



Spring 2022

Building a Better World

| Bushfire Resilience | Fleeing Ukraine | Beyond Homeownership | Back to Builds |



With Australia and the world opening up again, we've been so encouraged to see our volunteers returning and helping out in our Brush with Kindness and bushfire resilience activities. Whether you come as part of a team, or solo, we need every pair of hands possible to keep up with the need, and ensure as many Australian's as possible have a safe place to call home.

The volunteer support we receive through our programs has assisted over 750 victims of domestic violence. We know that this is a leading cause of homelessness as almost 120,000 people sought help from specialist homelessness services in 2019-20 who had experienced domestic and family violence.

Unfortunately, disasters are becoming more common both in Australia and overseas. Ensuring communities are prepared has proven to be a good investment as every dollar spent on preparedness saves \$6 in recovery costs. More importantly it gives peace of mind and a sense of safety to families who have already suffered too much.

Thank you again for all your support,

Nicole Stanmore

Nicole Stanmore
Mother, Donor and CEO.

together we empower

beyond homeownership –
a story of devotion and inspiration

Until a few years ago, Palhas and her family had been sheltering in a temporary refuge made of hay and mud. It was an impossible dream to buy land and build her own house, only earning between \$1.70 – \$2.25 AUD a day.



A proud mother of four girls and a breadwinner in her family alongside her husband, Palhas belongs to one of the most marginalised communities in the eastern lowland region of Nepal.

Palhas would take on several seasonal agricultural jobs to provide for her daughters, walking nearly three hours each day to the jungle to fetch heavy bundles of wood to sell at the markets, carrying them on her head.



Women carrying heavy bundles of wood on their heads to sell at the market, as Palhas would do each day.

For Palhas and her family, a safe and decent place to call home was considered out of reach.

When construction of their new home began, Palhas and her husband were overjoyed and only too happy to roll up their sleeves to help build alongside the team.



Palhas with one of her younger daughters.

Having a decent place to live meant that Palhas and her husband could focus on other priorities.

Now, two of their daughters are going to University, and the younger ones are in high school. Palhas is proud to give her daughters the opportunity she never had.

“This whole process of owning a home has been incredibly exciting and emotionally rewarding for our family. I am the only woman in my community to be able to provide an education for my daughters and help them to reach university!”

This is how we are working together to ensure long-term, generational impact.

With your support, we can help more families like Palhas’ and Ny’s access a safe and decent place to live, and also become financially empowered, helping to build and grow stronger families and communities.

Thank you!



Ny and Vann in front of their new home

family foundations



Vann and his wife Ny have faced challenging times over the years, living in a home that was inadequate to raise a family. During storms, their roof could not withstand heavy rainfall or winds and would get damaged, exposing them to the elements.

They could barely make enough each month to make ends meet, and earned a living from collecting rice from the fields after it was harvested, picking snails, and working around the village doing various odd-jobs.

With the help of our wonderful community of supporters, Ny, Vann and their children are now safe and secure in a new home.

Safe from the harsh weather, and warm at nights, Ny told us the positive impact the new home made in her life.

“Living in my new house is more comfortable and safer. We no longer have to worry when there is storm.”

As part of this project, we offer livelihood training to help support the families we partner with become self-reliant.

After completing a family development plan, Ny and Vann received a micro grant to help set up a farm near their home which they will manage to sell produce in their village. This increase in their monthly income will allow them to take care of their family.

“After we received the new house, we received the grant support to implement my family development plan. I have a bigger plan to expand my farm by saving from my income. I strongly believe that soon my family will be in better financial situation.”



The old house the family lived in

This project receives support from the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) and is in partnership with our implementing partner Habitat for Humanity Cambodia to provide access to safe shelter.

together we prepare

helping families and
communities be fire-ready
for the future



With support from our volunteers, partners and donors, we help communities in bushfire-exposed parts of NSW prepare their homes, connect with their neighbours and reduce risk together.

Focusing on the most vulnerable, local volunteers help people prepare for bushfires by clearing away potential hazards at properties and shared spaces, like they did for Barb and Les.

Barb and Les have lived in the beautiful Blue Mountains for over 12 years.

In 2019 when bushfires ravaged their street, they were luckily visiting family in Sydney. When they saw the reports, they were confident they had lost their home like many of their neighbours.

Since then, sadly Les has become terminally ill and unable to help his wife Barb maintain their land. Barb has become Les's full-time caretaker leaving her in a difficult position and unable to tend to her beautiful garden and land. This left them vulnerable to future fires as they have not been able to maintain a safe fire break.

Our volunteers spent one full day working at Barb and Les's property to clear overgrown vegetation to create a firebreak. With some time to spare, they also helped Barb with her vegetable garden, and created a safe and clear passage for Barb and Les to use when accessing their vegetable garden.

"Gee they did a lot of work...they just worked so hard. It's taken a weight off my shoulders and that's just been so good. Thank you.... Thank you so much!" - Barb

Barb and Les can now focus on Les's health knowing that their land is now manageable and in a much better position for future disasters.

"I'm very, very, very grateful... I think it's just fantastic" - Les



Laura Wells

being prepared for climate change

Habitat for Humanity Ambassador and Environmental Advocate, Laura Wells, recently spoke with Habitat's Community Development Manager for

Bushfire Resilience, Philip Sen, about the impacts of climate change, and the importance of being proactive and prepared for disasters.

Laura: What is disaster resilience?

Philip: Disaster resilience is something that's going to be increasingly important for people living in Australia and indeed around the world. Climate change means that the so-called 'natural disasters' we face - cyclones, droughts, bushfires, floods, they're going to get more intense and more frequent as time goes by. There's no stopping climate change I'm afraid. So, resilience is all about being ready for what is going to come, and making sure that people have the resources, skills and plans that they need to deal with the consequences.



Laura: So why is Habitat for Humanity Australia focused on bushfire resilience in particular?

Philip: Habitat is all about shelter and making sure that people have a fair go through having a roof over their head. Bushfire can be one of the most devastating natural disasters and those of us who saw the news or witnessed the 2019-2020 'Black Summer' fires, saw just how incredibly destructive bushfires can be. Sadly, any kind of disaster affects the most vulnerable the hardest, they're the ones who suffer the most and it's up to all of us who can, together, to help those people.

Laura: Absolutely, even though we've more recently had to deal with COVID and floods, bushfires are still a huge issue going forward, aren't they?

Philip: Climate change means that bushfires are going to get more intense as the climate changes. It will get hotter, it will get dryer - ironically the amount of rain has meant that vegetation in those bushfire exposed areas has grown immensely. Every day when we're out on site we see all kinds of saplings growing around people's houses and properties, all kinds of weeds, both indigenous Australian plants and non-natives which are adding to the problem, so it's just become unmanageable, and we meet a lot of people for whom it's become overwhelming. They cannot physically manage the amount of growth that's happened around their homes, and their homes are no longer safe. It's a huge fire hazard, and they need a bit of help getting back on top of it.

Bushfire resilience is quite hard work. It really does involve some physical work that's much better done with a team of people rather than an individual. So that's one of the reasons that this program exists – to help those people who are losing the physical capacity to take away all that vegetation and all those fire hazards, and just get them back on track and make sure that they are safer from the bushfire threat.

Laura: I felt the same on my volunteer days with Habitat. I loved getting in there and getting those tools out and chopping things down knowing that I was making a difference.

Philip: Absolutely! Other than the satisfaction of doing the work and seeing what you've achieved, is the gratitude that you see, time after time. We see people and a weight almost is physically lifted from their shoulders because they know that they're at risk, many of them evacuated during the last bushfire season and some we know lost their homes, and they know that they're no longer able to keep their properties safe by themselves and just seeing the weight lift of their shoulders when we've finished the job, and the thanks that we get, because those people feel so much safer after we've done that for them, and you know, that's reward enough.

100

Volunteers
Engaged

50

Resilience
Days

40

Owners
Assisted



**volunteer
today**

Want to get involved?
Give us a call or visit
habitat.org.au for
more information.



together we rebuild

Following the outbreak of war in Ukraine, all of us at Habitat for Humanity Australia have been overwhelmed by the incredible way supporters just like you rallied so quickly and generously to support our work. It's deeply moving to see such a response and the meaningful impact it's having on the lives of so many people.

Your support means that, as she waited for her transport to arrive, an elderly woman at the Ukraine-Romania border was kept warm with one of the hundreds of heaters and sleeping bags we handed out.

It means a family with young children had a roof over their heads with a hotel voucher we provided for a few nights in Poland whilst we helped them onto their destination.

And it means Olga now has a safe place to stay with her children and cats.

Olga, along with her daughters Nastia (11) and Lilja (20), and their two cats, fled Ukraine in early March. Their harrowing story encapsulates just how vital the support of incredible people like you is in being there for people who are facing the devastating loss of being forced to leave their home and community.



"We left our home in Bucha, northwest of Kyiv, and waited in Lviv for two weeks before we were evacuated. I did not want to leave."

I knew it would be hard to find any place to stay - especially because we left Ukraine along with our two cats. We love our cats very much and did not want to leave them behind. It was shocking to watch hundreds of animals run across Bucha's streets looking for shelter and food.

When we saw the tanks roll in, I did not know what to say to the children anymore. We cried



Habitat for Humanity responders support families arriving into Romania.

*and just hoped that nothing worse would happen. When we heard explosions, we hid in the basement. **Some of my neighbours didn't make it out...** I don't remember exactly how I felt as we left our home, I just know we didn't have a choice. It was the right decision - it saved our sanity and soul.*

*There's an old saying in Ukraine - 'it's good to be a guest, but it's better to be at home' - and **once the war is over, we will return home**."*

Response to the Ukraine Crisis

Just days after Russia invaded Ukraine, Habitat for Humanity teams began responding to the resulting refugee crisis by helping displaced families with shelter and other emergency needs at Ukraine's border with Romania and Hungary.

As of May 29, the fighting has displaced more than 14 million people, including over 6.8 million who have fled Ukraine. While much work lies ahead, below is a snapshot of where Habitat's response stands more than three months after the crisis.



How
you've
helped

2,600 emergency travel kits were distributed to refugees in Romania at the main borders.

300 refugees

from Ukraine are living in spaces refurbished by Habitat Romania as interim shelter solutions for up to six months.

25,000 people

were supported through donations of furnishings, food and household items and through electric heaters and air-conditioning units provided to transit centres.

2,750 refugees

have been provided with short-term accommodation in Romania, Poland and Hungary.

1,255 refugees

have been provided with mid and long-term accommodations across Poland, Romania and Hungary.



together we give back

Reconnecting Global Village

There is great excitement as we prepare to welcome back the hugely anticipated Global Village program after its hiatus during the pandemic. Global Village is a way to tangibly support Habitat's ongoing mission to provide people all around the world with a safe and decent place to call home.

As a Global Village participant, you'll have the unique opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture of another country away from the usual tourist trail, as you work shoulder-to-shoulder with people from different backgrounds to improve the standard of living of families in need.

Using local construction techniques and materials, teams might build a single house or several houses, help with disaster recovery or energy efficiency projects. You could be mixing concrete, weaving bamboo, digging foundations, laying bricks, hammering, rendering or painting but you will also form meaningful connections and strengthen the local community.

Whilst your personal trip may only last a week or so, the impact of your contributions will prove life-changing, both for these communities and yourself.



Global Village 2023

When and where?

Global Village is set to resume in April 2023, with possible locations in Fiji, Cambodia, Vietnam or Nepal. Builds typically run for one week, from Saturday to Saturday. Participants stay in a comfortable hotel and have time for rest, relaxation and exploring the country.

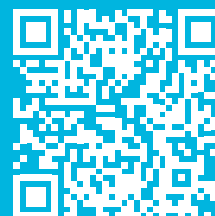
Who?

Anyone over 18 years of age with a reasonable level of fitness can take part. No building experience is necessary.

Costs?

A registration fee of \$200 (\$100 early bird), \$1800 minimum fundraising and \$600-\$1000 in-country expenses. Flights, visa, vaccinations, travel insurance and personal expenses are not included in your Global Village trip costs.

To express your interest please scan the QR code, visit helpinghands.online/global-village, email volunteer@habitat.org.au or call 1800 88 55 99.



together we hope

A lasting gift that will create meaningful, long-term change

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, this seems like an impossible dream when even basic food, shelter and education is out of reach.

However, there is hope.

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

You may already have a current Will. But close to 70% of Australians don't.

"We believe building a decent home provides much more than bricks and mortar – it provides real hope for the future. We are so pleased to once again be partnering with Safewill to help our supporters plan for their future. When you remember Habitat in your Will, you become part of our special community, dedicated to helping make transformational and lasting change possible."

– Dan Peyton, Head of Impact Giving and Engagement.



Safewill is Australia's highest rated Will writing platform, making it easy and affordable for Australians to write their Will – with just a few clicks.

With Safewill's online Will-writing service you can appoint guardians for your children, set out how you want to divide up what's yours and leave gifts to any charities that are close to your heart.

We are delighted to once again partner with Safewill to offer you a free* Will today.

Visit safewill.com/habitat for more information.

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, contact us at givinghope@habitat.org.au or on **1800 88 55 99**.

**Available to the first 22 supporters to take up the offer, visit safewill.com/habitat*

We acknowledge and thank our supporters for the difference they make, and the hope they provide now and into the future.



get involved

1800 88 55 99 | habitat.org.au/spring2022

Habitat for Humanity Australia
PO Box 1048
North Sydney, NSW, 2059

