



BUILDING HOMES  
AND HOPE IN HAITI:  
**TWO** YEARS INTO  
THE RECOVERY



Habitat for Humanity Haiti partnered with Anolise Simon soon after the January 2010 earthquake to rebuild her home, which was destroyed by the disaster.

CREDIT: EZRA MILLSTEIN



years

**Two** years after the massive earthquake of Jan. 12, 2010, many buildings and homes still lie in ruin, and more than half a million men, women and children continue to live in dilapidated and unsafe shelter. This reality is a constant and painful reminder that reconstruction work in Haiti is far from over.

But progress has been made. Shortly after the earthquake, Habitat for Humanity set an aggressive goal of serving 50,000 families in Haiti over five years. Thanks to donors, supporters and volunteers, Habitat has already served more than 40,000 families, with permanent houses, transitional and upgradable shelters, damage assessments, repaired and rehabilitated homes, emergency shelter kits, training, and job opportunities. That's more than 200,000 individuals whose lives have been made more secure and more stable through the work Habitat has carried out.

What Habitat has accomplished so far is due in large part to the critical role of local communities, families and individuals who have partnered with us in our rebuilding efforts. Their participation ensures the most vulnerable families are identified and specific needs are addressed. In addition, families often contribute to a project by providing sweat equity to help build their new homes. Habitat community engagement coordinators and construction workers, for example, are often hired from within the community. This provides job skills and employment opportunities so desperately needed in Haiti.

Habitat's commitment to Haiti dates back 27 years. Before the 2010 earthquake, Habitat had provided housing solutions for more than 2,000 families. "We were here before, we are here today, and we will be staying," said Claude Jeudy, national director of Habitat for Humanity Haiti. "But, Habitat needs continued support of our donors, without whom our long-term recovery efforts will not be possible."



**50,000**

The number of families Habitat for Humanity has pledged to serve in the five years after the earthquake.

**40,000+**

The total number of families already served in the first two years of Haiti's recovery.

**24,500+**

emergency shelter kits were distributed in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake. The kits, which include tools, work gloves, rope and tarps, allow survivors to clean up debris, complete basic repairs and create emergency shelter.

**150**

core houses have been built so far in the Santo community of Léogâne; 100 more are planned for 2012.

**4,450+**

Haitians have been trained in construction techniques, financial literacy, damage assessments, disaster risk reduction and business development.

**12,000+**

housing damage assessments were conducted to help determine which structures could be made safe and which needed to be torn down.

**4,000+**

families received transitional or upgradable shelters. The upgradable shelters were designed so that concrete blocks could be added later, as the family's finances improve.



**700+**

Haitians have been employed through Habitat for Humanity Haiti's main office and Habitat Resource Centers. In a nation with an unemployment rate of 60 percent, job opportunities are a crucial part of rebuilding.

**350+**

houses have been repaired or rehabilitated. All repairs are designed to make the houses more resistant to future disasters.

**550,500+**

The number of people who remain homeless two years after the earthquake.

**70**

Percentage of the population of Haiti that survives on less than US\$2 a day.





Wiline Dorcelian works alongside volunteers to help construct his Habitat house.

CREDIT: STEFFAN HACKER

## One house, one community at a time

In the summer of 2011, Habitat for Humanity broke ground on a permanent housing development in the Santo community of Léogâne. Nearly 500 volunteers for the 2011 Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project helped build 100 core houses in one week. Fifty more Habitat houses were built in partnership with Haven Foundation, an Irish nongovernmental organization. The volunteers worked shoulder to shoulder with the new homeowners, who are required to put in 250 hours of sweat equity. The site is now dotted with brightly painted homes that are designed to allow for expansion as soon as each family regains its financial footing.

Habitat is also working with partner organizations to provide latrines for each of the houses, along with 26 community water points to provide safe, clean drinking water. The master plan for the community also includes construction of a school and a marketplace, and improvements to roads, as resources allow. On every block in this community, land has been set aside for agriculture, so people can grow food for their own families and for small enterprise.

These 150 homes are a tangible sign of progress in a country desperately in need of hope. But it is only a beginning. Habitat plans to build 100 more homes this year on the Léogâne site, with an additional 250 homes to be constructed as funding allows.

*“We are all happy to do the work.”*

**Homeowner Rosette Louis, 70,** who helped dig foundations and clear the land for 150 houses in Santo. She and three of her four grown children have been sharing a one-room shack since the earthquake, but will be moving into their new Habitat home in January 2012.

## What is a core house?

Habitat’s core house is approximately 26 square meters (280 square feet), including a covered front porch. The house is designed to be culturally appropriate and disaster-resistant. Walls are plywood and concrete, with a concrete floor and corrugated metal roof. The foundation of each house includes buttresses that can support the addition of another room on the back. Each homeowner family receives construction training and assistance from a Habitat Resource Center in the expansion process.

Habitat’s permanent housing community in Léogâne is designed to house 500 families.

CREDIT: BERNARD CHERELUS



Habitat team members conduct household surveys in Simon-Pelé as part of Habitat’s urban development project in Port-au-Prince.

CREDIT: BERNARD CHERELUS

## Building more than houses: Habitat’s post-disaster urban development project

Given the scope of the need in Haiti, long-term change must involve empowering entire communities to rebuild their lives. In the Simon-Pelé neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, for example, Habitat for Humanity’s urban development project is helping families improve their living conditions and gain access to critical services for their community of about 30,000 (at least 8,000 of those residents now live in camps surrounding the neighborhood).

While Simon-Pelé has a vibrant commercial main street and strong social connections, its informal origins mean it lacks water, sanitation, sewers, latrines, solid waste disposal, street lighting, and social amenities such as schools and playgrounds. Many streets remain unpaved. Diseases such as cholera spread easily and often.

As part of its urban development project, Habitat surveyed more than 6,000 households. The information collected is helping the community to better understand its needs and decide which projects take priority. Today, local contractors from Simon-Pelé are implementing community upgrades with technical support from our Habitat Resource Center, including water points, street lighting and a septic system for the local health clinic. Additional upgrades will include drainage, road improvements and repairs of homes damaged by the earthquake.

Habitat’s long-term vision is about much more than construction. It’s about empowering and supporting change for the benefit of an entire community. While we measure our progress by the number of families and individuals served, the impact of our urban development work can be seen in the transformation of not only lives but also whole communities.

## Challenges to reconstruction



CREDIT: EZRA MILLSTEIN

Even before the earthquake, Haiti was a deeply impoverished nation. Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter puts this country's current situation in stark terms: "Haiti is in the worst need that we've ever seen anywhere in the world."

Haiti's infrastructure has never kept pace with its unrestricted, unregulated growth, and the chasm between the rich and the poor is stunning.

The earthquake didn't create all the problems in Haiti, but it aggravated them exponentially. And solving such a complex humanitarian crisis has many obstacles:

- Land tenure remains an enormous roadblock to rebuilding. Land ownership was nebulous before the earthquake, and now it is even more of a challenge. Building permanent homes on land that is not properly deeded is not an option for Habitat.
- Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with more than 70 percent of the population living on less than US\$2 a day. The unemployment rate hovers at 60 percent.
- Although billions of dollars have been pledged to support overall reconstruction efforts, only a small percentage has actually been delivered. The United Nations estimates that less than 40 percent of the funds promised for 2010-2011 have been provided. Without adequate funding, large-scale and long-term rebuilding cannot happen.
- Political uncertainty in Haiti seriously slowed the reconstruction efforts. Now that a new government is in place, the stage is set for a focused and coordinated national rebuilding program to take shape.

Since the earthquake, Habitat for Humanity has been working through multiple coalitions, groups and initiatives to advocate for improved shelter, national construction standards and a land tenure system. These efforts have ranged from giving testimony to the U.S. Congress to highlighting Haiti's challenges at a Brookings Institution symposium to supporting Haitian initiatives designed to broaden the impact of the reconstruction process.



A large tent encampment of people who are still homeless after the January 2010 earthquake. The encampment is situated alongside a road from the Port-au-Prince airport.

CREDIT: STEFFAN HACKER



Habitat has constructed more than 1,000 upgradable shelters, which consist of a timber frame, pressure-treated plywood side walls with a permanent concrete perimeter foundation, and traditional front porch.

CREDIT: BERNARD CHERELUS

## Why should we all still care about Haiti?

Habitat's work in Haiti has shown what's possible here. Haitians who lost what little they had in the 2010 earthquake are starting over from scratch. A repaired home, a temporary shelter, a core house, new job skills or employment opportunities provide a foundation for a family — and a community — to begin reclaiming their lives and livelihoods.

Habitat Haiti's Claude Judy has seen firsthand the impact Habitat's work can have on a family, a community and a nation at risk. "The best way to build a society and to strengthen a community is not simply to give them whatever they need, but empower them to take charge," Judy said. "That is exactly what Habitat is doing. By partnering with families and communities, we give them a boost.

"But the most important thing we can do is teach them how to fish, instead of having all their fish donated to them."

Please join Habitat in bringing homes, hope and transformation to Haiti. We are making a difference. You can help.



Veronique Brutus in her upgradable shelter, which can be expanded with technical assistance from our Habitat Resource Center and as family resources allow.

CREDIT: BERNARD CHERELUS





Murat Aubin and his family stand in front of their new Habitat home.

CREDIT: BERNARD CHERELUS

## What can you do?

If you have supported Habitat for Humanity's work in Haiti, please accept our profound gratitude. We ask for your continued support and invite others to join in our mission to bring homes and hope to the people of Haiti.

Habitat will reach its goal of helping 50,000 families only with continued financial support. There are many ways you can help to ensure this goal is met:

- **Donate.** Make an online donation at [habitat.org/haiti](http://habitat.org/haiti). Or text "Habitat" to 25383 to make a \$10 donation to Habitat's efforts in Haiti. If you'd rather donate over the phone, call 800-422-4828.
- **Partner with Habitat.** Take your financial support to the next level. To find out how you can become a partner with Habitat — as a community, a corporation, a foundation, a church, a synagogue or a mosque, or an individual — email [Haiti-Partnerships@habitat.org](mailto:Haiti-Partnerships@habitat.org) or visit [habitat.org/partnerships](http://habitat.org/partnerships).
- **Advocate.** You can advocate on behalf of Haitian families in need of permanent housing. Visit [habitat.org/takeaction](http://habitat.org/takeaction) to learn more. For a more in-depth look at shelter needs in Haiti, you can read our Haiti Policy Report at [habitat.org/haiti](http://habitat.org/haiti).
- **Pray** for the people of Haiti and for all the organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, striving to help Haiti rebuild.

Stay current on Habitat's progress in Haiti.

Visit: [habitat.org/haiti](http://habitat.org/haiti)

Facebook: [Habitat for Humanity Haiti – Official Site](https://www.facebook.com/HabitatforHumanityHaiti)

Twitter: [@habitatinhaiti](https://twitter.com/habitatinhaiti)

YouTube: [HabitatHaiti](https://www.youtube.com/HabitatHaiti)



INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS: 121 Habitat St. Americus, GA 31709-3498 USA  
229-924-6935 800-HABITAT fax 229-928-8811 [publicinfo@habitat.org](mailto:publicinfo@habitat.org) [habitat.org](http://habitat.org)

