

# Japan



## Habitat for Humanity in Japan

Habitat for Humanity International opened an office in Japan in 2001 to handle the increasing number of Global Village volunteers from Japan and to provide guidance to several campus chapters that had been formed. In November 2003, Habitat for Humanity Japan was officially registered as a non-profit organization. Habitat Japan has continually mobilized volunteers under the Global Village program. In the financial year ended June 30, 2018, a record number of 1,430 GV volunteers from Japan were sent on various Habitat builds including the first team to Africa. With the launch of the Project HomeWorks program in Japan in April 2017, Habitat's volunteers help to improve the living conditions of older people and people with disabilities.

## The housing need in Japan

In Japan's rapidly aging society, more people over the age of 65 are now living on their own. Many live in rental homes and tend to be isolated in the community, having little or no communication with neighbors. Some need help with organizing their living space, cleaning and other daily chores due to their frailty. Another vulnerable group of people living alone are those with disabilities. They may have to leave their low-cost rental apartments if the living conditions worsen or become unsanitary. It is difficult for such vulnerable groups to find another affordable home due to limited availability and the reluctance of landlords to accept their applications. They will feel less isolated when they receive regular visits and assistance with sprucing up their living environment.

## How Habitat addresses the need in Japan

Through Project HomeWorks, Habitat Japan partners with local volunteers to improve the living conditions of vulnerable groups, particularly older people and persons with disabilities. Volunteers help to clean their homes and make simple repairs. Habitat Japan also offers counsel and support to vulnerable households who are looking for affordable homes.



Volunteers clean up homes under Habitat Japan's Project HomeWorks.

## COUNTRY FACTS

<b>Capital</b>	Tokyo
<b>Main country facts</b>	Almost four-fifths of Japan is covered with mountains
<b>Population</b>	Over 126.7 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	92 percent live in cities
<b>Life expectancy</b>	84 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	2.4 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	NA

Source: World Bank

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Japan**  
2003

**Volunteers engaged in FY18**  
4,221

**Housing solutions**  
Global Village volunteer builds; Project HomeWorks; disaster response; youth engagement



## Disaster response

When a major disaster strikes, Habitat Japan appeals for funding to support post-disaster reconstruction efforts. In the event of a domestic disaster, not only are funds raised but volunteers including youths from campus chapters are mobilized to respond to needs such as clearing debris and disseminating information on the revitalization of homes. Habitat Japan took on its first major disaster response project after the devastating earthquake and tsunami hit the Tohoku region, northeastern Japan, in March 2011. Habitat also responded to the Kumamoto earthquake in April 2016.

## Project HomeWorks

Project HomeWorks was launched in April 2017 in order to respond to housing and social issues in Japan. Through cleaning and minor repairs, volunteers help improve the living conditions of older people and people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. To date, more than 530 volunteers are estimated to have helped 57 households spruce up their homes.

## International volunteer builds

Teams of volunteers from Japan are regularly sent on Habitat's Global Village trips to build homes in the Asia-Pacific region and other parts of the world. As of end-May 2019, a record 86 Global Village teams or 1,474 volunteers have been mobilized. The increase is due to strong youth engagement with the greater number of campus chapters in Japan.

## Youth engagement

Habitat Japan reaches out to a total of 2,700 young people through 44 campus chapters. Students advocate and raise funds as well as volunteer with Habitat locally and overseas. Campus chapter members are also strong supporters of the Habitat Young Leaders Build campaign that rallies young people to volunteer, fundraise and speak out for the need for decent homes.

## Meet a Habitat family

Hayasaka, a 90-year-old former teacher, has been living alone in public housing for more than 30 years. Due to her hearing problem, backaches and knee pain, she found it increasingly difficult to maintain her home.

After she sought help from Habitat Japan, a corporate volunteer team was mobilized in June 2018 to lend support. The four volunteers helped to remove mold from her bathroom, clean up her home and organize the cluttered living space. Before discarding things that could no longer be used, the volunteers checked with her regarding each item. After the clean-ups are done, Habitat Japan keeps in touch by checking in on the individuals and ensuring that safe, healthy living conditions are maintained.



## 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 Japan: [habitatjp.org/en/support/donatemoney](https://habitatjp.org/en/support/donatemoney)

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

\* You can designate your donation to Habitat Japan 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 go to: [habitatjp.org/en/join/gv](https://habitatjp.org/en/join/gv)

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

### CONTACT

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