

# Lesotho

## Habitat for Humanity in Lesotho

Habitat for Humanity Lesotho seeks to empower and transform communities in Lesotho by providing decent, clean and affordable shelter to Basotho families. Our program falls under the Vulnerable Group Housing (VGH) program as we work with disadvantaged groups in society to access decent housing solutions. For the past eight years, since 2007, we have worked with and for families with Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) as our key beneficiaries.

## The housing need in Lesotho

Lesotho has the second highest HIV/AIDS adult prevalence in the world with just under one in four people living with HIV. As a result of the pandemic, of all the countries with HIV prevalence greater than one percent, Lesotho has the largest percentage of children who have lost one or both parents. For 68% of all OVC, HIV&AIDS is the major factor causing orphanhood and vulnerability. As a result, many of these children live in places that are either indecent, unhygienic or in overcrowded spaces after the loss of their parents. Further, about 68 percent of Lesotho's population lives in households defined as poor with unhealthy conditions ranging from overcrowded homes, unsanitary conditions, and exposed elements. Many orphaned Basotho children lack a safe place to call home. Land ownership issues in Lesotho have also contributed to the woes faced by OVCs in the country. Many of them have been victims of property/land grabbing leaving them in desperate need of shelter.

## How Habitat addresses the need in Lesotho

Habitat Lesotho's VGH program works with OVCs and their families to address their needs for decent and clean shelter. The program aims to provide long term and sustainable solutions to its beneficiaries by enabling holistic support to selected families. The program ensures that beneficiaries receive support needed to better their lives and eventually work their way out of absolute poverty.

## COUNTRY FACTS\*

<b>Capital</b>	Maseru
<b>Main country facts</b>	Kingdom of Lesotho gained independence in 1966
<b>Population</b>	1.9 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	27.3 percent
<b>Life expectancy</b>	52.9 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	28.1 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	49 percent

\*Sources: CIA World Factbook, World Bank, UN

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Lesotho**  
2001

**Families served**  
More than 1,000

**Volunteers hosted**  
More than 200

**Housing solutions**  
Construction of new homes  
Water and sanitation  
Training on health and hygiene, house maintenance and secure tenure  
Advocacy for changes in policy and systems for shelter



## Vulnerable groups housing program

Under this program, Habitat Lesotho constructs simple, yet durable two-room houses with concrete blocks and corrugated iron sheets roofs. A ventilated pit latrine is constructed to improve sanitation. Additionally, Habitat Lesotho advocates for security of tenure and initiates ownership processes for OVC households to ensure they legally own the land before Habitat Lesotho builds a house for them. Local authorities, including the land administration authority, local councils and chiefs working with Habitat Lesotho are instrumental in assisting OVC households to legally own land where Habitat Lesotho builds.

Since Habitat Lesotho's program goal is to transform communities, beneficiary families and their communities are further empowered through various trainings. Trainings on health and hygiene, home maintenance and inheritance rights are provided to all beneficiary families served through VGH projects and, in many cases, to community members who may not have been direct beneficiaries of the house. House maintenance trainings ensure that the houses provide long-term shelter for the families. The knowledge gained through the inheritance rights training has seen an increased number of wills registered in various Habitat Lesotho projects. It also safeguards

the OVC family interests, leading to reduced cases of property grabbing in the unfortunate event of death of the OVC caregivers.

In all interventions, Habitat Lesotho works in close collaboration with the Government of Lesotho, development partners and NGOs as well as local organizations to address needs of OVC families that often extend beyond the need for decent shelter. This way, an all-round approach to addressing the needs is adopted while ensuring community ownership of projects is prioritized.

### Meet a Habitat family

Chabeli Sefefo is a 10-year old orphaned boy from Mangaung village in the mountainous district of Mokhotlong. He lives with his 46-year-old aunt Mary Sefefo and his two cousins, Sebongile Sefefo (9), and Keketso Sefefo (5). Before meeting Habitat for Humanity Lesotho, young Chabeli and his family lived in a one-room house made of stone walls and mud, with a leaking thatch roof. During the cold, and often snowy winters, their house would get so cold that it felt like they were sleeping outside. The family did not have proper toilet, and had to resort to the bush. This placed the children's lives in danger of having to go far outside at night.

After moving into their new home, it's clearly visible by Chabeli's smile and ease in character that life has taken a wonderful new turn. There's a sense of stability and the warmth of coming to a new home. When asked what he wants to become in the future, Chabeli smiles and says: *"I want become a policeman because I want to protect my family and the community of Mokhotlong"*.

### What you can do

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

#### DONATE

Go to [habitat.org/donate](https://www.habitat.org/donate) and designate your gift to Habitat Lesotho.

#### VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Lesotho 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 **863400, LESOTHO** 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 Lesotho, please contact us.

#### CONTACT

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