

# Papua New Guinea

## Country Profile



**PAPUA NEW GUINEA**, on the eastern end of the Indonesian archipelago, is a giant land famed for its rain, ruggedness, great beauty and the variety of its many local peoples and cultures.

Many people live in traditional-style rural homes, known as “bush houses”. The structures are constructed of bamboo, grass, leaves and timber. The materials are tied or woven together to produce one and two room shelters. Every few years, they need to be replaced. But with a growing population what seems an environmentally sound cycle of growth and reuse, has led to pressure on forests.

Half of Papua New Guinea's population lives in sub-standard housing; often relying on scavenged wood, stones, leaves and grass. Overcrowding is rife with little or no privacy.

HFH PNG was formed in 1983 in Port Moresby, and then moved to Lae, the second city. There are six affiliates: four in Morobe province (Finschafen, Markham, Morobe and Nawaeb); one in Eastern Highlands province; and one in East Sepik province.

HFH PNG has shifted to the “Save & Build” concept. The model is well supported by community, clan, and local churches and governments leaders. To date, more than 100 saving groups have been formed. Savings groups are also functioning in Lae as part of an official urban housing program.

HFH homes are made of timber, raised on stilts a meter or more off the ground. Roofs are made of corrugated metal sheets. Habitat encourages homeowners to cut and mill their own timber from their own land. To ensure sustainability, Habitat has developed a reforestation project; two trees are planted for every tree used for a Habitat house.

Houses are available in three designs: the two-room design measures 33.4 sq. m.; three rooms cover nearly 37 sq. m. and the four-room design 40 sq. m. The average monthly repayment per house is US\$15.50 and the average mortgage length is 20 years. The “Save & Build” repayment period is five years.

### COUNTRY FACTS

**Population:** 5,420,280  
**Capital:** Port Moresby  
**Area:** 462,840 sq. km.  
**Ethnic groups:** Melanesian, Papuan, Negrito, Micronesian, Polynesian  
**Languages:** Melanesian Pidgin serves as the lingua franca, English, Tok Pisin, Hiri Motu, and 715 distinct native languages.  
**Religions:** Roman Catholic 22%, Lutheran 16%, Presbyterian/Methodist/London Missionary Society 8%, Anglican 5%, Evangelical Alliance 4%, Seventh-Day Adventist 1%, other Protestant 10%, indigenous beliefs 34%

### HABITAT FACTS

Families Helped  
**1,092**  
Cost Of One House\*  
**US\$3,990**

As of April 2005

\* international sponsorship cost

### Habitat Highlights

- Regularly hosts teams of international volunteer builders: 25 teams to date, mainly from the US and Japan.
- Coronation College students gain regular IT and office work experience in national office; Andrew Baing Vocational School students support annual builds with Markham affiliate.
- Finschafen affiliate, in partnership with the Lutheran Church, has built first four houses for health workers.
- Lutheran Church is donating land in rural areas and leasing out 3 acres of land in Lae city; a building, training and resource center is planned.
- Partnership with Dulux and exchange programs between urban and rural homeowners significantly reduces construction materials cost.



### HFH Papua New Guinea

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