

## In the News!

# Build Change Announced as Finalist for Prestigious World Habitat Awards

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

#### **Build Change Announced as Finalist for Prestigious World Habitat Awards**

June 6, 2012 (Denver, CO) - Build Change, the international non-profit social enterprise is pleased to announce that it was selected as a finalist for the World Habitat Awards, established in 1985 by the Building and Social Housing Foundation as part of its contribution to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. Build Change was selected for its post-earthquake reconstruction efforts in Indonesia.

"We are extremely proud to be selected as a finalist for the World Habitat Awards," says Dr. Elizabeth Hausler Strand, Build Change's Founder and CEO. "This distinction recognizes the tremendous effort we've undertaken following the 2007 and 2009 earthquakes in West Sumatra to greatly reduce the number of deaths, injuries and economic losses from future building collapses in Sumatra's seismic areas by enabling people to build safe houses now and in the future, through skills training, greater awareness, and access to capital."

Build Change has worked in partnership with Indonesian and international engineers and architects, who helped develop the housing designs and guidelines used, as well as with pro bono structural engineers and university departments who helped with testing building materials. It has further collaborated with major international relief agencies and in the six months following the 2009 earthquake, it partnered with the Emergency Capacity Building Consortium with funding from USAID OFDA to provide technical assistance and training to homeowners and technical supervisors.

The main components of Build Change's program in West Sumatra include:

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### About Build Change

Founded in 2004, Build Change is an international non-profit social enterprise that designs earthquake-resistant houses in developing countries and trains builders, homeowners, engineers, and government officials to build them. The organization works in partnership with the public and private sector to leave in place lasting change in construction practice after earthquakes.

Since its founding, Build Change has improved the design of over 18,000 houses and trained over

- Advocating for and training people to build timber-framed houses with masonry skirt walls, or safe confined masonry houses if that is what the homeowner wants. Besides being less resilient during an earthquake if built incorrectly, masonry houses are also more expensive to build, harder to build correctly and harder to correct if major mistakes are made during construction.
- Providing hands-on technical assistance to homeowners for rebuilding their houses lost in the earthquake and raising their awareness of safe building techniques.
- Providing on-the-job training and technical support to builders as they construct earthquake-safe houses.
- Building a pipeline of professionals trained in earthquake-safe techniques by building the capacity and mentoring technical high school teachers and their students in West Sumatra and beyond.
- Undertaking a range of publicity activities in order to help spur demand for safe building practices, and thus help to maintain a flow of work for those trained in safe construction methods.

Build Change's impact in this area has been far-reaching and long-lasting. The organization has provided hands-on technical assistance to 610 homeowners and has raised the awareness of another 4,958 homeowners regarding safe building techniques. Through its collaborative work, 12,878 homes have been improved directly or indirectly, representing over 50,000 people living in safer homes.

Additionally, Build Change has taught the fundamentals of earthquake-resistant construction to over 5,000 people across the building chain, with on-the-job training and technical support provided to 1,085 builders and 3,293 engineers to date. Furthermore, 146 teachers and 3,012 students have been trained in earthquake-safe techniques and progress is well underway to getting the course institutionalized by the Bureau of Education.

None of the 478 houses built to the minimum Build Change standards following the September 2007 earthquakes suffered any damage in the 2009 earthquake and in partnership with government officials and local academics, Build Change successfully lobbied the central government to allow confined masonry and timber frame with a masonry skirt wall, and to discourage donors and relief agencies from promoting short-term solutions.

However, Build Change's most profound impact is the one it has on the beneficiaries themselves. As Eva from Padang Alai states, "Now I can breathe easily knowing that my house is earthquake-resistant." She continues, "I am completely proud of it and this is thanks to Build Change. Without their assistance, my house wouldn't be this perfect."

The winners of the World Habitat Awards will be announced soon. For more information about the awards or to learn more about Build Change's award entry, visit [www.worldhabitatawards.org](http://www.worldhabitatawards.org).

### **About World Habitat Awards**

The World Habitat Awards were established in 1985 by the Building and Social Housing Foundation as part of its contribution to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

12,000 people in the fundamentals of earthquake-resistant construction for single-family homes, including builders, technical high school students and teachers in Indonesia, China and Haiti.

Today, over 70,000 people worldwide are living in safer houses because of Build Change's work.

Your donation is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

[Visit Build Change Website](#)

### **Testimonial**



Eva, who lives in Padang Alai, can now breathe easier after moving into her new house. The experience of 2 major earthquakes in 2007 and 2009 left her concerned how to keep her family safe - especially her 2 year old daughter. Although she had experienced several major earthquakes in the past, the 2009 earthquake completely changed her perspective.

Two awards are given annually to projects that provide practical and innovative solutions to current housing needs and problems.

Every year an award of £10,000 is presented to each of the two winners at the annual United Nations global celebration of World Habitat Day.

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