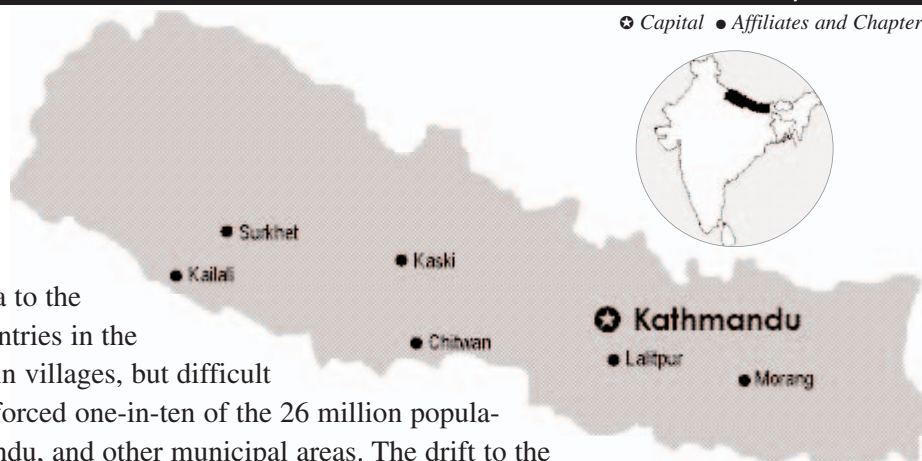


Nepal

Country Profile

📍 Capital • Affiliates and Chapters



NESTLED in among the glorious Himalayan mountains, and with giant neighbors China to the north and India to the south, Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. The majority of Nepalese live in villages, but difficult farming conditions and poverty have forced one-in-ten of the 26 million population to migrate to the capital, Kathmandu, and other municipal areas. The drift to the towns has been compounded by an on-going insurgency by political rebels in the west of the country.

According to the government's own figures, nearly 430,000 families live in sub-standard housing. Unemployment is a major barrier to breaking the poverty cycle. In addition, there are deprivations from annual floods as water cascades from the world's highest mountain range.

In slum areas, shelter basically involves plastic sheeting, paper and wood for walls and straw roof. Water is often unsanitary and few dwellings have toilets or electricity. In the lower plains, thousands of homes are lost to fire each year as families rely on dried vegetation and grasses for easy-to-ignite roofing, and on unsafe and illegal electrical connections from power lines. Fires and smokes are behind a high proportion of eye, lung and skin complaints.

HFH Nepal began its work in 1997 and currently works in six districts in both rural and urban areas. There are affiliates in Chitwan, Kailali, Lalitpur, Morang, Surkhet and Kaski.

Habitat houses in Nepal are a one-story structures with three rooms, a kitchen and a toilet. Buildings are made from brick, stone, wood, cement and galvanized tin roofs. A house is normally about 32.4 sq. m. in size and takes three to four weeks to complete.

HFH Nepal has built its first homes under the "Save & Build" approach – at Jhapa in eastern Nepal. "Save & Build" reaches more low-income families by substantially reducing housing costs and shortening mortgage repayment periods. Under a "traditional" Habitat model, Nepalese home partners take on ten-year mortgages that are repaid at an average of US\$12 a month.

In the past, Nepal has been a favored destination for volunteer building teams from overseas. These are expected to resume once the current security environment improves.

COUNTRY FACTS

Area: 140,800 sq. km.
Population: 27,676,547
Capital: Kathmandu
Ethnic groups: Brahman, Chetri, Newar, Gurung, Magar, Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Sherpa, Tharu, and others (1995)
Religions: Hindu, 86%, Buddhist, 7.8%, Muslim, 3.8%, others 2.2%
Languages: Nepali, Newari, Bhotia, Maithali

HABITAT FACTS

Families Helped
758
Cost Of One House*
US\$2,030

As of April 2005

* international sponsorship cost

Habitat Highlights

- HFH Nepal and Nepal Red cross are jointly rehabilitating homes for 225 fire-affected families in Saptari in southern Nepal.
- HFH Nepal has hosted more than 50 Global Village volunteer teams including many from Japan and the US.
- 18 local schools are actively involved in HFH campus chapter and youth events.
- Local churches for "Building On Faith" events.



HFH Nepal

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