

# Singapore



## Habitat for Humanity in Singapore

Habitat for Humanity Singapore began operations in response to the urgent reconstruction needs following the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004. Since its inception, Habitat Singapore has continually mobilized volunteers under the Global Village program for building projects and disaster response efforts in countries such as Indonesia, China and India. In Singapore, the Project HomeWorks program seeks to improve the living conditions of a growing number of vulnerable elderly people across the island. To date, more than 23,000 volunteers have worked on over 1,200 builds in the Asia-Pacific region and almost 2,000 local home improvement projects. Habitat Singapore is also involved in fundraising and advocacy initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region and other parts of the world.

## The housing need in Singapore

Before the Singapore government established the Housing & Development Board as the country's public housing authority in 1960, only 9 percent of the population was living in low-cost public housing. Today, more than 80 percent of Singapore's population lives in high quality HDB flats and approximately 90 percent of these residents own their flats. In 2012, the Singapore government announced that there were over 35,000 vulnerable elderly living alone. This number is likely to increase to 61,000 by 2020 and 83,000 by 2030. Living conditions for these elderly people, who typically reside in one-room flats, are poor and are unable to care for themselves.

## How Habitat addresses the need in Singapore

The Project HomeWorks program was conceived to improve the living conditions of the elderly, the sick and the disabled living in one-room flats all over the island. Volunteers are mobilized to clean up homes, make minor repairs and ensure facilities meet safety standards. Since 2006, more than 10,000 volunteers have participated in almost 2,000 home improvement sessions. In addition, Habitat Singapore raises awareness of the need to eliminate substandard housing through high-profile events such as Home Sweep Home.

Habitat Singapore has partnered with several corporations, charitable foundations and non-governmental organizations. Singapore-based celebrities such as Paul Foster, Eunice Olsen, Corrinne May and Anita Kapoor lend their support as Habitat Singapore's ambassadors. Members of campus chapters, a few of which have been established in local tertiary institutions, also volunteer, raise funds and advocate for Habitat.



Volunteers at the inaugural Home Sweep Home in 2017.

## COUNTRY FACTS

<b>Capital</b>	Singapore
<b>Main country facts</b>	Gained independence in 1965
<b>Population</b>	Over 5.88 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	100 percent live in cities
<b>Life expectancy</b>	85.2 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	2.2 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	NA

Source: World Factbook

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Singapore**  
2004

**Individuals served in FY17**  
1,805

**Volunteers engaged in FY17**  
1,760

### Housing solutions

Global Village volunteer builds; Project HomeWorks; Home Sweep Home; UnLitter Red Dot



## International volunteer builds

Teams of volunteers from Singapore are regularly sent on Habitat's Global Village trips to build homes in the Asia-Pacific region and other parts of the world. To date, Habitat Singapore has mobilized more than 13,000 volunteers who took part in more than 1,200 building projects. Popular destinations include Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam. Due to its close proximity, Habitat Singapore has embarked on sustained developmental projects in Indonesia's Batam island.

## Project HomeWorks

The Project HomeWorks program was launched in 2006 in order to improve the living conditions of elderly people residing in one-room flats across the island. Volunteers dedicate their weekends to cleaning, refurbishing and making minor repairs to these homes as well as befriending the elderly. Since 2006, close to 2,000 HomeWorks sessions have been conducted.

## Meet a Habitat family

For decades, Loh, a 62-year-old bachelor, has taken on odd jobs to make ends meet. He lives alone in a rental apartment in central Singapore. Due to his weak legs, and a cluttered home, he had fallen at home several times and he was even hospitalized on some occasions.

After learning of his situation through a social worker, Habitat Singapore mobilized volunteers to clean up Loh's home over several sessions under its Project HomeWorks program. Unlike many households that partnered with Habitat Singapore, Loh did not find it difficult to part with the things that he had accumulated over the years. Thanks to his cooperation and determination, Habitat's volunteers were able to clean and spruce up his home in four hours.



Loh (center) with volunteers from Habitat Singapore's campus chapter at Singapore Management University. Photo: Habitat for Humanity Singapore/Laura Philomin.

## Home Sweep Home

Home Sweep Home is an annual large-scale event that combines Habitat Singapore's home-cleaning and communal litter-picking projects on a single day across several neighborhoods in the country. Launched in 2017, the event attracted an average of 1,000 volunteers. Corporate donors have contributed about S\$300,000 to the program that also received widespread coverage in local media. In 2018, the event has expanded to cover six instead of three neighborhoods in the previous year.

## UnLitter Red Dot

Everyone has a role to play in creating clean communities where everyone has a decent place to live. Through UnLitter Red Dot – "Little Red Dot" is a common nickname for the island state – Habitat Singapore aims to create a society that is caring, civic-minded and considerate. After picking up trash, student volunteers shared their experiences and lessons learned in conversations that promote caring about the living space beyond the confines of their own homes.

## 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

[habitat.give.asia](http://habitat.give.asia)

### 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 contact [gv@habitat.org.sg](mailto:gv@habitat.org.sg)

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

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