

Building a Better World



In this issue:

Reflections from post-
disaster Vanuatu

Secure land for homes in
Cambodia

Out of the box gift ideas for
Christmas

Thank you for helping rebuild Fiji



Almost 8 months have passed since Tropical Cyclone Winston struck Fiji on 20 February, 2016.

The category five cyclone was the worst disaster to hit the country in recorded history and left more than 31,000 houses damaged or destroyed across Fiji.

Your support has been instrumental in ensuring the emergency phase of response efforts, which provided immediate shelter assistance to families, could be quickly planned and implemented. The infographic opposite shows what we've been able to achieve together.

Response efforts are now moving into recovery and rehabilitation phases with plans to rebuild and repair homes, repair water and waste management systems and provide 'Build Back Better' training.

The pilot of the 'Build Back Better' program saw community members take part in an intensive three-day construction training where they built Terry a safe house.

"I was really on top of the hill when I heard the good news," said Terry, when she found out she would have a safe home. "It's a miracle...This house built by Habitat means so much to me. Here, I can live with my daughter and be safe."

To volunteer with Habitat and help rebuild disaster affected communities in Fiji and beyond, like our supporters below, visit habitat.org.au/volunteer-overseas



SHELTER REPAIR KITS
DISTRIBUTED TO
FAMILIES



SOLAR LAMPS DISTRIBUTED



COMMUNITIES WERE
ASSISTED IN THE
WEEKS POST CYCLONE



EMERGENCY REPAIRS TO
WATER SYSTEMS



MOSQUITO NETS FOR
NEW MOTHERS
DISTRIBUTED



32,415
PEOPLE
RECEIVED
RELIEF
ASSISTANCE



EXCEEDED TARGET
NUMBER OF
BENEFICIARIES BY 30%

Give the **Right Tools for the Job**
gift card to provide families with the
tools to build secure and decent homes.



Reflections from the field

Jeff De Jesus, from our International Programs team shares his experience of working on the ground in Vanuatu to build disaster resilient communities after Cyclone Pam.

Even before the last nail has been fully hammered, a small number of people are starting to applaud. Others take up the cue, and soon the air fills with shouts of joy as this infectious energy takes hold of everyone in sight.



As part of Habitat's recovery efforts, I work with a small team which provides training to the local communities to increase their skills in building disaster resilient structures. We also facilitate workshops that raise awareness of hazards concerning the building of safe shelters, including producing an emergency community plan that can be followed when another natural disaster hits.

In the two months that I've spent living and working with these amazing people, 345 participants completed the construction training and 67 people took part in the safe shelter awareness workshops. In addition, Habitat has also established five community toolkit libraries which comprise of essentials such as saws, hammers, spirit levels and other equipment that community members of south east Ambrym can borrow when needed.

All of this would not have been possible if not for the efforts of Kirby Norman, a 51-year old father of five and the Area Secretariat for south east Ambrym. Kirby has been key in raising community awareness and told me with great optimism:

"We are so glad that you have come to help our community. The training that Habitat has provided will help in rebuilding everything we have lost. We are so isolated from the rest of the world that sometimes we feel no one knows we are here. It feels really good to know we have not been forgotten".

It's amazing to think that just one week ago, this site was little more than a pile of rubble. Bits of broken tree trunks, twisted shards of iron and a shattered concrete floor were the only remnants of the modest kindergarten that once stood here. Now the framework of a new structure which can house more than 50 students stands proudly over the relics of the old school.

In March 2015, Cyclone Pam laid havoc to the islands of Vanuatu. Among the most severely hit were the small communities of south east Ambrym. Home to an active volcano, the island regularly experiences downpours of acid rain and basic infrastructure is non-existent. With no electricity, no running water, and having to live off whatever little this harsh volcanic landscape can produce, life was already tough for the people on the island. But following the devastation of Cyclone Pam, life became just that much harder. The 250km per hour winds that lashed this region destroyed almost everything in sight, leaving over 1,700 people without a home.

Straight after the cyclone, Habitat for Humanity was on the ground, helping rebuild homes that were lost or damaged. Currently 46 houses are in the process of being rebuilt.

In a few days I fly back to Australia, and even though I know it will be hard saying goodbye to my new extended Ni-Vanuatu family, I feel extremely privileged to have been involved in Habitat's recovery efforts, and am hopeful that the people of south east Ambrym are better prepared for the future.

Jeff De Jesus
July 2016



Kirby and Jeff





Secure land, secure homes

Marnet and her family lived in an informal settlement in Cambodia by the roadside until 2012, when they were forcibly evicted to make way for a new development.

Marnet and her family had to start again, re-building their makeshift home and beginning a home business selling groceries. Although they were getting back on their feet, they still did not own the land on which they lived and the threat of forced eviction loomed.

With your valuable support, Marnet has been able to learn about the application process to gain secure tenure, so she can own land and build a permanent, secure home. She was assisted through the family selection process and after being

approved, Marnet was able to choose a plot of land to build her home.

"I am very excited that my family finally has our own secure land from the government where we can build our own house, grow my business and have a secure future. It was really important to be part of the community activities during the application process. We had direction, worked with the government and had support from the group," said Marnet.

Worldwide, 75 percent of land is not legally documented, leaving families vulnerable to eviction or displacement after a disaster. Your support has been vital in helping Marnet and families like hers, gain secure tenure that in turn allows them to invest more in their home – and their future. Thank you.

Purchase our **Home sweet home** gift card to help more families access safe and decent housing.



Supporter corner

Our supporters come from all walks of life, and contribute in many different ways. They are our lifeblood and our work would simply not be possible without them. Read what some of our supporters have to say about our work.

"Continue your outstanding work. I hope to join a build in future."

- Denis, supporter since 2011.

"I make a donation whenever I can when the need arises, and I have a love to do so."

- Shirley, supporter since 2015.

"It's good to help people through housing all over the world."

- Nicole, supporter since 2011.

"The concept of homeowners helping build their own home appeals to me."

- Joanne, supporter since 2009.



Giving back and building homes

Each year, over 400 Australian volunteers support Habitat by volunteering overseas through our Global Village program, giving roughly 16,000 hours of their time. This includes Nina, who volunteered in Vietnam to build a home for a family in need. Here's what she said about her experience:

"Achieving a dream is difficult for most people so I wanted to help make that dream a reality. I believe it is rewarding to see the direct impact and give back to the community I truly care about."

Make 2017 your year to volunteer! For builds to Vietnam departing in 2017 visit habitat.org.au/volunteer

Healthy habits and brighter futures

In remote Myanmar, school children can be found learning about health practices, such as washing hands and using clean bathrooms for the very first time.

Their teacher is Phyu Zin, a community facilitator with Habitat. Your contribution has provided training to facilitators such as Phyu Zin, who in turn teaches communities the importance of hygiene, raises awareness and helps break unhealthy habits.

“My favorite part is when I see children start to wash their hands and when communities begin to take responsibility for their own health,” said Phyu Zin.

She says the key to successful behavioural change lies in finding advocates within the community to spread the message.

Your support has helped train 148 active water committee members across 14 communities. Thank you for making a difference!



To give more families access to sanitation purchase our **Lovely Lavatory and Healthy Habitats** gift card.



A job for life

In northern Bangladesh, water, sanitation and hygiene programming is improving access to facilities for the poor and vulnerable.

As part of this project, you have helped train 189 labourers on sanitary toilet and tube well construction. This includes apprentices like Ripon.

By providing training on income generating activities, you have helped provide greater economy security to families, as well as aided in creating a skilled workforce to construct sanitation and water facilities to a safer and more sustainable standard.

Since attending training, Ripon told us he now has a better understanding of the risks of an unhygienic toilet and safe construction techniques.

Previously, Ripon’s customers would ask for pit toilets. However since the project started, each month he now constructs 10-15 toilets, all of which are sanitary.

Along with transformative training and skills development, you have also enabled community members to build 163 toilets and install 21 tube wells.



Help more community members like Ripon access training and skills development when you purchase our **Job for Life** gift card.

Protection from the elements



Without secure and decent housing, families must continually invest time and money to rebuild damaged or destroyed homes when disasters strike.

Your support is enabling poor families in Vietnam to break the cycle of poverty and build or repair homes to better withstand natural disasters.

In central Vietnam 35 disaster resilient homes have now been built or repaired, thanks to your generosity. 956 community members have also participated in disaster response simulations and another 5,000 received leaflets to further their knowledge of preparedness and mitigation measures, to reduce the impact when disaster hits.

The families you've helped includes Tap's, who can now give her two children a brighter future.

"I am happy with this house. Before we did not have electricity. We weren't safe at night and it was hard for the kids to do school work. Now they have their own room to study in with a light. We have our own toilet and wash room. It is much better than before for us," said Tap.

Other beneficiaries like Mai, a labourer with an unsteady income, said that prior to your help it was near impossible to save money to make repairs to her home.

"Now I don't have to be worried about whether it is rainy or windy," Mai said. "Previously I was always scared that the house could collapse at any time during the storms. Now it is strong and protects us."

By giving our **Bundle of Bricks** gift card to a loved one, you can help more families build sturdier homes.



Community driven approaches

In Yogyakarta, Indonesia Participatory Approach to Safe Shelter trainings are empowering and building safer communities.

These trainings bring communities together so they can be proactive and lead decision making when it comes to addressing the vulnerabilities they face related to disaster and shelter. Earlier in the year, community members put together an action plan for improving living conditions and creating a safer and healthier environment.

With your help, the community is now implementing solutions which will impact 2,600 people and mitigate risk by distributing fire extinguishers, generators, rubbish bins and water pumps.





A hand up at home

Giving families a second chance

Through a partnership with Settlement Services International (SSI), together we are helping provide housing and accommodation for refugees in New South Wales.

Mingoola is a small farming community near Tenterfield that is sadly in decline. The local public school closed at the beginning of 2016 due to no enrolments and both farmers and local businesses struggled to find workers to assist them.

Habitat NSW and SSI have renovated unused homes on two farming properties for refugee families who were interested in working in and supporting the community.

The families came to Australia from rural farming communities in Africa as refugees five years ago and are now Australian citizens. The families settled in Wollongong, but were both eager to relocate to a rural community and pursue work in farming as they had done in Africa.

The two families have since moved to Mingoola and the local school reopened to accommodate children from the families.

A place to call home

In South Australia, Habitat recently handed over a new home to Karen and her son, Kosta.

Karen began her journey with Habitat in mid-2014. Like all home partners, Karen started by completing the “sweat equity” component of our program in which future home owners volunteer their time in the construction phases.

Karen learnt new skills and gained a sense of achievement through this hands-on process.

At the home dedication ceremony, Karen, pictured above, shared how excited she was to have her own home and that being chosen to be a Habitat partner family has changed her life forever.

 **Habitat for Humanity**
Australia presents

Home.

A photography exhibition.

Visit our free photography exhibition from October to December to discover more about our work, the stories behind the photos and for your chance to win a Global Village experience.

See Home at
Customs House, Level 1, 31 Alfred Street, Circular Quay, Sydney
habitat.org.au/home-exhibition

CITY OF SYDNEY 

 **Customs House**

Clean water for all

Recently, our ex-Kamaiya Community Development project in Nepal came to an end, where you helped families like Bhajjo's.

Bhajjo, like most families in her community, did not have a toilet or proper sanitation.

This meant her family had to defecate along the riverbank and often fell ill due to improper sanitation.

Bhajjo describes defecating outside as “humiliating” and “unbearable.”

However, your help has allowed Bhajjo and families like hers to build a toilet in their home.

“Getting a toilet has saved me and my family from a lot of shame we otherwise had to face,” said Bhajjo. “We are now aware of how having a toilet makes the environment clean and reduces the risk of diseases.”

Thanks to your support, a total of 437 toilets have been built and 777 community members

have been trained on water, sanitation and hygiene. Water-related issues in the community were also addressed by building 157 wells and training 437 households in well installation.

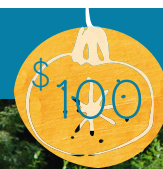
The impact of such facilities and training has been truly transformative.

Evaluations at the end of the project found 99% of the households in community now have access to a toilet and open defecation has completely stopped.

Through tube well construction, the community's access to drinking water has also increased. More than 75% of households are now collecting water within a distance of 30 to 50 metres, and only 4% were still fetching water from a 250 to 500 metre distance.

Thank you for making a healthier future a reality for Bhajjo and her community. Your support will continue to impact more families as the next phase of the project kicks off later in the year.

Buy our **Clean Water for All** gift card to give more families a healthier and brighter future.



Out of the box gift ideas

We hope that you have enjoyed reading news and updates from the families and communities you have impacted through your generosity.

You may have noticed, in this issue we have featured alongside each update from the field, a Habitat Gift you can purchase this Christmas to help more families in need access safe and decent housing, clean water and sanitation and life changing training and skills development opportunities.

If you'd like to purchase or find out more on our collection of Habitat Gifts, please see the enclosed catalogue and order form or visit habitat.org.au/habitat-gifts

Your gift will be helping more people in need this Christmas build strength, stability and self reliance.

As always, thank you for your support.