

Build in Cambodia with Jebby and Chelsea

Q&A: Global Village Volunteers

Jebby and Chelsea are two wonderful volunteers who joined us on our Phnom Penh Global Village Build in May 2023. Both Jebby and Chelsea were a joy to have on the build, and really handy on the tools – they also represented the youngest and oldest team members we had, Jebby aged 79 and Chelsea aged 22.

We asked them some questions about their time in Cambodia.

What were your first impressions of Cambodia?

Jebby: “My first impression of Cambodia was twofold: the richness of the culture and the dire living conditions of many Cambodians.”

Chelsea: “To be honest I can’t quite remember my first impressions other than thinking ‘Wow this is sooo different to Australia!’ There was a massive culture shock on my end for sure but I really started to appreciate the culture difference as the week went on.”

What was your favourite part of the week on the build site?

Jebby: “My favourite part of the week on-site was the feeling of being part of a dedicated group of volunteers all driven by the desire to help people they didn’t even know; everyone helping each other to do the best job possible for a Cambodian family.”

Our Global Impact



46 Million People served since 1976



1.4 Million Volunteers mobilised



7 Million People served in Asia and the Pacific



Jebby takes a well earned break from the build site (above)

Chelsea: “I had many favourite times onsite however it was towards the end of the week, the looks the families would give you and how excited they were getting was priceless. I was so blown away with how we can all connect despite such a language barrier.”

Can you describe the experience overall in 1-2 sentences?

Jebby: “This build was so much more than I expected. The deeply satisfying teamwork and connection to the other volunteers was combined with the joy of helping a family whose life was changed by our work.”

Chelsea: “The best experience I have had in my life so far! A totally invaluable time that you get to spend connecting with others. If you feel as though



this is out of your comfort zone like I did, please lean into it. It will be the best thing you do for yourself.”

Finally, what would you say to someone like you thinking about joining a build?

Jebby: “Someone like me should not believe their age is necessarily a barrier to joining the effort, but they should also take a good hard look at their capability to be part of a hard-working team in sometimes tough conditions. Be prepared to be proud of yourself!”

Chloe: “Do it! I will never forget my experience with Habitat – it grew me as a person so much and the people you meet all have hearts of gold!”

Are you keen to get involved and make a difference in the lives of others? **Join us on an upcoming Global Village!**

Dates, locations and further information can be found by visiting helpinghandsonline/global-village



“We are so grateful that so many people came out and they’ve done a brilliant job. Absolutely brilliant. We’re just blown away by how hard they’ve worked...”



Milly and Pat: Forging a path to Bushfire Resilience

The impact of bushfires on Australian communities is devastating, and volunteers play a crucial role in supporting those affected. Habitat for Humanity Australia’s Bushfire Resilience program is an essential initiative that helps communities prepare and respond to bushfires and creates a lasting impact.

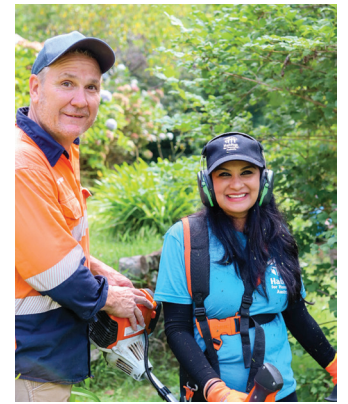
Often the people we assist are not able to independently prepare their property in a way that sufficiently reduces the risk to their home.

We recently headed out to the Blue Mountains to assist Milly and Pat in clearing their land. Prior to the last major bushfires in their area, Milly and Pat had a fire path cleared to allow for emergency access in the case that the fire reached their doorstep. Thankfully this was never used.

However, due to extreme weather over the last few years, including excessive rain and flooding, hazard reduction activities have been postponed across New South Wales. Vegetation quickly grew back at Milly and Pat’s property, more than doubling in volume.

Our volunteers were able to make a massive impact in just a few hours, for which Milly and Pat were extremely thankful.

“The risk is quite high here,” said Milly, “and just to have this done, helps to protect our property and our neighbours’ property too.”



Our Bushfire Resilience Program

Bushfires have been a natural part of Australia’s landscape for millions of years. However, in recent times, the pattern of bushfires has changed with shattering effects on Australian communities.

Climate change is a significant factor. In the lead up to the harrowing Black Summer fires in 2019 and 2020 there had been an extended period of drought, exacerbating the severity of the disaster.

Experts now warn that the unusual sequence of three wet La Nina climate events from 2021 to 2023 will mean additional fuel for bushfires the next time hot and dry conditions return. This could be as early as October 2023. This July, the World Meteorological Association declared the beginning of another El Nino weather event, bringing warmer than average temperatures and reduced rainfall to large areas of Australia. Our Bushfire Resilience site supervisor, Ben Moller says there is growing



anxiety in the community, particularly amongst the elderly people we work with, about how they will prepare for and withstand another fire season.

We know that it is less costly to act before a disaster devastates than it is to respond after the event. In Australia 98% of federal funding spent on disasters between 2005 and 2022 was spent on recovery and relief rather than building resilience. Taking a recovery approach rather than one of resilience means bigger, more

destructive fires that burn for longer. Our Bushfire Resilience Program is designed to address this gap. We mobilise volunteers to help community members who may not have the capacity to maintain their homes and clear away any potential hazards on properties and shared spaces. This means clearing natural fuels like excessive overgrowth from this past wet season, removing flammable hazards and debris and clearing a fire path to protect both the home but also

to act as an escape for both people and animals in the area.

Volunteer with us and help prevent the 2019-2020 Black Summer disaster from happening again.

Visit [helpinghandsonline/volunteer-in-australia](https://www.helpinghandsonline.org.au/volunteer-in-australia)



NAIDOC Week 2023

Each year we mobilize teams of fantastic corporate volunteers to support First Nations communities in celebration of NAIDOC week. Across the month of July 120 volunteers participated in more than 10 days of work. Together, they collectively accomplished over 850 hours of labor.

This year our volunteers in QLD helped to renovate and improve housing and shelter for First Nations families experiencing homelessness due to domestic and family violence.

In NSW our volunteers helped maintain and repair a youth centre in the heart of an Aboriginal community in Redfern. This work supports hundreds of children and their families for many years to come.

We also worked carrying out repairs, painting and landscaping across two sites that support First Nations people to settle back into life following incarceration. This work helped to create warm and comfortable spaces for residents on their journeys reintegrating back into the community.



Building hope for the future

Your Will can do more than protect your loved ones. It can help Habitat for Humanity build brighter futures for generations to come. By leaving a gift in your Will to Habitat for Humanity Australia, you know that you are creating a legacy of lasting impact.

After your loved ones have been provided for, a gift in your Will can help secure safe and decent housing for some of the world's most disadvantaged families and transform lives for generations to come.

In recognition of Include a Charity Week this September, Habitat for Humanity are again partnering with Safewill, Australia's leading online Will writing platform, to offer our supporters the opportunity to write a bespoke Will online.



“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 and Engagement.



Scan here or go to safewill.com/habitat



If you would like to have a friendly, confidential chat about leaving a gift in your Will, please contact Annie Pietersz, our Philanthropy Manager on (02) 9919 7024 or apietersz@habitat.org.au, she'd be delighted to speak with you.

How to get involved

get involved



1800 88 55 99



habitat.org.au/spring2023



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