



Press Release

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Austerity has made Britons kinder to each other, new report shows

14 July 2014 – Despite the austerity measures of the past few years that have seen massive cuts in welfare spending in the UK, Britons have become kinder towards each other by volunteering in huge numbers.

This is main finding of independent research conducted by EPG Economic and Strategy Consulting of Sewa Day, the annual international day of 'selfless service' which takes place in October.

Sewa Day, has led to more frequent or regular acts of volunteering, generating more social impact for Britain and could reach one million participants in five years, according to the Sewa Day Social Impact Report 2013.

In 2013, its fourth year, Sewa Day also had a significant global impact with new regional volunteer teams in Asia Pacific, the Russian Federation and Sub-Saharan Africa.

And, for every £1 of time and effort expended into Sewa Day 2013, Britain has benefited by £4.70, and equates to almost £16.3m gross of additional value for Britain over the past three years.

One of the main successes for Sewa Day has been to significantly increase diversity with more organisations taking part that were not affiliated to the Indian communities. And according to the Social Impact Report 2013 the next challenge for Sewa Day is to encourage more children to take part if it is to achieve sustained growth in the future.

Sewa Day 2013 in numbers:

- 323 projects, of which 139 in Britain
- 16 countries in which Sewa Day took place
- 76,100 people that took part
- 561,000 hours of volunteering activities globally
- 46 schools and universities in Britain where projects took place
- £7.8m value of net impact on British economy in last three years
- £16.3m value of gross impact on British economy in last three years
- £4.70 generated for British economy for every £1 put in for 2013
- 12-16 years old highest number of participants from this age group

The report's author, Pratik Dattani said: "Given that Sewa Day has grown from 5,000 volunteers in 2010, to over 76,000 in 2013, our most conservative scenario suggests Sewa Day could reach one million participants in five years.

"It's is also important to recognise the value for Britain of volunteering, when some of the assumptions that make up this figure are relaxed, they show that Sewa Day 2013 could have generated up to £16.3m of value."



Arup Ganguly, chairman of Sewa Day added: "The efforts of the all the Sewa Day Volunteers never ceases to amaze me, they continue to shine a beacon for all things good in our society. This report not only pays testament to all their efforts but also demonstrates the real value of volunteering.

"As a result of our volunteering we have seen greater social interaction between children and older people, increased the amount of food, clothing or other household items donated to those less fortunate and enhanced the local community through projects to remove eyesores and beautify the local environment.

"The challenge for us is to continue to grow the number of people involved in projects undertaken in 2014 and beyond."

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Notes to the Editor

1. Based on Survey Reponses. Check Sewa Day Annual Report for official figures.
2. The aim of Sewa Day is to provide people with a chance to give back to the community through volunteering on a single day to make a difference. As such each event organised must be based on at least one of the guiding principles below:
 - ? To relieve hardship and poverty
 - ? To bring a little joy
 - ? To help the environment

All the events will take place on the same day or for schools during the week and will not include any fund-raising activities. From infants through to pensioners, anyone can get involved and make a difference. Community groups, local councils, schools, temples, mosques and businesses have enlisted their support for this initiative.

Visit www.sewaday.org for more information.