



HABITAT FACTS

Families served this year¹

3,010

Families served to date²

10,437

¹New houses, rehabilitations and repairs in the year to June 30, 2011

²New houses, rehabilitations, repairs and other assistance.

Key Activities

- Works with MFIs and village banks to build homes with low-income families
- Promotes bamboo technology through bamboo roofing sheet facility and bamboo cultivation
- Disaster response and disaster mitigation
- Hosting of international volunteer teams

Habitat for Humanity in Nepal

Habitat for Humanity first began working in Nepal in 1997. In the eight years to 2005, Habitat helped 830 families to build decent housing. HFH Nepal then made a strategic decision to increase its impact and reach more and poorer communities. The result was a cost-effective and environmentally-friendly housing program delivered through partnerships with non-government organizations, microfinance institutions and village lending and savings groups. In June 2011, HFH Nepal celebrated the 10,000th family it had served.

Housing needs in Nepal

Nepal has made good progress in reducing poverty. Between 2005 and 2009, the landlocked nation reduced poverty by six percentage points to 25.4 percent. Rural dwellers are predominantly poor with a large gap between those living in the mid-western region and others in the central region and the capital Kathmandu. For example, 3 percent of the population in Kathmandu is classed as poor but the figure rises to 59 percent in Rolpa district in mid-western region, according to United Nations data. Disparities between genders, between castes and between ethnic groups are high and persistent, according to a 2010 Nepal Millennium Development Report issued by the government and UN. Political instability, high food price inflation and drought, flooding and other natural disasters add to the burden on the poor.

Nepal is experiencing a rapid expansion of urban areas and high rates of rural-urban migration. City dwellers find it hard to afford housing because of spiraling land prices, according to a 2010 UN-HABITAT report. The Nepal Housing Profile Study, published jointly with the Ministry of Planning and Physical Works in Nepal, shows that urban land prices have tripled since 2003, making housing increasingly unaffordable for many. About 10 percent of urban dwellers are squatters

and the number is set to rise, according to the UN report. An August 2010 report in a local newspaper suggested that there are 16,953 squatters in Kathmandu Valley, living mainly along the river banks of Bagmati, Bishnumati and Manohara.

How Habitat for Humanity works

HFH Nepal provides a decent home with access to water and sanitation facilities. Typically, a Habitat house measures about 31 sq. m. in area. It is made with bamboo wall panels on a timber frame finished with cement plaster. Sun-dried bricks are also used. Galvanized iron sheets are used for roofing which Habitat eventually plans to replace with corrugated bamboo roofing sheets. Habitat favors the use of the low-cost and environmentally sustainable bamboo which is especially popular in the east where Habitat has set up a bamboo processing enterprise which produces corrugated bamboo roofing sheets or presses woven bamboo mats into panels for walls. Women from the local community earn income by weaving bamboo into mats for the enterprise. In other areas, Habitat commonly uses cement blocks or bricks and mud.

Each home partner family contributes sweat equity, or their own labor, to build their own house as well as those of others. Families also provide raw materials such as timber, bamboo or mud from their own land to reduce the loan they have to repay. The mortgage loan repayment period is about 30 months and repayment averages US\$7 per month.

Habitat rebuilds homes following disasters such as the Koshi flooding in August 2008 and trains families to protect their lives and property against future calamities. To ensure timely and effective response, HFH Nepal has built up a network of suppliers which are ready to provide 1,000 prefabricated bamboo emergency shelters and transitional shelters.

COUNTRY FACTS



“100,000 Housing Campaign”

In July 2011, Habitat launched the “100,000 Housing Campaign” to mobilize partners, people and resources to tap locally available construction techniques and materials to help overcome the country’s chronic housing shortage. As part of this ambitious campaign, HFH Nepal is encouraging other non-governmental organizations and community-based groups to work with Habitat to add housing-related components to the services and activities they offer.

International volunteers

Home to the world’s tallest peak, Nepal is a popular destination with international volunteers. For the year ended 30th June 2011, Habitat hosted 26 teams or more than 400 volunteers. They came from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, the UK and the U.S. HFH Nepal is aiming to host 50 volunteer teams per year with over 35 teams lined up for 2012. Habitat will also hold “Everest Build II” in Kavre district in October 2012. International volunteers will work with home partner families to build 40 homes using environmentally-friendly, locally grown bamboo, and sun-dried soil blocks.

Partners

Habitat receives funding support from the Korea International Cooperation Agency through HFH Korea and Canadian International Development Agency through HFH Canada. Habitat programs in Australia, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands and New Zealand are also lending their support.



Habitat for Humanity Nepal
GPO Box 24037, 973/5 Dhumbrahi Marg, Ward #4,
Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: +977 1 4432 801 Fax: +977 1 4437 367
Email: info@habitatnepal.org GV: gvt@habitatnepal.org
Website: habitatnepal.org
Blog: <http://www.hfhi-nepal.blogspot.com/>

POPULATION: 29,391,883 (July 2011 est)

CAPITAL: Kathmandu

AREA: 147,181 sq. km.

ETHNIC GROUPS: Chhettri 15.5%, Brahman-Hill 12.5%, Magar 7%, Tharu 6.6%, Tamang 5.5%, Newar 5.4%, Muslim 4.2%, Kami 3.9%, Yadav 3.9%, other 32.7%, unspecified 2.8% (2001 census)

LANGUAGES: Nepali (official) 47.8%, Maithali 12.1%, Bhojpuri 7.4%, Tharu (Dagaura/Rana) 5.8%, Tamang 5.1%, Newar 3.6%, Magar 3.3%, Awadhi 2.4%, other 10%, unspecified 2.5% (2001 census)

RELIGIONS: Hindu 80.6%, Buddhist 10.7%, Muslim 4.2%, Kirant 3.6%, other 0.9% (2001 census)

LITERACY: 48.6% (2001 census)

URBANIZATION: 19% of total population (2010)

POPULATION BELOW NATIONAL POVERTY LINE: 25.4% (2009)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES: 88% (2009)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION FACILITIES: 31% (2009)

Sources: *The World Factbook, World Bank*

Habitat Highlights

- ▶ **September 2011:** HFH Nepal presented a banner on its “100,000 Housing Campaign” to the country’s president, Ram Baran Yadav. The campaign was officially launched earlier, in July, in Kathmandu. At that event, attended by high ranking officials including the governor of the Central Bank of Nepal, Habitat recognized the contributions of partner groups in helping Habitat reach more families and communities.
- ▶ **June 2011:** Celebration of 10,000th family served milestone.
- ▶ **March 2011:** 100 women supporters of HFH Australia worked with female headed households in Itahari, eastern Nepal to build 10 bamboo houses in five days. The project is part of a larger effort to help 250 such households to break out of the cycle of poverty through decent housing.
- ▶ **End-2010:** HFH Nepal helped build prefabricated bamboo houses in the east for 235 flood-affected families. The families were displaced when the embankment of the Koshi river burst in August 2008.
- ▶ **November 2010:** HFH Nepal officially opened the “Bamboo Enterprise for Habitat” in Jhapa in the east. The Canadian funded facility produces corrugated bamboo roofing sheets which will last many years longer than conventional galvanized iron sheeting. Local women groups earn additional income from weaving bamboo mats to be used in wall panels produced by the facility.
- ▶ **October 2010:** HFH Nepal successfully completed “Everest Build” with Nepal’s President attending the closing ceremony. More than 460 volunteers built 40 bamboo houses in Leknath, near Pokhara, a popular tourist destination about 200 km. west of the capital Kathmandu.
- ▶ **July 2009:** Celebrated 5,000th house milestone and 5,001st house ground-breaking ceremony. More than 5,000 people took part in the celebration and completed a 5 km long drawing on their visions of housing. The drawing was later handed over to the Minister of Physical Planning.

Meet a Habitat family

Janaki Bhandari, 38, lives with her three children in Itahari, eastern Nepal. Three years ago, she was deserted by her husband who married another woman. Her husband has never visited them since.

She works as an unskilled construction laborer, carrying bricks and stones and helping the skilled masons. During planting and harvesting seasons, she helps out on people's farms. She can earn about US\$2 a day to support her two daughters, Ranju, 11, and Rojina, 4, and son, Roshan, 8.

Janaki and her children used to live in a thatched hut on a small plot of land owned by her parents. The roof was made of thatch and the floor was made of mud. Twigs were used for the walls and plastered with mud. Cooking was done indoors with firewood and produced a lot of smoke which affected the family's health. When it rained, the floor became wet as water would get in. In drier weather, Janaki worried about fires.

There was hardly any space for her children to read or write. Janaki's eldest daughter had to help fetch water from a neighbor's house and collect cow dung to be dried as fuel.

Janaki left her children at home when she went out to work. She worried about their safety. "I used to think that if I had a decent shelter, at least I could work freely without worrying about the children."

"I want to give my children a secure future through educa-



tion. Before that, I need a safe place for them to read and write. It was like an impossible dream. But my prayers were answered last March," said Janaki. HFH Nepal and its partner SOS Children's Village helped her to build a bamboo house. Her house was completed in March 2011 by women supporters of HFH Australia during the Hand In Hand Build.

Janaki and her children now live in a two-room bamboo house with a concrete floor and corrugated iron roof. Her children can read and write without disturbance. Janaki is proud of her house. "This house for me is like heaven, a new start in my life and a safe place for my children to shape their better future."



What volunteers say

"I have been volunteering with Habitat for Humanity since 2001, and leading teams every year in Asia since 2003. Each year is always a very rewarding experience where we are able to positively change the lives of several families. This March, I led a team to Jhapa in eastern Nepal. The highlight of this year's experience was not only what we were able to do with the families who we built new houses for; rather it was the entire community who were so accommodating, helpful and engaged in every activity with us – a true community effort. Eastern Nepal is a very remote area that really allowed us to see and experience the local way of life."

– Jack Kingsley, an American volunteer.