made, preferably in person, with the leader or spokesperson of the intended beneficiaries and ascertain what they say are their top priority needs and that they and their community members are prepared to put their energy into helping carry out the project.

Sustainability is a key success criterion. Planning should take into account such things as current knowledge and customs of the beneficiaries and hence identifying what education and skills training will be needed, and desirably be given by local people so the Club does "train the trainer". Avoiding machinery requiring maintenance is desirable (e.g. use gravity feed for water rather than a pump if practicable), and ensuring good quality materials are used even if they cost more or have to be imported to the country concerned.

Sometimes having a partner organisation with complementary skills can greatly strengthen a project. Perhaps an NGO with staff living in the country concerned would be very useful. The partner may have long-standing good contacts with government officials, understand the local culture, and either speak the language or be easily able to hire interpreters. In any event your Club should establish a written Memorandum of Understanding with the partner organisation in order to have formal agreement on the objectives of the project, what each organisation will be responsible for, reports, banking and so on.

Evaluation of the completed project is vital not only for providing feedback to the project's supporters, but also to record lesson's learned (good and bad) to help future project planning.

Useful help at several stages of a project can be obtained from The Rotary Foundation's Cadre of Technical Advisers. See <https://my.rotary.org/en/cadre-technical-advisers>

Making your service projects visible to other Rotary Clubs and to the world.

The first step in this process is for Clubs to provide a simple list of their current projects. Your Assistant Governor has a simple form for this and will collect the information from you and pass it on to the relevant District Service Committee Chair.

The second step is providing a short (half page), standardised layout project description (focussing on the beneficiaries and how they will benefit) for publication on the District website. The Assistant Governor for your Club can assist you and pass the descriptions on to the relevant District Committee Chair.

When a project is completed its entry will be moved to a history section so a record of your good work won't be lost.

A parallel action is for Clubs to submit a project report for publication on Rotary Showcase (see www.rotary.org and search on Rotary Showcase) and write an article for publication in Rotary Down Under (for guidelines on writing articles for publication see www.rotarydownunder.org).

It is very helpful to other Clubs to include in such articles key lessons learned as found in your end of project evaluation. Also see <https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/secure/13301> for Rotary Club Central. And the District International, Community and Vocational committees are available to help.