



Small Gifts Bring Big Smiles and Hope

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Swaziland, a small country in southern Africa, is known for wilderness reserves, traditional Swazi festivals and picturesque scenes of the Lebombo Mountains. Yet, this beautiful country struggles with one of the world's highest rates of HIV/AIDS and a large population of orphans and child-led households. Its communities lack basic needs that we all take for granted, such as food and clean water.

Swaziland is one of many war-torn and poverty-stricken countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Europe benefitting from the generosity of [Team Hope](#), an international development aid charity based in Ireland. Team Hope is best known for their annual **Christmas Shoebox Appeal** which provides underprivileged children Christmas-wrapped shoeboxes filled with a range of simple gifts – from basic clothing and hygiene items to school supplies, toys and games.

Christmas is just another ordinary day in impoverished countries - until a shipment of Team Hope's shoeboxes arrives. This annual event brings hope to seemingly hopeless situations, and it helps children realize that "someone from another country knows about me".

Clare Associates and the Beckman Coulter Foundation Working Together

During the first half of November, Beckman Coulter Clare associates and their families filled an astounding 219 shoeboxes with simple gifts for children. The boxes were delivered to the Team Hope warehouse where they were inspected and packaged by groups of volunteers. Thousands of shoeboxes from all over the world were delivered to needy children at hospitals, schools, shelters, churches, orphanages, community centers or family homes.

The [Beckman Coulter Foundation](#) generously matched Clare's shoebox donations with a cash donation of \$5,000 (U.S.) directly to Team Hope and its causes.

The overwhelming contribution was described by Human Resources Manager, **Caroline Harris**:

"We were thrilled by the level of support for this campaign and the Clare team really got behind the initiative. The Clare site has a long standing tradition of charitable involvement with local organisations, such as Milford Hospice, and national organisations like the Irish Cancer Society and the St. Vincent De Paul group. Over the years, large numbers of associates have also participated in charitable sporting pursuits such as the Pink Ribbon Walk and the great Limerick run.

With respect the Christmas Shoe Box Campaign, the generous gift matching support from the Beckman Coulter Foundation raised the profile of the event and resulted in \$5,000 (U.S.) going to Team Hope to help with their good work, in addition to the 219 Christmas boxes that are going directly to needy children."

As Team Hope says, "Your shoebox won't change the world, but it might just change the world for one child, by bringing Christmas to children who have never experienced anything like it before!"

The Shoebox Appeal is one of many international causes that the Beckman Coulter Foundation is pleased to support as part of its current OUS expansion efforts. To learn more about the Beckman Coulter Foundation, or to inquire about potential support opportunities at your site, please contact [Marc Raudez](#).