

# Bangladesh



## Habitat for Humanity in Bangladesh

Since 1999, Habitat for Humanity Bangladesh has been working with low-income families to build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter. Habitat Bangladesh currently operates in Dhamrai, Dhaka district, and in the districts of Gazipur, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Tangail and Satkhira. The programs include decent, affordable housing, clean water and safe sanitation, training in appropriate construction technology as well as disaster response and mitigation.

## The housing need in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is among the most densely populated countries in the world with more than 1,200 people per square kilometer. According to United Nations data, about 25 million people are living in abject poverty and nearly a quarter of the female-headed households live in extreme poverty. More than two million people in the capital city of Dhaka either live in slums or are without any proper shelter. Urban migration is mainly due to better job prospects, especially in the garment industry, and educational opportunities. While most people migrate for economic reasons, more than 26 per cent leave for the cities because of natural disasters, river erosion and recurrent flooding.

## How Habitat addresses the need in Bangladesh

Habitat Bangladesh works with partners and volunteers to provide decent homes as a way out of poverty. Responding to disasters such as cyclones or storms has enabled Habitat to help Bangladeshi families rebuild more resilient homes. Improving communities' access to clean water and safe sanitation along with raising hygiene standards lead to better attendance in school and greater economic productivity.



Liza (left) bathes her daughter Toma using water from a tube well installed by Habitat Bangladesh in Madhupur upazila, Tangail district.

## COUNTRY FACTS\*

<b>Capital</b>	Dhaka
<b>Main country facts</b>	Gained independence in 1971
<b>Population</b>	Over 156 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	34.3 percent live in cities
<b>Life expectancy</b>	73.2 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	4.9 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	31.5 percent

\*Source: World Factbook

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Bangladesh**  
1999

**Individuals served in FY16**  
5,045\*

\*Includes construction and market development

**Volunteers engaged in FY16**  
568

## Housing solutions

Decent, affordable housing; urban development; disaster response; volunteer engagement



## Decent, affordable housing

Based on a low-cost core house design, families begin by building a house with a single room, a veranda and a latrine. They have the option of adding a second room or building walls around the veranda to expand living space when their situation allows. In addition to providing technical support for home renovations, Habitat Bangladesh has developed guidelines and manuals on building with various materials and equipment, construction of water and sanitation facilities and project management, among others. Habitat also trains construction workers and community members in building or renovating homes.

## Volunteer engagement

Local corporations, schools and embassies are strong supporters of Habitat's work in Bangladesh. International volunteers made their presence felt under the Global Village program. Due to security concerns in the country, Habitat Bangladesh has temporarily suspended the hosting of international volunteers since mid-2016 and is monitoring the situation with a view of resuming the program when feasible. Meanwhile, local volunteers continue to support Habitat Bangladesh's work. Young people, in particular, play a key role in the annual Habitat Young Leaders Build campaign by volunteering, raising funds and speaking out for the need for decent housing.

## Disaster response and mitigation

Habitat Bangladesh aims to help disaster-affected families through emergency shelter kits and transitional housing in the early phase of its response. Habitat also provides technical assistance and project management expertise to help families rebuild their houses. Since 2007, Habitat Bangladesh has helped more than 2,400 families through various disaster responses and training in disaster mitigation and preparedness. The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has provided a 3.222 million Hong Kong dollar (over US\$415,000) grant to help families affected by Cyclone Roanu in May 2016. Habitat Bangladesh has distributed 2,400 emergency shelter kits in Banshkhali upazila in Chittagong district by the completion of the project in November 2016.

## Urban development

In 2012, Habitat Bangladesh started its first urban project with the upgrading of three slums in Dhaka city. With funding from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, about 9,000 people were helped through house renovations, distribution of water filters, construction of water pumps and drainage system and walkways as well as bath houses and community toilets. Since 2014, Habitat Bangladesh has also been playing a catalytic role in engaging other non-governmental organizations, the government and partners in urban forums and dialogues.

## Meet a Habitat family

A secure house that stays dry during the rainy season has given Kajoli peace of mind. Her old hut was windowless and leaked when it rained. Her life changed after she and her husband Mosaraf moved into their Habitat house in April 2016. "Now I can sleep well. I feel refreshed and safe. I know my floor will be dry during the rain, and I know my belongings will be safe in the house when I leave for work," said Kajoli, a 48-year-old domestic help, who lives in Ananda Nagar village, Dhamrai upazila in Dhaka district. Her grandchildren would go to her house to do their schoolwork and often stay over. "Life is good in this house," Kajoli said.



With a secure house, Kajoli (second from left) can sleep well and her grandchildren have a place to study.

## What you can do

You can help Bangladeshi families improve their living conditions by taking one or more of the following actions:

### DONATE

USD \$: [habitat.org/donate/bangladesh](https://www.habitat.org/donate/bangladesh)

### TITHE

Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote **BANGLADESH** on your checks sent to: Habitat for Humanity International, Attn: Affiliate Tithe, 121 Habitat St. Americus, GA 31709

To learn more about Habitat projects in Bangladesh or in other parts of the region, please contact us.

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