

H F H J News Letter



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Habitat for Humanity Japan Newsletter
Issue 31

 News from the Field

3 Years Since the Great East Japan Earthquake

KIZUNA Project

Typhoon Haiyan Relief in the Philippines





Typhoon Haiyan Relief ~Re-Build Philippines Program~

On 8 November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan, one of the strongest storms on record with a maximum wind velocity of 105kph, plowed across the center of the Philippines including Leyte and the Cebu Islands, in Central Visayas. According to the Philippine government 6,201 people were killed and 1,785 remain missing. This super typhoon was one of the biggest natural disasters of the decade, following the Great East Japan Earthquake. The physical devastation in the Philippines left in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan is worse than Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. With devastation six times as high as Haiti, 1.1 million homes were damaged, including 550 thousand that were totally destroyed.

For Long Term Rebuilding Efforts

Shelters / places to rest are most needed when a natural disaster occurs. Habitat for Humanity (Habitat) typically distributes home repair kits for emergency relief, however in the case of the Philippines Habitat also distributed 4,000 emergency shelter kits including tarpaulins donated by the UK Government starting on 14 November 2013. From 22 November, 2013, two weeks after Haiyan hit, Habitat started home repair kit distribution as well.



Habitat now plans to distribute three million home repair kits to the most devastated areas such as Guiuan of Eastern Samar, Daanbantayan of Northern Cebu, and Tacloban of Leyte with the assistance of partner organizations.

Home Partner Story

Rennie Abulencia needed just three days to complete most of a new shelter in his hometown of Guiuan where the typhoon first made landfall. He was working quickly, with help from his father and brother, so that his wife and sons could come back home from Manila. Because his boat was washed away Rennie was left without a source of income. Without the Habitat materials, he said, he has no idea what he would have done.



Family Sponsorship For Happy Families around the World

*A new way
to help families secure
decent places to live*



Simple but decent housing is a foundation for human living and in breaking the cycle of poverty. Family sponsorship is a new project wherein sponsors in Japan are connected to families in need overseas, supporting their life-changing event: Habitat's housing program.

Family Case for Ms. Boonjua

Ms. Boonjua lives with her husband, three children and a grandson. The family was forced to move out of their rented house five years ago. She lived on the streets for a while, until she secured enough money to buy land at a discounted price from her friend. Even after purchasing land they lived in a makeshift hut pieced together with collected materials. The walls and roof were full of holes and there were no windows or doors whatsoever. The roof leaked every time it rained and pests and other animals could crawl in and out freely. "During the typhoon season," she says "we leave our kids at a neighbor's house while my husband and I hold the roof from blowing away all night."



Sponsor to witness, support and stay connected!

It was one of Habitat Japan's partner corporations that lend helping hand for Ms. Boonjua and her family. The company saw the benefit to be connected with the family and the community over time, and decided to take part as a family sponsor. Not only to provide funds, but also the employees traveled to Thailand as volunteer team last October and worked on the very house they sponsored. In the scorching heat the volunteers carried baskets of sand and laid blocks side by side with the family. Though they didn't speak the same language, the time spent together and experience shared surely built bonds and a house that will last. Some months later in February, we have received report that the family successfully moved into their completed house to start their new life.



Habitat Japan is now looking for family sponsors in Japan.
For more information, contact us at info@habitatjp.org

3 Years

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake

Three years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake, when Habitat for Humanity Japan (Habitat Japan) started its emergency relief operation, organized debris clearing, and home starter kit distribution.

In the following year Habitat Japan financially supported families that could not afford to repair their homes and provided housing consultations.

Habitat Japan also supported community revitalization by renovating and rebuilding community facilities damaged by the disaster.

Habitat Japan has supported not only the rebuilding of individual households but also the affected communities.

Volunteers Mobilized in 2013: 646

- 1 Repaired/Renovated:** 53 Homes
4 Community Centers / Facilities
- 2 Housing Consultations:** 86 Families
- 3 Fitting of Solar Power Generation Systems:** 13 Families
4 Community Centers
- 4 Communities Revitalized*:** 21 Communities

*Habitat Japan focuses not only on the homes affected by the disaster, but also the surrounding communities. Renovating and rebuilding community facilities and building benches and storage units, Habitat Japan helped rebuild the affected communities so that people can restart their own lives after returning home.

Challenges Ahead in Tohoku



It has been three years since the disaster but the occupancy rate of temporary shelters is still nearly 90%. "What are we going to do now?" This is a simple but fundamental question that any affected family may have. More than ever, Habitat Japan is called on to serve those in need of "a decent place to live." On the other hand, the public seems to be gradually losing interest in the issues of the affected people. NGOs and other Civil Society Organizations that assisted people in the disaster affected areas are scaling down their operations or have already left from the disaster areas. It is becoming increasingly difficult for Habitat Japan to continue the relief operations in Tohoku.

In 2014 the "Deepening" and "Spreading" Initiative

In 2014, Habitat Japan began employing the "Deepening and Spreading" initiative. Housing issues are becoming more complex in Japan as well as overseas, and Habitat for Humanity cannot address those issues alone. The housing issues must be addressed within society as a whole and by practical approaches. For this reason Habitat for Humanity works with local communities throughout the world under the belief that this is the most practical approach to providing better housing solutions. This also helps make a larger impact on society as this approach helps transform people's perspectives through involvement.



New
in
2014!

Habitat Japan Domestic Program

Habitat's 3 "Deepening" and "Spreading" Approaches

1 Housing Consultation

Housing consultations facilitated by Habitat Japan, families receive information according to the needs of the individual household's circumstances in order to effectively help them rebuild. Habitat Japan is committed to continued assistance for all affected people, including those that continue to live in temporary shelters.



2 Self-Build Support



'Self-Building' means to literally build one's own home. The options currently available to the most affected families are government-led group relocations to higher ground, moving in to public reconstruction housing, or for a family to hire a contractor to rebuild their own home, which most cannot afford. For those families that are interested in rebuilding but cannot afford a commercially available option, Habitat Japan is offering a solution. Habitat Japan would like to demonstrate through the pilot project in Ofunato, Iwate prefecture, that anyone can build a decent home even if they are not a professional. It may be a simple self-built home, but it is still a decent home, and at minimum, another option for the affected families to have a permanent place to live.

3 Home Repairs

Habitat Japan supports families that find difficulty repairing their homes due to economic reasons. Prior to home repairs, Habitat Japan provides housing consultations including assessment by professional architects. Habitat Japan became aware that families living in temporary shelters tend to receive more attention and assistance than the families living in their own damaged homes. Additionally, more attention and assistance have been given to people living in the coastal areas affected mainly by the tsunami that followed the Great East Japan Earthquake. Habitat Japan is advocating for the support of earthquake-affected individuals and communities in inland areas that have not received much assistance and continue to face difficulties. Habitat Japan volunteers involved in home repairs are also assisting by acting as spokespeople in order to spread the word throughout the affected communities in which they work.

New Project

KIZUNA Project

~Empowering Youth to Build the Future of Tohoku~

Habitat Japan acknowledges that it is the disaster survivors themselves that take the initiative in rebuilding the affected communities. The Kizuna project is therefore designed to give leadership and excursion opportunities for young people affected by the disaster, as they will be key actors in the rebuilding of Tohoku.

The project's scholarship recipients will experience immersion in the local community and its culture, hands-on volunteer activities with local people and other volunteers, and personal transformation through helping people in need, via overseas building program (GV:Global Village Program). Habitat Japan believes that those students will play a prominent role in building the future of Tohoku.

● Story of a Kizuna Scholar, Ryota Isobe

Ryota Isobe is the first Kizuna scholar that joined Habitat's GV trip to Thailand. He was on a train traveling to Tohoku University when the disaster struck, and was evacuated to a community center. Ryota said, "I want to give something back to the people who have helped us because I feel grateful for the enormous support received from overseas. I know support was also given by people from developing countries. I do not want to take that support for granted and feel it is my turn to do something for them."

Ryota became more actively involved in community services and volunteer activities after his trip. Now he is one of the key players leading a campus chapter at his university. "I learned team building and teamwork during the trip. Working together with everyone enhanced the general spirit of volunteering among us," said Ryota, motivating himself to serve in his community.



Your sponsorship will enable promising youth to enhance efforts toward rebuilding Japan!
For more information, contact us at ► info@habitatjp.org



Home Repair Project

Mr. Tanaka, a home partner, lives in Higashimatsushima, Miyagi Prefecture with his family.

His house was damaged by the great earthquake in 2011. He and his family found it too difficult to arrange the repairs to the house by themselves, and Mr. Tanaka applied in 2013 for Habitat Japan's financial support scheme for repairing the home's inner walls. However, the house was found to have sustained more substantial damages than he initially estimated. In particular, cracks on the external walls were diagnosed to be quite serious as leakage through them would penetrate into the sub-structure and could eventually cause severe damage to it. Mr. Tanaka approached Habitat Japan once again and asked for help. Following another assessment of his house, Habitat Japan decided to do the necessary repairs with the assistance of volunteers.

Habitat Japan volunteers and staff worked on the repairs in October 2013, which was one of the first cases in Habitat Japan's new approach, the "Deepening and Spreading" initiative.

In five days, Habitat Japan volunteers completed the work by filling the cracks and painting the exterior. Additional repairs were completed around the home's entrance and to the guttering.

It was one of many cases where volunteers played a vital role in supporting Mr. Tanaka to rebuild a decent place to live.

Habitat Japan launched a home repair project in Misato. It is located inland and north of Higashimatsushima city, and escaped the tsunami that followed the great earthquake in 2011. However, the size of the quake hit Misato was bigger than other coastal areas. Many families and communities have been facing difficulties since and still in need of assistance. With the funding support from Japan Platform, Habitat Japan will implement home repairs for 20 families in Misato starting this February.



1 Broken windows and walls of the Tanaka's house



3
"Thank you for working so hard in the cold weather. Our home is safe now, thanks to your help," said Mr. Tanaka, relieved and satisfied.

Self-Build Support

 Ofunato, Iwate


Self-Build Project

Habitat Japan is supporting Mr. Sato in building his own house in the Okirai district of Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture. Sato used to work as a carpenter outside of his hometown until he returned to Okirai in his twenties. However, he had to settle with a smaller income from a fishery in order to support himself and his aging mother after developing health issue in his forties. Since their house was washed away in the Tsunami, Sato and his mother have been living in a temporary shelter. Once the temporary shelter is closed, the only choice left for them is to move into public reconstruction housing where the rent is reduced temporarily. Even with a reduced rent, Sato feared that he won't be able to secure a stable source of income by the time the rent is to revert back to the normal amount in 20 years. Sato came to Habitat Japan with some savings and land on high ground that he owned in hopes of securing a permanent place to live.

It was then that Habitat Japan decided to investigate into ways of addressing the growing housing issues in Tohoku.

Utilizing the information collected from consultation sessions and trust established amongst the network of local housing professionals, Habitat Japan developed the self-build project as a solution to assist people like Sato.

As a result, through this project Sato will be able to build a house for three million yen. In order to realize Sato's dream, many volunteers, local professionals and residents came together. The first self-build house is scheduled to complete in May 2014.



TOPICS

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4 New Campus Chapters Have Joined!

Four new Campus Chapters (CCs) have joined Habitat Japan this year. A CC is a student-led, student-initiated organization on a university campus that partners with Habitat Japan. In the past ten years the number of CCs has steadily increased, and at the end of 2013, 22 CCs had worked with Habitat Japan to build homes and communities throughout the world, raise awareness of the poverty housing issues, and raise funds used to support families in need. Now 26 CCs from Hokkaido in the north and Kyushu in the south are calling for joint action to build homes and raise awareness and funds for those in need.

Tohoku University
[As One]

Hokkaido University
[Kenchikun]

Kyoto Tachibana University
[Why Not?]

Musashi University
[A't]

Inviting You to be a Volunteer Supporter



Habitat for Humanity now operates in nearly 80 countries, working with volunteers and local communities to support families in breaking out of poverty. Volunteers are also the

essential pillars of support that the organization needs, just as any homes need strong pillars to support them. Habitat for Humanity has been and will always be building cooperative relationships with devoted volunteers around the world.



In April 2014, Habitat Japan will introduce Volunteer Supporters with a goal of enhancing partnerships with its volunteers. As a part of this initiative, we ask all volunteers to be registered as volunteer supporters, starting from April 2014. Habitat Japan's volunteer supporters do not only lend their time and hands, but also support Habitat's mission through annual registration fees. The registration will be valid for one year and you can take part in any Habitat Japan volunteer opportunities at any time while you are registered.

Volunteer Supporter Registration Fee:

Regular Volunteer Supporters (including students aged 26 and above): 6,000 yen
Student Volunteer Supporters (aged 25 or younger): 3,000 yen

For more information, visit at ► www.habitatjp.org
or contact us at ► info@habitatjp.org

Habi-Bito

Enthusiasts in Habitat



Itaru Ueda

Tohoku University Campus Chapter
'As One' Leader



Itaru is a sophomore at Tohoku University. He is a student leader of a new Habitat Japan Campus Chapter (CC), 'As One'. 'As One' is the first CC in the Tohoku region. Itaru has been interested in volunteering overseas since he watched a film about building a school in Cambodia. "I believe there must be something I can contribute to society," said Itaru, explaining the reason why he opened a new CC. His friend, a member of another CC from Nihon University introduced him to Habitat Japan and Itaru became interested in establishing this student-led organization at his own school, Tohoku University. "Our CC members named the chapter 'As One' to symbolize that volunteers and home partners (beneficiaries) are working together 'As One' toward 'One' goal. 'As One' also wishes to be the driving force in Miyagi Prefecture to help the affected communities to rebuild," said Itaru with his great passion to support Tohoku.

Itaru said Habitat attracts him in many ways, for example, he likes Habitat's approach to working together with local communities

and also the CCs' interactions with one another. He said, "Being a CC, we have many chances to see other CC members who possess the same volunteer spirit and give them opportunities to serve the affected communities in Tohoku 'As One'. We will be a guiding light for all CCs to come help in Tohoku."

While Itaru and his CC members volunteer in Miyagi Prefecture, they also organized the first team trip via the Global Village Program to build a home overseas this spring. "Though the families in Tohoku and in other countries are in different situations, what we tried to achieve was the same with each. There is a lot we can learn from actual involvement in



volunteering through such projects," said Itaru. This new CC, 'As One' will make more impacts in Tohoku and overseas by extending helping hands 'As One'.

Editor's Note

This spring season, 409 volunteers traveled overseas through the Global Village Program. On the other hand in Japan, Rebuilding Japan Program is starting its 4th year of operation. We are committed to continued our fight against housing issues in and outside of the country. We are grateful for the continued support of volunteers and supporters that allow us to do so for another year around and beyond.



Habitat for Humanity Japan

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Habitat for Humanity is an international NGO that aims to realize a world where everyone has a decent place to live. It works in about 80 countries and has helped more than 600,000 families worldwide.