

Our beliefs

Habitat for Humanity is worldwide driven by the vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Today we are faced with an unprecedented global housing challenge, which is further exacerbated by an unprecedented climate challenge.

In the more than 70 countries around the world where we work, climate change is having far-reaching impacts. The millions of families Habitat partners with are often among the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which include increasingly common and severe weather events such as hurricanes, floods, wildfires, tornadoes and droughts. These events can result in tragic outcomes for families, including damage to or complete loss of their homes, which may expose them to other threats, such as food insecurity, disease and displacement.

At the same time, the United Nations Environment Programme has found that buildings and their construction produce nearly 40% of global energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.

In this context, Habitat for Humanity has the potential to impact — and be impacted by — the future of climate change. We believe that adequate and affordable housing can be built sustainably and will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by all of the United Nations member states in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Our practices

By partnering with families to build stronger, more disaster-resilient and more energy-efficient housing, we have seen how adequate, safe and resilient shelter can contribute to both the immediate security and long-term well-being of families while reducing a home's environmental impact.

Around the world, Habitat builds and renovates homes with this in mind, increasing the use of sustainable natural resources and construction practices while reducing the emission of greenhouse gases throughout a home's life cycle. Supporting resilience also means responding to the increasing numbers of disasters with shelter support so that every family can find safety and security in their home. We seek to use local materials, labor and technical know-how to support local economies and to construct culturally appropriate and environmentally friendly shelter solutions. In addition, we strive to keep housing construction materials out of landfills by creating opportunities for their reuse.

Our commitments

Habitat for Humanity commits to putting people at the center of our work by educating ourselves about the effects of climate change on the lives of the people we seek to serve through housing. Just as families must adapt to a changing climate, so too must our programming and operations evolve in order to address the housing needs of people around the world. As a global housing organization, we further commit to strengthening our technical expertise in existing and emergent approaches, tools and processes that allow us to pursue climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies in programming, operations, and our support of affiliated organizations. Encompassed in this are homebuilding and renovation efforts, disaster preparedness and resilience, disaster response and recovery, volunteer engagement, community education, advocacy, and development of more responsive housing markets. Finally, we pledge to continually explore the ways in which we can live into these commitments, using them as guideposts for our practices, programs, operations and partnerships.