

BRACED Project Code 8209002

Disaster Response for Latin America and the Caribbean



BRACED in Jamaica

Everyone deserves the sense of peace that comes with having a roof over one's head – and especially during hurricane season. For 77-year-old widow Cassinia Smith, in Manchester, Jamaica, this feeling of security finally arrived when a group of local and international volunteers armed with hammers and saws came to repair her roof damaged by 2004's Hurricane Ivan.

Pastor Wenford Henry, director of Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Jamaica, explains, "We have done the roof so that it can withstand any hurricane and we have also replaced the doors, rendered the walls and...(done) the painting and facelift so that at the end, it will look like a brand-new house."

Cassinia Smith's roof project is part of a BRACED collaboration between Habitat for Humanity, ADRA and ProjectsAbroad to build 10 houses and repair over 35 roofs. "The idea is to strengthen and repair roofs...before the hurricane season to lessen the severe impact on vulnerable individuals and families."

Cassinia Smith summed up her joy: "I just want to thank God for sending these persons to assist me... It all comes from the Lord."

After Agatha: Rebuilding Guatemala

Just 48 hours after Guatemala City was recovering from the violent eruption of Pacaya Volcano on May 27 2010 the tropical storm named 'Agatha' left a trail of devastating consequences as it ripped through Central America

According to CONRED (the national Guatemalan emergency response agency) in addition to the 154 deaths, 87 injured and 98 missing, 142,096 people were evacuated from their homes. Habitat for Humanity responded effectively and rapidly to the state of emergency; as part of HFHG's new "Progressive Home" and "Home Improvement" programs nearly 80 'core houses' (temporary shelters) were constructed and funded by a generous collection of \$200,000 donations in Guatemala alone. Habitat Guatemala is set on reaching as many as possible of the 53,244 families whose homes have been damaged by flooding or completely destroyed.

In the event of such a catastrophe as 'Agatha', the entire HFH Guatemala team, comprising 140 staff and 1,200 permanent volunteers from HPH's 200 local affiliate committees, join forces with national corporate and student brigades to ensure a fast response to the call for help.



CHILE: The Aftermath

27th February 2010 will forever be a day to remember in the hearts and minds of the Chilean people as disaster struck 320km south-east of the epicentre of the 8.8 magnitude quake and ensuing tsunami in the capital of Santiago. Although much hard labor remains to be done, the incredible solidarity amongst organizations, volunteers and local governments in establishing effective response measures has made the difference. Habitat for Humanity has played a vital role in fostering this new hope and building future homes.

HFH Chile's immediate and effective action enabled the distribution of emergency kits for affected families in Talca. In collaboration with Fuerza Fisica y Espiritual para Chile, HFH Chile is set on helping 10,000 families by means of restoring 4,000 houses, constructing 1,000 temporary shelters and serving at least 5,000 families with technical help and training.

Just one year on and HFH Chile has already helped provide shelter for 60 families in the four most affected regions of the country. As 61-year old Doña Francisca Angulo from El Monte – in the metropolitan area where HFH Chile has built 15 houses for earthquake-affected families - commented:

"My house has now taken on a new meaning and for that I feel happy. Thank you. You will always be in my heart."

Two hours from Santiago, in Millahue, Don Gerardo Parraguez also watched the family home he built with his own hands 40 years ago practically crumble to the ground under the force of the tremors. Team Habitat Chile stated "We know that this is not a permanent house, but a vital support, a refuge where they will be able to spend the winter, in a place where they will not be cold and where they will feel at home".

Building
Readiness
And
Capacities for
Emerging
Disasters

BRACED. A good strong name for Habitat for Humanity's Latin American and Caribbean disaster response program. Our aim is to not only repair damage, but to help prevent it in the first place. To that end, BRACED is working hard to strap roofs down, weatherize homes, construct strong rooms, build safe facilities and train communities – all to prepare families to resist disasters. But when disaster strikes, as it often will in the Caribbean, there is inevitably damage. In conjunction with its local partner organizations – who are on the ground ready to go – BRACED aims to help as many people as possible. Emergency shelter kits are distributed, roofs are fixed and homes are repaired. BRACED has assisted 101 people thus far in Jamaica, Haiti and Trinidad & Tobago, and conducted 4 community disaster risk reduction trainings.

Would you like to join us?

When you donate to BRACED (Project Code 8209002) at <https://www.habitat.org/cd/giving/one/donate.aspx?link=407> you designate how you'd like your funds used. Would you like to help out pre-disaster by funding ongoing construction and repair projects? Do you want to support community training? Or, should your money go toward the Disaster Fund that facilitates rapid response when disaster strikes? And, it's not all about money, either. Habitat is happy to accept your generous offer of in-kind donations – or your donated time and skills. Let us know how you'd like to help keep a community BRACED.

Would you like to support one of the countries highlighted in this issue?

Visit us at www.habitat.org where you can select your country of choice.

Or email us at LacDRR@habitat.org to find out how to donate to BRACED