

Habitat for Humanity in GUAM

Capital



GUAM, A TERRITORY OF THE United States, is the largest and southernmost island in the Mariana Islands archipelago in the northwestern Pacific. The island is exposed to natural hazards from occasional earthquakes to destructive typhoons that sweep in between June and December. On

average three potentially deadly typhoons a year bare down on the island.

After Super Typhoon Pamela hit in 1976, Guam's many wooden house structures began to be replaced by units made of concrete. By the 1980s, many of these homes were ready and considered "typhoon proof".

The ingredients for concrete are imported. The high cost of imported building materials, plus the need to comply with building codes designed to withstand typhoons and earthquakes, combine to create very high housing costs. Plans to increase the US military's presence, announced in late 2005, may also be adding to demand and thereby fueling higher house prices. A local real estate company estimated the median price for a single-unit home in December 2006 at US\$170,000, in contrast to a price tag of US\$106,500 in 2002.

The high cost of land and housing prevents many families from qualifying for conventional financing; so they build poorly con-

structed, unsafe homes or spend a high percentage of income on rent, locking them into a cycle of poverty which offers little hope of release.

Established in 1996, HFH Guam was the first non-profit homebuilder on Guam, bringing together individuals who shared the vision of eliminating homelessness and substandard housing. Habitat completed its first house on Guam in 1998. Houses are built using concrete slab foundations with steel-reinforced walls and poured-concrete roofs to withstand typhoon-force winds.

HABITAT FACTS

Houses Built To Date

19

Cost Of One House*

US\$70,660

* international sponsorship cost

Families Served**

2

**new houses, rehabilitations, repairs, technical, finance and other services in financial year to 30th June 2007

As of June 2007

HABITAT HIGHLIGHTS

- In November 2006, more than 20 volunteers from the Marriott hotels in Guam and Japan took part in Golf & Build. They installed electrical wiring, painted the walls and caulked the doors and windows of two houses. After the build, came a golf tournament.
- Sailors from the USS Curtis Wilbur helped paint a house in October 2006 when their ship stopped by in Guam.



Habitat for Humanity Guam

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COUNTRY FACTS

Population: 173,456 (July 2007 est.)

Capital: Hagatna

Area: 541.3 sq. km.

Ethnic groups: Chamorro 37.1%, Filipino 26.3%, other Pacific islanders 11.3%, white 6.9%, other Asians 6.3%, other ethnic origins or races 2.3%, mixed 9.8% (2000 census)

Languages: English 38.3%, Chamorro 22.2%, Philippine languages 22.2%, other Pacific island languages 6.8%, Asian languages 7%, other languages 3.5% (2000 census)

Religions: Roman Catholic 85%, others 15% (1999 est.)