

## **PM honours British woman supporting children in Bhutan**

Prime Minister Theresa May has named a British Buddhist nun a Point of Light for working to improve the lives of children in rural Bhutan.

Emma Slade is the founder of 'Opening Your Heart to Bhutan', a charity dedicated to supporting children in the country. Emma spent seven years working in the city of London before travelling for a number of years and eventually being ordained as a Buddhist nun in Bhutan. She combines her business background and her in-depth knowledge of Bhutan to serve as Chief Executive of the charity in an entirely voluntary capacity.

Emma's charity dedicates itself to improving the quality of life of children living in rural areas of the country whether that can be achieved with simple interventions such as providing bedding or clothing, or whether more complex work is required, such as building toilets, constructing sewage systems, making safe cooking areas or providing sufficient sleeping areas. Emma is currently fundraising to build a hostel for girls with special needs.

Emma is the latest recipient of a Point of Light award, which recognises outstanding individual volunteers, people who are making a change in their community and inspiring others. Each day, someone, somewhere in the country is selected to receive the award to celebrate their remarkable achievements.

### **In a personal letter to Emma, Prime Minister Theresa May said:**

"You have dedicated your life to doing everything you can to improve the quality of life for children living in rural Bhutan. By combining your business background with your in-depth knowledge of the country, you are ensuring their needs are met wherever possible and their lives are transformed.

Across the world British volunteers like you are helping to build a better world for everyone. The Point of Light award is a small thank you on behalf of the whole country, in recognition of your exceptional service."

Emma is the 654th winner of the Points of Light award which has been developed in partnership with the hugely successful Points of Light programme in the USA and was first established by President George H. W. Bush. Over 5,000 US Points of Light have been awarded and both President George H. W. Bush and President Barack Obama have publicly supported the partnership with Points of Light UK which honours shining examples of volunteering across the country.

Regardless of whether it's a doctor restoring local monuments in her free time, a father teaching young people life skills, or a local musician giving a voice to lonely people, the Point of Light award honours shining examples of volunteering across the UK.

**Emma said:**

“Inspired by a deep love for the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan, our charity Opening Your Heart to Bhutan, brings children with special needs joy and the opportunity to build meaningful lives within their communities. We work in practical ways on the ground in Bhutan improving educational facilities and access to medical help to the most vulnerable children in this wonderful country. Many people in the UK have been touched by our work and provided donations, physical goods and wishes of support. All of this keeps us going as, child by child, we work, building a bridge of friendship with Bhutan.

“I am very thankful for this award, it came as a great surprise, and a huge thank you to those in the UK who have donated to our charity and to our friends in Bhutan, this is an award for all of us.”

**Michael Rutland, the British Honorary Consul to Bhutan:**

“Emma Slade combines her style and experience in the world of international finance with the attributes of a Buddhist nun to bring to her charity enormous energy, dedication and sensitivity. Her work is making a real difference to lives of many children in the remote Kingdom of Bhutan, and provides a unique example of the power of volunteerism to have a positive effect on the lives of others.”

**Notes to Editors**

1. The Points of Light awards recognise outstanding individual volunteers, people who are making a change in their community and inspiring others.
2. The Prime Minister makes daily announcements of the winners to celebrate, encourage and promote volunteering and the value that it brings to the country.
3. If people know someone who could be a Point of Light they should write to the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street.
4. Website: [www.pointsoflight.gov.uk](http://www.pointsoflight.gov.uk)

