

Cambodia



Habitat for Humanity in Cambodia

While poverty has decreased significantly, many Cambodian families are hovering just above the poverty line of US\$1.25 a day. Nearly three-quarters of the population still live on less than US\$3 a day, based on the World Bank's data. Poverty is largely concentrated in rural areas though urban poverty is on the rise. Habitat for Humanity Cambodia seeks to break the cycle of poverty through safe, durable, affordable housing solutions. Since 2003, Habitat Cambodia has enabled over 22,000 families to build strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter.

The housing need in Cambodia

Based on a 2013 official population survey, it is estimated that at least 10 million Cambodians are in need of decent housing. Throughout the country, about 2 million houses require critical improvement to meet minimum quality standards. Under the Cambodia National Housing Policy, an additional 1.1 million houses will be needed by 2030 as a result of a population increase and rural-urban migration. Out of the two million residents in the capital Phnom Penh, about 25,000 people are living in over 340 slum communities that lack access to basic services and secure tenure. Often the most vulnerable have to deal with corruption and suffer forced evictions due to a lack of secure land tenure.

How Habitat addresses the need in Cambodia

Habitat for Humanity Cambodia works with a diverse group of international and local non-governmental organizations, microfinance institutions, corporate partners, and local and national authorities. Its holistic approach to housing includes:

- Unique knowledge as well as valuable data and research on the housing sector for the poorest segments of the population and low income families;
- Technical expertise in the provision of housing solutions for the most vulnerable individuals including safe and affordable house designs as well as water and sanitation interventions;
- An innovative approach combining market development and experience in housing finance and housing support services; advocacy for secure land tenure; and pro-poor housing solutions in collaboration with other NGOs and community-based organizations.



Families celebrating house dedication at the end of the Legacy Build in Oudong, Kandal province, in November 2018.

COUNTRY FACTS

Capital	Phnom Penh
Main country facts	Gained independence in 1953
Population	Over 16 million
Urbanization	21.2 percent live in cities
Life expectancy	69 years
Unemployment rate	1.6 percent
Population living below poverty line	17.7 percent

Source: World Factbook

HABITAT FACTS

When Habitat started in Cambodia
2003

Individuals served in FY18
115,315*

**Includes construction and market development*

Other interventions
22,908*

**Individuals involved in training*

Volunteers engaged in FY18
4,225

Housing solutions

Safe, affordable, quality housing including water and sanitation facilities; market development; secure land tenure; disaster risk reduction and response; advocacy; volunteer engagement



Housing for the most vulnerable groups

In Cambodia, 2.8 million people or 17.7 percent of the population still live in extreme poverty without any social safety net. For the past 15 years, Habitat Cambodia has been working in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Battambang to provide holistic housing solutions and help secure land tenure for the homeless, informal settlers, those affected by HIV/AIDS, people living with disabilities, older persons, street children, and orphans. A community-led total sanitation program in Siem Reap, implemented over six years ago, saw water and sanitation facilities being built along with the promotion of behavioral change. In Battambang, Habitat Cambodia works with the local and provincial government to secure land tenure for informal settlers living on state land. After each family has received a land certificate, Habitat Cambodia assists with new home construction and infrastructure projects such as roads and drainage systems.

Advocacy and volunteer engagement

The National Housing Policy was enacted by the Cambodian government in 2014 but it has yet to reach low- and middle-income families. Under Habitat's Solid Ground campaign, Habitat Cambodia is advocating for the effective implementation of the National Housing Policy to facilitate access to improved housing for the growing number of urban residents. Habitat Cambodia also rallies volunteers to raise awareness. International volunteers contribute on Global Village builds while local volunteers have been supporting the annual Habitat Young Leaders Build campaign in advocacy, fundraising and construction since 2012.

Disaster risk reduction and response

Through collaborating with government agencies, Habitat Cambodia aims to promote disaster-resilient house construction among local communities and the building sector. The community-led Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness trains families to better prepare for disasters. Habitat Cambodia also responds to disasters through the distribution of emergency shelter kits and reconstruction through the "Build Back Better" approach.

Market development

Since 2012, 60,699 families have gained access to housing finance loans through Habitat Cambodia's partnerships with major MFIs such as Kredit, LOLC (Cambodia) plc., First Finance, Sovannaphoum, and Hattha Kaksekar Limited. Since 2014, Habitat Cambodia's MFI partners are also provided with grants that were initially funded through the Swiss Capacity Development Fund to build their capacity and develop their products.

Meet a Habitat family

After Sophorn's wife died, he was left to bring up their baby daughter on his own. His family was living in a house with corrugated metallic sheets for the roof and wooden planks and tarpaulin sheets for its walls. Sophorn worked hard as a tuk-tuk driver for the sake of his daughter Sophornpanha, now 6. In September 2016, he and his family moved into their Habitat home in Chamka Kouy village, Ang Snoul district, Kandal province. "I remembered how happy my family was. My family kept smiling because of this wonderful and unexpected present." Sophorn's mother Sochen, who had been sickly, saw her health improved. She says: "I do not feel unhealthy, maybe it's because I have fresher air to breathe in and I do not worry a lot anymore!" Sophorn was also able to increase his monthly income to US\$380. With his parents working as a security guard and poultry farmer respectively, his family feels more stable.



(From left) Sophorn, his mother Sochen, daughter Sophornpanha and his father Sophy outside their Habitat home.

What you can do

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

DONATE

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

VOLUNTEER

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

TITHE

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

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