



Milestones 2009 Europe & Central Asia

In these times of global economic turmoil and tightened budgets, Habitat for Humanity has been continuing the fight against poverty housing in Europe and Central Asia. In fiscal year 2009 Habitat served a record 4,186 families which almost doubled the cumulative figure of families supported since the start of operations in Europe and Central Asia, reaching a total of 8,869 families served to date. Fundraising programs relied on committed corporate partners and volunteers to get almost 10 million dollars for projects worldwide and in the region.

Such substantial growth has been achieved through adjusting programs to communities' primary housing needs, adopting cost-effective construction technologies and leveraging all available resources to support families in need of simple, decent homes. Although Habitat, true to its roots, continues to build houses in Europe and Central Asia, the focus has been rapidly shifting to renovations, finishing 'half-built' homes left incomplete since the end of communism, and improving water and sanitation conditions for communities living in extreme poverty.

Most projects have been primarily funded through microfinance programs, and Habitat has been increasingly approached for expertise and advice in the field of housing microfinance. Total finance capital passed \$ 9 million with an additional \$4 million in loan capital for Romania, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Armenia secured from the Dutch International Guarantees for Housing (DIGH) and partners. Using loan capital, Habitat is set to serve families at an exponentially faster rate by leveraging its own funds better.

A new partnership with HOPE Ukraine has been expanded from Uzhgorod to other towns in the Transcarpathian region. Low-income households can borrow from \$500 for incremental home improvements such as roofing, flooring and insulation, or even as little as \$50-\$100 to install water filters and upgrade sanitation in Tajikistan. In Slovakia, loans have been used for energy-efficient renovations that were critical last winter in rural areas left without heat amidst the energy crisis when Russia cut gas deliveries to Europe.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Habitat brokered the first major loan to a Bosnian microfinance institution Lok Micro to serve more than 4,000 families over the next few years with technical support from Habitat.

In March 2009, Habitat was a key speaker at the microfinance conference in Vienna, Austria. In May, ECA attended the 12th Microfinance Center conference in Belgrade, Serbia. Habitat facilitated a housing finance session.

In Armenia, Habitat for Humanity signed a cooperation agreement with the ministry of urban development. The document sets a framework for joint efforts to improve housing situation in the country.

In Bulgaria, with the help from the Women's Build department, renovations have been tailored for the needs of families with disabled children who otherwise find it hard to borrow from banks as they are deemed unreliable clients. Small home-improvement loans are also offered to Roma groups, often neglected by municipal authorities and communities. The Roma Housing Improvement partnership in Macedonia is an example of cooperation with a microfinance institution, as well as a model for serving the most underprivileged groups in society. Initiatives have been taken a step further with house construction in Oradea, Romania, and similar plans to serve needy Roma families in Bulgaria and Slovakia.

In Kyrgyzstan, renovations were carried out in whole condominiums. The dismal Soviet-era multiple apartment blocks have been crumbling due to lack of maintenance, and living in such premises has become dangerous. However, resettling more than 100 families requires huge investment, time and effort. Habitat's approach has been to develop and partner with condominium associations to upgrade these buildings by overhauling roofs, stairs and entrances. In Kyrgyzstan, over 500 families were served throughout the year.

Applying low-cost locally appropriate construction technologies, such as cane-reed in Kyrgyzstan or mulberry branches in Tajikistan, through to testing innovative materials, has been another integral part of the ECA strategy. ArcelorMittal, the world's leading steelmaker, extended and enlarged its partnership with Habitat to \$761,000 this year after designing and completing the first steel-framed house in Moinesti, Romania.

Thinking green for the future, ECA has been exploring possibilities to utilize alternative sources of energy. A letter of intent has been signed with our partner Connect the World Foundation for a 4 year program which will serve communities in 5 countries by connecting homes to solar and wind power, as well as provide cable and digital connections.

Partnerships have been paramount in mobilizing resources for Habitat's efforts to eliminate poverty housing. However, ECA has been recently diversifying its support by using available government subsidies and aid. Tax designation campaigns, when companies and individuals dedicate a percentage of their already paid taxes to support charities, have run in 3 countries. In Slovakia, Habitat secured 4 corporate partners and a number of individual donations. At the same time, proposals totaling over \$1.2 million were submitted to the Slovak government aid agency for housing projects globally.

At the same time, the global financial crunch has brought it home that borrowers and lenders need to be responsible for their actions. Financial educational programs, executed with grants from the Citi Foundation in both ECA and in the Africa and Middle East region, give training both to clients and financial institutions. To date, 317 clients in Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary and Ukraine underwent financial literacy training conducted by ECA financial specialists.



VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

In fiscal year 2009, ECA area hosted 14 long-term volunteers as part of the International Volunteer Program.

In 2009, over 2,000 international volunteers supported programs in the region, while 2,675 volunteers from Europe travelled to programs worldwide.

In June, Whirlpool sent a 40-strong team to the Veles build in Macedonia and its first corporate team for Moldava nad Bodvou in Slovakia.

Consolis Group pan-European builds in Poland, Hungary, Macedonia and Romania engaged volunteers from 18 different countries.



Photos above: Building Casa Buna
in Romania



PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Habitat for Humanity Tajikistan, with support from the Canadian International Development Agency and Habitat for Humanity Canada, launched in May 2009 its first Building and Training Center in Asht.

In March 2009, Habitat Romania ran a month of Solidarity and Social Insertion in Timisoara. Volunteers and companies worked on builds for people with severe mental disabilities and socially excluded Roma families.

In partnership with Whirlpool and Women's Tennis Association ECA organized a PR and branding event in Warsaw. Three top tennis stars volunteered at the work site, and a donation of Euros 20,000 was received to help 15 single women families in Bulgaria and Tajikistan. The total support under the program served 100 women families.

107 Habitat US affiliates supported ECA with tithes worth of more than \$1.2 million.

The flood relief project in Doljest, Romania, has helped into adequate shelter 110 families who suffered when floods wiped homes in the northeastern part of the country in 2008. Financial support was offered by Petrom, the largest corporate partner in the Central European building program.

Habitat has successfully launched its first new-build construction in Veles, an industrial town in the central part of Macedonia. It will provide 11 housing units with 90 apartments over three years.



Families Served

Country	FY09	Cummulative to date
Armenia	86	482
Bulgaria	77	109
Kyrgyzstan	819	1735
Great Britain	14	44
Hungary	104	299
Macedonia	290	556
Northern Ireland	4	69
Poland	90	297
Portugal	8	30
Republic of Ireland	1	13
Romania	487	1581
Russia	4	35
Slovakia	122	477
Tajikistan	2052	3106
Turkey	0	8
Ukraine	28	28
ECA TOTAL	4186	8869

ECA Corporate Partners' Contributions FY 2009

Akzo Nobel	\$6,482
ArcelorMittal	\$707,897
Cargill	\$272
Citicorp	\$227,502
Consolis	\$244,115
Credit Suisse	\$5,000
CTW	\$2,749
EDF	\$744,234
Genworth	\$50,000
Guardian	\$1,560
MoneyGram	\$20,105
PMI	\$38,500
Saint-Gobain Isover	\$75,480
Whirlpool	\$231,337
WTA	\$56,163
GRAND TOTAL	\$2,411,395



Top: Whirlpool volunteers on site in Macedonia



Right: Habitat Ambassador and one of the world's top tennis players Daniela Hantuchova taking part at the WTA Women Build in Warsaw, Poland