



Habitat for Humanity Fact Sheet

What is Habitat for Humanity US Virgin Islands

Habitat for Humanity USVI, a new affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, incorporated in January 2005, is a Christian, faith –based organization which builds homes and hope through partnerships with individuals, businesses and faith communities. Habitat is founded on the conviction that every man, woman and child should have a simple, decent, affordable place to live in dignity and safety.

Habitat, which was founded in 1976 by Millard Fuller along with his wife Linda has to date built more than 200,000 houses around the world, providing over 1,000,000 people in more than 3,000 communities with affordable shelter.

How does it work?

Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds and rehabilitates simple, decent houses with the help of the homeowner (partner) families. Habitat offers flexible no interest, no profit mortgage loans to our partner families, with the homeowners' monthly repayments operating in a revolving fund, which is used to finance additional homes. The homeowners are required to invest hundreds of hours of their own labor -- sweat equity -- into building their Habitat house and the houses of others.



Volunteers from the V.I. National Guard work on the parking slab of Habitat-VI's first home at Adele Gade.

What are Habitat affiliates?

Habitat for Humanity's work is accomplished at the community level by affiliates -- independent, locally run, nonprofit organizations. Each affiliate coordinates all aspects of Habitat home building in its local area -- fund raising, building site selection, partner family selection and support, house construction and mortgage servicing. The USVI affiliate was inaugurated in January 2005 and is registered as a non-profit 501c(3) corporation, which allows Habitat to provide our donors with a letter of contribution allowable for tax purposes.

How are partner families selected?

Families in need of decent shelter apply to local Habitat affiliates. The affiliate's family selection committee chooses homeowners based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners in the program and their ability to repay the loan. Every affiliate follows a nondiscriminatory policy of family selection. Neither race nor religion is a factor in choosing

the families who receive Habitat houses. In the USVI, our first home is currently under construction at #4 Adele Gade for the family of Mrs. C. Hernandez, a single mother of seven children, ages 10-26, with four of the children still living at home.

How are donations distributed and used?

Donations, whether to a local Habitat affiliate or to HFHI, are used as designated by the donor. Gifts received by HFHI that are designated to a specific affiliate or building project are forwarded to that affiliate or project. Undesignated gifts are used where most needed and for administrative expenses.

Who controls and manages Habitat for Humanity?

Habitat for Humanity International as well as locally is managed by a board of directors who determines policy and oversees and guides the mission of Habitat for Humanity. Board members are dedicated volunteers who are deeply concerned about the problems of poverty housing around the world.

How does Habitat work with the government?

Habitat for Humanity welcomes partnerships with governments to help "set the stage" for the construction of houses. Stage-setting funding and gifts might include land, houses for rehabilitation, infrastructure for streets, utilities and administrative expenses.

How can I become a volunteer?

To volunteer, contact your local affiliate. Other opportunities to support Habitat's work are also available on our website or you can contact us at the local Habitat office here in the US Virgin Islands at level 2, 5600 Royal Dane Mall, St. Thomas. Habitat's Board President is Tom Bolt, Attorney at Law and its Executive Director is Dianne Wells.

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