

Habitat World

THE MAGAZINE OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL

Hope Is Growing

ALSO:

Disaster, before and after

SEPTEMBER 2014
habitat.org/magazine

Habitat brings hope



Whenever decent and affordable housing is part of the equation, hope follows.

It's no secret that I like to have a plan. In fact, after I accepted the position of Habitat for Humanity CEO in 2005, I wanted to learn as much as I could about our worldwide ministry and charted out my first 100 days.

Then hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck on the heels of the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami. In each of these disasters, the destruction demanded that we scale up our efforts and think in terms of rebuilding entire communities and impacting a total region. My plans—and ultimately Habitat's global strategies — changed dramatically.

As we approach the 10th anniversary of the tsunami — and as our disaster response and recovery efforts have continued around the world — we are heartened by great stories of families and communities that have come back stronger than ever. Among those you will meet in this issue is Sundaramurthy, a 55-year-old fisherman in India, whose family lost everything in 2005. Now he's back on his feet and is an employer of 10 who proclaims that Habitat helped him build hope — and a home — when he needed it most.

Habitat has served more than 200,000 disaster-affected families across 44 countries, including the U.S., since 1999. We've learned a lot from those efforts — particularly about involving local residents — and those lessons have guided

us as we also focus on revitalizing troubled neighborhoods. Whenever decent and affordable housing is part of the equation, hope follows, and we are seeing some amazing transformations.

In this issue, walk through the New Town Success Zone in Jacksonville, Florida, and see how a community partnership in which Habitat actively participates has changed a neighborhood — and the lives of its residents — for the better.

In New Town, organizers have known from the start that one of the critical elements of success is education. But they have seen for themselves that kids struggle to learn if they aren't eating well and if the streets they live on are unsafe and if they don't have a decent place to live. Housing is foundational. So Habitat Jacksonville has joined three dozen public and private organizations to help bring hope to New Town.

Disaster response and recovery and neighborhood revitalization are critical parts of Habitat's strategic plan to serve more families and communities around the world. We build — and rebuild — to give families a brighter future, to give communities a clearer path and to give hope a place to flourish. The support you provide makes all of that possible. Together, we continue to build hope alongside those who need it most. [HW](#)

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Mission Vision
A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

What we do
Habitat for Humanity International's vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Anchored by the conviction that housing provides a critical foundation for breaking the cycle of poverty, Habitat has helped more than 4 million people construct, rehabilitate or preserve homes since 1976. Habitat also advocates to improve access to decent and affordable shelter and supports a variety of funding models that enable families with limited resources to make needed improvements on their homes as their time and resources allow.

As a nonprofit Christian housing organization, Habitat works in more than 70 countries and welcomes people of all races, religions and nationalities to partner in its mission. To learn more, donate or volunteer visit habitat.org. For a full list of locations where Habitat is at work, visit habitat.org/where-we-build.

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“He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God’s fellow workers. You are God’s field, God’s building.”
— 1 CORINTHIANS 3:6-9

Pathways to permanence

Out of 20 disaster, building better lives: 5 stories to inspire you.



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Coming Home

What “community” 31 really means. Place is only part of it.

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All the latest news, video, photos and features. PAGE 10





UNITED STATES

Pitch in!

Volunteers are the heart, soul and muscle behind Habitat's work. Whether it's painting a house in your community or building one in another country, every part of our mission is possible because of dedicated volunteers like this one in Raleigh, N.C. That smile? She knows her work helps a family have a decent home.

Explore the many ways you can get involved at [habitat.org/getinv](https://www.habitat.org/getinv).

Photo by Jason Asteros



Magnificent mile blitz

UNITED STATES

More than 500 volunteers descended on Michigan Avenue in downtown Chicago for a four-day blitz build this spring. “Raise Your Hand Chicagoland” offered visitors a chance to tour a Habitat home and learn more about Chicagoland Habitat’s work. Mayor Rahm Emmanuel, Chicago Bears players and actor Jim Belushi joined in, as volunteers and partner families framed the exterior of one home and built walls for 12 more. The frames were then delivered to area affiliates to be turned into completed homes for 13 families. The event raised more than \$1.2 million to support Habitat’s work in the region.

caring



Caribbean construction

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Habitat led a seven-house build on this Caribbean island during Trinidad and Tobago’s Day of Caring, an initiative hosted by United Way.

More than 130 volunteers participated in the build, a highlight of which was the dedication of a Habitat house belonging to Paralympics athlete Carlos Greene and his family. Greene, who lost his sight in 2000, represented Trinidad and Tobago in the shot put and discus at the 2012 London Paralympic Games.

Safe water

FIJI, ZAMBIA

A Habitat Fiji water project has helped some 400 people in Nasauvuki village on the island of Moturiki. A 60,000-liter water storage tank was installed to collect rainwater, which is pumped into larger tanks and supplied to eight standing taps. In addition to providing clean water to rural families, such projects teach communities the plumbing skills needed for care and maintenance. “The projects bring the communities closer together,” says Habitat Fiji’s Saimoni Ravatu.

Habitat Zambia has partnered with Habitat Great Britain to implement the Maanzi [Water] Project, bringing safe water to the Chazanga village by installing a water kiosk. Marvis Mutale, one of 600 individuals served, is happy to have safe water available. “Our old source was dirty,” he says. “The water kiosk is more safe and clean to drink, and it will save the lives of the people of Chazanga. Our cry for help has really been answered.”



PHOTO COURTESY JEFF SCHEAR & GETTY IMAGES

Awareness and advocacy

EUROPE, ASIA-PACIFIC

Habitat Hungary has released an updated housing report, which cites affordability as its prime issue. There is no housing shortage in Hungary — the country has almost half a million vacant apartments — yet more than 300,000 families are on a housing waiting list. Habitat regularly advocates for significant policy changes to help resolve these disparities.

An Asia-Pacific regional report due in October will document the effects of rapid population growth and urbanization on housing. The new report will be unveiled at the Hong Kong launch of Impact Asia, an initiative expanding the network of Habitat partners.

The Housing Forum for Europe and Central Asia will take place in April 2015 in Berlin. This biennial forum brings together leading professionals committed to the cause of sustainable housing. The Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth aims to lift at least 20 million people in the region out of poverty, end social exclusion and increase employment opportunities. Habitat and its partners believe this is only possible by creating more decent housing.

Insulating homes for energy efficiency

In June, a team of 20 women from Whirlpool helped insulate homes as part of the company's LeaderSHEp Build renovation project in Bucharest, Romania, where high heating costs have forced some families to cut back on basic items such as food and clothes. Whirlpool volunteers also travel this year to Hungary, Bulgaria and Poland.



Read more online

Find this issue and more news, features, photos and video at habitat.org/magazine.



Incremental building

TANZANIA

Mazaki Bora — which translates roughly as “better housing” in the Kiswahili language spoken across much of East Africa — is a housing microfinance program designed by Habitat Tanzania specifically for Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's largest city. The program targets low-income households who are building their homes incrementally.

Mazaki Bora opened in 2009 and disbursed its first loans a few weeks later. By 2011, it had become Tanzania's housing microfinance leader. The number of active borrowers for this year totals 2,274, with the average loan amount about US\$633.

Since the first Habitat houses were built in Chile in 2002, the program has grown to include repairs and disaster response and preparedness.



“I can now take good care of my daughter, feed her properly, give her a chance to have an education. If one day I die, I would like her to have this house.”

Homeowner Gence Solo Zurline,
Habitat Madagascar

Centering on disaster recovery

VALPARAISO, CHILE

On April 12, 2014, the historic Chilean port city of Valparaiso suffered the worst wildfires in its history. More than 13,000 people lost their homes, and 12 hillside neighborhoods were destroyed.

In the aftermath, Habitat Chile provided affected communities with tool kits to start rebuilding. Habitat also joined a fundraising campaign to build emergency community centers in the areas damaged by fires. These centers will serve as a gathering place for families, offering a kitchen and food distribution center, storage for tools and materials, a health care clinic, counseling services, and self-help workshops.

“We hope to help by providing a permanent structure that reduces these families’ vulnerability in the fire’s aftermath,” says Luis Santibañez, director of Habitat Chile. “These community centers will serve to bolster their recovery.”



Canada Builds

A new program sends Canadian volunteers to serve all across their country. “Thousands of Canadians have travelled abroad to Habitat projects,” says Rick Tait, Habitat Canada’s senior director of Global Village. “But many communities in Canada could also benefit from this type of support.”

The first Canada Builds destination was Slave Lake, devastated by wildfires in 2011. Prince Edward Island was the second, and a trip to Yukon leaves Sept. 7. Learn more at habitatglobalvillage.ca.

Recent reading

A recent study published in *Science* magazine says that poverty can lead to mental states that make it more likely you’ll stay poor. These physiological changes, the authors say, “favor behaviors that make it more difficult to escape poverty.”

The stress hormone cortisol, for instance, can lead to “short-sighted and risk-averse decision making” and “a feedback loop that contributes to the perpetuation of poverty.”

Low-income families moving to better neighborhoods showed improved physical and mental health, as did study participants receiving “health insurance, improved housing and access to water.”

To read the report, visit sciencemag.org.



WHERE WE WORK

This summer, Habitat Bosnia and Herzegovina distributed clean-up kits to help 400 families remove debris and mud from their homes after severe floods and landslides, believed to be the worst in the past 100 years. Habitat’s local partnerships began in 2010.

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over...”

LUKE 6:38

1 DOLLAR

4

Number of times more likely that children who move four times by eighth grade will drop out. U.S. Department of Education and Denver Public Schools studies found that this relationship held regardless of socioeconomic status or reading achievement scores.

“Price” per square foot of houses in Wiregrass Habitat’s Square Foot Build Campaign. “We have a thousand square feet that we’re trying to sell, so for example if someone chose 100 square feet, they would donate \$100,” says Amy Schutz, executive director of the Alabama affiliate. Donors receive small numbered keys “so they’ll know what they helped to contribute to.”

800,000

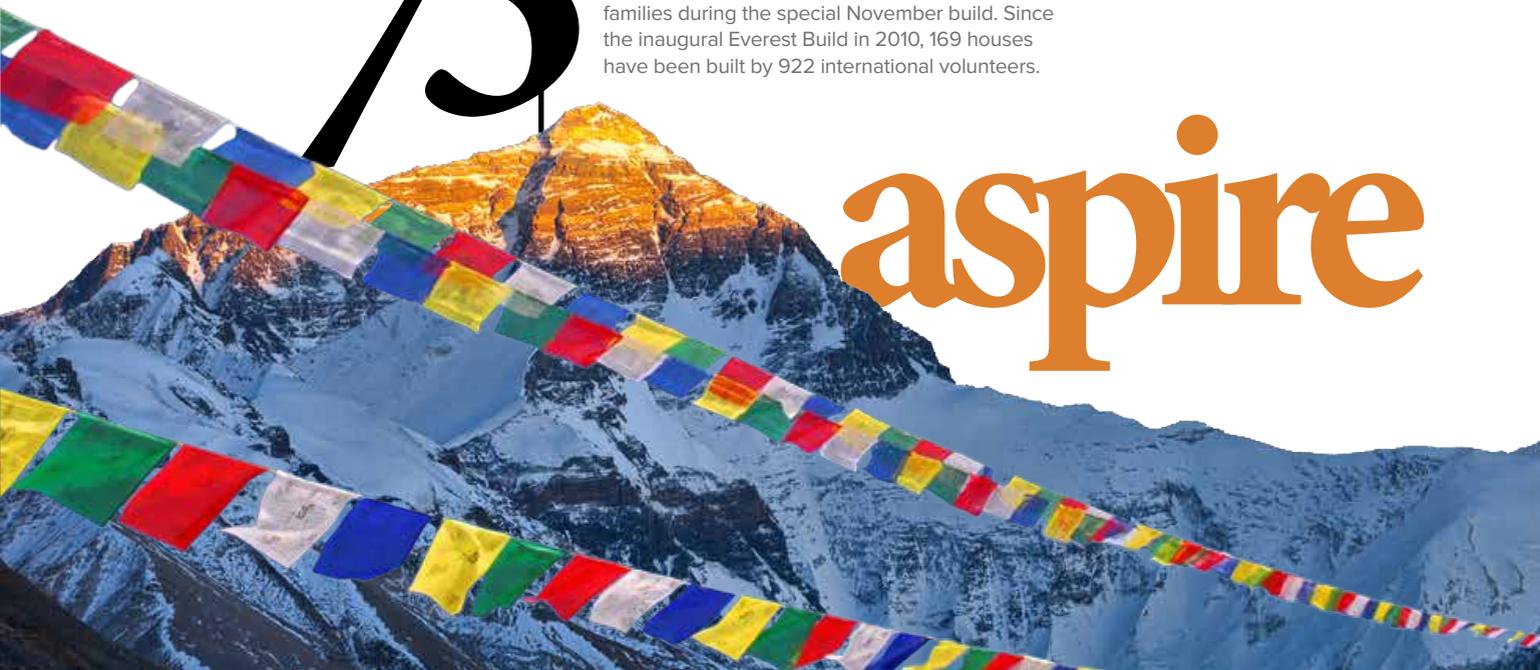


Families in Pernambuco, Brazil, that could benefit from the State Policy on Prevention and Mediation of Urban Land Conflicts that Habitat helped pass last May. This public policy will provide vulnerable populations with secure land tenure and property rights.

75

Houses scheduled to be built in Nepal’s Chitwan District during Everest Build III. Habitat Nepal will bring 750 international volunteers together with families during the special November build. Since the inaugural Everest Build in 2010, 169 houses have been built by 922 international volunteers.

aspire



what's new //

at habitat.org/magazine



Hope Is Growing

See how a community partnership in which Habitat actively participates has changed a neighborhood for the better.



A decent home is a new beginning

Watch a video highlighting all of the good things that start in a safe, decent, affordable home.

Why I serve

Hear from Habitat AmeriCorps Alumni Association member Kate Russell.



Help your home use energy more efficiently

Habitat Boston builds and repairs homes with energy efficiency in mind. You can, too.



Choose the Global Village destination that's right for you

Volunteer veterans offer advice that will help you travel with a purpose.

Build a better budget

Read how Habitat Erie coaches families to help them become successful homeowners.

Framing the future

New Jersey high school students experience the thrill of a Habitat build.



Sign up to receive Habitat World updates at habitat.org/hwemail.

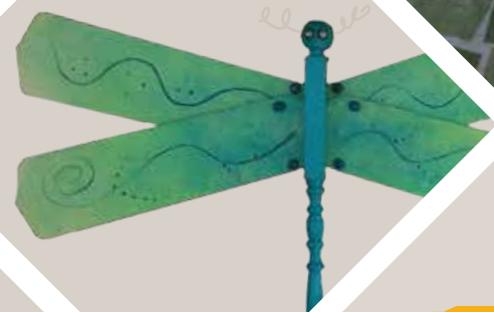


ARTISTIC PROJECTS

Paint ceramic tiles to use as coasters and light switches.



why
RESTORE?
BLOG



VIDEO DEMONSTRATION

Repurpose vintage furniture and other items found at our ReStores.

Launched on Earth Day 2014, the ReStore blog offers a variety of posts ranging from do-it-yourself ideas and home improvement projects to green living tips and reuse possibilities. It's a great resource for anyone looking for inspiration for their next project!



POWER-TOOLS PROJECTS

Make a coffee table out of antique cabinet doors.



SMALL PROJECTS

Restore a piece of vintage furniture.



see

these features and more at

habitat.org/restores/blog



Hope Is Growing



STORY BY ANN HARDIE
PHOTOS BY EZRA MILLSTEIN

A COMMUNITY PULLS TOGETHER IN JACKSONVILLE

Eleven-year-old Sha'keria Riley did something the other day that once seemed unthinkable. She walked to school.

Just a few years ago, Sha'keria's mom didn't allow her children to go outside, much less out of sight, because of all the drugs and shootings in New Town, their neighborhood in Jacksonville, Florida.

But this is a new day in New Town. Lots of things are happening that once seemed unthinkable in this community of 6,500 families. Since the people who live here and the police officers who work here began trusting one another, crime has gone down — violent crime by 50 percent.

New homes have sprung up as part of Habitat for Humanity of Jacksonville's \$16 million campaign to help



“Success comes with learning. And we are learning to be successful.”

SHA'KERIA RILEY
NEW TOWN RESIDENT

revitalize New Town. The work reflects Habitat's holistic Neighborhood Revitalization approach that expands the partnership with homeowners to include other residents and organizations for greater impact.

Since 2010, Habitat Jacksonville has repaired 125 houses needing some TLC and built or renovated 90 others for first-time homeowners, including a new green two-story house that Sha'keria eyes on her route to school.

Most evenings, after homework and dinner, she and her family walk to a new park on a spot once occupied by boarded-up houses. The sun-drenched, shade-dappled space is now home to bucket swings and big-kid swings, see-saws and jungle gyms, a short walking trail for grownups, and the unmistakable sound of children playing.

On the way home, they often drop by the new community garden to check on their onions, kale and cabbages. With the nearest grocery store several miles away, the resident-managed garden is a welcome source of fresh produce and a hands-on learning laboratory for kids.

“A lot of people want this neighborhood to be a good place to grow up,” Sha'keria says. “It's getting there.”

NEW HOPE IN NEW TOWN

These changes aren't happening by chance, but by the concerted work of the New Town Success Zone, a collaboration of residents and three dozen public and private organizations that came together in 2008 to make New Town a good place for children to grow up.

The neighborhood kids came up with the name of the collaboration. “It's a good name,” Sha'keria says. “Success comes with learning. And we are learning to be successful.”

Before that, the words “New Town” and “success” were rarely used in the same sentence. The neighborhood was known for its high rates of infant mortality, teenage pregnancy, high school dropouts and crime. “The only people out in the street were people who sold drugs or people looking for drugs,” says Dr. Irvin PeDro Cohen, executive director of the New Town Success Zone. “There was no park, no garden, no hope.”

Cohen, who grew up five miles from New Town, also serves as inspirer-in-chief. Sha'keria breaks into a big smile at the mention of his name. “He is always checking my report card, and if I do well, he lets me go to Girls Rock Camp,” she says, referring to the weeklong program where girls learn to play instruments, write songs and perform at the city's historic Florida Theatre.

The Success Zone's stated goal is to have every neighborhood child go to college or a trade school or join the military. For reasons symbolic and practical, the collaboration is based at Edward Waters College, which sits in the heart of New Town and is Florida's oldest historically black college. The school, founded in 1866 to educate freed slaves, donated the land for the park.





Officer Shirley Johnson

No more “us” and “them”

New Town residents and police officers are coming together to make the community a safer place to live and work. “There is trust,” says Tony Davis, assistant chief of the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office who oversees the New Town area.

It appears to be working. Violent crime in New Town, including shootings and aggravated batteries, has dropped 50 percent. Burglaries and arrests are way down, too.

Davis, who started his career 30 years ago patrolling these streets, is not surprised that the statistics are heading in the right direction. “When you put together a group like the New Town Success Zone that cares about the neighborhood, that happens,” he says.

The Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office has been one of the driving forces behind the Success Zone, a collaboration of residents and community partners working since 2008 to revitalize the neighborhood. “People here want it to be a place where they can walk the streets, sit out on their porches and be safe,” Davis says. “We want that, too.”

The sheriff’s office has built a new station at Edward Waters College, which houses the New Town Success Zone, and officers understand that their job is not simply to arrest criminals. They are also expected to attend neighborhood meetings, mentor schoolchildren, check on older residents, and even pitch in to build a greenhouse at the community garden.

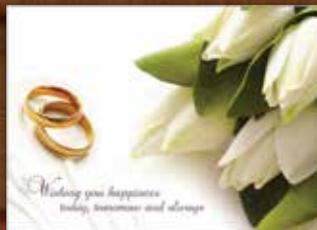
“The police make it a point to know everyone,” says Gary Pierce, a Habitat homeowner who lives across the street from the middle school. “That’s why it’s getting better here.” He points to Officer Shirley Johnson, who has stopped by to see him and his 3-year-old grandson.

“At one time, there was an ‘us’ and ‘them’ in this community,” Davis says. “Now it’s just all of us.”

A SPECIAL GIFT



When you make a Gifts from the Heart donation to Habitat for Humanity, you provide building materials, supplies and support for families who are in need of decent, affordable homes.



Honor your loved ones with a beautiful greeting card for any occasion or pay tribute to a loved one with a memorial gift.



Visit habitat.org/gfth or call (800) HABILITAT to give your gift today!



Success Garden is 100-by-100 feet of magic

Fruits and vegetables grow like magic — with a lot of hard work — in the black dirt of this once-vacant lot. The bounty includes green beans, collards and corn, along with Red Velvet okra, Sugar Baby watermelon and black raspberries. “Hey, this smells like tea!” says Savannah Brown, 7, taking a whiff of the lime basil.

The garden provides sustenance for New Town, which is miles from the nearest grocery store, and serves as a tangible sign of hope and renewal. “I would never have imagined that this lot would have turned into something so beautiful,” says RoToré Powell, who grew up in New Town and helps manage the garden.

Working with the nonprofit Friends of Northeast Florida Community Gardens, residents set out in 2012 to teach their community to grow its own food and eat healthier. As in other poorer neighborhoods where fresh produce is scarce, many residents struggle with diet-related health issues such as obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure.

In 2013, the garden produced 1,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables, a portion of which was donated to the food pantry at the local community center. As the garden matures, the annual harvest is expected to jump to 5,000 pounds. Residents plan to sell some of the produce at local farmers markets so the garden can be self-sustaining.

They’re getting stronger every day, both physically and as a community. “You come in this garden and you stand with people who have lived here 30 years that you never knew,” Powell says. “Then you see them walking down the street, and you smile and speak.”

She spends a lot of time teaching neighborhood kids how to sow seeds, water plants and believe in their own greatness. “Children are seeds,” she says. “If we take time with the kids, I feel like this neighborhood could have the next sheriff, the next mayor, the next famous heart surgeon, the next president. The sky is the limit.”

The dozens of New Town Success Zone partners, including the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office, Boys & Girls Club of Northeast Florida, and the Jacksonville Children’s Commission, come from all over the city. Each partner has been asked simply to do what they do best, whether that’s making the streets safe, getting a PTA up and running, teaching preschoolers their ABCs, or keeping older kids on track through after-school and summer academic programs.

There’s also a program at the college to help high school dropouts get their GEDs. Sha’keria’s mom, Shanita Brown, enrolled a year and a half ago. “How could I encourage my kids to stay in school if I didn’t lay that foundation myself?” says Brown, who was raised in New Town and dropped out

of school in the 11th grade to work as a hotel cook to help her mom pay bills. Brown has struggled financially herself in recent years, trying to raise and house her kids. And she, too, has admired the new Habitat homes going up in her neighborhood.

“If all these changes were going on in New Town when I was growing up, I think I would have been more motivated.”

In addition to education, health care is a major component of the New Town Success Zone’s efforts. Health providers offer prenatal care, back-to-school physicals, parenting classes for new moms and dads, and fitness classes for older caregivers now raising grandchildren.

They also treat many kids with asthma and allergies. More than 6 in 10 children living in New Town have respiratory

issues, which can be exacerbated by the neighborhood's proximity to two interstates and by the abundance of homes harboring mold and lead paint.

HOMES, COMMUNITIES AND HOPE

In 2010 Cohen invited Habitat, which has built some 1,900 homes in neighborhoods all over the city, to join the New Town Success Zone as its housing partner. Habitat's role is not only to improve the houses of longtime New Town residents but to attract new families through the promise of homeownership. "We want New Town to be a place where people want to live," Cohen says. "Not just a place for people who can't get out."

At the time, Habitat Jacksonville was embracing Neighborhood Revitalization, an approach that has been adopted by 230 local Habitat affiliates to date and focuses on changing the trajectory of entire communities. "We decided to focus on this one neighborhood and to align ourselves with other providers for greater impact," says Mary Kay O'Rourke, president and CEO of Habitat Jacksonville. Seated on the front porch of a newly completed home, O'Rourke echoes Habitat's mission "to bring people together to build homes, communities and hope."

The work in New Town is far from complete, but the unthinkable now happens every day. In June, with her kids looking on, Shanita Brown walked across a stage in her cap and gown to receive her GED. Her goals now include college, a job, and a new house. That path, like Sha'keria's walk to school, is now a lot easier to imagine. HW

"We want New Town to be a place where people want to live, not just a place for people who can't get out."

DR. IRVIN PEDRO COHEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NEW TOWN SUCCESS ZONE



About Neighborhood Revitalization

The Neighborhood Revitalization approach began in 2010, inspired by the idea that Habitat for Humanity's homebuilding efforts could have an even greater impact by partnering with residents and other organizations.

Each Neighborhood Revitalization project begins with understanding the goals of residents — what they believe will transform their neighborhood and enhance their quality of life.

This approach ensures that Habitat's work — from rehabs to playgrounds, from new homes to financial literacy classes — contributes to the fabric of the neighborhood and makes it an inviting place to call home.



HABITAT. WE BUILD.

Habitat for Humanity has a vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live. We believe in this vision because we know shelter is about more than four walls and a roof. A safe, affordable home changes lives.

A home helps people stay healthier. A home helps children do better in school, and that helps them do better in life. A home helps residents feel secure. A home helps families achieve financial stability and reach for new opportunities. This is true from Kansas to Kenya, from New York to New Zealand.

What we see when we envision a world with decent, affordable housing for all are the faces of those who will benefit most: Mario, India, Jeihuan and the tens of thousands of children who will grow up safer, happier and healthier in the Habitat houses you help build.

[habitat.org/webuild](https://www.habitat.org/webuild)



PATHWAYS TO PERMANENCE



Before rebuilding can begin after a tornado, as here in Oklahoma, there is the daunting task of cleanup. In many locations, Habitat staff and volunteers are on site quickly to help families begin the recovery process.





AS THE 10TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE
INDIAN OCEAN TSUNAMI
APPROACHES, FAMILIES
SHARE HOW HABITAT
HELPS BOTH BEFORE
AND AFTER DISASTER

Together, poverty and inadequate housing create a kind of slow-motion disaster, one that Habitat for Humanity has been helping to reverse for more than 30 years. But sometimes bad fortune comes much, much faster.

In seconds an earthquake, tornado, flood or storm can obliterate a city or village, leaving death and dislocation in its wake. And low-income families in substandard housing are always among the most vulnerable.

That's why Habitat has helped more than 200,000 disaster-affected families in 44 countries including the U.S., providing both immediate assistance and the promise of a safe, stable home to return to when the crisis has passed.

We call our approach "Pathways to Permanence" because the best way to assist families standing in the path of both kinds of disaster — fast and slow — is to find lasting solutions to their shelter needs. So much follows from that: better health, access to education, stronger communities, thousands of lives turned toward peace and promise.

HERE ARE A FEW
OF THOSE STORIES »



“MUCH HAPPIER AND SAFER”

In October 1998, Hurricane Mitch blasted Central America just a month after the devastation of Hurricane Georges. One of the most powerful Atlantic hurricanes ever, Mitch dumped more than 2 feet of rain in a single day in some areas, erasing whole towns and causing a reported 19,000 deaths.

In El Salvador, Emilio Gomez lived with his wife Ana Arquidia and their three children in a shelter with tin walls and coconut palms for a roof. After Mitch left only their kitchen standing, the family moved into that one room and started to rebuild, using the same flimsy but inexpensive materials.

Then a Habitat loan enabled the family to build a sturdy concrete block home with a separate kitchen and room to expand. Today, the grown children still live at home, mostly working as farmers, and they’ve added a granddaughter, 2-year-old Ana Rosemary, who has a safe space to crawl and learn to walk.

“My life is much happier and safer,” Emilio says. “It is wonderful what Habitat for Humanity does; I thank God for having found them.”

“I AM A HOMEOWNER!”

Bennie and Chanel White, both born and raised in New Orleans, survived the catastrophic one-two punch of hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the summer of 2005, then spent nearly five years displaced and adrift. Their two teenaged children had to live elsewhere as the parents struggled to regain their footing and rebuild their lives.

Before Katrina barreled over the U.S. Gulf Coast on Aug. 29, 2005, Bennie worked as a welder, Chanel as a housekeeper. In the desperate aftermath of the storm they lost their jobs and moved to Lake Charles, Louisiana, where Bennie found work — until Hurricane Rita hit, less than one month later.

“We lost everything again,” Bennie says.

This time the Whites fled to Houston, but what they really wanted was to go home.

Finally, in 2010, they did. Partnering with New Orleans Area Habitat, the Whites built a house and brought their family back under one roof.

“We love the house,” Chanel says. “It’s just miraculous. This was one of my personal goals, and I have achieved it. I am a homeowner!”

In the four years they’ve been in the house, everyone in the family has been able to focus on getting better jobs and even pursuing higher education — which seemed like a distant dream when they were moving around with few possessions apart from the clothes on their backs.

Son Jeremy has taken community college classes, and daughter Bobbianne studies at Cameron College, while working. Bobbianne’s two young children, Brooklyn and Dyarie, keep their grandparents’ household lively and focused on the future.

“We’re very strong as a family right now,” Bennie says. “We’re in a really good place.”



MICHAEL PALUMBO



Habitat's work in Haiti includes new construction and training community members in financial literacy and business development.

"A TIME THE LORD MADE"

Marie Solange Beauvil is a lifelong resident of Simon-Pelé, a densely populated neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. After the 2010 earthquake crushed a large section of her home, the 66-year-old grandmother first slept on the streets, then moved to a camp for displaced families. "Living conditions were terrible," Beauvil says.

Beauvil often returned to her uninhabitable house with her son Jean Murat Saint Surin and her grandchildren, 7-year-old Danielle and 8-year-old Solange. "I missed my home so much that I would just spend the day there," she says.

Today she's back with friends and neighbors, living in the only permanent home she has ever known. Her son has a job in the community, and her grandchildren are back in school.

Beauvil's home, retrofitted by Habitat Haiti as part of its community action plan to spur renewal in this urban neighborhood, is now a place of peace and refuge. "When my

home was fixed, it was a time the Lord had made," Beauvil says.

Thanks to the support of individual supporters and key donors and partners including UN-Habitat, the World Bank, and Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, Habitat Haiti's work has benefitted thousands of residents since the earthquake. In addition to retrofitting 650 homes, Habitat is helping to rebuild roads, clear canals, provide safe drinking water, improve sanitation and lighting, upgrade a health clinic and provide an array of training.

"There are a lot of changes in the life of the people here," Beauvil says. "My neighborhood is safe. People respect each other."

BUILDING: LONG-TERM RECOVERY

Kip Scheidler is Habitat for Humanity International's senior director of disaster risk reduction and response.

Q: How many disaster-affected families has Habitat served?

A: More than 200,000 families, in 44 countries including the U.S., where more than 100 affiliates have had some type of disaster response since 2003.

Q: News and human nature tends to focus on massive catastrophes, but Habitat also goes into situations where just one town or village needs help, doesn't it?

A: The people who know we respond to disasters know it because of our work with Hurricane Katrina and the tsunamis. But over half of what we've done to date has been smaller — like a tornado hitting a town in Tennessee.

Q: What kinds of intervention are there?

A: In the 15 years we have been doing this, we've expanded our options. Overall, we call it "Pathways to Permanence."

Whatever the intervention is, it should be a stepping stone to get a family back into a permanent home. We feel it's our responsibility to help people get permanent shelter and to make sure that low-income families aren't forgotten. We look at long-term recovery.



“SAFE IN THIS NEW HOUSE”



At 34, Marlito Sarda had seen his share of natural disasters in the Philippines. But the earthquake that struck the island province of Bohol in 2013 was different.

“I thought it was the end of the world,” Sarda says.

At the time, he shared a small house with his ailing mother and three nephews. His mother suffered serious injuries in the earthquake and died soon after. Sarda and his nephews pitched a ragged tent of plastic scraps a short walk from their collapsed home. Then, just three weeks after the quake, Super Typhoon Haiyan — one of the strongest storms ever to make landfall — devastated the islands, killing more than 6,000 people and delaying recovery efforts.

By early 2014, brightly painted orange-and-yellow Habitat houses had started dotting Bohol’s lush landscape like beacons of hope. Sarda and his nephews soon moved into one of 70 houses funded by the Union Bank of the Philippines. The houses are built using an innovative technology of bamboo-reinforced concrete over metal framing that makes them much more flexible and resilient than traditional concrete blocks.

Sarda’s new home can be expanded as his resources allow. For now, he and the boys — aged 6, 8 and 20 — keep the one-room house in pristine order, with a neatly made bed in one corner and a tall bookcase separating sleeping space and living area.

It’s a simple home, Sarda says. But compared to four months of sleeping on scrap materials under a tarp, it is a palace. “It will be much easier to take care of my nephews and keep them safe in this new house,” he says. “I feel good about that.”

BUILDING: RISK REDUCTION BY DESIGN

Rapid response is essential after a disaster, but it’s just as important to help communities prepare for the next time nature strikes.

Affordable housing and sustainable development go hand in hand with disaster risk reduction. If communities can arm themselves against unpredictable events — weathering storms instead of starting over after each natural disaster — they can lessen both the terrible human toll of death and injury and the capital and resources required for recovery.

What’s in the Habitat toolkit?

- New homes built with disaster-resistant techniques
- Existing homes upgraded to make them resilient during earthquakes, hurricanes, floods and tornados
- Emergency shelter kits (tarps, water, cooking oil, flashlights, blankets, buckets, tents)
- Home repair kits (plywood, roofing materials, lumber, sealant, cement)
- Government and school partnerships to increase disaster preparedness
- Community-based training in identifying hazards and analyzing vulnerabilities
- Construction skills training, which strengthens employment as well as housing
- Advocacy for early warning systems
- Water, sanitation and hygiene programs



Habitat works with communities worldwide to identify disaster risks and vulnerabilities, lessening the potential impact of a natural disaster.



BUILDING: CONNECTIONS

Disaster Corps volunteers are often the ones Habitat turns to first when a disaster occurs, helping local affiliates implement their recovery efforts. Bob and Joyce Daugherty have helped homeowners after a typhoon in Australia, a tornado in Illinois and Hurricane Sandy in New Jersey.

Why they respond

Bob: We both grew up in Oklahoma, where you had tornadoes quite regularly. And now we live in Florida, so we were aware that when those things happen, you feel so helpless. And seeing the situation that many of these families were in, we felt this was something that we wanted to participate in. People are often in a hopeless situation and really have no idea where to go to get assistance, and Habitat helps provide that.

What drives them

Bob: A safe and stable house is really foundational. One of the things we really enjoy is seeing the change in attitude, the hope when people see that they're going back to a more normal life.

Joyce: On top of that, we're putting our faith into action. We've been given so much love that we can't keep it; we need to give it back.

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Jimmy & Rosalynn CARTER WORK PROJECT

DALLAS – FORT WORTH 2014

A WORLD HABITAT DAY EVENT

For 30 years, former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, have given a week of their time to help Habitat for Humanity improve and build homes in the U.S. and in countries around the world. In 2014, the Carters will focus their efforts on Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas, as Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity and Trinity Habitat for Humanity co-host Habitat’s 31st annual Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project.

Our work to create affordable housing wouldn’t be possible without the support and investments of:

LEVEL	PARTNER
● PRESENTING	Pioneer Natural Resources
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“A NEW HOPE-FILLED FUTURE”

Dec. 26, 2004, is a date etched in Rani’s mind. The Indian Ocean tsunami was like nothing she or anyone in Killai village on India’s southeastern coast had ever seen. Rani lost her house and possessions, and though she and her three children survived, she worried about her husband G. Sundaramurthy, a fisherman working in Brunei close to tsunami-affected areas.

She finally received news that he was alive, and they were reunited shortly after.

Rebuilding his family’s life was foremost on Sundaramurthy’s mind. After moving into a home built by Habitat India in early 2006, he added a kitchen-cum-dining room with cement roofing and a wall that allowed him to cultivate a small garden.

He and his wife repair fishing nets and dry fish for sale in the local market. Economic stability gives the family a sense of dignity. Sundaramurthy was shattered when he learned that his house and possessions had been destroyed, but “Habitat’s assistance encouraged my family to move forward,” he says. “They provided us with a new hope-filled future, by providing safe and decent shelter.”

His confidence regained, Sundaramurthy bought a small boat and now employs 10 families in his village.

“Habitat instilled hope when our family was stranded — homeless and hopeless,” Sundaramurthy says. “Today, I am really proud to say that I own a concrete house, and I have educated, healthy children and grandchildren.” HW





Following a major disaster like the 2004 Asian tsunami, Habitat core houses can offer permanent shelter that can be added to later.

BUILDING: EMPATHY

David Emerson, executive director of Habitat St. Vrain Valley, found himself on a different side of the homeowner/helper handshake in September 2013. His Colorado neighborhood suffered crippling floods, and though he and his family all made it to safety, they had just minutes to grab a few belongings as water rose in the streets.

It was three or four days before they could even get back to the house to view the damage. Almost immediately volunteers began to arrive, cleaning homes, bringing food and water, and even drying family photos.

Emerson's experience of being helped by neighbors and strangers gave him new insight into Habitat's work. "It only affirms everything we talk about," he says. "I think the manner in which we got relief — through volunteers — created a stronger, more resilient community for us.

"I got to see what it's like to be overwhelmed by people's generosity and to allow people to be part of something good."



To learn more about Habitat's disaster response and risk reduction work around the world, visit

[habitat.org/disaster](https://www.habitat.org/disaster)

This spring, the MacArthur Foundation released the results of a survey of U.S. adults conducted to inform the work of the foundation's How Housing Matters initiative.

"Over the last five years, we've embarked on an effort to better understand how having decent, stable, affordable housing can lead to improved outcomes in areas like education and health and safer communities," says Ianna Kachoris, MacArthur Foundation housing program officer. "We hope that policy makers can better design housing, education and health policies that promote the beneficial outcomes we all care about."

Why we build



KEY FINDINGS:

- :: While the vast majority of Americans feel stable and secure in their current housing situation, insecurity touches nearly half of adults at some point in their lives.
- :: A majority of Americans believe that it is challenging to find affordable quality housing in their communities.
- :: More than half of all adults have made at least one tradeoff in the past three years to cover their rent or mortgage. Tradeoffs include taking second jobs, cutting back on health care and healthy food, and moving to less safe neighborhoods.
- :: Being in a distressed housing situation takes an emotional toll. Adults spending more than 30 percent of household income on housing or feeling unstable and insecure in their current housing situation worry about financial considerations at much higher rates.
- :: Three in five adults believe that a great deal or a fair amount can be done to solve the problem of housing affordability for the American people.

Find full results at macfound.org/housingmatters, and visit the *Habitat World* blog in September and October to read more about the survey and to learn about the ways that Habitat's work helps to address these issues.



A Volunteer Built to Last

You could call Don Baker “Mr. 100.”

Habitat for Humanity of the Greater Peoria Area began building in 1989 and has completed 100 houses. Baker has worked on every one.

“Mr. 100” might also apply to Baker’s all-or-nothing attitude; when he’s in, the Illinois resident is in 100 percent. Baker was one of the founders of Habitat Greater Peoria Area a quarter century ago, and he still spends six half-days a week on site.

While not many can match that kind of dedication, he points out that he’s hardly alone. “We have anywhere from four to five retired volunteers helping us just about every day.”

Baker is a carpenter by trade — a third generation one, in fact. “My grandfather was, and my father, and I began in 1958. I got 40 years in, retired in 1998.” (“Retired” is a relative term in Baker’s case.)

In July, Baker turned 80, but he doesn’t look or act it, and you’d be just as surprised to learn something else: At age 20, he contracted polio and spent nine months in the hospital. “I was paralyzed from the waist down for about a year. So I thank my lucky stars that I’m still around and able to do what I can do.”

Habitat Greater Peoria Area and Bosch Tools have acknowledged Baker’s service by establishing a community tool library and naming

it after him. “We were celebrating our 100th house,” he says, “and they sprung that on me. It’s a great honor.”

Plans are to open the library late this fall, with accompanying videos to demonstrate the safe and proper use of tools.

The affiliate’s 101st house is well underway, and construction on house 102 has begun. “I’ll be on all of them,” he says, “as long as I’m able.”

What keeps him going? “An opportunity to use my expertise and experience. Hopefully, it keeps me young, just getting up in the morning and having the good fellowship of working with a wonderful group of people,” he says. “Sometimes, you get that passion.”





ALL TOGETHER NOW

If you studied Latin, you might remember that *community* comes from *communis*, meaning “things held in common.” Often these are values — what people hold to be important, how they want to live. The Habitat community varies in every way but one: We know just how many good things start with a decent, affordable place to live.

If the 4 million people we’ve helped around the world lived in the same place, that city would be bigger than Nairobi, Berlin, Madrid or Los Angeles. Add a million volunteers every year, and we’re larger than dozens of countries. That’s a huge, diverse community united by a single belief: that home is where good things — and people — come together. **HW**

PHOTO BY JASON ASTEROS



With your help, Habitat puts hope into action.

Through monthly donations, **HopeBuilders** provide a consistent and reliable source of funding that allows Habitat to reach more families in need of decent shelter.

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Sign up at [habitat.org/hopebuilder](https://www.habitat.org/hopebuilder) today!