

Country profile

CHINA



Habitat for Humanity in China

Established in 2000, Habitat for Humanity China began operating in Yunnan province in 2002 and opened offices in neighboring Guangdong and Guangxi provinces in 2004. HFH China provides simple, decent homes to low-income rural families in these regions. Chengdu, the provincial capital of Sichuan, is the location of an office which was started to coordinate rebuilding work after the devastating May 2008 earthquake. In 2009, HFH China opened an office in the financial hub of Shanghai to raise awareness and create partnerships in the Yangzi delta area.

The housing need in China

China has an impressive record in reducing poverty. The world's most populous country has lifted more than 600 million people out of poverty in the past 15 years, accounting for about 70 percent of those brought out of poverty worldwide. Rapid growth and urbanization and economic reforms have been central to China's poverty reduction in the past few decades. However, inequality has increased and poverty has become concentrated in rural and minority areas, according to the World Bank. Many of the poor lack access to affordable housing, shut out by soaring land and house prices, and the inadequate supply of low-cost accommodation. The central government announced in September 2011 that it would build 10 million government-subsidized affordable housing units in 2011 and 36 million units over the next five years. Still, much remains to be done.

How Habitat addresses the need in China

HFH China works with local partners and the government in mostly rural areas to build simple, decent homes with the help of volunteers. Low-income families often lack adequate access to clean water and safe sanitation. The homes built by HFH China are typically made of more durable materials such as bricks and include proper sanitation facilities. The homes rebuilt after the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan included single detached, row houses, townhouses and apartment buildings. HFH China also constructed classrooms in Sichuan and community infrastructure in Yunnan, Guangdong and Guangxi. In Shanghai, volunteers help to renovate homes and improve safety of low-income elderly people.



Habitat homeowner
Tao Xinzhu and his
family in Guangdong
province.

COUNTRY FACTS*

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| Capital | Beijing |
| Population | Over 1.3 billion (July 2015 est.) |
| Urbanization | 55.6 percent lives in cities (2015) |
| Life expectancy | 75 years (2015 est.) |
| Unemployment rate | 4.1 percent (2014 est.) |
| Population living below poverty line | 6.1 percent (2013 est.) |
| Access to improved water sources | 95.5 percent (2015 est.) |
| Access to improved sanitation facilities | 76.5 percent (2015 est.) |

*Source: World Factbook

HABITAT FACTS

When Habitat started in China
2002

Families served*
More than 5,000

Volunteers hosted**
12,560

Housing solutions

- Rural reconstruction
- Disaster response
- Global Village volunteer program
- Urban renovation

*Since 2002

**Since 2009



Rural reconstruction

HFH China partners with local governments to rebuild houses in dangerous conditions by providing selected families with non-profit housing loans and mobilizing volunteers to participate in the construction. Grants are also provided to certain home partners in need who cannot afford to make loan repayments. In some communities, HFH China improves the infrastructure by building retaining walls to protect against landslides, and constructing recreational and communal facilities.

Urban renovation

In the aging cities of Shanghai and Guangzhou, many elderly people choose to live alone at home instead of nursing homes. Built decades ago, their homes have become danger zones, with faulty electrical wiring, cracked walls or ceilings and slippery bathrooms and kitchens. HFH China works with social service organizations to renovate the seniors' homes to prevent accidents and fires as well as raise awareness about the state of the elderly people's living conditions.

Disaster response

China is vulnerable to earthquakes and tropical storms which particularly affect low-income families. They continue to live in their damaged houses as they cannot afford to rebuild their homes. HFH China contributes its technical expertise in post-disaster reconstruction such as rebuilding about 1,400 houses together with the local government after a magnitude-8.0 earthquake hit Sichuan province in 2008. Earthquakes in Sichuan in 2013 and the neighboring province of Yunnan in 2014 saw HFH China distributing kits with essential items and building disaster-resilient homes for affected families.

Global Village

Short-term Global Village trips to HFH China's project sites offer transformative experiences to volunteers. They work hand-in-hand with home partners to build homes, communities and hope. Guangdong has hosted volunteers from Hong Kong for the Habitat Youth Build campaign, now known as Habitat Young Leaders Build. Sichuan also has its share of volunteer builders in post-disaster rebuilding.



Zhao Sufang at her old house (left) and new home built by HFH China in Sichuan province

Meet a Habitat family

Zhao Sufang has been through a lot in her 55 years of life. Her husband, who was diagnosed with stomach cancer, died in 2007. Her old house in Shigang village, Sichuan province, was razed in a fire and rebuilt with her neighbors' help. Over four decades, her old house had become run-down. She could not sleep well because she feared her house might collapse. Her only son and her daughter-in-law also have health issues. Life began looking up when Sufang built a new house with Habitat for Humanity China with the help of Global Village volunteers from USA. Sufang's son Wu Xiaobo, a construction worker, said: "Having a new home is my motivation to keep working and save money." Sufang and her family moved into their new Habitat house in February 2016. "We finally have a safe place to live. We can sleep well because the pressure is released. I am so grateful for the help from the volunteers and Habitat," she said.

What you can do

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

Habitat for Humanity China

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