

Country profile

PHILIPPINES

Habitat for Humanity in the Philippines

Since Habitat for Humanity Philippines started in 1988, it has served more than 106,600 families with decent housing. With significant scaling up of its activities, HFH Philippines is able to help an average of over 30,000 families annually in the last three years. Habitat and its partners also provide families with improved access to healthcare, education and livelihood. In responding to natural disasters such as typhoons and earthquakes, HFH Philippines aims to rebuild lives and increase resilience against future calamities.

The housing need in the Philippines

Shelter needs are driven by the country's growing population, poverty and prevalence of disasters. Data from the National Statistical Coordination Board showed that 25.2 percent of the population was classified as poor in 2012, a fall of 1.1 percent over 2009. The poverty rate fell by 3 percent in the first quarter of 2013, compared with the corresponding quarter from 2012. Fishermen, farmers and children remain among the poorest. The Philippines is hit by frequent seismic activity and by around 20 typhoons a year, destroying lives, livelihood and homes. According to the country's largest association of housing developers, the current housing backlog is estimated at four million units.

How Habitat addresses the need in the Philippines

Habitat for Humanity partners with government agencies, corporations, non-governmental organizations, and faith-based groups to build homes and hope. A year after devastating disasters such as the 7.2-magnitude Bohol earthquake and Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda) both in November 2013, the Philippines was struck by Typhoons Hagupit (Ruby) and Seniang (Jangmi). Amid helping survivors to rebuild homes and hope, HFH Philippines has set its sights on reducing the total housing deficit in the country by 20 percent in 2020. As such, the "WeBuild" advocacy campaign was launched in December 2014 to reach out to donors, partners and volunteers across various sectors. Through the Habitat Online Champions, Habitat will also tap the power of social media to raise awareness of its work. International and local volunteers contribute time and labor while families also help build homes with their own hands.



Jonel and Marissa Esteban used to live in a shack that was often flooded. Their new Habitat home in Bistekville offers them a secure and healthy environment to bring up their twin daughters and operate a small computer rental business in the living room of their house.

Photo: JM Lago/HFH Philippines

COUNTRY FACTS

Capital	Manila
Population	107.6 million (July 2014 est.)
Urbanization	48.8 percent lives in cities (2011)
Life expectancy	72 years
Unemployment rate	6.7 percent (July 2014)
Population living below poverty line	25.2 percent (2012)
Access to improved water sources	91.8 percent (2012 est.)
Access to improved sanitation facilities	74.3 percent (2012 est.)

Source: World Factbook, National Statistical Coordination Board

HABITAT FACTS

When Habitat started in Philippines

1988

Families served*

36,609

Volunteers hosted*

398

Housing solutions

- Disaster response
- Community development
- Decent, affordable homes
- Volunteer programs

* For financial year ended 30 June 2014



Disaster response

The Philippines, located close to the equator, is highly prone to natural disasters. In 2013, large-scale devastation in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan and the Bohol earthquake, along with numerous other typhoons and the conflict in the Zamboanga region, took a heavy toll on lives and property. Habitat for Humanity Philippines focuses its disaster response efforts on providing shelter assistance, education, training and partnerships to survivors. Under the Rebuild Philippines program, Habitat distributes shelter repair kits in the aftermath of a disaster, and helps to rebuild homes and communities toward permanent recovery.

Community development

Habitat aims to build up communities by eradicating poverty and transforming lives through sustainable construction and livelihood programs. Habitat also provides housing support services which leverage shelter as a catalyst for community transformation. Through financial literacy and other sessions, Habitat home partner families learn economic and social values to help them break out of poverty and improve their lives.

Meet a Habitat family



Maria Crieta helped with the construction of her new Habitat house.

Virgelio and Maria Crieta were having their usual weekly get-together with their married children and the families in Bohol in October 2013 when they felt violent tremors. The 7.2-magnitude earthquake which struck the island province left thousands of families homeless and fearful for their lives. The Crietas were similarly shaken. They stayed with one of their children for a week before returning to Catagbacan Norte village where they found their own house destroyed. For nearly nine months, Virgelio and Maria had to live in a temporary shelter which they built out of salvaged plywood, metal sheets and a tarpaulin. They moved into their new home built by Habitat for Humanity Philippines in August 2014.

The Crietas worked with local volunteers and skilled workers to construct the earthquake-resistant house with walls made of interwoven bamboo slats. After months of living in a cramped and stuffy shelter, the Crietas could start life anew and continue to strengthen their family ties.

Decent, affordable homes

HFH Philippines aims to ease the national housing backlog by providing Filipino families with safe, decent and affordable housing. For families who cannot even qualify for socialized housing, HFH Philippines provides the opportunity and dignity of home ownership through the work of its Housing Project Development Group. Families invest an initial downpayment and make affordable monthly mortgage payments toward the cost of their house. Families also contribute sweat equity, or their own labor, to build houses, including their own, in the community.

Volunteer programs

Habitat believes in bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope. By contributing their time, money and talent, volunteers represent the heart, hands and voice of Habitat in providing decent homes to Filipino families in need. Be it an individual, corporate, or a group of friends or people from the community, volunteers make a societal impact not only in construction but also through lending their skills to HFH Philippines' programs and offices.

What you can do

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

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