



## AT A GLANCE

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

# 5,114

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

# 1,180

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

<sup>2</sup>New houses, rehabilitations, repairs and assistance in the year to June 30, 2010

— Updated January 2011 —

**T**HAILAND, “the Land of Smiles”, has achieved remarkable progress in economic and human development over recent decades. The economy continues to perform well in spite of political uncertainties and street disturbances over past years. Yet, the fruits of prosperity are spread unevenly in this tropical Southeast Asian nation. Many people can afford to access the formal private or government housing sectors. However, for many low-income families, having a good, regular income is not enough. Rising demand for land, and the growing pressure on land prices, make access to the formal housing sector difficult for them.

The government’s National Housing Authority estimates some 300,000 families or nearly 8.2 million people live in sub-standard housing. Problems are particularly acute in Bangkok as the capital has grown into a major metropolis of an estimated 11-12 million people, dwarfing other cities in the country.

Poverty is still widespread in the rural northeast, far north and far south of the country. Migration from rural areas has placed a strain upon the supply of affordable land. Migrants face high rents for small rooms and often live in overcrowded areas plagued by a lack of proper sanitation facilities. Squatter settlements are commonly seen along railway lines or near port and industrial areas.

Habitat for Humanity began in 1998 in Udon Thani province in northeastern Thailand. Since July 2007, HFH Thailand has been operating through its national office in Bangkok and Habitat Resource Centers in Rayong, for projects the central area; in Chiang Mai in the north; and Udon Thani in the northeast. Work in the south is overseen by an office in Ranong, near Phuket.

HFH Thailand’s post-tsunami-reconstruction program served over 1,900 families, and was transformed into a regular program. The move reflects the continuing strong need for affordable housing in the south of the country.

In November 2009, Habitat for Humanity International’s global signature event, the Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project, was held in Nong Gon Kru village on the outskirts of Chiang Mai city in the

north of the country. Hundreds of local and overseas volunteers worked together with Habitat home partners at the main site for the Carter Work Project, building 82 houses over five days.

Habitat both builds and renovates homes using Save & Build, Building in Stages and traditional models. The Save & Build housing microfinance model calls for groups of families to save toward the cost of a house. When a proportion of the cost has been saved, Habitat and its partners invest the remaining amount and construction can begin on the first houses. The savings cycle starts again for other houses until all members of the group receive their homes.

For Building in Stages, Habitat homeowner partners start by constructing a two-room “core” house with an open space, built on a cement foundation. Additional rooms and walls are built after three years or once a certain amount of the initial mortgage is repaid.

Nowadays, HFH Thailand’s houses are typically around 36 sq. m. in size. The design features the use of concrete interlocking blocks or concrete hollow blocks with a tiled roof. Habitat also builds wooden stilt houses with metal sheet roofs in southern Thailand. House construction normally takes about 30 days.

In recent years, HFH Thailand has focused on working with partners to provide complete community programs involving improved water and sanitation, education, and health care as well as housing. It has also launched Friends of Habitat where celebrities and business leaders volunteer their time and labor promoting Habitat’s cause at media events or builds.

Habitat receives strong support from a range of corporate partners. These include insurance companies AIA and Manulife Insurance; agricultural products group Cargill Siam; consumer finance companies and banks GE Capital, Bank of Ayudhya and Government Housing Bank; pharmaceutical and healthcare company Glaxo-SmithKline; hotel group JW Marriott; transportation and logistical services company UPS; and real estate company Raimon Land.

Thailand is a popular destination for volunteers with teams visiting from Australia, North America, and across Asia.





## HFH THAILAND Highlights

- ▶ In November 2010, HFH Thailand distributed shelter repair kits to benefit 250 families affected by severe flooding in Patthalung province in the south. Chevron Thailand donated US\$87,000 to HFH Thailand's flood response effort.
- ▶ In November 2010, more than 40 volunteers including Cerebos Pacific staff used empty Brand's Essence of Chicken bottles as a filler for cement floors on a house in Pathumthani province, north of Bangkok. Volunteers used the same approach for a test house in September.
- ▶ In June 2010, state-owned Government Housing Bank of Thailand signed an agreement to fund the building or renovation of some 600 homes by HFH Thailand over the next four years.
- ▶ In May 2010, volunteers from local developer Ramon Land built with HFH Thailand in Rayong, in the country's southeast. Led by chief executive officer Hubert Viriot, the team built with two Habitat home partners in Map Ta Phut municipality.
- ▶ In February 2010, 26 volunteers from global health service company CIGNA's offices around Asia built with HFH Thailand in the northern province of Chiang Mai. Together with two Habitat home partner families, the volunteers spent two days mixing cement and laying bricks.
- ▶ In January 2010, HFH Thailand and its partners handed over the community center at the main site for 2009 Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project in Nong Gon Kru village in Chiang Mai province.
- ▶ Over five days in November 2009, hundreds of overseas and domestic volunteers including many celebrities built 82 houses in Nong Gon Kru village as part of the 2009 Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project. Celebrity volunteers included China-born movie star Jet Li; Indian film star and Habitat Global Hero John Abraham and actor R "Maddy" Madhavan; Sri Lanka actress Jacqueline Fernandez; South Korean actor Lee Seo-jin; Japanese footballer Hidetoshi Nakata; and HFH Thailand's goodwill ambassador, singer and actor Rattapoom "Film" Tokongsub.
- ▶ In October 2009, Cargill Siam celebrated its 100th house built with HFH Thailand. To mark the occasion, more than 110 volunteers from Cargill, Betagro and Nestle worked on four houses in Chiang Mai province in the north of the country.
- ▶ In January 2009, the state Government Housing Bank agreed to support a 200 million baht (about US\$6 million) housing finance credit that will enable Habitat to provide homes for some 2,300 families.
- ▶ In January 2009, about 100 Korean university volunteers, mobilized by Korean steel giant POSCO, worked with Habitat home partners to build seven houses in Chonburi province.

# COUNTRY FACTS

POPULATION: 67,089,500 (JULY 2010 est.)

CAPITAL: Bangkok

LAND AREA: 513,120 sq. km

ETHNIC GROUPS: Thai 75%, Chinese 14%, others 11%

LANGUAGES: Thai, English, ethnic and regional dialect

RELIGIONS: Buddhism 94.6%, Islam 4.6%, Christianity 0.7%, others 0.1% (2000 census)

LITERACY: 92.6% (2000 census)

URBANIZATION: 33% (2008)

POPULATION LIVING ON US\$1.25 A DAY: 2% (2005)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES: 98% (2008)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION FACILITIES: 96% (2008)

Sources: CIA World Factbook, World Bank



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