



Press Release

28th June 2013

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"Up to £11.7million of economic benefit to Britain during Sewa Day last year"

Fifty thousand volunteers generated millions of pounds of economic benefit to Britain during Sewa Day in 2012, the annual global volunteering initiative. Voluntary organisations, schools and companies including Lloyds Banking Group took part in over 200 projects helping their local area and adding real value to their community.

According to the report, released today (28th June 2013), by the Economic Policy Group (EPG), Sewa Day generated a Social Return of Investment (SROI) of £2.60 for every £1 invested into it, equating to up to £11.7m million of additional value for Britain in 2012. The social impact of Sewa Day in 2012 represents an increase of at least 15 times over the impact generated in the previous year.

Sewa Day 2012 saw a 233% rise in the number of volunteers from 2011 and an outreach programme into 20 countries including Dubai, Hong Kong and South Africa. From the 237 projects undertaken, 107 were in the UK including in cities and towns like London, Bradford and Leicester. People of all ages donated their time to a range of projects to relieve hardship, deprivation or improve the environment.

After voluntary organisations, schools were the second biggest group to participate in Sewa Day. The recent launch of a new programme 'Sewa Day Schools' aims to build on school involvement in 2013. Schools involved in 2012 included:

- Ealing Tuition Service, Ealing, London - Pupils worked with the Ealing Council Park Rangers' Nature Conservation programme helping to clear a public footpath in the local area.
- Radford Primary School, Nottingham - Cooking meals and taking them to a homeless soup kitchen, going to a day centre and talking, entertaining and taking part in activities with the elderly day centre users
- Cambridge International School, Dubai - Toiletries were packed in shoe boxes to give to workers in labour camps. Stationery collected was sent to Sri Lanka, India, Namibia and Pakistan.

The report emphasises the impact of Sewa Day in encouraging volunteering within the community as around 60 percent of organisers of projects in Britain, who responded to a survey question, said that they were "not likely" or only "somewhat likely" to have hosted a volunteering event without Sewa Day.



The high levels of social media engagement, in particular on Facebook where interaction significantly increased in the lead up to the day itself, helped to encourage participation, especially among younger volunteers. One group, Exemplaris in Southall, who are a small group of Sikhs from Afghanistan found out about the project from social media and organised a massive clothing collection at their local Gurdwara. They also organised a valuable clinic providing legal support, career and health advice on Sewa Day.

The report offers recommendations for Sewa Day 2013 including the expansion into schools to help embed the concept of 'sewa' (selfless service) in schools and encouraging more regular volunteering throughout the year.

This year, Sewa Day takes place on **Sunday 6th October 2013**.

Pratik Dattani, managing director EPG and lead author of the report: "The Sewa Day Social Impact Report attempts to put a monetary value to volunteering. Our findings highlight quite clearly the real contribution volunteering can have and Sewa Day is making a difference in the local community.

This report has access to significantly better data than was available for the 2011 Impact Report. This allowed for more meaningful and robust calculations, particularly where we were able to calculate impact for sub-categories of projects. Our recommendations for Sewa Day 2013 will undoubtedly enhance volunteer involvement and the profile of this global initiative."

Arup Ganguly, chairman of Sewa Day: "The results continue to affirm our belief that Sewa Day adds a huge amount of value to society. EPG's analysis shows that Sewa Day 2012 generated an SROI of £2.60 for every £1 invested. Further extrapolations in EPG's report show that Sewa Day 2012 potentially generated up to £11.7m of value.

"Sewa Day is developing a successful formula to increasing engagement while making the community, greener, cleaner better places to live. We want people to donate their time, not their money. This initiative demonstrates how fostering better ties between people from different community groups can only be a good thing and as this EPG report shows, adds economic value too."

For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Sanjay Mistry on 07810 368 772/
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Notes to Editor

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.

For further information visit www.sewaday.org