



APRIL 2018

 **Habitat for Humanity**
Japan

Volunteers plant mangrove seedlings in spare moments from house building work.

14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND

Environmental Conservation and Community Support

Habitat for Humanity Japan (Habitat Japan) is providing support for Baan Bagan community, located in Krabi Province of southern Thailand.

Around 1,000 residents live in this fishing village surrounded by mangroves. However, the number of mangrove forests has been shrinking with the rise in sea level, resulting from the global warming. Preserving the mangroves helps villagers as more than 90 percent of them make their livelihood by catching fishes inhabiting the forests as well as it can protect the village from natural disasters such as tsunami. To date, Japanese volunteers have planted more than 1,000 mangrove seedlings. At first these seedlings are only 20 centimeters long, but within three years they grow up to fairly tall.

The average income of a fisherman in Baan Bagan is approximately 8000 bahts (about ¥27,000). Without a single high school in the village, the reality here is children start working as a fisherman shortly after graduating from junior high school to help their family. Since we started to support the community in the spring of 2017, Habitat Japan has not only been committed to the housing support, but also making great efforts on helping with the dyeing of handicrafts called “batik” and reforestation of mangroves. In the past years, a total of 153 volunteers from nine teams joined in this comprehensive community support in Baan Bagan.

In order to build a sustainable community your continuous support is essential, and we thank you for your cooperation.

SDGs that Come from the Home

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal call to action to end global issues such as poverty and the global warming. Though our focus is on housing issues, Habitat for Humanity is not only making efforts to achieve “Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities,” but also working with corporates and partner organizations to achieve all 17 goals.

Our agendas are diverse, ranging from building eco-friendly communities; setting toilets and wells for better hygienic environment; and approaching to locals’ health problems. We indeed cover more issues such as building houses strong enough to natural disasters and securing space where children can study safely. Building a house itself cannot solve all problems related to living, but having a home where one can live safe without worries lead to solve these problems.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

*17 global goals to be achieved by 2030
for realizing a sustainable society*

Energy and our lives

Energy is an integral part of our everyday life. Many of the families that Habitat support live in poverty and paying for energy is a significant burden on their household budget. While fuel types vary between oil/coal in urban areas to firewood in rural areas, every household needs fuel for their everyday living. Habitat provides support through energy-efficient home designs as well as domestic finance trainings for homeowners.

Photo: An Indian lady cooking outdoors over firewood. Cost of firewood bears a significant burden on household budget.



As an opportunity to educate young generations about renewable energy and sustainable development goals, a [training on clean energy](#) was conducted at “Kawashima Taiyou to Shizen no Megumi Solar Park”, Japan’s largest floating solar plant. One of the participating students said “it was an opportunity to learn about clean energy and think about the future of our planet.”

The students later stood in the shape of the sun and filmed themselves using a drone that is usually used for inspecting solar panels. The pictures were posted on social media to raise awareness towards [energy and the future of our planet](#).



Youth Initiatives for the Future



Photo: Japanese student volunteer teaching children in Myanmar how to brush their teeth.

Through a youth campaign called “[Habitat Young Leaders Build \(HYLB\)](#)”, youth from various Asia Pacific countries are participating in volunteer and awareness activities. Asia has the largest population of youth but also has the most number of aging cities. Habitat believes in the importance of thinking about the future of young generations in order to have a sustainable community. As part of the campaign, Habitat launched leadership academies in the Philippines and Nepal to develop future leaders. Similar programs will also start in Japan in 2019 to develop youth leaders who can drive initiatives in Asia.



During an [Eco-community training](#) in Togane, Chiba, a workshop was conducted about co-existence between human and nature. A forest that has once been intervened by human would require ongoing maintenance by human. Thinning and pruning are important processes to allow sunlight to penetrate throughout the forest and protect the forest. Some of the participating students set foot in a large forest for the first time. This was an opportunity to think about the importance of forest preservation and the future.

 **SmartEnergy**

Special thanks to [Smart Energy Co., Ltd.](#) for their contribution towards clean energy and eco-community trainings.

Improving living environment and securing a place to live

Homeless, vacant houses, garbage houses - these are the examples of housing issues in Japan. **Project HomeWorks (PHW)**, Habitat's housing support project in Tokyo area, provides clean-up support for those living in so-called garbage houses which are full of clutter causing unsanitary living environment. Public nuisance is usually at the center of the discussion about garbage houses, but we would see the true issue that lies behind the condition of those houses when we stand beside a person who lives in such house.

Protecting the home where people live now

Mr. X is one of the homepartners we supported through PHW. He now lives in an apartment in Tokyo but once was a homeless. He also suffers dementia. The room was full of things he collected and had no space to lay out a futon. Mr. X, however, was smiling in the middle of the room with stacks of filled garbage bags. If he continues living in unsanitary conditions with those overflowing belongings, it is likely that he wouldn't be able to renew his apartment lease agreement and would lose a place to live having no choice but to live on the street again. Therefore, there was an urgent need to improve his living environment. Five of our volunteers visited him a few days later and removed 500kg of garbage in just half a day. The floor finally showed up and now he can lay the futon to sleep. As you can see from this case, improvement of living environment includes the action to protect the home where people live now.



Project HomeWorks which launched in April 2017 provides cleaning and maintenance support to solve living environment issues.

< Cleaning and maintenance support >

With more than 130 volunteers (as of March 2018), Habitat supported those who deals with difficulties such as aging, disabilities and financial reasons. Cleaning support aims to improve living environment. Interaction with volunteers can motivate homepartners to take the first step for improvement of their living environment while our volunteers can directly grasp the actual needs. Learning from their experience, volunteers are also able to turn their knowledge into action in providing support. Renovation/repair support is provided to make current living environment more safe and decent, for example, installation of fence guard for bay windows, handrails for steep stairs and soundproof materials as well as replacing ceiling board. Supporting shelters for people in need can also raise awareness for the social significance of shelters.

< Housing issues and our future initiatives >

Habitat keeps in touch with homepartners by revisiting and watching them attentively so that they can maintain decent living conditions. We will also launch full-scale support for people who have high risk of being denied to rent a house in Japan due to age, disability, gender or nationality.

Accomplishment for FY2017 (April 2017-March 2018)

- Number of households Habitat Japan supported: 17 households

- Number of volunteers: 134 volunteers

Thank you for
supporting
Project HomeWorks

J.P.Morgan

Bloomberg

Johnson & Johnson
FAMILY OF COMPANIES IN JAPAN

This spring will mark one year since Habitat Japan launched Project HomeWorks, which tackles local housing issues. Looking back, we met many different homepartners, supporters, and volunteers. Whilst spending time with people of differing ages and occupation, from students to company employees, I was touched by how they all met homepartners with earnest and, in their own way turned their knowledge into actions to respond to the homepartner's needs. Sometimes I worried about whether or not I would be able to convey well why these activities were necessary; however, these worries were always nothing more than needless worries. I too was able to learn many things from all of the volunteer's sensitivities and efforts and I was inspired by their support for our activities. In our second year we are going to continue to broaden the subjects and issues we deal with as well as our target areas. Once again, we sincerely thank you for continued cooperation.

Yoko Kurita, Habitat for Humanity Japan



Greetings from Cecilia Melin, New Board Chair of Habitat for Humanity Japan



It is my pleasure to send you warm greetings as the newly appointed Board Chair of Habitat for Humanity Japan. I would like to thank our donors, partners and volunteers who have contributed to our vision of “a world where everyone has a decent place to live.”

I first joined Habitat for Humanity as a volunteer in 2009. Together with my family, I visited a village in Thailand. The three-generation family comprised 12 people who were living in a small room with only a wood-burning kitchen outside and no sanitation facility. We worked with members of the family and a carpenter to build a simple home. While the poverty was shocking, the family and their neighbors made us feel deeply appreciated. Gradually we were accepted into their small community. Every day the family members had more smiles on their faces as they saw their new home take shape. When the house was finished, many cried out of joy and we felt we had received far more than we had given to the family. We were so impressed with this project that we later built homes in more than six countries.

Since our inception in 2003, Habitat Japan has supported thousands of families, thanks to our volunteers and donors. In 2017, Habitat Japan sent a record number of Global Village volunteers – more than 1,200 – to build homes in the Asia-Pacific region. We also serve our communities in Tokyo through Project HomeWorks by cleaning or rehabilitating the homes of the vulnerable elderly or those with disabilities living alone in cluttered and unhygienic houses. Together with the excellent and committed staff and volunteers of Habitat Japan, we aim to extend Japan's Omotenashi spirit to help more people in need.

A Swedish proverb goes like this: “Shared joy is double joy; shared sorrow is half a sorrow.” Joyful or sad, we know we are not alone for we work side by side with our committed donors, partners and volunteers to ensure that everyone has a decent place to live.” Together, we can build a brighter future for families and more sustainable communities. Through shelter, we empower.

Every donation makes a difference

Habitat's mission is supported by many individuals, corporates and organizations. Your donation will help families to build a safe and secure place to call home. Please make a donation to build strength, stability, and self reliance through shelter.

- Postal Transfer -

Account number : 00100-2-278431

Account holder : (特活) HFH ジャパン

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