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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Build Change Primer on Post-Disaster Housing Reconstruction Approved by USAID: *Primer Transforms Post-Disaster Housing Reconstruction Approach*

(DENVER, December 6, 2012) Build Change developed a primer on post-disaster housing reconstruction that was recently approved by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This Primer, entitled "[*Building Back Housing in Post-Disaster Situations – Basic Engineering Principles for Development Professionals: A Primer*](#)," provides USAID officers and host country officials with the steps, principles and best practices to properly and successfully carry out homeowner-driven housing construction and reconstruction in a post-disaster situation. The Primer also provides a road map on how to develop a project through planning, design and implementation.

The homeowner-driven approach outlined in the Primer takes a fundamental shift in the way post-disaster housing reconstruction is delivered. This approach – proven in Indonesia, China and Haiti – empowers homeowners to drive the reconstruction process and creates lasting change in construction practice so that local builders, engineers and homeowners build safe houses in the future – even after funding and technical assistance cease.

The Primer also addresses several key development and humanitarian objectives:

- Greatly reduce deaths, injuries and economic losses caused by housing collapses due to natural disasters in developing countries
- Permanently change building code enforcement and construction practice so that houses built in the absence of external funding and technical support are substantively more resistant to collapse during and after disaster situations
- Build capacity by training builders, homeowners, engineers and government officials
- Permanently change construction practice by building local skills and stimulating local demand

Dr. Elizabeth Hausler Strand, founder and CEO of Build Change, explains, "By providing USAID and other organizations a sustainable framework for post-disaster reconstruction, Build Change can help change post-disaster housing reconstruction practice globally – to one that creates permanent change in construction practice in developing countries." She continues, "The implications are great – with the potential to save hundreds of thousands of lives and significantly reduce economic losses and risks from future disasters."

Dr. Hausler Strand just presented this Primer at the USAID Post-Disaster Infrastructure Reconstruction (PDIR) workshop in Washington, D.C. At this workshop, she also discussed the challenges of transitioning from "temporary" shelters to long-term, permanent housing, shared best practices on implementing a retrofit program in Haiti and talked about the possibilities of replicating this program in other seismically active developing countries. To read the Primer, [click here](#).



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About Build Change

Build Change is an international, non-profit social enterprise with a mission to reduce deaths, injuries and economic losses caused by housing collapses due to earthquakes in developing countries. It does this by designing earthquake-resistant houses and training builders, homeowners, engineers, and government officials to build them. Because of Build Change's award-winning design and capacity-building programs in post-earthquake reconstruction programs in Haiti, Indonesia and China, more than 80,000 people are living in safer houses. Visit www.buildchange.org.

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