

# Australia



## Habitat for Humanity in Australia

Habitat for Humanity's Australian programs are delivered through State Partners in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland. Habitat works with low-income families to achieve the dream of building and owning their own safe, secure home. In Australia, Habitat also assists disadvantaged families through its repair and maintenance program, Brush with Kindness. Internationally, Habitat Australia works in partnership with communities across the Asia-Pacific region to address housing poverty and to support integrated community development. Habitat Australia and its partners are currently working in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines and Vietnam.

## The housing need in Australia

In Australia, it is estimated there is a shortage of more than 500,000 affordable houses. About 60 percent of low-income families experience 'housing stress', that is, they spend more than 40 percent of their household disposable income on rent. Despite being a rich country, Australia has a housing affordability crisis and it is hitting poorest families the hardest. The cost of land, materials and construction has continued to rise, especially in the capital cities and major regional centers. National statistical data show that on any given night, over 100,000 people in Australia are homeless. Lack of affordable housing is a key contributor to this figure.

## How Habitat addresses the need in Australia

To date, Habitat for Humanity has built over 220 homes with low-income families in Australia. Habitat's work is made possible through the donation of money, construction materials and land, and the contribution of volunteer labor. Partner families contribute 500 hours of their own time in the planning and construction phases. This is called 'sweat equity' and is recognized in the 5 percent discount on market value that we return to them. In Australia, we also help disadvantaged families through Brush with Kindness. The program mobilizes teams of volunteers to carry out landscaping and minor repairs to the exterior of homes of people who may be disadvantaged, disabled or socially isolated. Brush with Kindness also serves as a vehicle for engaging corporate volunteers, in locations close to metropolitan areas.



Corporate volunteers taking part in the Brush with Kindness program.

## COUNTRY FACTS

<b>Capital</b>	Canberra
<b>Main country facts</b>	Gained independence in 1901
<b>Population</b>	Over 23.2 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	86 percent live in cities
<b>Life expectancy</b>	82.3 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	5.6 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	NA

Source: World Factbook

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Australia**  
1998

**Individuals served in FY17**  
265

**Volunteers engaged in FY17**  
1,546

**Housing solutions**  
New home constructions; disaster response; Brush with Kindness; Global Village volunteer teams



## New home constructions

Habitat for Humanity Australia enables low-income families to achieve their dream of home ownership by building safe, secure homes. Families partner with Habitat in the construction of their home. Habitat Australia currently constructs about 10 homes a year.

## Brush with Kindness

Habitat for Humanity Australia runs Brush with Kindness activities across New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland and Victoria states. It is a program designed to respond to the shelter needs of vulnerable members of our community including young people recovering from drugs and alcohol abuse, women escaping domestic violence, and newly arrived refugees. It is a “backyard blitz” style activity where teams of between 10 and 15 persons can get out of the office and get their hands dirty. Habitat currently mobilizes approximately 400 volunteers per year through the Brush with Kindness program.

## Developing holistic communities

Habitat Australia’s international program is designed to address multi-dimensional aspects of poverty and recognises the key role adequate housing plays in sustainable development. The program is targeted at both community and sectoral levels and works to address needs at multiple stages on the housing value chain. It includes projects focused on water, sanitation and hygiene, disaster risk reduction, urban development, market development and land tenure. Together with its partners, Habitat Australia projects in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Myanmar, Nepal and Vietnam.

## Meet a Habitat family

Meet John and Johanna – the 58th family to receive a Habitat for Humanity home in Victoria. The couple is among 10 families who have moved into the Yea Heights Estate as part of Habitat Victoria’s major affordable housing project. When John and Johanna moved back to Australia after caring for John’s terminally ill father in New York, they didn’t arrive back to what they had expected. Due to certain circumstances, they had to live in a small bedroom next to a noisy park that affected Johanna who suffers from a congenital heart condition. She needs more sleep than an average person but her living environment made things difficult. Since moving into their new Habitat home in April 2018, Johanna’s health has improved and John has found meaningful work. “I already see a change in Johanna – a vibrancy and vitality from getting far better rest in a clean and beautiful environment,” said John.



John says his wife Johanna’s health has improved after moving into a Habitat home.

## What you can do

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

### DONATE

In Australia: [habitat.org.au/donate](https://habitat.org.au/donate)

In the U.S.\*: [habitat.org/donate/](https://habitat.org/donate/)

*\* You can designate your donation to Habitat Australia or a specific cause by clicking the designation option.*

### VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to one of the Habitat projects around the world or lead your own. For more information, please contact [global.village@habitat.org.au](mailto:global.village@habitat.org.au)

To learn more about Habitat projects in Australia, please contact us.

### CONTACT

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