WHAT IS UBUNTU-BLOX?
(RECYCLED BUILDING BLOCKS)

UBUNTU INFO PART 1

Patti Stouter
April 2012
WHAT IS UBUNTU-BLOX?

UBUNTU-BLOX INFO PART 1

Ubuntu is an African word with a rich meaning that encompasses cooperation, humanity, and group solidarity for survival in situations with scarce resources. It is a good name for a self-help technology that can turn a problem into a resource.

Inventor and welder Harvey Lacey of Dallas, Texas envisioned the press and system to build with trash in response to the housing crisis after the Haitian earthquakes. Owen Geiger provided advice about how to reinforce the wall. Harvey has been hard at work refining and promoting and teaching ever since.

See other files in the Ubuntu Block Info series also available online soon to learn more about building with Ubuntu blocks.

This work by Patti Stouter is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.
A STRONG & LIGHTWEIGHT BUILDING MATERIAL

EARTHQUAKE-RESISTANT
TERMITE PROOF
FLOOD-RESISTANT
INSULATED

UBUNTU-BLOX INFO 1: What is Ubuntu-Blox?
STRUCTURAL BUILDING WALLS
8” / 20 CM THICK

STIFFENED WITH WIRE AND REBAR

UBUNTU-BLOX INFO 1: What is Ubuntu-Blox?
LIGHT WALLS SAFER ON SOFT GROUND

THAN HEAVIER BUILDINGS—LESS EXPENSIVE FOOTINGS NEEDED
UBUNTU-BLOX TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

A HAND-OPERATED PRESS, WIRE AND PLASTIC TRASH

UBUNTU-BLOX INFO 1: What is Ubuntu-Blox?
TRASH IS AVAILABLE

TURN NON-RECYCLABLE PLASTIC FOAM AND FILM PROBLEMS INTO RESOURCES
MA K I N G U B U N T U - B L O X

PUT CLEAN PLASTIC TRASH IN BAGS OR TUBES

LOAD IN THE HAND PRESS BALE BLOCKS WITH WIRE

UBUNTU-BLOX INFO 1: What is Ubuntu-Blox?
BUILD WITH UBUNTU-BLOX

ANCHOR REBAR IN FOOTING
LAY BLOCKS

TIE BLOCKS TO WIRE
ADD REBAR EVERY 4 COURSES

UBUNTU-BLOX INFO 1: What is Ubuntu-Blox?
GOOD COMPRESSIVE STRENGTH

A SINGLE BLOCK OF RECYCLABLE MATERIAL HELD UP APPROXIMATELY 4,000 POUNDS
SAFE IN AN 8.3 MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE

This test house only lost some plaster and one shutter on the shake table at 8.3
PROTECT FROM FIRE WITH STUCCO OR PLASTER
PROLONGED FIRE EXPOSURE COULD DAMAGE UBUNTU-BLOX

USE FOR A SINGLE STORY, FOR BEDROOMS WITH GOOD EGRESS*

* IN A PROLONGED FIRE UBUNTU-BLOX MATERIALS COULD RELEASE TOXIC GASES OR MELT
BUILD ON A NON-FLAMMABLE BASE WALL

IF PEOPLE COOK INSIDE
HEAVY BASE UNDER UBUNTU-BLOX

NON-FLAMMABLE CONCRETE BLOCK, CEB, EARTHBAG OR GRAVEL BAG CAN ANCHOR FOR HIGH WINDS
UBUNTU BLOCK

COMPRESSED PLASTIC TRASH
8x8x16 INCH/ 20x20x40 cm
A BUSINESS AS WELL AS A HOME

AVAILABLE MATERIALS, EASY TO LEARN
Thanks to the many individuals and organizations that have supported Harvey Lacey’s Ubuntu-Blox development and testing:

Geiger Research Institute of Sustainable Building,
SMU Engineering & Humanity Week,
Memnosyne Foundation,
Haiti Communitaire,
IOM

Images used with permission:
1, 6, 8, 15– Patti Stouter
13, 17– Jonathan McIntosh, Wikimedia Commons, Jakarta, Indonesia

14– Gringologue, Tortillera, Guatemala
All other images courtesy of Harvey Lacey and friends

A public service of www.SimpleEarthStructures.com