

# Building a Better World

In this issue:

Rebuilding after the  
Nepal floods

How a well changes lives  
in Bangladesh

Volunteering at home and  
overseas with Habitat



# Through shelter

we empower

*We believe that everyone deserves a safe and decent place to live, and each year thanks to supporters like you, we help more families access secure homes and brighter futures. Thank you for transforming lives through shelter and all the opportunities it affords.*



With your help, more than 22,000 people were impacted across Asia Pacific over the last year. Your support not only enables families to access safe and decent housing, but fosters the strength, stability and independence needed to build better lives. Our work would not be possible without you. We hope you enjoy reading the stories of the families you have impacted through your kindness.



## Every family needs a safe home

*With no collateral, credit history or access to formal financial institutions, the majority of families living in poverty are “unbanked” and unlikely to qualify for traditional banking services.*

This means that no matter how hard they work, it is almost impossible for families in developing communities to build a brighter future free from poverty.

However, thanks to you, families are receiving a hand-up in Cambodia. By providing access to microloans, families can receive much-needed funds to repair their homes.

This includes Sreymom’s family. Earning a limited income as cow farmers, Sreymom and husband, Narith were unable to put aside savings to rebuild their home. Their income always went straight to immediate needs such as food, water and essentials for their children.

Access to a microloan has meant the family have been able to build a safe and secure home with access to water and electricity.

The house is also raised above ground on supports, which makes it possible to extend and add an extra level below in the future.

“The new house will give more security and space than the old house,” Sreymom says. “We can keep the cows below and have a large open area.”

She also plans to set up a home business selling meat and drinks in a shop they will build where the old house was located.

Each month, Sreymom and her husband pay off a small, affordable loan suitable for their circumstances and income earning ability.

Microfinance programs like this not only allows families to access housing, but plays a key role in empowering them to have a say in their future by paving the way toward financial independence.



## Every child deserves safety and security

*On August 12 2017, floodwaters hit Anita's community in Eastern Nepal and rose to nearly one metre high.*

Anita, 18, her parents and her two sisters managed to climb a bamboo ladder to find safety on the roof of a temple. From here, they watched helplessly as the flood waters swept away all their belongings and destroyed their house, which was located along the bank of a river. Her father's rickshaw, which was the sole source of income for the family, was also destroyed.

The next day, after the floodwater had receded, Anita and her family returned home. Out of all of their possessions, only a few copper plates and pieces of pottery were left.

Thankfully, the generous support of donors like you meant families like Anita's could have some temporary reprieve.

"We only had something to eat the next day after people who came to distribute relief materials gave us some food," said Anita. "From the tarpaulin provided by Habitat for Humanity Nepal we were also able to create a makeshift shelter."

Your support has helped enable Habitat for Humanity Nepal to distribute tarpaulins, mosquito nets, water backpacks and water purification solutions to 400 families. In addition, 1,362 temporary bamboo shelters have been completed and the construction of permanent shelters for 100 families begins this year.

## Every community can be resilient

*Anita's story, and countless others from disasters around the world, show the need to provide support in areas of Disaster Risk Reduction.*

Disaster Risk Reduction refers to the actions we take to prepare for, recover from, and mitigate the impact of natural hazards such as cyclones or earthquakes.

Every year, natural hazards impact human settlements, cause the loss of thousands of lives and damage infrastructure and national economies. When natural hazards impact communities this way, and when those communities lack the resilience to recover on their own, it becomes a disaster.

Unfortunately, disasters discriminate, often impacting the most vulnerable groups in society the hardest.

Natural hazards are inevitable, but they don't have to become disasters. Planning for and recovering from disasters opens up a window of opportunity for positive social change.

Disaster Risk Reduction activities such as evacuation simulations, construction training and bringing together community members to identify hazards, focuses on building capacity and empowering vulnerable groups. These activities act like insurance – whatever we do now to strengthen and prepare for future disasters helps us manage them much better and reduces the social, emotional and economic impacts.

That's why your support is more important than ever. Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction can save lives and leads to stronger communities that can sustain themselves. Thank you for building a better tomorrow.





Photography: Rhys Anderson

# Every brick builds a brighter future

*Now in its third year, Rock the House is a volunteer movement that is uniting people of all walks of life to put their hands up, and to good use by building a rock solid future for families in need.*

Already, 18 homes have been built by almost 200 Rock the House volunteers. In 2018, you can help us reach 30 homes and impact communities in need in both Cambodia and Indonesia.

## Join Team Indonesia

The last two Rock the House experiences have taken place in Indonesia and this year will be our last. This is because Rock the House is part of a

six year housing project in Yogyakarta which is coming to an end. Throughout the entire project an incredible 568 homes have been built!

Volunteering in Yogyakarta offers you a chance to be part of a legacy which has transformed an entire community and generations to come.

## Volunteer in Cambodia

Habitat for Humanity has long run volunteer experiences in Cambodia, and is now opening this up as part of Rock the House. In Cambodia, you will work alongside vulnerable families including the elderly, child-headed households and those living with HIV/AIDS to build safe and decent homes. Volunteers will be building in Siem Reap, also home to the famous temples of Angkor Wat.

**So, what team will you be on? Join us from the 7th - 14th October 2018 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia or Siem Reap, Cambodia. Put your hand up and register today by visiting [rockthehouse.org.au](http://rockthehouse.org.au)**

## What our volunteers have to say



*"I didn't realise it would be so emotional handing over the home to our new-found family. This experience is something everyone should go through at least once in their lives to appreciate what we have. We learnt from a family with practically nothing how they can have so much love and generosity toward all of us."*

- Luke Dorizas, Rock the House 2



*"We came here to build a house but we left feeling like we gained family... To know that five days of our lives has completely changed the rest of theirs is humbling and I'm going to come home much more thankful for the life I have."*

- Sarah Walsh, Rock the House 2  
(third from left with her Southern Cross Austereo colleagues)



# Every mother

## wants a healthier future for their kids

*Thuan, her brother and his four daughters live in a remote village in Vietnam, where access to hygienic sanitation facilities is a crucial need.*

Previously, Thuan's family had a basic pit toilet with a wooden slab. The toilet was unsanitary and unable to support the needs of a family of six. However, sadly as low-income earners, Thuan's family could not afford to build a new, hygienic toilet.

However, thanks to your support, Thuan and her family were able to apply for an affordable loan to build a bathroom with two toilets. The bathroom is hygienic, and constructed from durable materials that will be able to withstand the storms and typhoons that frequently affect Central Vietnam.

Previously, the family struggled with having to bathe outside as their toilet was open and without privacy. The new toilet will make a big impact by bringing an added comfort and safety to Thuan and her family's life.

Through Habitat's affordable loan program, Thuan's family are able to pay back the amount gradually over a period of three years. The loan repayments will go into a revolving fund, which allows other families to access similar loans.

For low-income families, having support like this is crucial in breaking the cycle of poverty and obtaining a healthier and more secure future. Thank you for your support.



## Every home builds hope

*"My husband and I were very excited when Habitat for Humanity offered training on how to build a safe shelter.."*

We immediately started building our house after the training and Habitat staff would regularly check on our progress and advise us. Habitat gave us construction tools and materials but they also gave us strength, encouragement and moral support. Now we live in a proper home. I am thankful and happy for the help of Habitat and their kind supporters."

- Narayani, home partner, Nepal





# Every drop makes a difference

*Farida lives in a remote community in Northern Bangladesh, where gaining access to clean water has been an arduous journey.*

Previously, Farida and the five other families in her community all shared a single well. As the well was just outside the community, collecting water in the rainy season was a treacherous experience. This saw Farida crossing submerged roads and flooded fields, multiple times each day, hauling heavy jerry cans of water with her.

In the dry season, conditions were not much better. The high elevation of the land meant the well was not deep enough to reach water that had almost completely dried up due to the hot weather.

Installing a well with a deeper shaft would resolve this problem. However, this is an expense significantly beyond the means of a poor community. Instead, families would have to walk long distances to collect water from the closest and safest source. Worldwide, this job is often tasked to women and girls, who spend a staggering 200 million hours walking to collect water every day. This time spent collecting water impacts the ability of women and girls to earn an income or attend school, and acts as a barrier in their development.

“It was tedious work for us to collect water from long distances at other people’s wells,” said Farida. “Sometimes, after such a long walk, some households didn’t allow us to collect water from their well either.”

To combat this challenge and to reduce the journey, Farida and other families would often resort to collecting water from a nearby pond. This water, however, was untreated and would lead to the spread of water-borne diseases.

“We know safe water is essential to live a healthy life,” said Farida, “but we did not have our own source of safe water. We felt deprived and ashamed but we did not have any alternative choice.”

Thanks to the support of Australian Aid through the Civil Society Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Fund, and Habitat for Humanity donors, Farida’s community now has a choice, and access to a brighter, healthier future that comes with it.

With the support of Habitat for Humanity Bangladesh, a local committee has been formed in the community to improve access to clean water and knowledge of hygiene and sanitation practices. This includes the installation of a new tube well within the community, which will provide access to clean, safe water all year round.

“This well has given us great relief from the challenges we previously experienced,” said Farida. “Beside drinking water, now we can take a bath in clean water and maintain our privacy.”

Farida’s community no longer must resort to drinking unsafe water or plan their entire lives around collecting water. For Farida, access to this essential and precious resource not only means improved health, but is a source of dignity and pride.

With your support, this project has also seen the completion of a further 100 tube wells and 600 toilets in Northern Bangladesh. Over 1,000 students have received training on hygiene practices, and 300 labourers learned well and toilet construction.





## Every Aussie deserves a roof overhead

*When Stuart\* moved into a one-bed apartment in Sydney's inner city after years of living on the streets and in hostels, all he had was an air mattress and bedding, plus a borrowed TV.*

Today, he has a furnished home, thanks to Habitat for Humanity NSW volunteers. Over one day volunteers delivered, assembled and installed a bed, complete with new linen, a bedside table, a sofa, dining table with chairs, chest of drawers, kitchen items, refrigerator and a washing machine.

"The apartment was almost completely bare when we got there," said Anne, one of the community volunteers. "But after a few hours, some intense discussion on how to assemble the furniture, and lots of elbow grease it looked great."

In partnership with NSW Family and Community Services (FACS) which provides the accommodation, 84 apartments have been furnished for homeless people who had been sleeping rough in Sydney's Martin Place and local parks.

When homeless people move into apartments they need support to maintain tenancies and not return to sleeping rough. Providing furniture and furnishings reduces the burden of how to obtain such items and maximises the possibility of success of the tenancy. The support of 246 community and corporate volunteers to assist in furnishing the apartments, has played an important role in providing a solid foundation and hope for the future.

## Every family needs a place to call home

*Meet John and Johanna - the 58th family to receive a Habitat for Humanity home in Victoria.*

John and Johanna are one of ten families who have moved into the Yea Heights Estate as part of Habitat Victoria's major affordable housing project.

When John and Johanna moved back to Australia after caring for John's terminally ill father in New York, they didn't arrive back to what they had expected. A mixture of problems with a family member who had hoarding tendencies and a lack of work soon found them living in a small bedroom, without access to the rest of the house.

Their living situation did nothing to improve Johanna's health problems. Johanna suffers from a congenital heart condition and requires more sleep than the average person. Living in a small space, next to a noisy park meant it was difficult for Johanna to rest. In addition, with Johanna completing full time study and John facing visa implications, finding work became difficult and the pair found themselves in need of assistance.

Thankfully, with the help of Habitat for Humanity, the couple have been given a fresh start. "You lose parts of yourself when you don't have space of your own," says John. "The biggest relief is knowing that Johanna will be able to have a better shot at health."

The couple are already seeing positive change since moving in two months ago. Johanna's health has improved and John has found meaningful and ongoing work. "I already see a change in Johanna - a vibrancy and vitality from getting far better rest in a clean and beautiful environment," said John.





# Every parent wants the best for their child

*We all want the best for our children, grandchildren and loved ones. We want them to be healthy, happy and safe, and we want to see them fulfil their potential.*

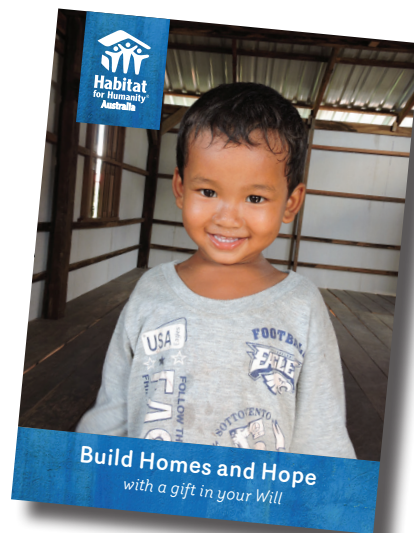
For many families living in poverty across the Asia Pacific region this seems like an impossible dream when even basic food, shelter and education is out of reach.

However, a brighter future is possible.

After you have taken care of your loved ones, a gift in your Will, no matter the size, will help some of the world's most disadvantaged families obtain safe and decent housing, along with the strength, stability and independence to build a better future.

Just imagine the possibilities once this cycle of poverty is broken.

Remembering Habitat in your Will is an incredible investment for future generations, and many of our wonderful donors choose to extend their support of Habitat in this way.



**For more information and to obtain your FREE copy of our guide to Gifts in Wills: Build Homes and Hope, contact Annie, our Philanthropy Manager on (02) 9919 7024 or email [annie@habitat.org.au](mailto:annie@habitat.org.au), she would be delighted to hear from you.**

You're invited to the

## HAND UP FOR HABITAT GALA DINNER

Hosted by media personality and  
broadcaster, Angela Catterns.

Join our celebration of transforming  
lives through volunteering  
and beyond.



### WHEN

Thursday 10 May 2018, 6.00pm for a  
6.30pm start

### WHERE

Strangers Dining Room, Parliament  
House, Macquarie St, Sydney

### TICKET INFORMATION

Tables of 10: \$2,200  
Corporate packages available  
Individual ticket: \$220

### RSVP - 30TH MARCH

Secure your tickets now. Visit  
[habitat.org.au/gala](http://habitat.org.au/gala) or call  
1800 88 55 99