

Thailand

Country Profile

● Affiliate ✪ National Office & Affiliate ▲ Tsunami Response



THAILAND, “the Land of Smiles”, is one of the great economic development success stories of recent times. Yet, the fruits of prosperity are spread unevenly in this tropical south-east Asian nation. The country is only now recovering from the sharp downturn of 1997 when a local financial crisis had a knock-on effect across Asia..

The government’s National Housing Authority estimates some 8.2 million people live in sub-standard housing. Problems are particularly acute in Bangkok as the capital has grown into a major metropolis, dwarfing other cities in 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. As a result of the December 2004 tsunami, the government estimates 5,000 to 6,000 families are in need of housing.

Habitat for Humanity Thailand began in 1998 in Udon Thani, in the north-east. There are affiliates in Chiang Mai, Nakhon Rachasima (also known as Korat) and Lampang. New affiliates were recently formed in Bangkok, Chiang Rai and Khon Khaen. HFH Thailand’s tsunami recovery programs are located in Phang Nga and Krabi in the south.

HFH Thailand both builds and renovates homes using Save & Build and traditional Habitat models.

The Udon Thani affiliate pioneered the Building in Stages concept where 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.

House construction normally takes about 15 days and involves concrete blocks, C-bar roof trusses, and zinc or metal roof sheeting. Average monthly repayments are approximately US\$21.



COUNTRY FACTS

Area: 514,000 sq. km.
Population: 64,490,000
Capital: Bangkok
Ethnic groups: Thai 75%, Chinese 14%, other 11%
Religions: Buddhist 95%, Muslim 3.8%, Christian 0.5%, Hindu 0.1%, others 0.6%
Languages: Thai, English, and dialects

HABITAT FACTS

Families Helped
698
Cost Of One House*
US\$3,000

As of September 2005

* international sponsorship cost

Habitat Highlights

- Post-tsunami reconstruction assisted by volunteers from Ford Motor Co., Cargill, JW Marriott and Bank fo Ayudhya.
- Korat and Lampang affiliates receive two Chevy Colorado pick-up trucks from General Motors.
- In spring 2004, HFH Thailand launched a “1,500 House Campaign” designed to raise 150 million baht – about US\$3.75 million -- to build 1,500 houses by 2006.
- Hosted some 80 volunteer teams to date: 57 Global Village teams; 16 from local organisations; and five local youth and two church teams.
- “Bike & Build 2002” involved 50 cyclists from International School Bangkok riding between 350 km. between Korat and Udon Thani to raise funds and awareness.
- The Udon Thani affiliate was awarded the “2003 Fuller Award for House Construction” for conceptualizing the “core” house concept and the “2002 Affiliate in Good Standing Award”.



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SSP Tower, Floor 15 Fl., 555 Soi Sukhumvit 63 (Ekamai), Klongtan Nua, Wattana, Bangkok 10110, Thailand Phone: +(66) 2-711-6942
Fax: +(66) 2-711-6937 Email address: hfhthai@loxinfo.co.th Website: www.habitatthailand.org