



Build a better world

In this issue:

65th Australian Partner Family
Receive Their Home

NAIDOC Week: Brush With Kindness

Update on the projects you support



every hand helps build hope

habitat hero spotlight

Geoff has been supporting Habitat for over 10 years since he joined his first Global Village volunteering experience, where he was helping a family in China build a safe and decent home. Over the years Geoff has continued his generous contribution building homes and hope for families in Nepal, Cambodia and Vietnam. He believes that a safe and secure place to live is a very practical way to empower vulnerable families, creating a solid foundation for a better future.

Geoff is one of our truly amazing supporters. Not only does he get in and get his hands dirty (literally) on the build site, he is also part of a special group of supporters known as HopeBuilders, who give each month to help those who need it most. Through his support, more families can access safe and secure housing, clean water and sanitation, and the skills needed to be economically secure.

“A safe and secure home brings empowerment and hope...families are more stable and an attainable future can be dreamed!”

Passionate and committed supporters like Geoff help make our work possible and we are very grateful.

Thank you!

If you'd like to know more about the different ways you can help show your support like Geoff, please don't hesitate to contact us:

(02) 9919 7000

or

[visit habitat.org.au](https://www.habitat.org.au)



every parent

wants to build a brighter future
for their family

Grant Thornton- Build - one year on

The smiles said it all. Gratitude. Joy. And, perhaps most of all, optimism for the future.

When the Grant Thornton volunteers arrived in Quang Dang, Vietnam, Tien did not know how to pronounce the company's name correctly. But she knew that they would change her life forever.

For years she had been living in a dilapidated house with its leaking roof and floor consisting of rotted materials. In the rainy season, there was rarely a dry place for her children, three years old and Toan, 11, to sleep.

Now, after working alongside the 147 volunteers, Grant Thornton partners from Australia and around the world, Tien, 33, has a water-resilient house, with concrete walls and an iron sheet roof on a metal frame. There is also an attic to keep the family including her 65-year-old mother Ngungt, who suffers from chronic bronchitis, safe in the seasonal floods.

Not far away Hai, (38), his wife Huong, (35), son Ten, (8), and daughter Duyen (11) were also beginning life in a new house. As mason Hai felt upset that he could not improve his own home despite his skills. Working with the Grant Thornton team gave him the chance to contribute to the project.

"Not many strangers are willing to give you 50 million Dong (around \$US2,143) to support you with building a house ... without giving a single request to benefit them," says Hai.

The Grant Thornton team built 13 homes during their four-day visit. They also raised \$280,000. They were part of a record breaking year for corporate volunteers with a total of 218 at projects across the region.

That's building bridges between cultures. And building futures for families.



every one

deserves a decent
place to live

Jema & Romel's Dream Come True

65th Australian Partner Family Receive Their Home

When she was young Jema was due to live with her grandparents to give her mother, battling with mental illness, a break. But tragically they were killed in the black Sunday fires. She then grew up in a series of foster homes and residential care.

All her life Jema has dreamt of one thing. A home of her own. Now, thanks to Habitat for Humanity, she has one. And a bright future with her partner Romel and their 18-month old daughter Isla.

Moving into the pretty white three-bedroomed house in the small Victorian country town of Yea marks a new beginning for Jema.

It's in an area where there are lots of other children with whom Isla can play and is an easy walk to the town centre with its church and local primary school.

Perhaps more importantly, the home is affordable. It comes with an interest-free mortgage, based on 95 per cent of the market value, and the payments are capped at 30 percent of the couple's income, a repayment model that's aimed at avoiding crippling housing stress.

This is such a far cry from Jema's four year struggle where she has been living in social housing in a Melbourne suburb. Unfortunately, of the terms of her lease, Romel was not allowed to live with them.

So, for what seems an age, they have been searching for a family home. Romel, who works part-time as a cleaner, said that the couple had tried to save to buy a house but it was going to take forever - "until he was 'probably' dead". Renting was prohibitively expensive with the average an impossible \$350 a week.

The house was built partly with \$40,000 from The Big Issue's Homes for Homes programme which raises funds to boost the amount of social and affordable housing for a wide range of disadvantaged Australians. Property owners make a tax-deductible donation of 0.1 per cent of their property sale price when they sell which goes to Homes for Homes.

Speaking at the official hand-over of keys, Habitat for Humanity's Philip Curtis described the growing Australian "crisis" where for many low-income families paying rent means not having enough money to eat properly, or fill a prescription or pay the energy bill.

For Jema, Romel and Isla, the first family to move into a house built with a donation from the scheme, the keys not only open the door to their home, they are symbols of a bright and happy future.

As taken from the Big Issue no.592,
written by Anastasia Safioleas'
bigissue.org.au



every door

opens a new opportunity

NAIDOC Week

Voice. Treaty. Truth.

In recognition and support of NAIDOC Week where history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are celebrated, we wanted to show our support of local indigenous communities. For the first time our Brush With Kindness program mobilised corporate staff from Boral and Bloomberg and community volunteers during NAIDOC week in NSW and QLD. We partnered with an organisation providing crisis accommodation for Aboriginal women and children facing homelessness, as well as a unique indigenous co-operative housing organisation for Aboriginal families on low to medium incomes.



During painting and repairs of one of the Aboriginal family homes the two sons came out to help paint their home. The youngest son and Isabelle a volunteer found themselves painting together and sharing a truly heartfelt moment. The Boral team in QLD shared,

“We were grateful for the opportunity to lend a hand to women and children who are doing it tough. It was hard work, but it was a good feeling to see results at the end of the day and know we were making a difference.”

With the continued support of our donors, volunteers, and partners we can continue to help more families and their children access safe shelter and homes.

For corporate volunteering contact us:

partnerships@habitat.org.au

or

(02) 9919 7002

every brick

is a building block



Fiji Water for Women
Engages women in community water planning and access. Creates technical and leadership roles for women. Provides innovative water solutions to address environmental concerns, eg. compost toilets.

An overview of the projects you're supporting:

Bangladesh - Home, toilet and water tank construction. Community training in hygiene and safe water practices. Climate smart housing techniques and disaster resilient technology.

Cambodia - Improving shelter security, access to clean water and health care services for the elderly and disabled. Microfinance loans to kick start small businesses.

Fiji - Preparing communities for natural disasters, improving the safety of homes and schools. Building community evacuation centres and addressing waste management needs.

Myanmar - Providing student hygiene training. Construction of pipelines, toilets and other water infrastructure. Community disaster preparedness.

Nepal - Providing technical support to ensure homes meet construction standards and can withstand disasters. Community led disaster planning. Microfinance, livelihood and skill development training.

Vietnam - Swimming lessons to prepare children for seasonal monsoon floods. Safer water facilities, drilled wells, toilets, piped water infrastructure as well as waste management training. Disaster training and housing repairs.

every smile

comes from a place
of safety and security

Biggest Smile in Cambodia



Each day Peou and her daughter Mariya, stood at the bottom of the bus steps greeting the volunteers: “Choum reap sor” they’d say to each other, hands together as a sign of respect offering to carry the team’s water, snacks and equipment for the day.

As the Aussie volunteers, from all walks of life, sweated through the heat, humidity and the manual labour, Peou was there, always smiling, preparing refreshing mangosteen a tropical fruit, passing water bottles, doing anything she could for the visitors whilst also caring for her children.

Her husband Sam was perhaps the hardest worker of all. He was on site before the volunteers arrived, continuing through the regular water and snack breaks and working into the evening, well after the volunteers were back in their hotels.

He has a powerful incentive. His existing home is too small to allow all four family members to sleep together so Sam and Peou would often sleep in the separate kitchen about 30 metres away.

In the dry season it’s so hot, none of them could bear to sleep inside. The floors are hard clay which turns to mud during the wet season. Large gaps under the walls mean insects, rats and scorpions regularly invade where the children sleep.

To earn an income Sam works as a pesticide sprayer during the wet season, earning just \$US5 a day. In the dry season he is a rat catcher and needs to catch 13-14 rats in order to get \$1 for their meat at the local markets.

Peou can’t work as she is too weak after contracting HIV from her first partner. She fights constant nausea and struggles to sleep 2-3 hours a night. HIV was passed to her son, Ny, who also has severe cerebral palsy and struggles to walk or communicate properly.

“In our life, we have never known a comfortable time,” Peou said. “We have only been through a hard life. When we heard we would be supported by Habitat, I became really excited and nothing can describe my feeling right now. Thank you so much!”

This is the heart of Habitat for Humanity’s Global Village program. Those who can, offering a hand up - physical, emotional and financial - to those who have almost nothing, dream the most modest of dreams, and are prepared to contribute everything they can, however little.

In the last year alone over 600 individuals, corporate staff and students volunteered to provide safe shelter to families throughout our neighboring countries. This makes it the most impactful year of the Global Village program so far, and we want to change even more lives in the 12 months ahead.



every person

can help build a
brighter future

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 vulnerable families obtain safe and decent housing, along with the strength, stability and independence to build a better future.

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.

We understand your Will is deeply personal, however if you would like to have a friendly, confidential chat about leaving a gift in your Will, please contact **Annie Pietersz**, our *Philanthropy Manager*:

(02) 9919 7024

or

APietersz@habitat.org.au

She would be delighted to hear from you
