



### **Habitat for Humanity Global Village Communication Resources**

Volunteer trips offer many opportunities for media coverage. Volunteers can share their first-hand experience of fighting poverty housing, as well as educate other members of their community on the staggering global housing need. By telling their story to a wider audience, they can also promote the work of Habitat and its mission to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness.

You can share your work with your communities by sending a press-release to a local newspaper and writing an article to your school, church or company newsletter. Alternatively, you can write a blog post or notes on your Facebook page. You can also simply share pictures from your latest trip.

Habitat thanks you for your commitment to share your work with a wider audience! To support you in your endeavor, we prepared some simple communication guidelines.

#### **In the guidelines you will find:**

- A. Habitat talking points.
- B. A sample letter to the editor.
- C. A press-release template to be sent after the trip.

#### **A. Habitat talking points**

When writing materials about Habitat for Humanity, make sure your material contains some of the basic facts about Habitat and the way it works:

- Mention the name of the organization and its mission.
- Explain in a few words the basic operating model of Habitat for Humanity.

#### **Habitat basic facts:**

1. Habitat for Humanity International is a Christian nonprofit organization dedicated to the cause of

eliminating poverty housing. Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has built and renovated more than **400,000** homes worldwide, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than **2** million people.

**2.** It works in more than 90 countries of the world by building and repairing homes, offering microfinance services, improving water and sanitation, working on disaster response and advocating for affordable housing. Habitat works in partnership with people of all walks of life, races and religions.

In Europe and Central Asia, Habitat is present in **20** countries where it works with partners, donors and volunteers from the region. In **17** countries it is building and repairing homes, offering microfinance services, improving water and sanitation, working on disaster response and advocating for affordable housing. In this region, Habitat has served more than **11,000** families together with volunteers and homeowners.

**3.** Habitat housing methods and models may vary around the world depending on local needs and housing conditions, but it works with families who demonstrate the following characteristics:

- **Willingness to partner.** Families must take action to improve their own living conditions by helping to build or upgrade their own home or homes of others in the community. This requirement is called 'sweat equity'.
- **Need of simple, decent and affordable housing.** Families who partner with Habitat must demonstrate need. The need requirement can include living in substandard or overcrowded conditions or paying a high proportion of one's income in rent. All families who partner with Habitat are low-income and in need of affordable housing.
- **Ability to pay back.** Habitat is not a giveaway program. All partner families must be willing and able to pay back a loan to the local Habitat organization. The repayments go into a revolving fund to help create additional Habitat housing opportunities in the community.

**B. A sample letter to the editor to be sent before the trip**

TO:

FROM:

Date

Dear editor,

I will be going to [country] soon (or [type date]) to help build homes for low income families. I will be working together with future homeowners and volunteers with the nonprofit organization Habitat for Humanity that is committed to fighting poverty housing for families in developing regions and throughout the world.

Perhaps you might find it interesting to cover this trip in your edition. [Give some interesting bits about the future trip, possibly some poverty housing facts from the country where you go and detail of a Habitat project the team will be working on]. I can send you an article with a photo when I return from my trip and, of course, it is possible that you interview me, before and/or when I get back, depending on your interest.

If you are interested in an article or interview you can contact me.

CONTACT details:

Name:

Phone:

E-mail:

Media contacts of the Habitat office I will visit:

With kind regards,

### C. A press-release template to be sent after the trip

#### GV press release template

[Contact for more information:

(name), (phone number)

(e-mail address), (web page)]

*'You can do so much good!'*

**[New Yorker]** with Habitat for Humanity on a building trip to **[country]**

**Location, date of release** - In **[month]** this year, **[name/group]** from **[location]** went to **[country]** on a volunteer trip with an international nonprofit organization Habitat for Humanity that is dedicated to fight poverty housing globally. During a week's trip, **[he/they]** helped built/renovate **[number of]** homes for families who live in poor conditions.

'It was beautiful and sad at the same time', said **[name]**. 'Sad because several families live in a poor house without facilities and beautiful because you can do so much good with building a house.' *(Examples of quotes can be copied or customized)*

Building travelers are frequently going for work on Habitat projects in various locations. Habitat offers building experience in more than 40 countries around the world.

'It's a unique experience', said **[name]**. 'Even when you travel through the country, you're not that close to the culture. You're working with local professionals and often even with the future homeowners. We work with local materials and build according to the local practices. It's quite tough but it shows respect for the culture and contributes positively to the local economy. *(Adjust to the real situation and attribute the quote).*

Thanks to the support of **[name]** and the co-building travelers, a few families are closer to improved housing in **[name of the town]** in **[country]**. 'When you see how they live: with too many people in a too small house, you see the real need. No sanitary facilities, floors of mud and roofs leaking. *(Adjust to the real situation and attribute the quote).*

At the end of the week, the team said goodbyes to the local families in a festive way. This is an emotional moment, as in a week, they created close relationships. However, they leave knowing that the work they did matter, they helped another family to break the cycle of poverty.

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**[Mention the caption: who's on the picture, what's there to see]**