

# India



## Habitat for Humanity in India

Habitat for Humanity began operations in Khammam, Andhra Pradesh state, southeastern India, in 1983. Among the largest Habitat programs in the Asia-Pacific region, Habitat India has helped more than 195,000 families gain access to decent shelter as well as rebuilt their homes and lives in the aftermath of disasters. By 2019, Habitat India plans to reach out to 500,000 low-income families with improved housing solutions, safe sanitation and clean water as well as post-disaster reconstruction.

## The housing need in India

The world's largest democracy, India has seen rapid economic growth and made progress toward achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals. Income inequality remains a challenge though the poverty rate has been declining. World Bank data showed the national poverty rate has fallen from 37 percent in 2005 to 21.9 percent in 2012. To meet the country's vision of a home for all by 2022, India will need to build an additional 20 million housing units.

## How Habitat addresses the need in India

Given the immense need for adequate housing in the country, Habitat for Humanity India engages donors, supporters and volunteers in its mission to ensure that everyone has a decent place to live. According to UNICEF India, 564 million people still defecate in the open in India. Habitat India's "Sensitise to Sanitise" campaign aims to address the problem by building sanitation units as well as promoting behavioral change. Voluntary labor for Habitat's housing and disaster response projects comes from international teams under the Global Village program and from local corporates and schools.



Actor John Abraham (center) with Sacred Heart School's students who supported Habitat India's flood response in Tamil Nadu.

## COUNTRY FACTS\*

<b>Capital</b>	New Delhi
<b>Main country facts</b>	Gained independence in 1947
<b>Population</b>	Over 1.2 billion
<b>Urbanization</b>	32.7 percent live in cities
<b>Life expectancy</b>	68.5 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	8.4 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	29.8 percent

\*Source: World Factbook

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in India**  
1983

**Individuals served in FY16**  
738,850\*

*\*Includes construction and market development*

**Volunteers engaged in FY16**  
5,156

## Housing solutions

Decent and affordable homes;  
disaster response and preparedness;  
"Sensitise to Sanitise" campaign;  
engaging with volunteers



## Decent and affordable homes

It is estimated that more than 73 million families in India do not have access to decent shelter. Habitat for Humanity India works with low-income families to build new homes and incremental housing as well as to repair and rehabilitate houses. In line with the Government of India's vision to ensure "Housing for All", Habitat India believes that every person has the right to safe and adequate shelter.

## Disaster response and preparedness

Since 1999, Habitat India has been responding to disasters ranging from cyclones to earthquakes to floods. Among the largest projects was the response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami which helped more than 13,000 families. Habitat India also implemented a community-based disaster mitigation and preparedness program which has trained more than 49,000 individuals. The response to the 2015 flooding in Tamil Nadu had the support of actress Jacqueline Fernandez who appealed for funding and led a 150-volunteer build in Chennai. To date, Habitat India has distributed about 7,000 humanitarian aid kits containing items such as tarpaulin sheet, nylon rope, water filter and a personal hygiene kit. In September 2015, a disaster insurance scheme developed by Habitat India's partner, insurance firm HDFC Ergo, was launched. The scheme offers policies to help low-income families rebuild or repair their homes after disasters. Annual premiums range from 100 to 250 Indian rupees (about US\$1.40 to US\$3.50).

## "Sensitise to Sanitise" campaign

In India, nearly half of the population or 564 million people defecate in the open, a problem that the Indian government seeks to end by October 2019 through "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" (Clean India Mission). Habitat India's "Sensitise to Sanitise" campaign, launched in November 2014, provides access to clean water and safe sanitation through building toilets in individual households, schools and communities. In addition, Habitat India runs a structured, community-driven program on behavior change communication to fight open defecation and raise awareness of the importance of sanitation and hygiene. In July 2015, Habitat India led the formation of the "Sensitise to Sanitise" coalition. Together, the 13 partner organizations have served a total of over 9.3 million individuals.

## Market development

India is a popular destination for Habitat's Global Village volunteers with teams coming from countries such as Australia, New Zealand and the United States. Local volunteers from corporations, international schools and universities also supported Women Build and the 2016 Habitat Young Leaders Build campaign.

## Meet a Habitat family

Hailing from Nagenhalli village in Bengaluru, Karnataka state, Kala has had a tough life. Her husband died after a prolonged illness while her eldest daughter passed away after suffering domestic violence. Of her remaining five children, two sons have problems of their own. Her fourth son, Rajkumar, is a contract laborer while fifth son Senthil drives a rental car. Her youngest child, Selvi, is currently studying in the ninth grade. "After my husband's death, the responsibility of providing for my family fell on me. Most of the money I earned was spent on my children's health; there were hardly any savings left," said Kala. "The little shack we used to live in was so cramped...we had to take turns to sleep. This started affecting my health and I went into depression," she added. Things looked up, however, after Kala applied to become a Habitat homeowner and moved into her Habitat home in 2013. "These four walls have not only saved us from societal embarrassment but also shielded my family, made us stronger and provided us with social security and status," Kala said.

## What you can do

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

### DONATE

USD \$: [habitat.org/donate/india](http://habitat.org/donate/india)

### VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to India or lead your own. For more information go to: [habitat.org/gv](http://habitat.org/gv)

### TITHE

Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote **INDIA** 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 India or in other parts of the region, please contact us.


### CONTACT


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Seen here with her son Loknath, Kala and her family have gained strength and dignity.

