



Habitat
for Humanity®
Lee and Hendry Counties

2022 - 2023

gratitude report



SPECIAL EDITION

building together

Christie proudly holds the key to her home
as the first homeowner in Habitat's new
Journey Together Neighborhood.

> read on page 11

THANK YOU FOR YOUR IMPACT: A LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

A year of milestones in the face of adversity

It has long been said that true character is shown in times of adversity, not comfort and convenience. Only one year removed from a global pandemic, our region faced its most significant hardship yet. A category four storm swept through Southwest Florida, causing historic damage and upended the lives of many. But while Hurricane Ian did inflict physical damage, it didn't break our community's spirit. In fact, it strengthened it.

Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties, with its partners, demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity to accomplish our goals and surpass them. This year, we experienced our most impactful year in our 40-year history, having **served a record 1,687 new families** through affordable homeownership, housing counseling, hurricane recovery services and home repairs.

With your help, we **built 66 affordable homes in partnership with local families** enabling them to achieve the strength, stability and independence they need to build a better life. Two of these homes were part of the successful launch of Habitat's Journey Together Neighborhood, a 29-home development situated off Prospect Avenue in the city of Fort Myers.

In addition, **1,070 families benefited from HUD-approved housing counseling**, which created individualized action plans to reduce debt, build savings, increase credit scores and in some cases, escape the risk of foreclosure.

In the wake of Hurricane Ian, we **assisted 881 individuals by offering hurricane consultation and resource services**, using Hurricane Resource Sites to deliver a variety of immediate services to both Habitat homeowners and the wider community, such as the distribution of essential home maintenance and safety supplies. In addition to this, we launched a Hurricane Recovery Home Repair Program with the aim of offering repairs to low-income homeowners. **Forty-six Hurricane Recovery Home Repair projects were successfully completed**, and over 100 repair projects are currently in progress.

The generosity of donors and volunteers is what fuels Habitat's mission. This past year, we saw record levels of philanthropy, marked by individual support for hurricane recovery, inspired by a \$1 million fundraising match by the Edwardson Family Foundation and an

anonymous donor. We also witnessed **2,031 active volunteers**, which is the highest number seen since the pandemic, **collectively dedicate 48,570 hours of their time and talents**, serving as a remarkable testament to the strength and determination of our community.

ReStore revenue remained strong despite losing our North Fort Myers retail store in the storm, our most profitable location. Nevertheless, we are rebuilding and expecting to reopen the North Fort Myers ReStore in 2024!


Even as we celebrate great progress, we are mindful that our county is experiencing a crisis of housing affordability that has only been exacerbated by the destruction Hurricane Ian left behind. With the Cape Coral-Fort Myers metro area being the nation's most overvalued housing market to buy and rent, our ministry is needed now more than ever. We must continue working – in ways old and new – to innovate, catalyze and collaborate to fulfill our commitment to building, improving and retaining places to call home.


The past year has been challenging for all of us, and we recognize that preceding years have posed difficulties for many. However, despite these challenges, we remain thankful for God's faithfulness and the numerous blessings we've received as we continue to build more homes and serve more families.

We sincerely appreciate your commitment and support to help us fulfill our mission during trying times. Your unwavering financial support, advocacy and time investment have turned uncertainty into success, and together, we are making a life-changing impact on local families.

As you explore the following pages of our 2022-2023 fiscal year Gratitude Report, you'll see that there's nothing we can't accomplish when we work together.

Psalm 57:1 says, "In the shadow of thy wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by," a faithful reminder that no matter the storm, we persevere.


Becky Lucas
CEO


Timothy F. Hawkins
Chair of the Board of Directors

Fiscal Year:
2022
2023



1,687 new families served

through a combination of new home construction, home repair, housing counseling and hurricane recovery services.

 **1,070** families benefited from HUD-approved housing counseling services

 **66** families purchased affordable homes in Lee and Hendry Counties

27 
families served through home preservation and repair services

36 
families satisfied their mortgages

international families served

71



Weathering the storm

Hurricane Ian had a significant impact on Lee County and its residents, including Habitat for Humanity.

Flooding and roof damage to our offices in North Fort Myers forced us to deliver services out of our warehouse. Three ReStores suffered flooding and damage, and our pole barn, which stored construction materials, was also determined to be unusable due to instability issues.

Despite the challenges Habitat faced as an organization, we continued our mission of providing affordable homeownership in partnership with local families by closing homes.

Habitat closed on its first home only 10 days after the storm made landfall and caused historic damage in Southwest Florida.

“We don’t stop at Habitat. Where there’s a will, there’s a way. Families needed to be in homes,” remembers Dana Baird, who led Habitat’s Hurricane Recovery Team.

Dana helped Adline close her home on October 7, 2022, who before moving into her home in Habitat’s Majorca Palms neighborhood, experienced homelessness.

Five days later on October 12, Habitat closed on two more homes. In total, staff worked to close 12 homes in less than two months after Ian, and

families continued being approved for the Affordable Homeownership Program.

“Every closing is always special. You see tears of joy almost all the time at the closing table. These just felt extra special because of what was happening around us,” Dana says.

Habitat not only quickly continued to serve its partner families but also the Lee County community at large by:

- Helping **881 individuals by offering hurricane consultation and resource services**, using Hurricane Resource Sites to deliver a variety of immediate services to both Habitat homeowners and the wider community, such as the distribution of essential home maintenance and safety supplies.
- Completing **46 hurricane home repairs to date**, with over 100 repair projects in the pipeline.

Your support fueled this effort, through generous individual donations and a \$1 million match by the Edwardson Family Foundation and an anonymous donor.

Support like this not only helps Habitat provide safe and affordable shelter but to rebuild lives.

Like Dana said, “natural disaster or not, it’s not going to stop us.”

BUILDING HOPE FOR JAMETRIA

After Ian, Jametria’s roof was severely damaged. As a single mom of three, Jametria was unsure how she would pay for an expensive roof replacement to make her home safe again. But through Habitat’s Hurricane Recovery Home Repair Program, Jametria and her family now have a safe and stable roof over their heads.

“If it wasn’t for Habitat, I’d still have buckets and water [in my home].”
- Jametria



Timeline of events

A snapshot of how Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties responded to Hurricane Ian.



Sept. 27

With news of Hurricane Ian tracking for Southwest Florida, **Habitat closes** offices, ReStores and job sites to prepare for the storm.



Sept. 28

Hurricane Ian makes landfall in Lee County as an **intense category 4 storm**.

Assessment of **storm impact** on Habitat properties begins.



Sept. 29 - - Oct. 2

Catastrophic roof damage and flooding at Habitat headquarters, with 95% of the furniture irrecoverable. The North Fort Myers ReStore was destroyed, including all merchandise. The South Fort Myers ReStore and McGregor ReStores were damaged, and most merchandise was not salvageable.



Oct. 3

Staff begin working out of the **Warehouse as a temporary headquarters**.



Oct. 3

Habitat opens three **Hurricane Resource Sites** to the public to distribute home preservation and safety items.



Oct. 4

The **Hurricane Recovery Home Repair Program** is created with current staff to help low-income families rebuild after the storm.



Oct. 7

First home closing after the storm with Habitat homebuyer, Adline.



Nov. 4

First wall raising after the storm with Habitat homebuyers Jorge and Itzel and volunteers from Pelican Landing and The Colony.



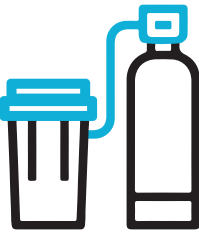
Nov. 14

Staff relocates to a **new Habitat headquarters** on New Brittany Boulevard in central Fort Myers.



Nov. 18

Home dedications resume and homebuyers David and Carla celebrate with home sponsors Dave and Cheryl Copham.



Feb. 28

First Hurricane Recovery Home Repair completed, replacing a water softener system for a family in Cape Coral.

The store that builds homes

Early mornings and late nights used to keep Abdelkrim away from his family more than he would like to make ends meet. Now, as a Habitat homeowner with an affordable mortgage, he's able to see his kids off to school on the bus every morning.

"I was working 50, 60, 70 hours a week to cover the rent and expenses," he says. "Now, I have less instability, so I can spend more time with my family than before."

Just a year ago, Abdelkrim, his wife Somia and their four children were renting a duplex that was infested with mice, cockroaches and spiders which made it unsafe for his family to live in. The unpredictable cost of living added more stress.

"When you rent a place, you expect [that] every three [to] six months for the landlord to increase the rent. And you don't have a choice, you have to accept it," he remembers. "I used to take one day off [a week]. Now, I take two days off to spend more time with my kids because it's less stressful."

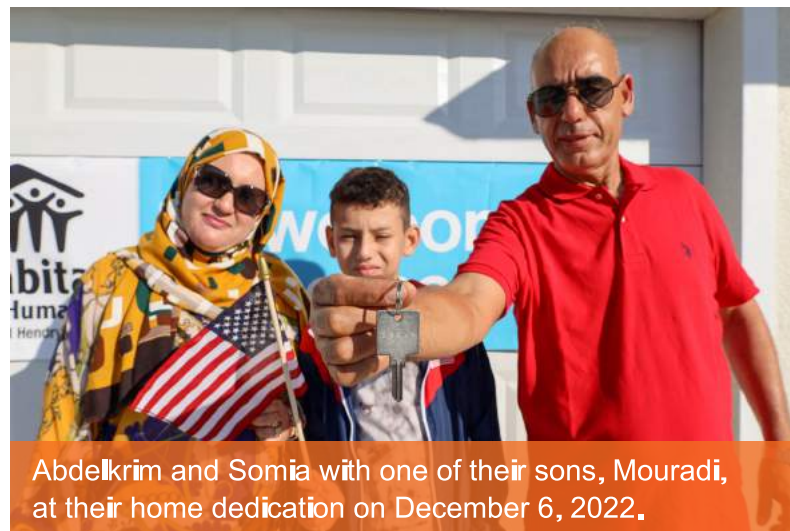
Abdelkrim and Somia's home was one of five sponsored by Habitat for Humanity ReStores in Lee County in fiscal year 2023. ReStores are nonprofit retail centers that sell new and gently used furniture, appliances, home decor, building materials and more. One hundred percent of the profits from the ReStores fully fund the cost of building affordable homes.

"I think it's a great thing when there's that direct correlation between what we do as a retailer and how that directly impacts our mission in building homes for our partner families," says ReStore Manager Brandon Eiland. "I think it's huge. It really puts into perspective what we do, as well as it gives us that extra motivation."

ReStores also give future homeowners the opportunity

to put in their sweat equity by volunteering.

"We get to know who they are; they get to see the effort that we put into what we're doing, and it really gives the staff the opportunity to build relationships with folks who are [purchasing] homes," Brandon says. "It makes it real."



Abdelkrim and Somia with one of their sons, Mouradi, at their home dedication on December 6, 2022.

Proudly owned and operated by Habitat, our local ReStores make up nearly fifteen percent of our total revenue. Donations and purchases help more homeowners achieve the strength, stability and self-reliance they need.

And it's helped Abdelkrim achieve his dream of homeownership and secure a better future for his family.

"Before it was stressful. Now it's peaceful," Abdelkrim says. "You can't buy peace."



This fiscal year, the ReStore fully funded 5 homes, despite losing our North Fort Myers retail store after Hurricane Ian!

FY 2022-2023

ReStore by the numbers

5 Habitat homes funded and built through ReStore profits

15,967 items donated to the ReStore and diverted from landfills

389 individuals volunteered at the ReStore

5,487 volunteer hours contributed at the ReStore

North Fort Myers ReStore: Re-opening in 2024!



Since September 28, 2022, the doors to our North Fort Myers ReStore have been closed due to the impacts of Hurricane Ian. However, we are excited to announce that we are rebuilding!

Be the first to know when the North Fort Myers location re-opens! **Scan here** to subscribe to our e-newsletter:



Thank you ReStore corporate sponsors:



To every group and individual who committed their time, talent and spirit to Habitat's ministry of building homes, communities and hope, we thank you.





THANK YOU FOR YOUR IMPACT:
WOMEN BUILD 2023

raised
\$389,471

2 built
new homes
in partnership with Sarah and Veronica.

140 volunteers contributed
895 hours building homes



Habitat Homebuyers Sarah and Veronica at the Women Build Thank You Party on March 18, 2023.



Fort Myers President at FineMark National Bank & Trust and Board Member at Habitat Lee and Hendry Tiffany Williams presents Veronica with a key during her home dedication.

The mission of Women Build is to engage women in the effort to provide safe and decent homes for families in need of affordable housing. By recruiting, educating, and inspiring women, we can transform lives in our communities.

Since 2011, Women Build in Lee and Hendry Counties has **partnered with 27 female-headed families** to build strength and stability for their children through local fundraising and volunteer efforts. In recent years, more than half of our Habitat homebuyers are women. Sarah and Veronica are just two of the **52 female-headed households** we partnered with during the 22-23 fiscal year.

Thank you to our amazing Women Build sponsors, SuperPeople, fundraising teams, donors, and volunteers. Because of your support, Sarah, Veronica and their children now have a safe, decent and affordable place to call home.

Scan here to learn more!



THANK YOU FOR YOUR IMPACT: CORPORATE PARTNERS

A foundation built on support

In March, we broke ground on the first two homes in our new Journey Together Neighborhood, a 29-home planned community situated off Prospect Avenue in the city of Fort Myers. Coca-Cola Beverages Florida, LLC (Coke Florida) and B&I Contractors each sponsored the construction of a home, which included the cost of building materials, supplies and skilled labor. Volunteers from both companies worked together with homebuyers Christie and Marcia to raise the walls of their single-family homes simultaneously.

Their support not only built houses, it built community. The two homeowners have not only become neighbors, but close friends.

Christie was the first homebuyer to move into the neighborhood, her four-bedroom home funded by Coke Florida. Before moving into her Habitat home, she was raising four children in a two-bedroom apartment. Now, she has the space she needs.

“It means security,” Christie said. “It means being able to have something I can call my own and having something my kids can have for years to come.”

Marcia lives right next door, her home sponsored by B&I Contractors. Before moving in, she didn’t have stable housing. “All my adult life I was able to provide for myself and my children,” Marcia said. “Three years



Habitat Homeowners Christie and Marcia working alongside volunteers at their simultaneous wall raising on March 4, 2022.

ago, I found myself in a position I had never been in before. Homeless. I [went] from family member to family member sleeping on the couch.”

Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties is proud to work with companies that share a belief in the mission of building stronger communities through stable housing. The philanthropy, advocacy and volunteerism from our partners this past year demonstrate to people in need of decent housing and the community at large that Habitat is not alone in its bold pursuit of a community where everyone has a stable place to live. Thank you to all of our corporate partners for helping to change people’s lives!

You can help families like Christie’s and Marcia’s achieve their dream of homeownership by becoming a Habitat corporate partner.



Corporate giving highlights:

18 homes sponsored by corporations	39 corporations volunteered on job sites	415 individuals from corporations volunteered	2,623 hours were contributed by corporate volunteers
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A Habitat of hope

Elizabeth remembers life as a rental tenant for her and her son Ben.

“My rent jumped from \$1,100 to \$1,700 monthly and food prices skyrocketed,” she says. “I was unable to find affordable housing in the area even if I downsized to a one-bedroom.”

With a stable job of 15 years in healthcare, every time she tried to get ahead, the rising cost of living would pull her back.

“I saved every bit I could of the stimulus money and bonuses from the pandemic and finally built up a healthy savings account, only to dip into it monthly just to afford the basics.”

Lacking the stability and independence she needed for her and her son, Elizabeth turned to Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties after a friend shared her own experience going through the Affordable Homeownership Program. It was that simple nudge of encouragement that changed her situation.

“If I can do it, absolutely anyone can do it. I said, ‘I’ll do it. I’ll do whatever it takes.’”

“I knew about Habitat for Humanity for years, but I was almost intimidated. I thought, ‘It couldn’t be for me, I couldn’t qualify, I don’t deserve this, there are other people who deserve it more than me,’” she remembers. “I had recently seen Heritage Heights, which is so close to my work, I just decided that I’m going to try it.”

Like many of its planned neighborhoods, Heritage Heights was built by Habitat to promote healthy living, social interaction and a sense of community. Eventually, 150 families will live there in single-family and multi-family homes surrounding a community lake. It features a playground, basketball court, stocked freshwater pond, barbecue grills and picnic tables. It’s also close to public transportation, schools, hospitals



Elizabeth and her son Ben stand together with the key to their new home and the American Flag symbolizing that they have achieved the American Dream.



On December 3, 2022, Habitat Lee and Hendry Board Members worked alongside Future Homeowners to raise the walls on Elizabeth’s home.

and medical centers.

Future homeowners contribute 300 sweat-equity volunteer hours, attend more than 20 hours of homeownership and financial literacy classes, pay \$2,000 towards closing costs and meet regularly with a Habitat housing advisor. Families partner with Habitat to gain the skills and knowledge they need to have a successful homeownership experience.

Motivated by the opportunity, Elizabeth completed her requirements in only three months.

“If I can do it, absolutely anyone can do it,” she admits. “I said ‘I’ll do it. I’ll do whatever it takes.’ So I just buckled down for three months. Every day I wasn’t at

work, I was volunteering.”

Elizabeth and Ben are still full of excitement settling into their forever home by having game nights with friends, chatting with neighbors and decorating the home the way they want it, something they weren’t able to do in the rental.

Paying an affordable mortgage allows them to save for the things they enjoy. “We’re saving now to hopefully go on a vacation, which we haven’t had in forever,” she says.

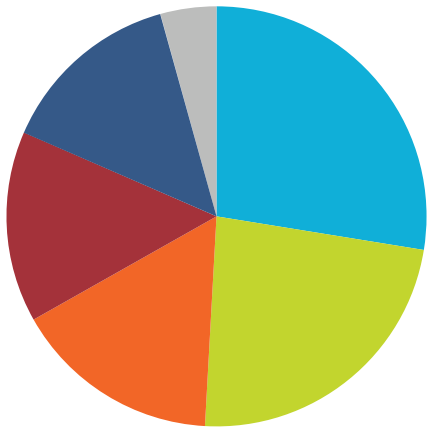
Thank you to our generous home sponsors, Ron and Carol Sperling, and the volunteers who gave Elizabeth a hand up to achieve her American Dream of homeownership.



Ben and Elizabeth with home sponsors Ron and Carol Sperling at Elizabeth’s Home Dedication ceremony on June 6, 2023.

Financial Highlights

FY 2022-2023



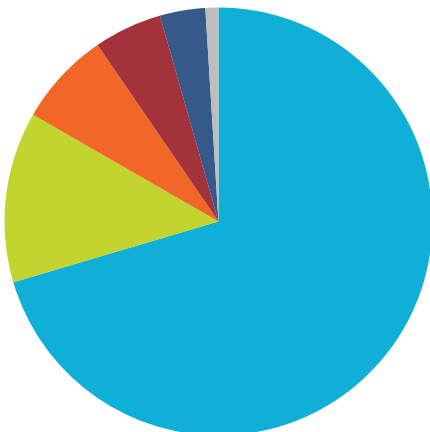
Funding Sources

Philanthropy	\$6,917,379	27.6%
First Mortgages	\$5,853,472	23.3%
Government Grants	\$4,002,456	15.9%
ReStore Sales	\$3,694,628	14.7%
Other Income	\$3,553,606	14.1%
Donated Property & Services	\$1,079,825	4.3%
Total	\$25,101,366	100%



Sources of Philanthropic Contributions

Individuals	\$1,842,232	26.6%
Corporate Partnerships	\$2,388,900	34.6%
Campaigns	\$1,378,480	19.9%
Grants	\$1,307,767	18.9%
Total	\$6,917,379	100%



Uses

Construction Services	\$16,364,967	70.4%
Retail Services	\$2,998,388	12.9%
General Admin	\$1,656,508	7.1%
Family Services	\$1,196,840	5.1%
Fundraising & Volunteer Services	\$797,440	3.4%
Tithe	\$227,646	1.0%
Total	\$23,241,789	100%

Thank you Government Grant Partners

- Cape Coral**
 - CDBG
 - SHIP**FineMark National Bank & Trust**
 - FHLB —AHP**Fort Myers CRA**
- Lee County**
 - ARPA
 - HOME
 - SHIP
 - SIFR

Executive Leaders

- Becky Lucas** | CEO
John O'Donnell | CFO
Tanya Soholt | COO
Elisha Baird | VP of Strategic Partnerships
Jennifer Lacey | VP of Finance
Tammy Moran | VP of ReStore
Karen Rodriguez | VP of Family Services
Mark Wilke | VP of People and Culture

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Data above reflect unaudited financials. For an audited report, please visit habitat4humanity.org/financials.

FY Thank you to our donors—every gift empowers a family in Lee & Hendry Counties

2022-2023:

JULY 1, 2022–JUNE 30, 2023

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Anonymous
AUM, Inc.
B & I Contractors, Inc.
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Ellie Fox
Louis Friedrichs
Cheryl and Thomas Garn
James and Mary Hamilton
Hope Martinez
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Lisa Munkelwitz
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Russel Proctor
Shirley Sloper
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Steve Clark
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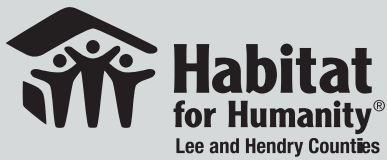
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* = Board Member
Bold = Building the Future Legacy Society Member

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habitat4humanity.org

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Suite 100
Fort Myers, FL 33907



@h4hleehendry

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Mortgage Burning Celebration

Join us as we celebrate the success of Habitat homeowners who have paid off their mortgage!

Tuesday, December 12th | 6:00 PM

Journey Together Neighborhood

340 Prospect Avenue, Fort Myers, FL 33905

From Palm Beach Boulevard, turn on Prospect Avenue. Cross over the train tracks, and turn left onto Onward Street. Parking will be provided on the property.

Heavy hors d'oeuvres and refreshments provided at this tented outdoor event.



The Frederick family has been mortgage free since 2020!

RSVP

Kindly RSVP to Joyce at
JoyceJ@habitat4humanity.org
or 239-349-7240 by
Thursday, December 5th.