

The last word goes to the participants:

“Diabetes New Zealand now has a greater understanding of the worth of its volunteers and the significant economic contribution these people make to the success of our organisation. This information has been shared with our local societies at our 2004 Annual Conference and will be used when planning our annual Diabetes Awareness Week activities”.

“Victim Support New Zealand was always aware of the immense value added by the service provided by volunteers and the non-cash support we received. Participation in the VAVA project gave us the opportunity to measure this contribution and the report has highlighted areas where information can be collected and used as a management tool. We thank Suzanne Snively for her vision and leading this ground-breaking research on voluntary agencies.”

“This report gives astonishing estimates of the voluntary work done by Playcentre members – Playcentre adds enormous value to NZ society. We will use this information externally to lobby and advocate, and internally to analyse our voluntary nature and characteristics. It is amazing data that we hope is used for future directions within voluntary organisations”.

“VAVA’s independent perspective on in-kind donations and voluntary labour value across a broad range of other organisations within the sector will allow our Association to more effectively inform stakeholders, funders and other agencies about the vital importance of volunteers to the work we do and the overall well-being of New Zealand society.” NAEHTS

“The VAVA research independently confirmed our own data and the conclusions we had drawn about the tremendous value of the work done by Citizens Advice volunteers. It also highlighted the particularly heavy reliance of the Citizens Advice service on volunteer involvement, and the great value for money our service provides to the community and for our funders in local and central government.” Nat Assn CAB

“This study has provided valuable information on the huge amount of time our volunteers contribute to meeting the organisation’s vision of ensuring New Zealand’s children are among the healthiest in the world. Acknowledging the significant amount of volunteer hours give to Plunket has resulted in volunteers being more integrally involved in decisions impacting on the community. Providing support and training to volunteers is now considered an investment rather than an expense.” Plunket

“Barnardos has found the experience of contributing to the VAVA project to be extremely valuable and surprising in the significance of its results. Our key contributory activity was foster care services, and we were once again struck by the scale of the voluntary effort and the value of the economic outputs contributed by foster parents who make a personal commitment to children and youth in need of temporary parenting and suitable role models.”

“To successfully get the volunteer programme funded we needed to provide more than anecdotal stories of the benefits of volunteering. As a result of the information provided by the VAVA report we were able to provide a financial analysis of the benefits of volunteering to our CEO and Board, which more than doubled our funding for the 04/05 year” IHC.

“The 1,546,500 hours put in by our volunteers each year add up to an astonishing 823 equivalent full time jobs. Annually those hours contribute somewhere between \$16 and \$28 million over budgeted income. The information from the report reinforces the importance of volunteers to the Foundation. It will also be extremely useful for publicly recognising the contribution that all volunteers generously give to organisations every day.” Foundation of the Blind.

Counting for Something

Value Added by Voluntary Agencies (VAVA) project Report Summary

This project has been developed to provide measures of the work of voluntary organisations, recognising that annual accounts do not adequately reflect the full value these organisations add to social wellbeing and the economy.

The concept behind the VAVA project is simple - to examine the value that we add:

- * we start by measuring the contribution of time and donated cash and in-kind contributions = *inputs*
- * it is then possible to measure what is achieved by the services delivered = *outputs*
- * outputs are delivered by voluntary agencies in a way that engages the people who need its services, and then the achieved results can be measured = *outcomes*.

Our first study looked at *inputs* of 10 large, national agencies with branches/divisions across Aotearoa/New Zealand providing a wide range of different services within the community over twelve months.

The results on the following pages demonstrate several key messages about our sector:

- * ***only a tiny part is visible in financial and economic measures*** - the community and voluntary sector is like an iceberg – this first stage of VAVA goes below the surface to measure the value added by voluntary contributions of time, cash and assets that go towards the services delivered by these agencies.
- * ***the magnitude of voluntary contribution is huge*** - the findings indicate an enormous economic contribution. The time spent by volunteers is comparable to total time worked by paid employees in the dairy industry, and by 2/3rds the paid staff at the Ministry of Social Development. As this data is only for ten agencies – the implications about the size of the contribution of all community and voluntary agencies is staggering.
- * ***great diversity and range of voluntary organisations and activities*** - no one size fits all. These ten agencies offer different services, have different management and governance structures, have different volunteer structures and numbers, and have different funding streams. The report highlights this diversity as core to the nature and strength of community and voluntary agencies.
- * ***voluntary agencies add value*** – they are an investment – the report shifts perceptions that community and voluntary agencies are “takers” or a liability to society and changes this around to demonstrate that they are “givers” and add significant value to every dollar they receive.

An outline of this project and summary of key findings are on the next three pages.

Outline

The VAVA project is a unique joint project between New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (NZFVWO) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). This research is a first for Aotearoa/New Zealand, using economic terminology and templates to collate consistent data from several major social service agencies.

Ten national voluntary agencies participated in this project:

- * Barnardos New Zealand
- * Diabetes New Zealand Inc.
- * IHC New Zealand Inc.
- * Literacy Aotearoa
- * National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Schemes (NAEHTS)
- * New Zealand Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux Inc.
- * New Zealand Playcentre Federation Inc.
- * Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind
- * Royal New Zealand Plunket Society Inc.
- * Victim Support New Zealand

They range from personal and family support agencies, adult and early childhood education providers, health and disability support services, and information providers.

Each agency has its own report, and the collated results are reported in this overview report.

Summary of key findings from overview report:

Voluntary agencies add value to money:

- * For every one dollar provided to a voluntary agency, between \$3 and \$5 worth of services are delivered in the community.
- * \$42 million was received in cash donations and grants.
- * A conservative estimate is that \$177.5 million* was voluntarily contributed by these 10 agencies in 2002.

Voluntary agencies make great use of gifts:

- * Kiwis give more than cash – they donate equipment ranging from computers to cars, subsidise services and assets, such as property – are part of the inputs combined to deliver goods and services.
- * The agencies received at least \$3.6 million in donated goods and \$5.9 million in subsidised services in one year:
 - Donated goods and assets include vehicles, furniture, computers and consumables such as food and stationery.
 - Services range from rent to telephone, postage and electricity.
- * The saving of cash and fund-raising time enables the agencies to use their volunteers for service delivery.

Volunteers do work which would otherwise have to be paid for:

It is estimated that volunteers worked:

- * A total of 7,638,238 hours made up of:
 - 6,850,130 hours per year from voluntary workers
 - 720,214 hours from voluntary managers and
 - 67,894 more hours from board members.
- * This adds up to the equivalent of 4,063 fulltime workers per year.
- * Each of the 10 agencies found their volunteer hours were equivalent to 50 FTEs per year or more - this puts them in the top 5% of New Zealand enterprises.
- * The value of this work has been calculated at a conservative estimate of \$126 million* in 2002.

Supporting Government – whichever party is in power:

- * The services provided are essential social services which support government objectives.
- * Community and voluntary sector organisations are community based and can respond swiftly to community needs and local initiatives.
- * Volunteers and voluntary agencies have special attributes and unique skills when it comes to engaging with the people who need their services.

The report is not just a doorstep:

The template can be used by all voluntary agencies to collect comprehensive information about the size and frequency of their contributed inputs.

This report has followed an approach that enables the voluntary sector to further develop its:

- * Knowledge about volunteers and the ways they add value to service delivery.
- * Management of voluntary inputs to achieve effective outcomes.
- * Effective employment of in-kind assets.
- * Management of the balance between voluntary and other inputs.
- * Own accounting standards including both market and voluntary transactions.

It provides valuable information for:

- * Increased visibility of the voluntary sector.
- * Greater recognition of the significance, size and impact of voluntary agencies.
- * Opportunity to develop voluntary organisations as assets and investments.
- * Public recognition that voluntary agencies generate a return greater than their costs.

* this is the mid point of a range of three scenarios (high, medium and low) of the value-added inputs by volunteers