Natural disasters cause nearly 90,000 deaths worldwide every year. 97% of these deaths occur in emerging nations, largely due to the collapse of buildings.

Our mission is to greatly reduce deaths, injuries, and economic losses caused by housing and school collapses due to earthquakes, extreme weather, and fires.

We believe that all people have the right to live and learn in homes and schools that will protect them from natural disasters. Build Change saves lives in earthquakes, extreme weather, and fires by working with people to build homes and schools that will protect their families and children.

- We focus on permanent solutions, implemented on a local, sustainable level.
- We create designs for disaster-resistant houses and schools that use local styles and materials.
- We train builders and engineers in disaster-resistant design and construction, so they can build safe houses and schools.
- We provide recommendations for small, affordable improvements to local building techniques.
- We educate local communities on disaster safety and preparedness to encourage the demand for safe buildings.
- We work alongside homeowners and support their decisions about the design and layout of their own home.
- We facilitate access to insurance, subsidies, and incentive-based funds for homeowners to rebuild or retrofit their homes. This financing is coupled with technical assistance provided by our staff of local engineers.
- We work with local small businesses to make their bricks and concrete blocks stronger.
- We work with governments to develop building standards and national training programs so that safer building occurs on a national scale.
Our Work

Theory of Change

Earthquake-resistant construction will become common only if the right technology is locally available, widely known, and culturally accepted. Plus, the cost must be competitive with existing and commonly used (but vulnerable) building methods.

Our theory of change involves overcoming three barriers to adoption common to so many development challenges: money, technology, people.

People

Someone has to want the house to be safe. Build Change stimulates demand for safe housing by making it easy for homeowners, governments, and NGOs to understand and implement basics of safe building.

Money

If people do not have enough money to build a safe house, they won’t. Build Change facilitates access to subsidies with strings attached and incentive-based housing microfinance. In Colombia, Build Change is partnering with the Bogota city government to use subsidies for housing improvements as incentives for strengthening buildings. In Haiti, Build Change is partnering with Sogesol, the microfinance subsidiary of Sogebank, to provide loans for strengthening buildings.

Technology

The right building technology must be locally available, widely known, and cost-competitive. We emphasize small, low-cost changes to existing, culturally preferred technologies and train local professionals how to build safely with them.

Create permanent change in construction practice by building local skills and stimulating local demand.
Together we can save countless lives.
The Autodesk Foundation supports Build Change because of their focus on driving positive impact with innovative and user-centered design. We are also impressed by their visionary leadership and collaboration with diverse stakeholders to save lives. Our mission is to invest in the most impactful organizations using design to create a better world, and Build Change is well-aligned with that vision.

– Joe Speicher
Executive Director
Autodesk Foundation

Dr. Hausler’s work proves that the wheel doesn’t need to be re-invented. Innovation as a result of smart improvements to existing technologies can be equally effective. Elizabeth is a remarkable example of someone whose work is a catalyst for wide-scale adoption by using a model that is economically and socially sustainable.

– Joshua Schuler
Executive Director
Lemelson-MIT Program

Build Change has made unprecedented progress over the past 10 years in reducing future earthquake casualties in developing countries. By investing in Build Change, RMS is helping to minimize loss and risk in communities with the least resources to cope with disasters.

– Hemant Shah
Co-Founder and CEO
RMS

Build Change has been a Clinton Global Initiative member and commitment-maker since 2010, completing six commitments with another underway. Build Change’s CEO is a member of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Risk and Resilience.

Leverage international technical excellence to create local solutions.
Work with Us

Global Platform Partner
$100,000+ commitment per year for 3 years

- Opportunities for employee engagement with Build Change
- Volunteer opportunities for employees at Build Change project site
- Logo displayed in-country on buildings or training materials
- Feature in Build Change eNewsletter
- Quarterly posts about partnership on social media
- All benefits listed under Changemaker

Changemaker
$100,000+

- Speaking engagement with Build Change CEO
- Recognition at Build Change promotional activities
- Quarterly briefs about the achievements the funding has enabled
- All benefits listed under Retrofitter

Retrofitter
$50,000+

- Post about partnership on Build Change social media
- Personalized recognition from Build Change program site
- All benefits listed under Builder

Builder
$20,000+

- Hyperlinked logo in Build Change annual report, website, and corporate partnership materials
- Permission to use Build Change logo on marketing collateral

Brickmaker
$10,000+

- Logo in Build Change annual report, website and corporate partnership materials
- Permission to use Build Change logo on marketing collateral

Improve building quality, reduce risk, and save lives.