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To: Jan Coulson
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Asia-Pacific Update
 A twice-a-month e-newsletter for partners
 throughout the Asia-Pacific region



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Top Stories

In memory of key Habitat player Rev. Azariah Korabandi

One of the key players in bringing Habitat for Humanity to the Asia-Pacific region has died following a traffic accident. Reverend Azariah Korabandi, the 79-year-old president of Habitat for Humanity India's Khammam affiliate, passed away on 20th May 2010. He was instrumental in setting up Habitat for Humanity's first affiliate in India's Andhra Pradesh state in 1983. To those who knew him, Rev. Azariah epitomized selfless service. John Aaron Franklin Thirupathi, who started working in Habitat as an office assistant to Rev. Azariah, said of his mentor: "My association with Rev. Azariah began immediately after my graduation (from college) in 1984. Rev. Azariah's humble nature and exemplary life inspired me a lot." In addition to building homes with people in need, Rev. Azariah travelled to the U.S., the U.K. and Australia to appeal for funds to support schools, homes for the elderly, microfinance services, and medical care in Andhra Pradesh. Last year, Rev. Azariah was honored by the Indian government with the Rajiv Gandhi Manav Seva Award in recognition of his services to children. On 23rd May 2010, Rev. Azariah was laid to rest at a farm which he had established in Gollapadi, a village 40 km southwest of Khammam. Thousands of people attended the funeral service, including representatives from HFH India, board members of HFH Khammam, members of the community, politicians and corporate executives. Rev. Azariah is survived by his wife, Vijaya, and two grown-up children.



Rev. Azariah was instrumental in setting up Habitat for Humanity's first affiliate in Asia, in India's Andhra Pradesh state in 1983.

HFH China raises HK\$250,000 from ballet benefit in Hong Kong

Habitat for Humanity China partnered with Hong Kong Ballet for a fund-raiser in Hong Kong

that raised HK\$250,000 (over US\$32,000) in one evening. The performance by Hong Kong's premier ballet company on 23rd May was held in Hong Kong's harbor-side Cultural Center. Complimentary tickets were provided to underprivileged children and others who would never have seen live dance before. A silent auction included prizes to stay at Banyan Tree resorts: the Singapore resort spa developer recently unveiled a [partnership with HFH China](#).

Wells Fargo volunteers prepare HFH China's Hong Kong fishing village project

An eight-member team from the Hong Kong branch of financial services company Wells Fargo recently lent a helping hand to Habitat for Humanity China ahead of the official launch of Habitat's first restoration project in Hong Kong. The project will transform lives, especially those of elderly residents, in a fishing community in Tai O village on the southwest coast of Lantau island, near the international airport. The Hong Kong branch of Wells Fargo, headquartered in San Francisco, California, U.S.A., also committed HK\$84,000 (about US\$10,800) for 30 staff members to volunteer in the Tai O project. [More details](#).



Wells Fargo volunteers with the Habitat home partner in Tai O fishing village.

Test build for Mongolia's Blue Sky Build

A 16-member team from the United States recently worked on a test house ahead of Habitat for Humanity Mongolia's Blue Sky Build which is scheduled to start in late June. The volunteers worked with Habitat's construction staff to install insulation, complete brick walls, put up wooden joists and trusses, and lay metal roof sheets. Thirty families will be partnering with HFH Mongolia and about 100 international volunteers during the Blue Sky Build which runs from 28th June to 2nd July.



The test build house for next month's Blue Sky Build.

Habitat housing for families of Philippine soldiers who died in rescue work

Habitat for Humanity Philippines will be assisting the families of seven Philippine soldiers who died while rescuing people during last September's typhoons, Ketsana and Parma. With donations raised by MAP, which founded A Life for Other's Foundation, HFH Philippines will be building new houses for the families in BayaniJuan sa Calauan in Laguna province. [Read more](#).

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Disaster Response News

HFH Bangladesh to help more families through diversified programs

Habitat for Humanity Bangladesh is partnering with local non-government organization Jesh Foundation in a community-based disaster mitigation project designed to protect lives and property in 20 villages in disaster-prone Sakhira district in the southwest of the country. An initial 200 families will be assisted through loans for retrofitting their homes against

damage from flooding. The eventual goal is to serve more than 1,000 families. Another 5,000 families will be trained in reducing the impact of loss and damage during annual floods. Disaster mitigation is one of a number of areas where HFH Bangladesh is expanding its activities to reach even more families in need. It has also started a pilot three-year project in Mymensingh to help families gain adequate access to water and sanitation facilities as well as community health education programs.

Habitat enters new phase of post-cyclone rebuilding in Myanmar

With the completion of the first phase of the response to Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, Habitat for Humanity continues to support its partner World Concern in a second phase. The disaster risk reduction program includes sustainable livelihood and community disaster-risk management initiatives. It aims to assist 7,000 families in 52 villages in the devastated Ayeryawaddy Delta. The new initiatives are supported by various donors. Hong Kong Christian Council has committed nearly HK\$580,000 (US\$74,450) to support the construction of 46 disaster resilient houses with latrines and water systems, and solar lamps. Two years after southern Myanmar was battered by Cyclone Nargis, Habitat and World Concern have built 1,267 basic houses and repaired 500 others in 18 communities in the delta. [Read more](#) about the reconstruction effort.



Habitat and World Concern have completed more than 1,260 basic house and repaired 500 others in cyclone-affected Myanmar.

New Zealand couple's memory of daughters lives on in a Habitat house in Samoa

A New Zealand family who lost their two daughters during last September's tsunami in Samoa dedicated a house built by Habitat for Humanity to their memory. Petria and Rebecca Martin were among 200 people who lost their lives when a powerful 8.3-magnitude earthquake caused tsunami waves that struck several South Pacific island nations early on 30th September 2009. The Matamata community in New Zealand where the sisters grew up made a donation for a traditional house to be built. The house is among more than 70 *fale* homes which HFH New Zealand has completed to date in Samoa. "They'd be just thrilled to bits they have made a difference, that their lives have made a difference to someone else," said their father Kerry Martin. [More details.](#)

ING Bank donates home repair kits to Philippine typhoon-hit families

ING Bank has donated home repair kits to 98 families whose homes were damaged during last September's Typhoon Ketsana. The bank's country manager for the Philippines, Consuelo Dizon Garcia, was at the distribution center in Pulilan, Bulacan province, to distribute the kits. To date, HFH Philippines has distributed more than 4,000 home repair kits in Marikina, Bulacan, Pasig, Quezon City, Valenzuela City, Benguet, La Union, Rizal and Pangasinan.

US\$1.3 billion raised for earthquake-hit Haiti

A U.S. university has estimated that donors have contributed US\$1.3 billion – equivalent to the amount raised for the 2004 Asian tsunami – to over 90 non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity for work in earthquake-hit Haiti. While the figure was less than US\$5.3 billion garnered in the response to Hurricane Katrina, the response was significant, said Patrick Rooney, executive director of the Center of Philanthropy, Indiana University. [Read on.](#)



Donations from the U.S.A. to earthquake-hit Haiti are equivalent to those raised for the 2004 Asian tsunami. Photo: Steffan Hacker.

Rebuilding Chile: Three months later

In response to the February 27 earthquake, Habitat for Humanity has launched “Physical and Spiritual Force for Chile”, or “Newen Ñeque for Chile” in Mapuche, the indigenous language of Chile. Habitat for Humanity Chile’s initial response will involve the construction of 1,000 earthquake-resistant houses. A three-month update touches on how supporters can join Habitat’s efforts to partner with 10,000 Chilean families in the most ravaged regions of the country. [Learn more.](#)

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Other News

Sporting ways to support HFH Australia

Two upcoming events offer sports enthusiasts novel ways to support Habitat for Humanity Australia. Supporters can take part in the 14 km. fun run in City2Surf on 8th August which will take them from Sydney’s central business district to world-famous Bondi Beach. By creating a personalized online fundraising page, supporters can help garner funds for Habitat. [Get details.](#) The Sydney Running Festival on 19th September provides another opportunity for serious runners – a half or full marathon – to help raise money for HFH Australia. [Read on.](#) For yet others who have creative ideas of garnering funds for HFH Australia, [visit its website](#) for more information.

New home for New Zealand family of seven

With five children to care for, Joseph and Rui McLean-Nahora are hard pressed to save money to build a new house. Although both hold full-time jobs, they could only afford to rent a home. That was until they were selected by Habitat for Humanity New Zealand. In ten days, more than 130 volunteers helped to build a house for the family in Napier in the North Island. “Volunteers have ranged in age from 17 to the eldest we had was 89 and they’ve all just had a ball,” said Habitat’s Shirley Bennett. [More details.](#) In the Bay of Plenty region in North Island, the Prentiss family will soon be moving into a house built by Habitat. Used to life in rental properties, Ivy Prentiss cried for an hour when she learned that her application for a Habitat house was successful. [Find out more](#) in HFH New Zealand’s latest newsletter (2.8 MB).

Japan volunteers go traditional

Habitat for Humanity Japan is calling for volunteers to help build traditional row houses, or *nagaya*, for four families in Kanagawa prefecture, south of the capital Tokyo. Habitat is lending its support to a project which began earlier this month which incorporates traditional Japanese construction techniques that utilize natural materials like bamboo. Volunteers will build alongside local people in Fujino, Sagami-hara city in Kanagawa. [More details \(in Japanese\).](#) HFH Japan sends more than 1,500 volunteers on overseas Habitat builds each year. On June 6, representatives will be talking about the benefits of volunteering at a half-day event at JICA Global Plaza in Tokyo’s Shibuya district. [Find out more.](#)



Volunteers will have the opportunity to learn about local techniques used in constructing a traditional long house.

Habitat homes transform lives of 100 families in Delhi colony

More than a year after Habitat for Humanity completed 100 homes in the Balashwa resettlement colony in northern India, families are thankful for their new lease of life. These families used to live in informal settlements along the banks of Yamuna River in the capital New Delhi. The Balashwa project began in September 2008 and was completed in December 2009. HFH India's resource center in New Delhi joined hands with local non-profit organization Chetanalaya, its partner in a project in another Delhi resettlement colony Bawana. "It feels so good to have this house now. The attitude of the people in the neighborhood has changed toward us. We do not need to feel ashamed any more. Even our relatives like to visit us now," said Habitat home partner Shariff. [Read more.](#)



Home partner Shariff and her family can now welcome visitors to their house. Photo: Mikel Flamm.

Update on Habitat's area office in Bangkok

Habitat for Humanity's Asia-Pacific office in Bangkok reopened today (31st May) after a two-week closure caused by clashes on the streets of the Thai capital. In the hiatus, area office staff worked either from home or from satellite locations, including using space in World Vision's Asia-Pacific regional office in a safer part of the city. Some Habitat staff relocated to the Habitat national office in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, partly as a test of Habitat's area office business continuity plans.

HFH Tajikistan's water filter project wins environment award

Habitat for Humanity Tajikistan's bio-sand water filter project has won a prominent environment award. The 2010 Energy Globe Awards will be presented in Kigali, capital of the central African nation of Rwanda, on 3rd June. The ceremony will also open this year's UN World Environment Day. The Habitat project is being implemented in Kumsangir in southwestern Tajikistan. Over a quarter of the country's population lives in Kumsangir, the largest and poorest region in the country. Cases of typhoid, hepatitis, diarrhea or dysentery are common. HFH Tajikistan's filters allow water to pass through rocks, gravel and sand before being collected in metal buckets. This method eliminates over 90 percent of water-borne diseases and parasites. Habitat home partner Isroil Ilhomidin said: "Although we boiled the water before we drank it, the children often would just drink it, then get sick after. We have had this filter for two years now and none of us has been sick since we began to use it."



Consuming water filtered by HFH Tajikistan's bio-sand water filter helped to drastically reduce the incidence of water-borne diseases. Photo: Mikel Flamm.

Habitat ranked 4th for "effective leadership" among non-profit organizations

Habitat for Humanity International has been ranked the fourth top non-profit "leader" brand in the U.S., after American Diabetes Association, Special Olympics, and American Red Cross, according to an online survey. The survey by a U.S.-based public interest communications company rated non-profit groups on leadership attributes. [Read the survey.](#)

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This and That

Nominations for CSR Awards

The 2010 Asian Forum on corporate social responsibility programs takes place in Beijing, China, in the third week of October. Habitat for Humanity has had display booths at previous years' forums, held in Singapore and the Philippines. This year's theme is "Improving Business Competitiveness through CSR". Among the speakers are representatives of two business groups which support the work of Habitat for Humanity. They are: Edmond Maceda, chief sustainability officer of the Philippines' Ayala Land; and Pragnya Ram, group executive president, corporate communications, Aditya Birla Management Corporation. Nominations are also open for the 2010 Asian CSR Awards. The deadline is 27th August. [More details](#) on the forum and awards

New faces

Habitat for Humanity's Asia-Pacific area office in Bangkok has appointed two new regional finance managers. **Busaba Vongslai** has experience in accounting, treasury management, reporting, budgeting, planning and analysis. Busaba will support Habitat offices in Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and Laos. She can be contacted at bvongslai@habitat.org. **Timothy Weng-Kong Loke** was previously with American Red Cross in Washington DC as its senior financial analyst and had experience starting up its tsunami recovery program in Thailand. Timothy will support Habitat offices in India, Indonesia, Philippines, China, Singapore and Myanmar. Based in Bangkok, his email address is tloke@habitat.org.

A warm welcome to all.



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