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Sent: Tuesday, 14 November 2017 2:42 PM
To: undisclosed-recipients:
Subject: ShelterBox Advocate November newsletter



ShelterBox

A U S T R A L I A

ShelterBox Advocate Newsletter November 2017

For more information on the valuable role of being a ShelterBox Advocate (volunteers who are members of Rotary that share the story of ShelterBox in your club) please visit our [Volunteering page](#) and view our current opportunities.

In times of need, Rotary members work with ShelterBox to provide disaster relief

By ShelterBox and Rotary staff

When disaster strikes, Rotary's project partner [ShelterBox](#) works closely with Rotarians and Rotaractors around the world to bring aid to families in their hour of need. The Rotary family provides vital support to ShelterBox through fundraising activities and practical assistance on the ground in the affected areas. Whether helping with logistics and transport, translation and local knowledge or acting as a link with governments and officials, the power of the Rotary network can have a massive impact on ShelterBox's ability to operate effectively across the globe.

Below are just a few examples of how Rotary members and ShelterBox have been working together to save lives and help families and communities devastated by recent conflict and natural disasters.

Thousands affected in Bangladesh



In Bangladesh, ShelterBox has been working closely with Rotary clubs from District 3282 to help support around 3000 families following widespread flooding in the north of the country. Local Rotarians have been invaluable in providing logistical support and access to areas of Bangladesh that would have been extremely hard to reach without Rotary's network of contacts throughout the country. ShelterBox Operations Coordinator Jo Arponen said "the current response in Bangladesh would not have been possible without the facilitation provided by Rotarians in the country".

The southern area of Bangladesh has also seen hundreds of thousands of families cross the border from Myanmar to escape ethnic violence at home. Most have arrived with little more than they can carry and are living in makeshift camps made of bamboo and thin plastic sheeting. With the support of Rotarians, ShelterBox has been able to visit the affected area and draw up plans to assist around 4,000 families with solar lights, tarpaulins, blankets and other vital aid items. [This short film](#) from Response Team Volunteer and Rotarian Liz Odell highlights conditions in the camps for the Rohingya population.

Hurricanes cause devastation in the Caribbean

The Caribbean has proved to be one of ShelterBox's biggest logistical challenges. After two category five hurricanes battered the region in quick succession ShelterBox sent a team to assess where their aid would be most needed and most appropriate. Based on this assessment and their own capacity this response has focussed on the following countries.

The entire population of **Barbuda** was evacuated following the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma. ShelterBox has been working with the National Office of Disaster Services and other aid agencies to support a return to the island by providing a combination of tents and ShelterKits. Using Antigua as an operating and logistics base, ShelterBox has benefitted greatly from the ongoing support of District 7030 Assistant Governor Corina Sealy and other Rotarians.

In the **British Virgin Islands**, the team worked with the Rotary family throughout the BVIs to provide tents and other aid items to the inhabitants of the island of Jost Van Dyke, enabling them to remain on their home sites while starting the reconstruction process.

In **Dominica**, 155 mile per hour winds ripped through the island during the passage of Hurricane Maria. Liaising with Rotary clubs in the capital Roseau and the town of Portsmouth, ShelterBox is currently supporting around 500 households with ShelterKits and training, as well as distributing 3000 solar lamps and water containers.

In the **Dominican Republic** ShelterBox and Rotary District 4060 are working in partnership with [Habitat for Humanity](#) to distribute ShelterKits and associated training materials to help families whose homes were destroyed or damaged by hurricane Maria. Coordination between the three organisations ensured that the whole process of recovery could be planned, from the initial emergency phase right through to longer term reconstruction. Local Rotarians have been vital in identifying the areas most in need, supporting the ShelterBox Response Team with transportation, translation and, most crucially, enabling the team to connect directly with the affected communities.





ShelterBox also has current operations in Somaliland, Syria, Iraq, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. For information about the RI-ShelterBox project partnership on the [RI-ShelterBox Fact Sheet](#). Contact rotaryrequest@shelterbox.org for information about getting involved.

Rotary and ShelterBox are project partners for international disaster response. ShelterBox is a Charity independent of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation.

To get the latest update on our Operations go to the ShelterBox Australia [Facebook page here.](#)

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Please note my normal working days are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday



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