



**Habitat**  
for Humanity®

Center for Innovation  
in Shelter and Finance



# DEVELOPING MARKETS to EXPAND AFFORDABLE HOUSING





## Introduction

Since its establishment in 1976, Habitat for Humanity International has served over 5 million people by providing better housing solutions. Habitat's focus on adequate housing is rooted in the belief that housing plays a central role in well-being. Currently, 1 in every 4 people live in conditions that harm their health, safety, prosperity and opportunities. In addition to benefiting these areas, adequate housing has been linked to increased stability and to a sense of dignity for inhabitants. Habitat is always developing new and innovative ways to expand the influence and impact of its work in housing around the world.

In 2009, Habitat established the Center for Innovation in Shelter and Finance to work toward eliminating substandard housing and homelessness around the world by supporting the design of diverse market development interventions that enhance different components of the housing value chain that can increase access to adequate housing. The center's vision is "To serve as a place of knowledge, expertise, advice and innovation, enabling low- and very-low-income families to acquire adequate housing."

The center focuses its efforts in facilitating collaboration among public-, private- and third-sector actors in the market to develop sustainable housing-related products and services for the 1.6 billion people worldwide who lack adequate housing. The center aims to take on a facilitative or consultative role, assisting in the development of private-sector-driven housing products and services to support low- and very-low-income families. In serving as a facilitator instead of a direct provider, the center can develop programs that will reach greater scale and continue to be available to

low-income households on the open market after Habitat's role is complete.

One of the key areas of the center's work is affordable housing finance. Through microfinance, families have the funds to purchase materials and complete the project in a shorter time frame, thereby reducing the risk of loss and hastening the benefits of adequate housing. The center provides assistance with product design (from market assessment to pilot plan, implementation and monitoring) and development of nonfinancial housing support services models, and advises on startup financing for these products.

The center works through a team with geographic experience and expertise in Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and Asia and the Pacific; with global coordination based in Atlanta, Georgia. The center has implemented projects commissioned by the MasterCard Foundation; The Inter-American Development Bank/Multilateral Investment Fund; Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency), or AFD; International Finance Corp., or IFC, of the World Bank; and the Swiss Capacity Building Fund, among others.

Through 2014, the center had trained more than 500 practitioners in housing microfinance product development.

It also has directly supported more than 48 financial institutions in the development of housing microfinance products by providing or assisting with market research, product design, pilot planning and implementation (including monitoring and evaluation), product review and refinement, and expansion plans.

**On the cover — at top: Habitat for Humanity's Asia/Pacific staff members provide training to clients of a partner financial institution during a pilot project in October 2013. Bottom left: Center for Innovation in Shelter and Finance staff members and consultants take part in the 2013 CISF Global Training in Uganda. Bottom center: The CISF team and members of one of its partner financial institutions visit a community in Peru as part of the product development process. Bottom right: Participants work in groups as part of a CISF-led training exercise.**

# Areas of work

As part of its work, the center offers:

## ADVISORY SERVICES:

These include housing market systems analysis, product development, housing support services modeling and design, and support of the expansion and rollout of market-based solutions, including identification of adequate capital.



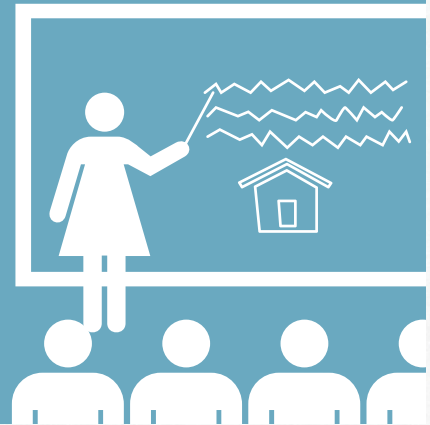
## RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT:

This includes the development of case studies, white papers and working papers to continue expanding the knowledge on affordable housing solutions.



## PEER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

These include conducting trainings and workshops and participating in conferences and forums.



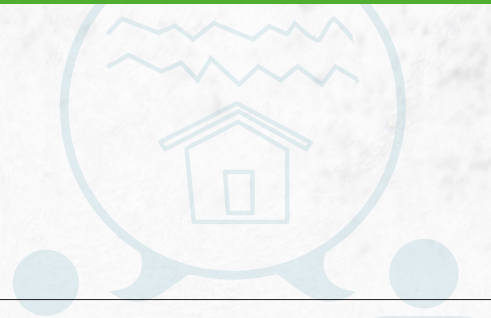
The team leading the center's work around the globe includes:

- **Sandra Prieto-Callison**, who oversees global operations.
- **Ezekiel Esipisu**, who oversees operations in Africa and the Middle East.
- **Belinda Florez**, who oversees operations in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- **Elena Milanovska**, who oversees operations in Europe and Central Asia.
- **Jennifer Oomen**, who oversees operations in Asia and the Pacific.



## Recent consulting projects: **Advisory services**

<p><b>Opportunities for the Majority: Strengthening of the Incremental Housing Construction System for BoP in Peru (2015-16)</b></p>	<p>Inter-American Development Bank’s Opportunities for the Majority, or OMJ, structured a US\$20 million loan to Financiera EDYFICAR S.A. to finance access to building materials for the “Bottom of the Pyramid.” In partnership with material suppliers (hardware stores) and labor (construction foremen), OMJ offered customers a comprehensive solution, including appropriate technical assistance to at least 20,000 families at the Bottom of the Pyramid. The center, as an expert in this field, fosters capacity development and collaboration among the key actors of this sector.</p> <p>EDYFICAR is one of the first financial institutions that received advisory services from the center to develop housing microfinance products. It went from a pilot implementation of the product, in which 504 loans were disbursed, to the disbursement of 230,595 loans as of 2014, with a total portfolio of more than \$326 million. The center continues to help EDYFICAR expand its outreach by involving other market actors.</p>	
<p><b>Citi Foundation: Growing Impact for Housing Microfinance in Latin America and Caribbean (2014-15)</b></p>	<p>The center is supporting the development of partnership models with housing market actors to provide cost-effective housing finance solutions while creating an effective portfolio of technical assistance services offered by a network of certified construction workers.</p>	
<p><b>CEMEX: Strengthening of the Incremental Housing Construction System for BoP in Mexico (2014-15)</b></p>	<p>The center is supporting CEMEX to improve Bottom of Pyramid access to housing products and services through safe and secure housing investments. As a part of the strategy, the project involves key actors in the value chain and stimulates inclusive business and training opportunities for construction workers.</p>	
<p><b>Swiss Capacity Building Facility: Building Capacity for Housing Microfinance</b></p>	<p><b>Building Capacity to expand Housing Microfinance in the Great Lakes Region in Africa (2014-17)</b></p>	<p>The center is providing technical assistance in the design and piloting of housing microfinance products to two financial institutions to increase the scalability and sustainability of the products.</p>
	<p><b>Building Capacity to Expand Housing Microfinance in Central America (2013-14)</b></p>	<p>Through this project, the center increased the capacities of two financial institutions (one in Honduras and one in El Salvador) to diversify their products through the design, piloting and rollout of housing microfinance products that include housing support services.</p>
	<p><b>Capacity Building for Housing Microfinance in Cambodia (2012-13)</b></p>	<p>The center implemented a survey and conducted a training workshop among local financial institutions to improve their capacities to add housing microfinance products to their current portfolios. The center also partnered with two top microfinance institutions, Thaneakea Phum in Cambodia, or TPC, and Hattha Kaksekar Limited, or HKL, to increase their capacities and test new models of housing support services.</p>



<p><b>Bayer Material Science: Solutions for Affordable Sustainable Housing (2013-14)</b></p>	<p>In partnership with Bayer Material Science, CISF used the Affordable Housing Market System Analysis tool to map and assess the value chain for affordable, sustainable housing solutions for low-income populations in four Asian markets: India, Philippines, Indonesia and Bangladesh. The research identified key market actors and their roles, analyzed the gaps, and provided recommendations on how to inform different actors on sustainable housing solutions. The center will use this analysis to develop and support sustainable public and private housing solutions.</p>
<p><b>The MasterCard Foundation: Building Assets, Unlocking Access (2012-17)</b></p>	<p>With support from The MasterCard Foundation, Habitat is implementing a five-year capacity building program in nine partner financial service providers in Ghana, Uganda and Kenya, to help them diversify their product offerings to include housing microfinance products with the potential for scale. Habitat is implementing this project through CISF by engaging in strategic partnerships with financial service providers that show commitment and institutional potential to deliver housing microfinance to low-income sectors at scale.</p>
<p><b>Citi-Habitat: Home Improvement Micro Savings Pilot Program in Vietnam, Philippines and Thailand (2011-14)</b></p>	<p>This program helped low-income households strengthen homes against potential disasters in areas at risk. Participants were able to open an account with as little as \$4.50, and CISF provided incentives for saving, along with financial education and technical assistance on home construction projects. The project also included a randomized control trial to study the most effective incentives for promoting savings.</p>
<p><b>Citi Foundation: Strengthening Systems for Housing Microfinance in the Dominican Republic (2010-12)</b></p>	<p>Through this project, CISF partnered with four microfinance institutions in the Dominican Republic to design and deliver housing microfinance products and services for low-income borrowers.</p>
<p><b>Inter-American Development Bank/ Multilateral Investment Fund: Strengthening the Financial Systems for Housing Microfinance in Peru and Bolivia (2009-12)</b></p>	<p>CISF identified, assessed and selected financial institutions interested in housing microfinance in Peru and Bolivia, and provided consulting services to seven financial institutions to develop housing microfinance products. These include market research, product prototype design, housing support services design, pilot implementation plans, monitoring and evaluation of the pilots, and rollout plans. The center also trained the staff of the financial institutions on the product and on the provision of technical assistance and financial education. The center collected information throughout the project and facilitated a regional conference to exchange knowledge and lessons learned.</p>
<p><b>LOK Microcredit Foundation (2010-11)</b></p>	<p>CISF provided support and guidance to the LOK Microcredit Foundation as it conducted market research to assess the potential of offering housing loans. The center and LOK worked together to develop and pilot two products in 2011: a loan for general renovations and a loan for energy efficiency renovations (both include construction technical assistance). By August 2012, LOK was serving 1,488 clients through these housing products.</p>



## Recent projects: **Research and knowledge development**

<p><b>Housing Microfinance Survey Report 2014 (coming in 2015)</b></p>	<p>This report assesses the current state, trends and challenges of housing microfinance based on the answers of 48 financial institutions located across four regions: Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, Africa and the Middle East, and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. An online survey was used to gather information from the institutions regarding their borrowers, characteristics of the housing microfinance products, performance of their housing portfolios, and prospects for the future of housing microfinance products within their institutions.</p>
<p><b>Kenya Housing Microinsurance Feasibility Study (2014-15)</b></p>	<p>Funded by the Swiss Capacity Building Facility, this study investigated factors influencing supply and demand for housing microinsurance in Kenya and will investigate preliminary concepts for housing microinsurance products.</p>
<p><b>Housing Microfinance Handbook (third edition coming in 2015)</b></p>	<p>Originally published as a tool kit in 2012, the handbook is being updated and expanded to better serve microfinance institutions. The second edition will be divided into two sections: a generalist section providing background information on housing microfinance, and a practitioner’s section providing directions and tools for the staff in charge of housing microfinance product development. New information on Housing Support Services, product development, and monitoring and evaluation will be included.</p> <p>The handbook was written by the CISF (<a href="http://habitat.org/cisf">habitat.org/cisf</a>).</p>
<p><b>Housing Microfinance Case Studies of 11 Habitat Partnerships from Around the Globe (2013)</b></p>	<p>The center evaluated 11 of its past microfinance partnerships, analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, constraints and key lessons from each. The report was published in 2013 to inform the work of housing microfinance practitioners around the world.</p>







TERESA K. WEAVER

**Anabelle Garcia holds her baby daughter, Tricano. Garcia’s family lives in a community in the Philippines being helped with housing microfinance loans that were developed by a financial institution with support from the Center for Innovation in Shelter and Finance.**

<p><b>Housing Finance Study in Sub-Saharan Africa (2013)</b></p>	<p>Funded by the Agence Française de Développement, and in consortium with ShoreBank International, CISF analyzed data on the affordable housing sectors in sub-Saharan Africa, ranked the countries based on their potential for development, and provided partners with recommendations regarding potential partnerships and high-impact intervention opportunities.</p>
<p><b>IFC Housing Microfinance Tool Kit for India (2012-13)</b></p>	<p>Designed in partnership with the International Finance Corp., the private-sector development arm of the World Bank, the tool kit was built for the Indian context and aims to guide organizations in developing and implementing housing microfinance products. At least 57 financial institutions, including Housing National Banks, were trained in the contents of the tool kit.</p>
<p><b>Transforming Access to Housing Finance in India (2009-13)</b></p>	<p>Through a USAID grant, Habitat established a Housing Microfinance Technical Assistance Center, which offers construction technical assistance to low-income housing finance clients for a fee. Habitat conducted market research, piloted approaches to housing microfinance and technical assistance, documented lessons learned, and disseminated information and learning through presentations, workshops, meetings with stakeholders and the creation of a housing microfinance tool kit. The TAC partnered with Growing Opportunity Finance, or GO, providing technical assistance to GO and housing support services to its clients. As of September 2012, GO had distributed 171 housing loans averaging \$550, and 470 clients had received technical services.</p>



## Recent training events and conferences: Peer learning

The Center for Innovation in Shelter and Finance hosts regional conferences to train its staff and partners in housing finance best practices and lessons. It also partners with other agencies to share knowledge and experience. The following are a few ways Habitat has shared knowledge on affordable housing.

SANDRA PRIETO-CALLISON



**Workshop:** The Center's Approach to Housing Microfinance Product Development

**Date:** Jan. 26-28, 2015

**Location:** Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Description:** Sandra Prieto-Callison led this training workshop, which brought together staff members and consultants from Habitat for Humanity's CISF in Europe, the Middle East and Africa to strengthen their capacity to provide housing microfinance technical assistance using the approach and tools designed and adapted by the center for housing microfinance product development.

**Regional training for Europe, the Middle East and Africa was held in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in January 2015.**



**Conference:** Annual Housing Finance Conference by Africa Union Housing Forum

**Date:** Nov. 18, 2014

**Location:** Cape Town, South Africa

**Description:** Ezekiel Esipisu, Habitat's associate director of housing finance and market development, served as a facilitator for a session titled "Increasing Access to Housing Finance: Lessons Learned Through the MicroBuild Fund and MasterCard Foundation Projects in Africa."

**Training:** Housing Finance in Sub-Saharan Africa training by Wharton Business School

**Date:** Oct. 10, 2014

**Location:** Cape Town University Graduate School, Cape Town, South Africa

**Description:** Ezekiel Esipisu, Habitat's associate director of housing finance and market development, served as a facilitator for a session titled "Housing Finance Case Studies."

**Conference:** Southern Africa Housing Finance Conference

**Date:** Sept. 29, 2014

**Location:** Cape Town, South Africa

**Description:** Ezekiel Esipisu, Habitat's associate director of housing finance and market development, facilitated a session on Habitat's approach to housing finance.

**Conference:** SEEP Conference on Opportunities for Increased Scale and Impact: Product Innovations and Partnerships

**Date:** Sept. 24, 2014

**Location:** Washington, D.C., USA

**Description:** Sandra Prieto-Callison, Habitat's director for market development and housing finance, was a speaker on "Product Innovations and Partnerships." More than 80 microfinance institution networks attended.

**Forum:** Asian Microfinance Forum

**Date:** Aug. 4-8, 2014

**Location:** Shanghai, China

**Description:** CISF consultants Jennifer Oomen and Maria Morales facilitated a training session titled "Entering into Housing Microfinance" for microfinance practitioners, investors and partners.







**Training:** Asia/Pacific Regional Training

**Date:** February 2014

**Location:** Manila, Philippines

**Description:** This training workshop, led by the CISF's Teresa Morales, brought together CISF team members from Asia and the Pacific to strengthen their capacity to provide housing microfinance technical assistance. Participants included staff members from Habitat's area and national offices and external consultants.

**Asia/Pacific Regional Training took place in Manila, Philippines, in February 2014.**

**Panel discussion:** Investment on the Frontier

**Date:** Nov. 6, 2013

**Location:** Washington, D.C., USA

**Description:** Sandra Prieto-Callison, of Habitat's CISF, was featured in this panel discussion at the 2013 SEEP Conference. The panelists explored how investment capital can be used to spark, nurture and scale new sectors. They discussed initiatives in the affordable housing, higher education and agriculture sectors and analyzed success measures, transferability, cost effectiveness and scale.



**Workshop:** Housing Microfinance Product Development  
**Date:** Nov. 4, 2013  
**Location:** Washington, D.C., USA  
**Description:** Sandra Prieto-Callison hosted a housing microfinance workshop for microfinance practitioners from around the world at the 2013 SEEP Conference. This training taught practitioners, in a systematic way, to design housing microfinance products with nonfinancial housing support services customized to fit cultural and institutional needs and capacities.

**Workshop:** The Center’s Approach to Housing Microfinance Product Development  
**Date:** Oct. 21-26, 2013  
**Location:** Kampala, Uganda  
**Description:** Sandra Prieto-Callison led this comprehensive, hands-on training workshop that brought together CISF team members from around the world. Participants included staff members from all of Habitat’s area offices, multiple national organizations and international headquarters, along with external consultants.

**Workshop:** Partnerships out of Poverty Summit  
**Date:** October 2013  
**Location:** Manila, Philippines  
**Description:** Jennifer Oomen facilitated a 90-minute session titled “Finance and Housing: Partnerships that Create Safe Living Spaces for the Poor,” which featured promising housing microfinance partnerships from Peru and India.

A CISF workshop brought together participants from around the world in October 2013.



SANDRA PRIETO-CALLISON



## Meet some of our featured consultants

Below are the profiles of just a few of the outstanding consultants who work with Habitat for Humanity's Center for Innovation in Shelter and Finance around the world.



### Asia/Pacific

**Mark van Steenwyk** is a consultant with more than 30 years of international economic development work experience, including public- and private-sector development, small and medium-sized enterprise promotion, agribusiness, affordable housing, value chain enhancement, rural institutional development, value chain finance, microfinance and development banking. He recently led the creation of a data capture framework for the SASH Market Mapping and Gap Analysis for four countries, a significant undertaking that required him to create a whole new set of data capture tools, in addition to processing and analyzing the information and training four consulting country teams within six months.



### Africa and the Middle East

**Peter Mukwana**, a consultant in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, has over 20 years of experience in microfinance and banking and is a certified service provider of market research, corporate branding, customer service, product marketing and strategic marketing. Among his many accomplishments, he has participated in curriculum development and training on microfinance best practices for ACDI/VOCA, and he has evaluated microfinance programs in nine countries.



### Europe and Central Asia

**The Microfinance Centre** is a regional microfinance resource center with 20 staff members in Europe and Central Asia. Since its founding in 1998, MFC has completed over 300 capacity-building projects and programs related to financial inclusion and asset-building. MFC has four core programs: capability building, social performance management, policy research and financial education.



### Latin America and the Caribbean

**Christy Stickney** began working in microfinance in 1993. Before working as a consultant for the CISF, she led product design and training for Opportunity International and directed Habitat's housing finance programs in Latin America. Her many contributions as a consultant include work on three project evaluations, multiple studies and articles, and proposals for funding.



Centro de Innovación  
a la Vivienda A.C.

### Latin America and the Caribbean

**The Centro de Innovación a la Vivienda A.C.** is a consulting unit of the CISF operating in Mexico. It was established in 2014 to provide consulting services and technical assistance to a variety of market actors using the methodologies, direct support and oversight of the CISF.



## Future vision

The CISF is seeking to expand its operations through a network of certified consultants who will provide institutional advisory services to private-sector actors in affordable housing products and services, including financing, thus supporting the enhancement of housing market systems in different contexts around the world.

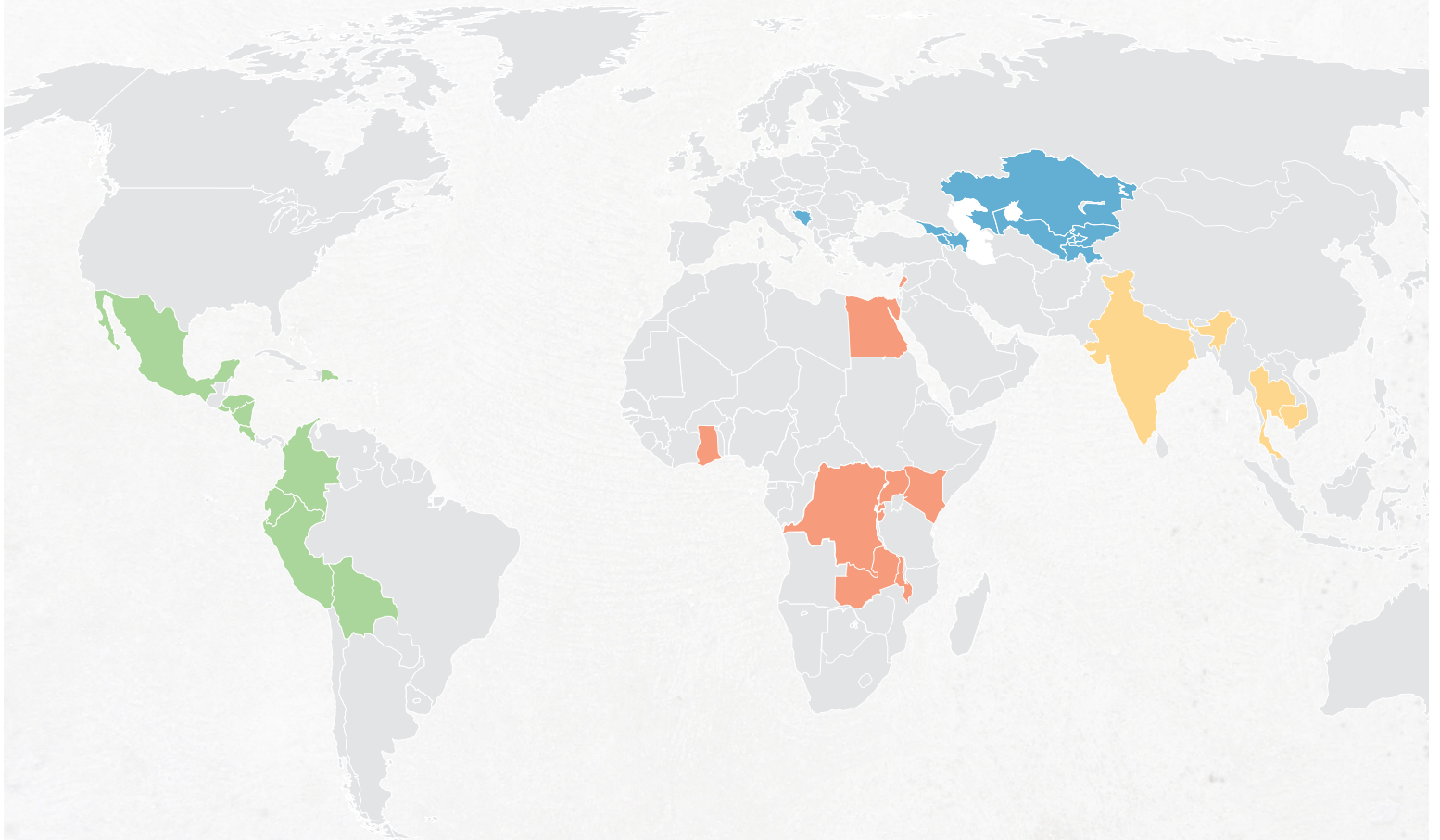
It seeks to expand its outreach beyond housing microfinance, which was the modest beginning of its consulting services. Currently, it is exploring new avenues for microinsurance products for housing; supporting the design of business models for housing-related social businesses; and embarking on new areas of practice, such as secure tenure, energy efficiency and water and sanitation.

The CISF will continue to be a key player supporting housing market development, working toward the goal of improving the housing of more than 1.6 billion people worldwide.









## Countries with active CISF programs



### Current projects

-  Africa and the Middle East
-  Asia/Pacific
-  Europe and Central Asia
-  Latin America and the Caribbean





Center for Innovation  
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For more information on the work of the Center for Innovation in Shelter and Finance, visit our website at [habitat.org/cisf](http://habitat.org/cisf) or reach us via email at [global-cisf@habitat.org](mailto:global-cisf@habitat.org).





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