This Holiday Season a Unique Gift is Just One Click Away

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Toronto, ON, Canada (RPRN) 12/17/13 —

—Whether you're trying to find a gift for the person who has everything, or you're choosing to forego traditional presents this year, Plan Canada's online Gifts of Hope catalogue is filled with meaningful and unique gift ideas. Charitable gifts continue to gain momentum and popularity because the holidays are also about giving back and helping families and communities in need.

"Gifts of Hope have far-reaching impacts for the children and communities we work with in developing countries," says Paula Roberts, Executive Vice-President of Marketing and Development at Plan Canada. "We have gift options that include everything from clean water to fruit trees and food baskets to name a few. These translate into nothing less than healthy families, income possibilities and freedom from hunger."

This year's catalogue also includes an added option, the **Typhoon Haiyan** relief gift that will help to provide food, clean drinking water, medical supplies, and shelter to children and families in the wake of last month's devastating typhoon in the Philippines.

Any of these unique gifts would be ideal for teachers, co-workers and even party hosts – and the best part is so many of this year's Gifts of Hope have

matching programs in place, so your gift goes even farther.

Consider pooling money among adult family members this year. Instead of buying each other gift cards, bank it to give a girl the gift of an education, which gives her the gift of choices, too. Change up the office's "Kris Kringle" gift exchange and go in on a herd of goats. Or give your kids a budget and let them choose something for another child who needs a helping hand – this is a great opportunity to teach children early financial skills and about global issues and how they can play a part in positive change.

The **Plan Canada Gifts of Hope** catalogue offers an assortment of more than 40 items. Starting at just $10, there really is a gift to suit any budget. There are also options that make sense for all faiths and cultures throughout the holiday season. Here are just a few examples of how gifts have made an impact over the past year:

- 180,000 pregnant women in Zimbabwe and Bangladesh were given maternal health care
- More than 25,000 people in Pakistan benefitted from clean water and sanitation
- 100,000 people in El Salvador had access to stocked pharmacies
- More than 18,000 women and girls in Niger received literacy training

Want to make it even more personal? When you purchase **Plan Canada Gifts of Hope**, you can choose a customized gift card for the recipient, which includes a photo and description of the gift. Here are just a few gift ideas and how they work:

NEW! **The quinoa project**($35) *MATCHED*

What you're really giving : A superfood gift for around 6,000 families in developing countries, where poor nutrition and health run rampant. This gift of a family garden includes everything necessary for growing that garden: quinoa seeds and other grain crops; training for growing and harvesting the crops; and the know-how to turn those crops into nutritious meals with cooking classes and recipe books.

NEW! **Girls' take-home rations** ($25) *MATCHED*

What you're really giving : Give the gifts of food and education. Many girls in developing countries are often kept at home and out of school because of existing gender roles and stereotypes. With this gift, each month that a young girl regularly attends school, she will receive essential food items (like cooking oil or grains) to take home to her family. Feed families, feed young minds and be part of changing communities—one educated girl at a time.

NEW! **School essentials**($17) *MATCHED*

What you're really giving : Fill schools in developing countries with the essentials to give students the best possible education and path to a better life. With this gift, you'll not only be helping provide basics such as textbooks and pencils, you'll be funding essential school lunch programs and teacher training. This gift will also help children receive education in emergency situations, support programs to reduce school violence and work on improving school hygiene.

NEW! **Typhoon Haiyan relief**($95) *MATCHED*

Typhoon Haiyan, possibly the worst storm on record, destroyed entire communities and shattered millions of lives when it struck the Philippines. The storm swept away homes, schools, crops… and lives. But with this gift, you can help children and families recover and rebuild. Plan has worked in the Philippines for more than 50 years and has extensive experience responding to natural disasters and other crises, deploying teams of technical experts to support the immediate delivery of clean drinking water, food, medical supplies, shelter and educational resources. Note: T*yphoon Haiyan gifts of $95 will be matched for a $190 value (until Dec 23, 2013).*

Goat ($75)

What you're really giving : A goat provides milk for a family: protein, nourishment and health. Just imagine what a herd could do for a community!

This gift provides the possibility of a livelihood, an income and the ability to make choices about the future.

Newborn checkup ($30)*MATCHED*

What you're really giving : This gift supports the important work of community health workers who visit moms and their newborn babies within the first three days of the baby's birth—a critical time. The visit helps to ensure the baby is thriving and growing, and that the mother is healthy and recovering well from delivery. In communities where health-care centres are difficult to access and newborn mortality rates are far too high, this gift saves lives.

Give a gift that gives twice

Also available through the Gifts of Hope program are **Gifts of Hope merchandise**—tangible items like silver earrings or a cuddly, stuffed goat that you can give to loved ones during the holidays. The money from all Gifts of Hope merchandise goes toward a general Gifts of Hope fund which is used to support children and families.

Buy a gift today

Gifts of Hope can be easily purchased online at plancanada.ca or over the phone at 1-800-387-1418.

About Plan Canada

Plan is a global movement for change, mobilizing millions of people around the world to support social justice for children in developing countries. Founded in 1937, Plan is now one of the world's oldest and largest international development agencies, working in partnership with millions of people around the world to end global poverty. Not for profit, independent and inclusive of all faiths and cultures, Plan has only one agenda: to improve the lives of children. For more information, visit plancanada.ca.

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To view infographics and high-resolution images of these gifts, go here.

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