



HABITAT FACTS

Families served this year¹

385

Families served to date²

1,939

¹New houses, rehabilitations and repairs in the year to June 30, 2011

²New houses, rehabilitations, repairs and other assistance

Key Activities

- Housing and integrated community development.
- Water, sanitation and hygiene including the construction of sanitation facilities.
- Land tenure and housing advocacy.
- Housing for vulnerable people including those living with HIV/AIDS and orphans.
- Disaster response and mitigation.

Habitat for Humanity in Cambodia

Habitat for Humanity International registered a branch office in Cambodia in January 2003. HFH Cambodia is committed to improving lives beyond four walls and a roof. The Habitat programs in Phnom Penh, Prey Veng, Kandal, Siem Reap and Battambang aim to reduce poverty. The emphasis is on the development of sustainable communities that also promote gender equality, income generation and appropriate response to HIV/AIDS and vulnerable groups. Habitat and its partners also facilitate access to adequate and affordable safe water and electricity connections, and proper toilet. The use of solar energy is especially encouraged. Family members are offered training in construction and other skills in order to improve their employment and earnings prospects. HFH Cambodia has a five-year goal of assisting 10,000 low-income families while inspiring individuals, groups, organizations and the government to champion innovative housing solutions for people in need.

Housing needs in Cambodia

After more than 25 years of civil conflict, Cambodia has achieved impressive economic growth since the mid-1990s and has made significant progress in reducing poverty. The government estimates about one quarter of the population was poor in 2010. This compared with 35 percent in 2004 and 30 percent in 2007, according to the Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey. Poverty is largely concentrated in the rural areas. In the 1990s, hundreds of thousands of refugees who were driven out of Phnom Penh by the communist Khmer Rouge regime, returned to the capital city and created huge squatter colonies. They lack secure tenure or basic services as they settle in every conceivable empty space, from sides of railway tracks to banks of lakes or rivers to near dumpsites.

In recent years, the municipal authorities in Phnom Penh have encouraged the revitalization of the city center. Large tracts of

public land have been, and continue to be, leased or sold to commercial developers. Informal settlers who live on these plots are relocated to areas up to 30 km away. Families end up living in places that lack access to water, sanitation and health services. Livelihoods may be threatened as employment opportunities in the city involve costly and lengthy journeys to and from work.

How Habitat works in Cambodia

HFH Cambodia builds houses with families and volunteers. A Habitat house in Cambodia is usually 31.5 sq. m. in size. Habitat seeks to provide additional space for a small home-based business as well as land at the rear for a vegetable garden. Traditionally, houses were built using fired bricks or were made of wood and built on stilts. In 2009, HFH Cambodia introduced a more economical and environmentally-friendly solution: hand-made stabilized soil blocks. HFH Cambodia home partners repay mortgage loans pro-rated to their incomes, enabling even very poor families to benefit. The average repayment is approximately US\$22 per month over a period of about five years.

In Battambang city in the northwest, HFH Cambodia received approval in mid-2011 for a one-year extension on a World Bank supported project to serve a total of 330 families in land tenure security, shelter improvement and livelihood issues. In late 2010, HFH Cambodia strengthened its program to improve the lives of families living with HIV/AIDS with key partnerships supported by the Elton John AIDS Foundation, the UK philanthropic arm of Sir Elton John. Habitat's partners are Save the Children Australia, Khemara, Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE and Sharing Experience for Adapted Development. The two-year, £810,000 (about US\$1.2 million) program will bring safe, decent housing to 320 vulnerable families including those living with HIV/AIDS. HFH Cambodia's

COUNTRY FACTS



POPULATION: 14,701,717 (July 2011 est.)

CAPITAL: Phnom Penh

AREA: 181,035 sq. km.

ETHNIC GROUPS: Khmer 90%, Vietnamese 5%, Chinese 1%, other 4%

LANGUAGES: Khmer (official) 95%, French, English

RELIGIONS: Buddhist (official) 96.4%, Muslim 2.1%, other 1.3%, unspecified 0.2% (1998 census)

LITERACY: 73.6% (2004 est.)

URBANIZATION: 20% (2010)

POPULATION LIVING ON US\$1.25 A DAY: 28% (2009)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES: 61% (2009)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION: 29% (2009)

Source: World Factbook, World Bank

contribution is to complement its partners' outreach by providing secure land and building or repairing homes for their beneficiaries. The target locations are communities in around the capital, Phnom Penh, and Prey Veng, a densely-populated agricultural region on the eastern banks of the Mekong River, bordering Vietnam.

Volunteers

Cambodia is a popular build destination for volunteers from Australia, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore, Japan, North Ireland, Canada and the U.S. and elsewhere. In November 2011, more than 300 volunteers – many from New Zealand and the U.S.A. – worked together with home partners-to-be in HFH Cambodia's first-ever special build, the Khmer Harvest Build.



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Habitat Highlights

- ▶ **November 2011:** Over 300 international volunteers built 22 houses alongside families during the Khmer Harvest Build in Oudong, Kandal province. As part of the five-day build, the volunteers spent time making bricks and working on a farm project, both sources of income for some of the families.
- ▶ **October 2011:** Approval of an eight-month extension for a pilot project between Elton John AIDS Foundation and HFH Cambodia. Under the project, 120 new houses will be built and another 200 homes renovated or repaired for orphans and vulnerable children and those living with HIV/AIDS.
- ▶ **October 2011:** To mark World Habitat Day, about 120 students and residents helped to clean up the Trapeang Anhchanh community in Phnom Penh.
- ▶ **July 2011:** HFH Cambodia's program was among 16 case studies presented in Manila in July to highlight the importance and impact of decent housing in alleviating poverty. The case studies were presented by Asian Institute of Management, ASEAN Foundation and Asian Development Bank.
- ▶ **June 2011:** World Bank approval and government support for one-year extension of a pilot project to improve land rights for squatter families in Battambang province.
- ▶ **June 2011:** First test build for the Khmer Harvest Build completed.
- ▶ **February 2011:** The Pang family living with HIV/AIDS received a house with secure tenure under pilot partnership between HFH Cambodia and the Elton John AIDS Foundation. They were among the first families to be helped under the partnership.

Meet a Habitat family

After three years of living in a bamboo shelter near a dumpsite in the capital Phnom Penh, Kem Sabet's new home is everything she wishes for. Her daughter Davy said: "The new house is safe, comfortable and can help to earn money for my family."

Sabet used to worry when she was living in her old house. "We were always afraid that either the wind would blow the house down or it would just collapse on its own. We always hoped we would get the chance to move out of there but we never knew when that would be."

Sabet moved into her Habitat house in mid-July 2011 with her husband, son and granddaughter. Together with her husband Long Sambath, Sabet is raising 20 ducklings in a pen which they built outside their house, in Oudong in Kandal province, about 45 km. from Phnom Penh.

The clean air and neighbors' friendliness are also strong draws. "We were accepted here very quickly," said Sabet. Twenty-eight families are already living in the community. By the end of 2011, another 22 families were expected to move in when their houses were completed during the Khmer Harvest Build in November.

"I am confident my family will do well here in their new home," said Davy. "My father used to work late in the night as a motorcycle taxi driver in Phnom Penh. It was dangerous for him to work late. I know he is happier here; he has a job making blocks for the Habitat houses. After the November build he hopes to work on the farm project."

Davy's younger brother Sochichhay, 13, attends the local school. Earlier, before his school term started, he set up a small stand outside the community where he sold cakes, fruit and snacks, earning from US\$3-4 per day.



(From left) Sochichhay, Davy, Kem Sabet with granddaughter Vin Sreyvatey and Long Sambath.

Twenty-four-year-old Davy and her husband live in Phnom Penh where she works in a garment factory. Her daughter Vin Sreyvatey, 1½, lives with Sabet to work to support her family. She gives her earnings to her parents so that they can make the repayment on their Habitat house.

"My parents' lives have changed a lot since they moved here. I no longer need to worry about them because it is safe here. The other families in the community who used to live in the dumpsite are very friendly to one another," said Davy.

Holding on to her daughter, Davy said: "I no longer think about living at the dumpsite because it was very hard on my family. That is in the past. I look to the future and that makes me happy."

What volunteers say



"Construction work is always fun because you can easily see your progress! It's a great feeling to work on laying a brick wall all day and, at the end of the day, see how much you've accomplished. I'm inspired by knowing that what we do makes such a huge difference in the lives of the home owner families. Stable housing leads to stable health, education, and economic situation. A house means a new start!"

- Jess Wilson, from U.S. who volunteered in Trapaing Anhchanh community, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in July 2011.