



## Ways out of homelessness

### Housing First Project of Habitat for Humanity Hungary

<b>Name of the project</b>	<b>Housing First Project of Habitat for Humanity Hungary</b>
<b>Aims and Objectives</b>	<p>The goal of our project is to provide homeless people long-term, independent and direct accommodation. The project's approach for tackling homelessness is that it moves homeless people from the street directly into their own apartments rather than moving them through different "levels" of housing (eg. from the streets to a public shelter, and from a public shelter to a transitional housing institute). Our approach is based on the idea that a homeless household's primary need is to obtain stable housing, and that other issues that may affect the household can and should be addressed once housing is obtained.</p>
<b>Project Description</b>	<p>In 2014 - with the support of Aktion Deutschland Hilft - we helped 10 homeless households to find a permanent and affordable home. In this project the participants moved to renovated social rentals. Our partners (the City is for all, Maltese Charity, Baptist Charity and Twist Oliver Foundation) provided them complex and intensive social work, to prepare them to move to their flats, and to help them keeping it. HFHH is planning to work with more municipalities as we established good connections and found more opportunities than we thought. We have started a long term project for 3-5 years, in which we could help about 5 homeless households living on the street or in self build shacks, into apartments each year (with the support of Foundation Abbe Pierre and Saint-Gobain Initiatives).</p>
<b>Core elements</b>	<p>We build partnerships with local municipalities. We then renovate ruined, municipality-owned social rentals where homeless families or individuals will move in later. Our social workers help our clients prepare independent living and provide then an intensive after care so that they become able to keep their home for long term.</p>
<b>Funding</b>	<p>The project is supported by private (international) donations. We do not receive any state funding.</p>
<b>Impact/ results</b>	<p>During our so far implemented programs, six out of seven of our clients decided to stay after the first 8-10 month. Another important impact is the growing interest from municipalities in partnering with us.</p>
<b>Participants</b>	<p>We work in close partnership with municipalities during which we are renovating empty and bad condition municipality flats with the help of our volunteers. We are also working with street social worker organizations. In our buildings the beneficiaries and volunteers are working together, they get to know each other, and we can raise awareness for the problem.</p> <p>The program participants are rough sleepers.</p>
<b>Staff</b>	<p>For the implementation of the project, Habitat for Humanity is hiring 1 full-time project manager and 2 social workers, part time. We also have staff for the renovation of the flats (building manager, volunteer coordinator, donor relations manager)</p>
<b>Innovative aspects</b>	<p>The project's innovative aspect is that rather than moving the homeless through different "levels" of housing (eg. from the streets to a public shelter, and from a public shelter to a transitional housing institute), it moves them</p>



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	<p>from the street into their own apartments directly.</p> <p>Furthermore in Hungary it is unusual to work with volunteers on that level. Cooperation with municipalities and use of social rentals in the project is rare: usually homeless people have no access to social rentals in Hungary.</p>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<p>The program's sustainability is based on private donations. We work hard to engage more and more donors to fund our project. Our long-term advocacy goal is to promote our program among policy-makers and try to get governmental funding which could serve as a stable financial source.</p>
<b>Lessons learned</b>	<p>We are in the middle of an ongoing process. So far it is clear, that municipalities can be engaged in the program, their trust can be gained. We also learned how important is to make "real homes" for the participants: their involvement to the renovation work is crucial in the process of transforming their life. We also have some experience in how odd jobs can influence the sustainability of social rentals: regular and predictable income is needed.</p>
<b>Obstacles</b>	<p>The partnership-building with municipalities is sometimes difficult and slow due to the heavy workload of the partners.</p>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>We expect our current program to provide us evidence-based information about our impact. We will ask an external research consultant to prepare an impact evaluation plan for us. Since the number of our clients is low, we will rely on qualitative research tools. As methodology for evaluation, we will use semi-structured interviews, focus groups discussions and document analysis.</p>