

Empowering Communities



Workers learning about the sustainable qualities of bamboo in construction.

Building Greener Futures with Bamboo

Empowering Communities through Sustainable Housing

In the Philippines, bamboo is emerging as a powerful solution to two major challenges: climate change and housing insecurity.

Often called the “poor man’s timber,” bamboo is anything but. It grows fast, requires little water, and doesn’t need pesticides. It also absorbs carbon dioxide and helps prevent soil erosion - making it one of the most sustainable building materials available.

Bamboo’s benefits also go beyond the environment. With support from **Habitat for Humanity’s Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter**, local cooperatives like the **Kawayan Collective** are turning bamboo into strong, treated materials for homes and furniture. These efforts are creating jobs, building skills, and helping families access safer, more affordable housing.

One exciting innovation is the **bamboo starter home** - a durable, eco-friendly structure that costs less than traditional social housing. These homes are cooler in hot weather and built using locally

sourced materials, reducing transport emissions and supporting the local economy.

Despite its potential, bamboo is still not widely used in mainstream construction. That’s why Habitat is working with local partners to raise awareness, improve policies, and train more builders in bamboo construction techniques.

Your support helps:



Train local workers in bamboo harvesting and construction



Develop affordable bamboo housing solutions



Advocate for bamboo-friendly building codes



Empower families to build safer, greener homes

Together, we’re not just building homes - we’re building **resilient communities and a more sustainable future**.

Home is the foundation for dignity and belonging

Jennifer's story shows how safe housing changes lives.

When Jennifer arrived at a youth shelter at just 13, she believed "living in a refuge was rock bottom." She was scared and unsure of what the future held. What she found was a place of healing, growth, and possibility.

Jennifer had known what it was like to live in chaos. But stepping into a freshly painted, clean space - thanks to our Brush with Kindness program - was transformative. "Coming home to this refuge, to a clean environment is so important because for everyone living here, you don't have a second home. **This is your home.**"

With support from Dulux and local volunteers, Habitat helped refresh bedrooms, living areas,

and communal spaces - **creating a sense of dignity and a fresh start for young people in crisis.** Jennifer felt that deeply: "It's obviously pre-lived in, everyone has... come in, lived and then left... **seeing it freshly painted is like a fresh start.**"

Jennifer's confidence grew. Over time, she came to realise that the refuge was far more than just temporary shelter - it was a place that nurtured her sense of self-worth and independence. She began to see her future differently. **"I signed my first lease at 16...and I just decided to join a real estate course, and hopefully I can work my way up to the top and get a set of apartment blocks**



"Seeing it freshly painted is like a fresh start."

and house people - young people, women escaping domestic violence."

Jennifer knows firsthand how crucial it is for young people to have stable homes. She's seen the harmful impact it can have on their education,

health, and social connectedness when they remain in unsafe housing or are at risk of homelessness. Her drive to help others find safe, empowering spaces motivates her to make a difference in the lives of those who need it most.

Global Village

Volunteer overseas and transform lives, working side-by-side with communities to create safe, sustainable homes around the world.

volunteer.habitat.org.au/global-village



Scan here for more information



Your Support Is Saving Lives: How Better Housing Helps Women Thrive

Right now, over 1 billion people live in informal settlements - places without safe housing, clean water, or proper toilets. Women living in these areas face even greater risks to their health and safety. With your support, we're changing that.

Through the **Home Equals campaign**, Habitat is working to improve housing in informal settlements around the world. The results are powerful. Research shows that simple upgrades - like clean cooking fuel, private toilets, and access to water - prevents illness and saves lives.

Women in these communities are leading the way - organising for safer sanitation, better health care, and

stronger protections. With your help, they're not just surviving, they're building healthier, safer futures.

Your support means more than bricks and mortar. It means dignity, safety, and empowerment for women who need it most. **Thank you for being part of this change. Together, we're proving that home equals health, safety, and opportunity.**

Foundations for Change

Four Reasons Housing Matters



Social Cohesion

Stable housing enables people to build lasting community ties, access education and contribute to society.



Health and Wellbeing

Secure housing minimises the risk of physical illness and poor mental health associated with housing insecurity.



Economic Stability

Affordable housing enables people to invest in their futures, maintain employment and reduce reliance on social services.



Accessibility

Housing is the foundation for stability - enabling better access to education, employment, and healthcare, further helping to break the poverty cycle.

A New Chapter



Outgoing CEO Nicole Stanmore

A New Chapter

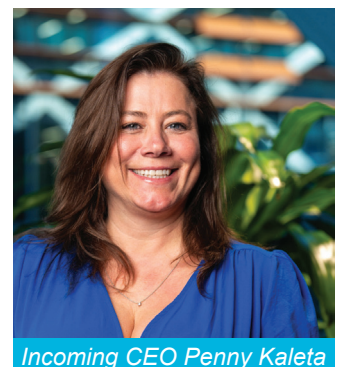
Celebrating the legacy of outgoing CEO Nicole Stanmore and embracing the vision of incoming CEO Penny Kaleta.

After close to six years of dedicated leadership, We bid farewell to CEO **Nicole Stanmore**. Nicole's tenure saw transformative achievements, including accreditation as a Community Housing Provider, the launch of our social enterprise, Habitat Women and the completion of a refuge supporting First Nations women and children. Nicole also oversaw our

partnership with DFAT to deliver the Water for Women project in Fiji, empowering women, girls and vulnerable communities to lead healthier, more resilient lives. Her passion for sustainable housing and community empowerment has left a lasting impact across Australia and the Asia-Pacific.

We're excited to welcome **Penny Kaleta** as our new CEO. Penny brings over 20 years of experience in media, marketing, and social impact, most recently focusing on youth homelessness. Her collaborative

leadership style and commitment to building strong partnerships will help drive Habitat's mission forward. Penny is eager to build on our foundation and lead us into a future of innovation, inclusion, and lasting change.



Incoming CEO Penny Kaleta

Brush with Kindness: Impact Snapshot

It's been a fantastic year so far for *Brush with Kindness* across Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Newcastle. Thanks to your ongoing support, our volunteer days are growing stronger, and the numbers say it all.



Since January, **2,028 volunteers** have helped transform **162 properties** into safe, welcoming homes for families in crisis. That's **over 810 families** whose lives have been directly improved.

We've teamed up with a wide range of community organisations that champion strength and resilience in the face of adversity. Together, we've supported women and children rebuilding their lives after domestic violence, Indigenous families maintaining connection, people overcoming housing challenges, men's shelters and people navigating mental health challenges. **Every home repaired reflects the courage and dignity of those we work alongside – and the power of community action to build lasting change.**

One standout project? *Front Yard Blitz* on Piccolo Way. Our ambitious goal: renovate **30 front yards in 30 days**. Volunteers painted, mowed, planted, trimmed, and repaired, breathing new life into run-down spaces. The impact was immediate and deeply felt. 32 properties were transformed, supporting **more than 160 people** living on low incomes or facing housing insecurity.

During NAIDOC Week, we proudly partnered with local housing providers to support Indigenous residents.

In recognition of the 2025 theme, "*The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy*", **137 volunteers refurbished 11 homes**, making positive change for **32 families**. It was an inspiring reminder of what we can achieve when we work together.

From team-building days to community action, every supporter makes a powerful difference. Whether you've picked up a paintbrush, donated, or helped spread the word, **your support builds brighter futures, one home at a time.**



Stay in touch - we'd love to hear from you!

get involved



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habitat.org.au/spring2025



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