



Habitat for Humanity®

Singapore



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Tis the season to give thanks and be jolly!

We have much to give thanks for: a fruitful year of successful Builds which have sown much into the lives of our Home Partners, a few major sessions of Operation Homeworks, a new college chapter in SMU, a debut launch of our ReStore in eBay, a few new faces in the staff team, our determined volunteers, our corporate partners and sponsors, volunteers and dear supporters like you!

Every bit of effort matters in this cause, for each little bit will add up into a mighty force of transformation which moves to address the state of poverty housing through hope!

We thank you for all your continued support throughout this season. Let's continue to work hand in hand to make this a world where everyone has a decent place to live!



ABOUT HABITAT

Habitat for Humanity (HFH) International is a non-profit Christian housing organisation with a mission to eliminate poverty housing worldwide by building simple, decent houses with the help of the homeowner families themselves and volunteers.

Habitat for Humanity builds for people of all backgrounds, races and religions to provide needy families with a simple and decent place to live in.

GLOBAL VILLAGE PROGRAMME

Habitat Singapore sends volunteers to work with other Habitat offices around various parts of the world for building projects. These countries include Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, East Malaysia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Global Village programme is an initiative to allow Singaporeans a chance to contribute to eliminating poverty housing on an international scale as well as helping them gain experience in different working cultures. Global Village programmes last longer than short builds, for typically 7 days, so that the work will have more significant impact.

Building with Interlocking Bricks!

With the generous support of Lien i3 Challenge from Lien Foundation, we have built an interlocking brick factory in Batam. Together with our co-workers at Habitat for Humanity Indonesia, the idea was to improve on our build quality, produce our own bricks, and to research into better and cheaper ways of constructing decent and affordable houses for those in need.

We are happy to report that the factory has produced its first batch of 35,000 interlocking bricks! I went there last Tuesday to take a look at the progress. Here's a photo of the factory:



Part of the plan was to do up a sample house, experimenting with the brick placement, learning and working out the problems encountered. The house would serve also as a demonstration of our abilities for the home partners, who would need to be convinced of adopting the new building approach (since they have to pay back the cost of the house at a not-for-profit manner, they would have a say as to how the house would be built). Since this sample house has been paid for by the grant from Lien Foundation, Habitat Indonesia would look for a deserving recipient who would get the house for free.

My team and I went to where the sample house was being built by Habitat Indonesia staff. We were busy taking photos and examining the built when I saw an elderly man busy pushing the bricks on a wheel-barrow, and helping out in the construction process. I asked him for his age, and he told me he is 75 years-old! I mean, the man was pushing barrows of heavy bricks, holding on to the window and door frames while the construction crew was working... tough, tough work for a 75 year-old!

BATAM BUILD PROGRAMME

The Batam Build (BB) programme has the same objectives as Global Village, except that it comprises of short builds in Batam that range from 1 day to a maximum of 3 days. The Batam Build programme aims to allow volunteers who may not have the financial ability nor the time an opportunity to contribute to building houses for the poor.

DISASTER RESPONSE

HFH Singapore believes in her Christian mission to show love, and her social responsibility to neighbouring countries and the world at large. As such, HFH Singapore aids in the rebuilding work of countries struck by calamities such as natural disasters by providing funds, manpower, and technical expertise. In 2005, HFH Singapore sent teams to participate in a post-tsunami building project in Indonesia, Aceh. In 2008, about 1700 houses were built, made possible by a \$14.3 million (SGD) donation from the Singapore Red Cross, and an additional \$0.8 million (SGD) that was raised by HFH Singapore.



Above: The Interlocking Brick house under construction



Above: Pak Hadi Raharjo and his soon-to-be new house.

OPERATION HOMEWORKS

Many elderly and handicapped people live alone in houses that are cluttered and sometimes unhygienic. Habitat's 'Operation Homeworks' engages volunteers to clean, clear clutter, remove pests, replace broken furniture and bedding to improve the safety and sanitation of the homes of the elderly and handicapped monthly.

Operation Homeworks has benefited more than 200 elderly and disabled peoples' homes to date with the help of more than 1,200 volunteers. This project was well received by MediaCorp who reported during the news broadcasts in all their TV channels.



Above: Pak Hadi Raharjo's previous house, and his wheel-chair bound wife.

We struck up a conversation, and found out that Pak Hadi Raharjo and his wheelchair-bound wife Ngatimah (69 years old) have been struggling with everyday life. He makes a living by selling tapioca on a wheel-barrow, but need help from his neighbours who regularly send him food and some financial support. Habitat Indonesia staff found the couple living in a horrible poverty-house (see above), and decided to let him have the same house we are building.

Pak Hadi Raharjo said in an interview with Habitat Indonesia, "When I heard from Sri, my daughter, that the house is for free, I only said to her if it finally comes true, that means that this house would be a gift from God. There are no right words to describe how I feel except to thank Habitat for Humanity. At the end of our lives, we finally will have a decent, safe and simple house to live in. We can only pray that God would return all the favors and bless Habitat for Humanity and their supporters for their concern and care towards all the people who have a dream of a better place to live."

So, we've just helped a 75 year-old man and his 69 year-old wheelchair-bound wife off their rotten house, into a new inter-locking brick house. All in a day's work...

Man, I've got a great job! Tell me your work brings you such satisfaction!

*Yong Teck Meng
National Director*

DONATIONS

Habitat for Humanity Singapore relies entirely on donations and support from corporations and individuals for her operation.

To make a donation, write a cheque, made payable to "Habitat for Humanity Singapore".

Include your name, contact number, address and "donation" on the back of the cheque.

Or make a credit card donation at <http://www.habitat.org.sg/donate.html>



ReStore is Now on eBay!

We are pleased to announce that ReStore, our platform for selling donated items is now up on eBay.

This makes *ReStore, Reuse and Recycle* even more convenient, for everyone can now browse and buy ReStore items directly through the internet.

Habitat ReStores are part of Habitat for Humanity's global effort in ensuring that we live in a world where every person has a decent place to call home. ReStores are typically stores that receive donations-in-kind from the public and companies to recycle and re-use. After restoration, the items are sold at the hundreds of ReStores in many countries where Habitat operates, thereby reducing landfill and promoting environmental well-being, while raising much needed funds for our fight against poverty-housing.

This virtual ReStore in Singapore will be a channel in making this world a better place for all. The income generated will be used to support our community programmes.

How you can help:

1. **Donating:** Write to us at restore@habitat.org.sg if you have items you want to donate to us. We can only handle small items at this stage in time due to storage constraint. Please ensure that all items are in good working condition. Kindly drop your items at our office from Monday - Friday (9.30am - 5.30pm). We can also do a collection at your doorstep from 10am - 4pm on the first Tuesday of each month.
2. **Giving:** You can purchase an item and give it to someone who needs it.

With your help and partnership with families from all backgrounds, races and religions, Habitat has built more than 500,000 houses worldwide, providing safe and affordable homes for more than 1.75 million people. Help to provide even more families with the comfort and security that come with a safe home.

Donate a gift today!

Visit ReStore at <http://stores.ebay.com.sg/Habitat-Singapore-ReStore>

Nehemiah IBOD Award 2011 Nominee for Outstanding Volunteer:

Ong Li Li

Li Li walked 100km from 17 June to 18 June 2011 as part of a fundraising effort for Bare Your Sole 2011. Besides raising a significant sum of money as an individual fundraiser, her act of charity generated much awareness through wide media coverage. She has kindly written some words of encouragement and reflection about her volunteering experience with Habitat:

Everyone has his own plans for achieving life objectives every year. I find it quite surprising when I think back about this year's personal achievements and marvellous experiences as a volunteer.



In the first quarter of this year, I put in a lot of effort searching internet websites, hoping to get sponsoring organisations involved in organising a 100km walk. I didn't get any responses until one day when I thought of the Habitat for Humanity *Bare Your Sole* 5km walk which I joined in 2010. I planned to start the 100km walk one day earlier and join Bare Your Sole 2011 the next morning in the 4km barefoot walk to create awareness and to raise funds for Habitat for Humanity Singapore.

Keeping in mind the idea of wearing no shoes to remember people with no homes, I directed my colleagues and friends to participate the in the charity. Although I personally completed a 100km walk in 2008, this was a much bigger challenge. I considered myself fortunate because when I told my friends and colleagues about my walk, most were supportive of it and showed their support through donations and words of encouragement. These encouragements got me through the long hours of training and hard work that had to be put in for the walk.



The most challenging part of the day walk was completing the last portion of the 100km walk before continuing with the rest of participants in the Bare Your Sole 2011. I was in terrible pain in the lower back when walking towards the second checkpoint. I had to stay focused on the cause for this charity and endured all the pain and aches to complete the walk. My team mates encouraged each other and we managed to complete the overnight walk. I am very grateful for the team effort, without which I would not have been able to complete this difficult task.

My second project with Habitat Humanity was to build shelter for the local community in Matale Sri Lanka, July 29 to August 13, 2011. We were in a village helping the local mason to build his house. We worked in teams of two and were assigned to carrying cement, digging and to shifting gravel. The hospitality of the home partner family was very touching – they prepared tea breaks, local delicacies with the little they had. One weeks' worth of strenuous work with sores and aches finally resulted in a proper shelter for the family of three kids.

The handover ceremony for the new house was also very touching—I was overwhelmed with tears of joy. I learned in this project that even simple pleasures in life can be so fulfilling.



My third project with Habitat for Humanity was to volunteer in Operation Homeworks at Kreta Ayer. I organised a group of colleagues to clean up one household for elderly tenants. We also visit the elderly as often as we can to lend our helping hand and to spend time with them. This has taught me to appreciate and show love and care to the elderly, especially our own parents. It also reminds me that one day we all will grow old.

I believe we can all help in whatever ways we can if we can break the barrier of our comfort zone and make the first move as a little effort or sacrifice on our part. This can be done in partnership with any charitable organization, and the experience you gain is much more than you can imagine.

What are you waiting for? Just do it.



Noteworthy Thoughts from Our Volunteers:

Doreen Neo, Singapore Polytechnic, GV Build 3 – 9 Oct 2011 at Chiang Mai

Ever since we are informed about this building trip, I was already eagerly looking forward to it. I have always wanted to get a hands-on experience to build houses for people who were less fortunate. And I was finally able to do so through this trip. Teamwork was the key thing I have learned through this project. At the start, most of us were not close to one another, but it was through working together that we got to bond together. Everyone played their part to make the whole project successful; shoveling the sand, passing the buckets through human chain, mixing of cement and mortar and aligning the concrete brick walls together - it was a tiring task but undertaken with a spirit of perseverance. The team contributed in the efficiency of building the house, as it is said, 'many hands make the work light'.

Knowing that we were building this house for a family, we gave our best effort. Working together with the homeowners and Habitat for Humanity staff in this project gave each of us a sense of ownership of the house.

Every day we left the site dirty, tired and exhausted but proud when we looked back at what we had accomplished for that day. I believe this trip also reinforced some of the things I've learned in my Interior design course as well, such as mixing of concrete and handling certain tools. It was truly a memorable and fruitful trip, where I believe through building a house, we actually build lives.

Chung Er Yu, Singapore Polytechnic, GV Build 3 – 9 Oct 2011 at Chiang Mai

We felt that one of the problems faced is communicating with the locals there. At first, there seemed to be a wall between us and them, not knowing and understanding what they were saying to us during the work, but slowly, as we watched their actions and listened to how they talk to us, I felt that we're talking with our actions and not with our mouths any more.

Through this whole project, even though it was tiring and the work could be quite tough, I think what I really received was the joy and love of the people there. Even though they do not earn much but together they live, work, talk, and care for one another as a whole family.

Throwing everything aside, I envy them, because they live such a free and fulfilled life. Although life could be a little tough, their burdens seem to be lifted up as they come together. I felt so warm-hearted and happy to be there, and although it's a little sad to leave that place, it is really a meaningful and fruitful trip because I have learnt something from them.

Team Ohana, Batam Build 21 to 22 Oct 2011

With a little bit of love and care... we can make a difference, brick by brick.

Why We Build

Joining a couple of teams for Builds this year generated food for thought which shaped the way I think about our work since I came aboard the staff team in Singapore.

Numerous volunteers give of their time and energy year after year, travelling to unfamiliar lands to build houses for families in need. A significant number of repeat volunteers look forward to Build trips year after year, keen to visit the houses that they worked on before, just to see how the families are doing.

Many volunteers often say that they are very happy just to be a part of this hope-building process, and the satisfaction that the livelihood of a family has been improved more than justifies all the sweat and toil in the house-building process.

There is joy in the knowledge that every week, families are delivered from their old run-down shacks into decent new homes, where there is warmth and shelter from the weather. Children who would otherwise be living helplessly in the ugly state of poverty can be nurtured into useful members of society.

Sometimes, we might fail to see the immediate value of a simple thing that we do for others, but in the case of Habitat, even a simple act like passing bricks can be an essential step in delivering a family out of poverty for generations to come. The little things do matter.

Thus, let us continue to make a difference in the lives of others. We can either choose to give financially, or to give our time and energy at the frontlines by helping to build a house. Let us make it a matter of conscience to make sure that the world is a place where everyone has a decent place to live.

It starts with us.

Tan Eng Kwang
Volunteer Relations Executive

NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL

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What is Habitat Gift that Gives ?

HabitatGifts are perfect for those hard-to-buy-for people on your Christmas shopping list. Instead of spending money on IT gadgets and fashion, consider giving a life-changing virtual gift in honor of a friend or family members and help Habitat build safe, decent and affordable houses in partnership with families around the world. It is unique, meaningful and fully tax-deductible.

All you need to do is choose the gift from the gift catalogue and complete the form.

Through “Gift that Gives”, many lives will be touched and transformed this Christmas. Thank you for choosing to make a difference this blessed season.

Warmest Blessings,

Habitat for Humanity Singapore

The Christmas gift catalogue contains items that symbolically represent our work. Each gift is a donation to Habitat for Humanity Singapore and will be used where it is needed most – to ultimately provide safe, decent and affordable housing in partnership with people living in poverty around the world.



Share your gift during this blessed season!

Christmas Gift that Gives : Stamp Edition

Decent housing saves lives. It rekindles hope and roots families and communities. In decent housing, the walls are strong, the roof and concrete floors are secure - the family inside focuses on thriving rather than on surviving.

To date, 25% of the world's population or 1.5 billion people still live in substandard houses or no shelter at all. Substandard housing can significantly affect emotional well-being and physical health. Habitat for Humanity has successfully built half a million Habitat houses and 2.5 million people live in these decent, affordable homes. We invite you to take part in Habitat for Humanity's program and be a hope builder to impact lives.



* All the amounts stated on the stamps are estimations and illustrations, and are not for direct, traceable designation of your donation. Your donation will go to support the work of Habitat for Humanity Singapore in general.



Share your gift during this blessed season!

Habitat Stamps Order Form



Please fill up the following details

Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Mdm: _____

NRIC: _____ Hp: _____

Email address: _____

Address: _____

No	Item	Price	Unit Order	Subtotal
1	2 Hammers	\$25		
2	5 Boxes of nails	\$30		
3	100 Bricks	\$40		
4	Squatting Toilet	\$50		
5	Plant a Tree	\$60		
6	2 Shovels	\$70		
7	Plumbing System	\$150		
8	1 Set of Doors	\$250		
9	Toilet	\$300		
10	Kitchen	\$500		
11	Roof	\$600		
12	Bedroom	\$750		
13	Living Room	\$1000		
14	Playground	\$2500		
15	1 house sponsorship	\$5000		
Total				

*** All the amounts stated on the stamps are estimations and illustrations, and are not for direct, traceable designation of your donation. Your donation will go to support the work of Habitat for Humanity Singapore in general.

I would like to dedicate the gift to _____ Email: _____

Payment method :

Cheque
Please make payable to **Habitat for Humanity Singapore Ltd**

Cash
Please print out this form and submit personally to Habitat for Humanity Singapore office.

Master card / Visa card / Pay pal
Please go to <http://www.habitat.org.sg/donate.html> and submit the donation online. Kindly indicate your gift dedication message and your friend's email address and name in "Any Remarks" column in order for us to email them accordingly.

For cheque payment please mail this form to

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