

Country profile: NORTHERN IRELAND



Country facts

Capital:
Belfast

Population:
more than 1.7 million

Urbanization:
N/A

GDP per capita:
N/A

Habitat facts

Established:
1994

Funds raised:
more than \$2.6 million

Number of volunteer teams sent:
more than 300

Focus activities:
Sustainable local building programme, mobilising volunteers both locally and globally, equipping advocates for decent shelter and housing rights, engaging young people in active local and global citizenship.

Habitat for Humanity in Northern Ireland

Starting in 1994, the program locally is focused on reconciliation and regeneration in communities impacted by deprivation and the legacy of conflict. Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland has brought together more than 16,000 volunteers from across the country committed to a shared future for Northern Ireland – to building houses, building communities and building hope. Since 1999, Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland has worked to support the global mission by raising funds to support international projects and sending volunteer teams to work alongside families in need around the world.

How Habitat for Humanity works in Northern Ireland

Peace-building remains at the heart of the strategy for the local work. Strategic focus globally is on raising funds from individuals, companies and other funders for programmes which alleviate poverty through housing; improving health, increasing educational opportunities, providing livelihood support.

Local building and volunteering program

Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland has completed more than 90 homes helping regenerate 11 different communities. The local building programme provides a platform for volunteer engagement; intentional programmes beyond practical volunteering designed to develop leadership and active citizenship. In May 2011 a new energy-efficient home model that does not require a central heating system was implemented, delivering real impact for low-income families.

International volunteers

Habitat Northern Ireland sends volunteers in support of longterm partner programmes around the world. A partnership with Ethiopia, for example, which focuses on extending support marginalised families affected by leprosy, has been described by Habitat Ethiopia as the most effective in achieving its mission in the country. Over 3,500 volunteers have travelled in the last 11 years, one in 500 people from NI has been part of the programme. Physically and financially, volunteers contributed to the construction of more than 1,000 homes worldwide.

School and youth programs

The success of a cross community schools programme has led to the development of a new inter-church volunteer programme. The programme provides young people an opportunity to work together to explore faith, difference and diversity. Participants demonstrate active citizenship by building on-site locally delivering real benefits for local communities. Every year more than 500 young people engage with youth programmes.

Corporate partners and churches

Partnership is at the heart of Habitat's work. Corporate partnerships offer an opportunity beyond traditional check writing through local and global volunteering trips to build homes alongside families in need of decent shelter. Habitat Northern Ireland has appreciated the support of such companies as Cemex, Gilbert Ash, Creagh Concrete, Lagan Group, Graham Construction, Construction Register Ltd, Irish News, Momentum and many others.

Meet a Habitat family

'When I get my new Habitat house it will be like walking through the gates of heaven.'

Those were the words of a lady called Fadi who lives in Kombolcha in Northern Ethiopia. A team from the University of Ulster helped build homes there during the past two summers. Part of a special partnership with Habitat Ethiopia project aims to integrate people with leprosy and their families into the local community. Fadi herself suffers from leprosy. She was forced to live in a slum with the other leprosy families on the outskirts of the town. However just two weeks after we left Fadi moved into her new Habitat house that for her is not just a home but a place of stability and security.



What did the volunteers say?

'I went with the idea that we would be changing the lives of the people. They gave more to us than we could ever return. Faith, hope, courage, strength and compassion – my life is enriched to an extent I may fail to do justice in words.'

Student from University of Ulster team to Ethiopia 2010.

What you can do

DONATE

Visit www.habitatni.co.uk/donate and send your donation to families in need all around the world.

VOLUNTEER

Come build with Habitat and enjoy the experience of a lifetime. Contact gv@habitatni.co.uk

PARTNER

If your corporation would like to support Habitat and partner with us, contact petera@habitatni.co.uk

SUBSCRIBE

Subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter and get regular updates on our work: www.habitatni.co.uk/?q=newsletter

LEARN MORE

Learn more about how Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland addresses the need worldwide. Go to www.habitatni.co.uk

CONTACT

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Habitat for Humanity International is a global charity dedicated to eliminating poverty housing. Since its foundation in 1976, Habitat has built and renovated more than 400,000 houses worldwide, providing simple, decent, affordable shelter for 2 million people.

In Europe and Central Asia Habitat for Humanity International works with families in need in 23 countries, building and repairing houses, offering housing microfinance services, improving water and sanitation, working on disaster response and advocating for affordable housing. In this region, Habitat has served more than 11,000 families together with volunteers and homeowners. Find out more at www.habitaturope.org.