



## AT A GLANCE

Families served to date<sup>1</sup>

**1,319**

Families served this year<sup>2</sup>

**170**

House sponsorship cost<sup>3</sup>

**US\$76,410**

<sup>1</sup>New houses, rehabilitations and repairs

<sup>2</sup>First two quarters of the financial year to June 30, 2010

<sup>3</sup>International sponsorship cost

— As of April 2010 —

**C**URRENTLY AMONG the world's 20 largest economies, South Korea was a picture of poverty four decades ago. In the 1950s, war had ravaged the Korean peninsula and South Korea was one of the poorest places on earth. Over the decades, country and its people have created a unique prosperity. The numbers of people living in poverty has fallen steadily.

Yet in spite of a higher standard of living, housing is not always affordable. Recent Korean research data showed housing prices across the country rising in 2010 for a sixth consecutive year and by the fastest pace in four years.

Escalating land prices have also made it difficult for lower income families to afford decent shelter. The dramatic increase in population density has compounded the housing issue, resulting in the need for creative uses of available land.

In 1992, a group of volunteers investigated whether the Habitat for Humanity concept could be effective in South Korea. With land donated by a Christian communal village and funds provided by individual donors, these volunteers completed three houses in Yangju county, Uijeongbu city, Gyeonggi province, about 30 km. north of Seoul, two years later.

The program really took after 2001 when Habitat's largest annual volunteer event, the Carter Work Project, took place in Korea. The country's then president, Kim Dae-Jung, was among 9,000 volunteers to join former US president Jimmy Carter as they built 136 homes in one week on multiple sites.

HFH Korea plays an active role in the Habitat world, building houses at home as well as abroad. To date, Habitat has served over 1,300 families in Korea and overseas with secure and affordable housing. HFH Korea also responds to calamities at home and as far afield as Nepal. The government's overseas aid arm, Korea International Cooperation Agency, has channeled more than US\$300,000 through HFH Korea to support housing projects in Nepal and Vietnam in Asia and Madagascar in Africa.

Habitat also extends the reach of its programs through resource centers. HFH Korea launched its first resource center in August 2009 in Hwaseong city on the outskirts of the capital Seoul. Another two resource centers will open in Yangpyeong in the north and Pohang in the east.

On average, a Habitat house covers 53 sq. m. and is made of concrete, lumber, plywood, drywall, styrofoam, siding, and shingle. Because of South Korea's harsh winters, insulation is a must. Construction time takes from four to six months. In addition to house construction, HFH Korea also assists families to renovate their homes.

HFH Korea is a strong supporter of Global Village international volunteer builds. Each year, South Korea sends 50 to 60 teams overseas, to various countries in the Asia-Pacific region. HFH Korea also sends teams of college students to build in Habitat's post-disaster reconstruction projects. Teams have worked in Pakistan, Indonesia and Sichuan, China. 🏠





## HFH KOREA Highlights

- ▶ In January 2010, HFH Korea mobilized more than 300 college students for the Happy Move volunteer program funded by Hyundai Motor. Volunteers worked on Habitat builds in earthquake-affected Sichuan province, southwest China as well as in Sao Paulo City, Brazil.
- ▶ In January 2010, HFH Korea sent over 100 university volunteers from Korea to Pangalengan city in Indonesia's West Java, to build homes for earthquake-hit families. The volunteers were supported by Korean steel giant POSCO which also funded Habitat teams to India and Thailand in 2008 and 2009 respectively.
- ▶ In November 2009, the Korea International Cooperation Agency donated US\$500,000 to the 2009 Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project held in five countries in the Mekong River region. Fifty KOICA World Friends Korea volunteers also built at the sites in Chiang Mai, Thailand; Sichuan, China and Hanoi, Vietnam.
- ▶ In October 2009, SC First Bank sent about 300 volunteers to build in the New Life Project in Hwaseong city, Gyeonggi province. The bank also funded two Habitat houses. Hwaseong is the site of Korea's first Habitat Resource Center launched in August 2009. The HRC's pilot project involves the construction of an 18-unit multi-story residential building. The resource center is supported by Grand Leisure Korea (GKL), Kyobo Life Insurance, SC First Bank, Daewoo Engineering, GS Engineering & Construction among other donors.
- ▶ HFH Korea held its annual Blitz Build in the summer of 2009 with staff from donors such as Binggrae and Korean Airlines volunteering for the five-day build.
- ▶ In mid-2009, Citibank Korea's staff and executives including CEO Ha Yung-ku, and their families built with HFH Korea in Daejeon. The bank also donated over US\$115,000 toward HFH Korea's programs for 2009.
- ▶ In mid-2009, Samsung C&T Corporation, an arm of Korean conglomerate Samsung Group, unveiled its sponsorship of homes for 16 families and sent staff including skilled workers to builds.
- ▶ In 2009, Hyundai Steel supported 100 student volunteers who renovated houses for the elderly and disabled in Dangjin district, Chungcheongnam province in the west.
- ▶ Under a partnership with Korea National Housing Corporation in early 2009, HFH Korea could call on the government body's expertise in housing technology as well as on its staff for volunteers.

## COUNTRY FACTS

POPULATION: 48,508,972 (JULY 2009 EST.)

CAPITAL: Seoul

LAND AREA: 99,720 sq. km.

ETHNIC GROUPS: Korean

LANGUAGES: Korean, English widely taught in schools

RELIGIONS: Christian 26.3% (Protestant 19.7%, Roman Catholic 6.6%), Buddhist 23.2%, other or unknown 1.3%, none 49.3% (1995 census)

LITERACY: 97.2% (2002)

URBANIZATION: 33% (2008)

POPULATION LIVING ON US\$1.25 A DAY: 2% (2000)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES: 92% of population (2000)

Sources: CIA World Factbook, World Bank



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