

Country profile

BANGLADESH



Habitat for Humanity in Bangladesh

Since 1999, Habitat for Humanity Bangladesh has been working with low-income families to build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter. HFH Bangladesh currently operates in Dhamrai, in Dhaka district, and in the districts of Gazipur, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Tangail and Satkhira. The programs include clean water and safe sanitation, microfinance, training in appropriate construction technology as well as disaster response and mitigation.

The housing need in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is among the most densely populated countries in the world with more than 1,200 people per square kilometer. According to United Nations data, about 25 million people are living in abject poverty and nearly a quarter of the female-headed households live in extreme poverty. More than two million people in the capital city of Dhaka either live in slums or are without any proper shelter. Urban migration is mainly due to better employment opportunities, especially in the garment industry, and educational opportunities. While most people migrate for economic reasons, more than 26 per cent leave for the cities because of natural disasters, river erosion and recurrent flooding.

How Habitat addresses the need in Bangladesh

HFH Bangladesh works with partners and volunteers to provide decent homes as a way out of poverty. Responding to disasters such as cyclones or storms has enabled Habitat to help Bangladeshi families rebuild more resilient homes. Improving communities' access to clean water and safe sanitation along with raising hygiene standards lead to better attendance in school and greater economic productivity.



One of the new houses built in an 180-house disaster preparedness project in Satkhira.

COUNTRY FACTS

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| Capital | Dhaka |
| Population | Nearly 169 million (July 2015 est.) |
| Urbanization | 34.3 percent lives in cities (2015) |
| Life expectancy | 71 years |
| Unemployment rate | 4.9 percent (2015 est.) |
| Population living below poverty line | 31.5 percent (2010 est.) |
| Access to improved water sources | 86.9 percent (2015 est.) |
| Access to improved sanitation facilities | 60.6 percent (2015 est.) |

Source: World Factbook

HABITAT FACTS

When Habitat started in Bangladesh
1999

Families served*
More than 8,600

Volunteers hosted**
More than 2,600

*Cumulative figure since 1999

**Cumulative figure since 2010

Housing solutions

- Decent, affordable housing
- Urban development
- Disaster response and mitigation
- Volunteer engagement



Decent, affordable housing

Based on a low-cost core house design, families begin by building a house with a single room, a veranda and a latrine. They have the option of adding a second room or building walls around the veranda to expand living space when their situation allows. In addition to providing technical support for home renovations, HFH Bangladesh has developed guidelines and manuals on building with various materials and equipment, construction of water and sanitation facilities and project management, among others. Habitat also trains construction workers and community members in building or renovating homes.

Urban development

In 2012, HFH Bangladesh started its first urban project with the upgrading of three slums in Dhaka city. With funding from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, about 9,000 people were helped through house renovations, distribution of water filters, construction of water pumps and drainage system and walkways as well as bath houses and community toilets. Since 2014, HFH Bangladesh has also been playing a catalytic role in engaging other non-governmental organizations, the government and partners in urban forums and dialogues.

Disaster response and mitigation

HFH Bangladesh aims to help disaster-affected families through emergency shelter kits and transitional housing in the early phase of its response. Habitat also provides technical assistance and project management expertise to help families rebuild their houses. Since 2007, HFH Bangladesh has helped more than 2,400 families through various disaster responses and training in disaster mitigation and preparedness. The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has provided a 3.222 million Hong Kong dollar (over US\$415,000) grant to help families affected by Cyclone Roanu in May 2016. HFH Bangladesh aims to distribute 2,000 emergency shelter kits in Banskhali Upazila in Chittagong district by end-October 2016.

Volunteer engagement

Volunteers from local corporations, schools and embassies support Habitat's work in Bangladesh by contributing their voluntary labor on build sites, raising funds and advocating for Habitat's cause. Youth volunteers play a key role in the annual Habitat Young Leaders Build campaign through fundraising and speaking out for the need for decent housing. International volunteers make their presence felt under the Global Village program. In the past decade, HFH Bangladesh has hosted more than 80 Global Village teams.

Meet a Habitat family

Mohammed Selim Miah is only 16 but he has weathered a lot in his life. His father died of an illness 12 years ago and Selim has been living apart from his mother and younger brother. Selim lives with his grandmother in Raniyat village, Tangail district in the capital Dhaka. To support his family, Selim used to work as a household help during his school vacation.

The shack that Selim shared with his grandmother was often cold and damp. Their plight was highlighted to a community-based organization that was a partner of HFH Bangladesh. In 2014, Habitat completed the construction of a house on Selim's family's land.

Selim is now in his first year of study at the Madhupur College and he works as a shop keeper to continue supporting his family. "I feel safe, secure and loved," said Selim, after living for two years in his new house. "I am proud that I have a beautiful home where I can invite my friends, and concentrate on my studies. I sleep well, and I feel healthy. This home is an abundant blessing in my life."



Mohammed Selim Miah, with his grandmother Mossammed Hawshi Begum, feels secure and loved in his home built by HFH Bangladesh.

What you can do

DONATE, VOLUNTEER or **TITHE** to help families break the poverty cycle through decent homes. To learn more about HFH Bangladesh's work, please contact us.

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