



Lauren was pregnant with her first child when Hurricane Harvey damaged her home in Fort Bend, Texas, so much that she had to move in with family. Thankfully, she was approved to build a new home with Habitat. Now she and her newborn have a safe, healthy, secure home.

**HABITAT'S EFFORTS IN DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY HAVE ACHIEVED A LOT IN THE U.S.!**

**5,977**

Disaster-affected families across the U.S. have worked with Habitat since 2006.

**30+**

Communities across the U.S. have received immediate assistance thanks to Habitat's Mobile Response Units.

**55,000+**

Hours of service have been provided by Disaster Corps volunteers since 2006.

**122**

Habitat affiliates have performed early recovery interventions since 2018.

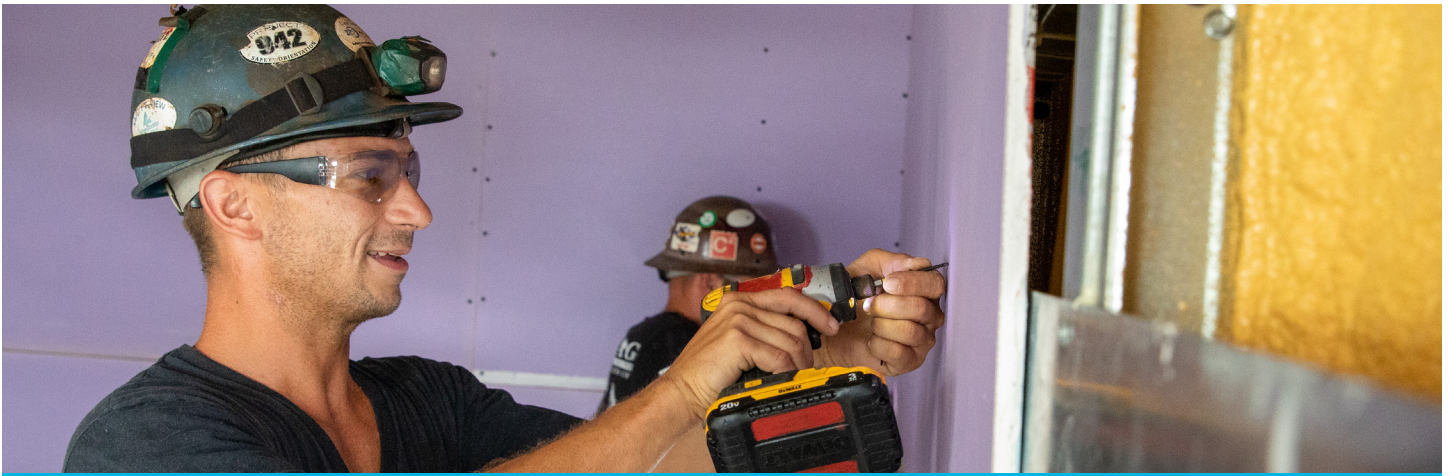
Millions of people have lost their jobs because of COVID-19, leaving them extremely vulnerable during and after disasters. Your support of our hurricane relief efforts helps families build back stronger.

## Habitat for Humanity's disaster response strategy in the U.S. and Canada

Habitat for Humanity International collaborates with local Habitat organizations to reduce vulnerability and support communities and families affected by disasters. In 2020, an emergency was declared in all 50 states and U.S. territories simultaneously for the first time. Hundreds of millions of people were asked to shelter in place because of the COVID-19 pandemic, creating job loss and major economic problems. Low-income households, which were already vulnerable to housing issues, are particularly at risk of housing problems in today's economic instability. Now more than ever, a safe, healthy and decent place to live is a matter of life or death.

Hurricanes often leave terrible destruction in their wake, with homes flood-damaged, roofs torn off and houses left in a pile of rubble. They wreak havoc on the places where people need to shelter to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and keep their families out of harm's way.

Habitat addresses local needs generated by disasters and the compounded effects from the pandemic. We assess post-disaster environments to determine the scale of damage, the capacity to create effective response actions that fit local needs, and the appropriate measures to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Local Habitat organizations help affected families remain in their communities through recovery and reconstruction long after emergency responders have left.



A volunteer installs drywall inside a new Habitat home in Marathon, Florida. High home prices in the area meant that many families who lost their homes when Hurricane Irma struck the Florida Keys had to relocate away from friends, families and jobs. Habitat is diligently working to help families rebuild and repair their homes so that they can stay in the communities they love.

## A PROVEN ACTION PLAN

Habitat assists with long-term recovery and reconstruction efforts in hurricane-affected areas once it is deemed safe to do so and takes care to consider the special needs of each community in relation to COVID-19.

**Phase 1: Emergency response:** *Initial cleanup, information gathering, training and guidance.*

- Remote assessments based on available data, community discussions, household feedback and local authorities. We also train local Habitat employees and assess the economic impacts of COVID-19 and governmental assistance and restrictions because of the pandemic.
- Immediate response conducted remotely or via contact-free delivery, to assist families during the insurance claim process and raise awareness of home safety and security considerations.
  - » Demolition, external debris removal and emergency repair activities using COVID-19 safety measures.
  - » Deployment of Habitat Mobile Response Units with tools and equipment, including personal protective equipment.
- Remote technical guidance and support for state and local Habitat organizations.

**Phase 2: Early recovery and community support:** *Assisting families and providing support to local Habitat organizations either remotely or via contact-free delivery.*

- Housing and communitywide capacity and emergency market assessments.
- Family assistance, which may include non-food item distribution, financial assistance or technical support,

in partnership with other organizations, to address wider needs created by COVID-19.

- Organizational stabilization and planning to obtain emergency funding for Habitat organizations.
- Adaptation of long-term recovery designs to the local need and Habitat capacity.

**Phase 3: Long-term recovery and reconstruction:**

*New construction, home repairs and assistance with partnerships and funding continuing remotely, once they are deemed safe.*

- Collection of detailed information on shelter needs, livelihood patterns and capacity.
- Mobilization of virtual skilled volunteers for program development, family services, information management and other assignments that can be completed remotely.
- Rehabilitation, repair and construction of houses. With an increased focus on safety and health because of COVID-19, we will prioritize work with contractors rather than volunteers.
- Use of the Habitat Strong and Habitat Ready programs to build resilience and assist state and local Habitat organizations, Habitat ReStores, and homeowners.
- Collaboration with third-party organizations to provide technical assistance and acquire land.
- Support for local Habitat organizations as they access federal funding for disaster recovery.
- Engagement of Congress to increase access to secure tenure and financing, COVID-19 relief packages, etc. Advocacy for land-use planning and zoning, building codes, and infrastructure. Influence of disaster response Community Development Block Grant funding.



A hurricane destroyed Junior and Leta's trailer and the surrounding neighborhood where they had lived for 36 years. The cost to rebuild was out of their budget. They are thrilled to be able to return to the community they love with help from Habitat of the Middle Keys, so they can stay near their children, grandchildren and friends.

### JUNIOR AND LETA CAN STAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD THEY LOVE

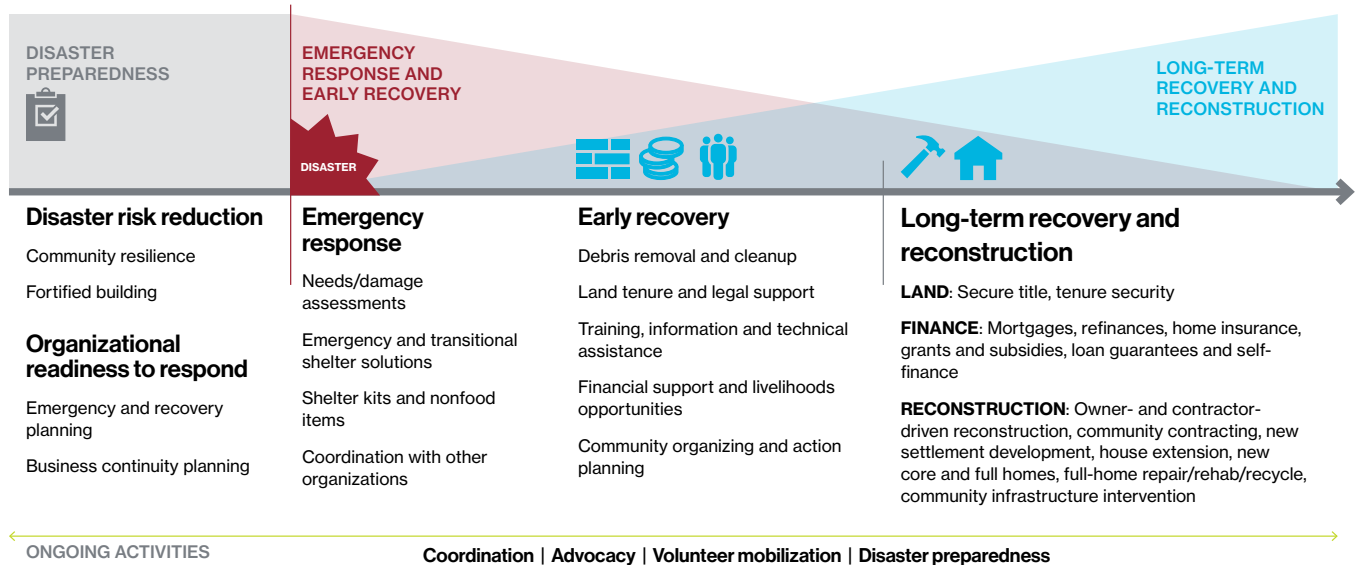
When Junior and Leta returned to their home in Marathon, Florida, after Hurricane Irma, they couldn't believe their eyes. "It was a terrible sight when we pulled into the yard," Junior says. "Our trailer had been completely separated from the added-on concrete addition. All the windows were blown out. The trailer roof was peeled back like a tuna can, and we had rotten fish and seaweed throughout the entire trailer. We weren't able to salvage anything inside."

Even though they lost everything, Junior and Leta immediately turned to helping their community rebuild. For months, they helped other families get back on their feet, all the while moving from one temporary living arrangement to the next. Though they were happy to help the community they love, they longed to return to a home of their own. Initially, Junior and Leta were worried that they couldn't

afford to rebuild in Marathon and would have to move away from their children and grandchildren if they ever wanted a home of their own again. Fortunately, their daughter Tracy knew about Habitat for Humanity, and she wrote to Habitat of the Middle Keys to tell her parents' story.

Now, three years after Hurricane Irma turned their lives upside down, Junior and Leta are the proud owners of a new Habitat home near their family. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has thrown yet more obstacles their way, the couple is grateful for the stability Habitat has provided. "Because the mortgage payment is affordable, we are still able to make our monthly payments," Junior says. "We can still afford our home even in trying times thanks to Habitat."

# Pathways to Permanence



Habitat for Humanity International provides support to local Habitat organizations in the form of disaster management expertise through deployed surge capacity and remote support for initial assessments, fundraising, public messaging, reconstruction technical assistance, legal support, partnership development with other organizations, training, and organizational capacity development. Habitat's hurricane response

strategy follows the guidance of our broader Pathways to Permanence strategy, which is our approach to the reduction of vulnerability and support of disaster-affected populations in their goal of achieving durable and permanent housing solutions. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Habitat is targeting interventions that provide high impact to families through low- to no-contact delivery mechanisms.

**Your support of Habitat's disaster response and recovery efforts will help families rebuild their homes and lives after disasters strike.**



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