

Corporate responsibility continued

Community investment

Connecting communities

We are committed to developing strong community partnerships. Our priority is to invest in education and youth development, supporting employees, sustainable tourism, heritage and the environment. In 2007/08, we supported 130 community and conservation organisations worldwide, donating travel awards, excess baggage and cargo.

We continue to be a member of both the London Benchmarking Group (LBG) and Business in the Community's (BITC) Percent Club. The LBG's benchmarking model is used to assess our total contributions to the community.

Education and youth development

Our Community Learning Centre – close to our Waterside headquarters at Heathrow – has welcomed over 44,000 young people and adult learners since opening in 1999. Interactive, airline-focused programmes relevant to the school curriculum are delivered to local school pupils. Programmes include global education weeks delivered in partnership with the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), focusing on places we fly to. The children are immersed in the culture of the country they are studying and also learn about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Languages

The British Airways' Language Flag Award is offered to schools across the UK and has been recognised by both the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Language Champion Scheme in recognition of its work on the promotion of language learning.

Partnerships

In the UK, through corporate partnership with the Natural History Museum, we have developed programmes to provide opportunities for pupils from Heathrow schools to visit the museum, meet scientists and experience the work of the Darwin Centre. Overseas, we have been working with the Mukuru Promotion Centre in Nairobi, Kenya, for over five years supporting over 4,000 children. On the development of IT and education programmes, 15 teachers have participated in teacher exchange programmes to gain a better understanding of both the UK and Kenyan education systems. This programme will continue to be developed in 2008/09.

Change for Good

Our partnership with UNICEF, Change for Good, raised £2.5 million in the year to March 31, 2008. The onboard collection programme, supported by over 2,400 cabin crew champions, enabled us to fund UNICEF's work with vulnerable children. Programmes included HIV testing, treatment and counselling (Tanzania), HIV-prevention (Ghana) and emergency cyclone relief (Bangladesh). Change for Good launched the first branded Change for Good toy, Fudge the Dog. In 2008 Change for Good will celebrate its £25 million milestone.

Employee fundraising

Over 4,000 retired and current employees donated over £600,000 directly from their payroll to their chosen charities through our Giving Scheme. In addition, we hosted 10 fundraising events raising over £160,000 for a range of employee-supported charities. Our employees have been taking part in the BA Fun Run for over 14 years, raising over £735,000 for Cancer Research UK. During 2007/08, our World Cargo team collected and delivered 15 tonnes of high-quality gifts, donated by employees from around the airline.

Donations

BITC reported our total direct and in-kind donations for 2007/08 at £5.7 million (2006/07: £6.3 million). Of these, direct charitable donations amounted to £398,000 (2006/07: £1.2 million). Over the past year we have donated more than £800,000 of surplus merchandise to charities in the UK and overseas.