

# habitat<sup>®</sup>

THE MAGAZINE OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

DECEMBER 2022  
habitat.org

A photograph of a family of four standing in front of a stone wall. On the left, a woman wears a white headscarf with a green and white decorative element on top and a blue dress. In the center, a young boy in a grey vest over a dark shirt smiles. In the foreground, a young girl in a dark blue puffer jacket smiles. On the right, a woman in a grey jacket over a pink shirt smiles. The background is a rough stone wall with a doorway behind them.

health  
security  
hope

# Working together for greater impact



I continue to be inspired when I see people rally together to help their neighbors improve their living conditions.

Since the beginning, one of the great strengths of Habitat for Humanity has been the ability to bring people together. Supporters around the globe are bound by the desire to create a better world. By pouring our collective energy into creating housing opportunities that are affordable, we can ensure that more people will lead healthier, more secure lives.

I continue to be inspired when I see people rally together to help their neighbors improve their living conditions. You'll see wonderful examples in these pages.

Three years ago, hundreds of us worked to lay the foundation for a Nashville community. Today, the neighborhood is flourishing with families thriving in the comfort, safety and security of affordable homeownership.

Through partnership, a Colorado mountain town is helping schoolteachers and county workers become homeowners with affordable mortgages so that they can stay rooted in the community they serve.

In Côte d'Ivoire, families build houses with locally sourced, ecological bricks designed to withstand intense weather and erosion.

From Bolivia to Fiji, with our help, residents and organizations in countries around the world are creating access to clean water and adequate sanitation in their communities.

How does all of this — and so much more — happen? Through the support of people like you who make the difference. As we look back on 2022, we will celebrate the progress we have made and give thanks for another year of building homes, communities and hope. But we know there is more to do.

I thank each of you who has contributed, volunteered, advocated and raised awareness. I thank you for your prayers and support. And I give thanks to God every day for everyone who shares our vision and takes action to bring about positive change. Together, we can create that world where everyone knows the joy, peace and stability of a decent place to call home.

**Jonathan T.M. Reckford**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Habitat for Humanity International

## HABITAT'S VISION

A world where everyone has a decent place to live

Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat for Humanity began in 1976 as a grassroots effort on a community farm in southern Georgia. The Christian housing organization has since grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in local communities across all 50 states in the U.S. and in more than 70 countries.

Families and individuals in need of a hand up partner with Habitat to build or improve a place they can call home. Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage.

Through financial support, volunteering or adding a voice to support affordable housing, everyone can help families achieve the strength, stability and self-reliance they need to build better lives for themselves.

Through shelter, we empower. To learn more, visit [habitat.org](https://www.habitat.org).

## LET US HEAR FROM YOU

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**Habitat for Humanity®**



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An engineer at PCS Industries supervises as a machine funnels manufactured sand at his company's plant in Tamil Nadu, India.

Decades of overmining river sand has devastated aquatic ecosystems and drained the country of the resource used to produce concrete. Manufactured sand, or M-sand, is a sustainable alternative and a cost-effective building material.

M-sand is created by crushing rocks, quarry stones or larger aggregate pieces into sand-sized particles. The result is a high-quality, eco-friendly sand that can be used to build strong, secure homes constructed with concrete. Habitat for Humanity's Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter partners with government organizations and local enterprises like PCS to invest in, scale up and mainstream M-sand, helping India's rapidly growing population connect to affordable housing solutions.

CAMBODIA

## Grace leads to new growth

Seap harvests vibrant green bok choy flourishing in her garden next to the home she helped build with Habitat for Humanity Cambodia. Seap's stilt house protects her family from heavy rains and storms, and an affordable place to call home also has enabled them to invest in their land where they now grow vegetables and raise chickens.

Since Habitat Cambodia's Grace Project began in May 2017, more than 1,470 families like Seap's have built or improved the places they call home. The Singapore-funded project takes a people-first approach to holistically partnering with residents living in informal settlements, older adults, widows and people with disabilities.



In fiscal year 2022, Habitat Jordan rehabilitated more than 100 homes east of Amman, helping refugees and vulnerable local families, raising awareness about shelter and energy savings, and making referrals to specialized support for education, income generation and psychosocial support. Additionally, Habitat Jordan completed six communal projects through which community-based organizations are working to host refugees and local visitors and specifically meet the needs of women, children, people with disabilities and orphans.



ZAMBIA

## Residents identify improvements to fight flooding

In Makululu — the second largest informal settlement in sub-Saharan Africa — homes are especially vulnerable to the effects of flooding during the rainy season, sometimes catastrophically. The intensity of the floods is only expected to increase as climate change worsens, threatening the safety and security of families living there.

In response, Habitat Zambia has trained residents and community leaders using the Participatory Approach to Safe Shelter Awareness, a method of disaster risk reduction



### Use your voice

Visit [habitat.org/costofhome](https://www.habitat.org/costofhome) to learn how you can advocate for affordable housing solutions.

# 3.8 million

**The United States is 3.8 million homes short of meeting housing needs, double the number from 2012, according to Up for Growth's Housing Underproduction 2022 report. From 2012 to 2019, the timeframe analyzed, 230 metropolitan areas saw their housing deficit become more severe, and the nation's housing affordability crisis has only become more widespread, impacting residents in nearly every state.**

that helps community groups reduce shelter-related risks by raising awareness and developing skills. PASSA training helps residents assess priority needs and create an action plan to increase shelter safety within their community.

Working together, groups in Makululu identified the inadequate drainage system and sometimes blocked drains as major factors contributing to the community's high incidence of flooding. They then drew community maps prioritizing the most problematic zones and engaged additional community members to take collective action ahead of the rainy season. In May 2022, Habitat Zambia provided wheelbarrows, shovels, spades and industrial gloves to help the Makululu community build stronger drainage systems.

### FIND OUT MORE AT HABITAT.ORG

Best-in-class Habitat house designs from across the United States. Concrete floors helping families across Latin America and the Caribbean improve their health. Habitat's ShelterTech advancing startups with entrepreneurial housing solutions in sub-Saharan Africa. Every day, we work to change lives. We partner, we problem solve, and – with your help – we produce tangible results. Find innovation and inspiration from communities around the world at [habitat.org/stories/](https://www.habitat.org/stories/)!





DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

## Financial access results in incremental improvements

Watching her grandchildren play inside her home brings Marcia immeasurable joy. But when it rained, the wet furniture and muddy dirt floors in Marcia's old wooden house would make the place uncomfortable and unsafe.

The 60-year-old always dreamed of having a home where her grandchildren could play freely, but she lacked the financing to make home repairs and improvements. It was when she learned of Habitat Dominican Republic that she found renewed hope. By partnering with Habitat to finance incremental updates to her house, Marcia has borrowed and repaid six repair loans with Habitat.

Her most recent home improvement project included familiar faces who were eager to contribute for a festive occasion.

Several famous Dominican television and radio personalities—including Miralba Ruiz, Jatnna Tavárez, Bárbara Plaza and Paloma Rodríguez—joined Marcia to install a concrete floor in her home as part of Habitat Dominican Republic's first Women Build.

Not only will this new floor make her family more comfortable, it will also be crucial to keeping her grandchildren safe. Research shows that dirt floors in home can harbor parasites, bacteria and insects that often lead to disease and impact cognitive development among children.

Marcia is thrilled with her new floor. "My son and daughter will be more comfortable, and my grandchildren will be able to play on the floor when they visit my house," she says.



Since the powerful cyclone that struck Indonesia's East Nusa Tenggara province in April 2021, Habitat Indonesia has helped 105 families rebuild or repair their homes and has trained more than 570 people in safe building techniques, community-based disaster risk management and waste management to ensure communities are better prepared for future disasters.



CÔTE D'IVOIRE

## Building to last with ecological bricks

Amenan and her three children can finally sleep through the night, a relief for the mother who used to spend restless nights in fear that her aging house would collapse on the family during rainy season. But her new Habitat home is built with stabilizing bricks that fortify her home and protect her family.

Amenan is one of several families in the village of Dida N'Glossou to partner with Habitat Côte d'Ivoire to use strong ecological bricks that can withstand intense weather conditions and stave off erosion. The bricks, sourced through local and sustainable materials, are also cost effective.

"The house we had before was small and in bad condition, mostly because it was built with non-durable materials, which made things complicated because I had no money to repair it," Amenan says. Her home rebuild is part of a Habitat Côte d'Ivoire program that partners with low-income families to improve their quality of life through holistic programming. As part of the program, Amenan and her neighbors now have access to improved sanitation, including potable water and well-lit latrines. They also will receive training on income-generating activities including pig rearing and market gardening.

"My family's life has changed," Amenan says. "I am especially happy for my children."



# This year give the gift of hope



In this season of giving, consider making a gift with long-lasting impact for families in need of safe and affordable housing.

**By donating your required minimum distribution, also known as a qualified charitable distribution, to Habitat for Humanity, you can:**

- Minimize your tax liability on IRA withdrawals.
- Increase your charitable giving and impact without increasing your income or income tax liability.
- Expand access to affordable housing and help families who are building strength and stability through shelter.

Contact our planned giving professionals today at **(833) 434-4438** to discuss donating your required minimum distribution and other simple ways to give.

MALAWI

## Freeing financial resources for family well-being

For many families around the world like Mary's, spending money and resources on critical home repairs and improvements collides with other important needs like food and health care.

"We used to spend a lot of time searching for grasses to thatch our house in preparation for rainy season," Mary says. "We often slept hungry as most of our financial resources were spent on repairing the house, but not anymore."

Mary partnered with Habitat Malawi to build a new home in Nanyongo for her four children, moving them from an overcrowded house to an affordable space that brings them security and peace of mind. "This house has eased life for all of us," she says.



UNITED STATES

## Service members build technical skills and houses



A partnership between Fort Riley's Home Builders Institute and Manhattan Area Habitat is enabling U.S. Army soldiers transitioning into the civilian workforce after their service to practice the technical skills they learn in HBI's classroom with hands-on experience at a Habitat build site.

Through Habitat and HBI, a career skills program at Fort Riley, service members learn how to construct, wire and plumb homes from start to finish. Josh Brewer, Manhattan Area Habitat's executive director, says the partnership presents a win-win. The soldiers receive on-the-job training and gain exposure to construction organizations that may retain their talent while providing Habitat with much-needed labor.

For years, Habitat affiliates across the U.S. have partnered with nearby military bases and HBI for construction training. The work of a few trailblazing affiliates — Fayetteville Area Habitat; Fort Hood Area Habitat; Habitat South Hampton Roads; Habitat Montgomery County, Tennessee; and Habitat Pennyryle Region — has paved the way for Manhattan Area Habitat's partnership with HBI.

To date, approximately 140 service members have helped build Habitat Manhattan Area homes through this partnership.



# 96,000

New affordable homes needing to be built every day to house the estimated 3 billion people who will need access to adequate housing by 2030, according to UN-Habitat



Photo by Abisek Bista

## INNOVATING IN ASIA-PACIFIC

Bamboo is a popular building material for low-income families in Asia, but traditional building methods lack the structural integrity to withstand hard weather conditions or disasters.

Habitat and the Hilti Foundation are using cement bamboo frame technology – developed by Base Bahay

Foundation, an organization founded by Hilti Foundation – to build homes in the Philippines and Nepal. The homes are constructed with specially treated bamboo and cement plaster that makes them disaster-resilient and sustainable; they experience 70% fewer carbon emissions compared to homes using conventional construction systems.

# New home brings hope



Almaz marvels at the residence she and her three children now call home. The family moved into their spacious, clean and safe house in Addis Ababa’s Lideta district in 2021 after partnering with Habitat for Humanity Ethiopia. “Now I can raise my children with hope,” Almaz says.

Hope was fleeting before the family upgraded their housing. They were among the 3 million of Addis Ababa’s 5 million residents who live in slums or informal settlements and lack access to adequate housing, safe water and proper sanitation. Almaz and her children lived in a makeshift structure that was covered with plastic iron sheets, leaving them without privacy and vulnerable to extreme weather conditions during Ethiopia’s dry and rainy seasons.

Almaz’s three children — 17-year-old Habtamu, 14-year-old Tigist and 11-year-old Kidist — used to worry about their safety at night. Now they share their mother’s excitement in their new home. The lockable doors protect

the family, and the fortified roof and walls prevent leaks and flooding.

“In our old house, my books got wet when it rained and I couldn’t study,” says Kidist. “In the new house, I have clean space to do my homework and study for exams. Now I can be successful in my education.”

Almaz and her children are among many families who built homes through a Habitat Ethiopia partnership with city- and district-level governments across three years to improve the quality of life of 7,400 households — 52% of which were female-headed, like Almaz’s.

“Habitat’s work fills the huge gap and has helped to solve complex problems related to lack of housing, water and toilets,” says local government official Birtukan Bahru.

Almaz provides for her children by washing clothes for families in her community. Their home provides a stable place where they can grow and prosper. And that, Almaz says, “means everything.”

# Housing affordability, stability and equity remain our focus.

Three years ago, Habitat for Humanity launched Cost of Home, our first U.S. national advocacy campaign. Along with our network, partners, volunteers and community members across the country, we set a big goal:



As of the close of fiscal year 2022, the campaign has helped **6.45 million people** gain improved access to affordable and stable homes through policy changes, and our work isn't finished yet.

**We extend our thanks** to the following organizations and individuals for their generous financial support of Cost of Home:

Wells Fargo  
J. Ronald Terwilliger  
Stanard Family Foundation  
Whirlpool Corporation  
Bank of America  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Lowe's  
Linda Dotson  
Melville Charitable Trust  
Retirement Research Foundation  
Kresge Foundation  
Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Weyerhaeuser

Visit [habitat.org/costofhome](https://habitat.org/costofhome) to learn more about U.S. advocacy and how you can get involved.



Helping families around the world improve their health by improving their living conditions. Creating opportunities for startups that provide mentorship, connections and funding as they propel housing solutions. Successfully advocating for system and policies that create and preserve affordable housing. Our fiscal year 2022 annual report, available on [habitat.org](https://www.habitat.org) on Nov. 22, will highlight the intentional and innovative ways that we pursue our mission and the enormous impact of our work. Mark your calendars!

Work that's location-specific,  
inclusive and transformational



# Helping essential workers build affordable places to call home



**A**s an eighth-grade social studies teacher at Aspen Middle School, Lyssa loves her job. “I’m a teacher through and through,” she says. Lyssa has lived and worked in the Colorado mountain community for more than a decade and never wanted to change her career. Faced with exorbitant housing and rental prices in Roaring Fork Valley, however, she felt that staying there seemed impossible.

Lyssa had to consider what was manageable for her and her husband, Jeremy, and their two children, 6-year-old Arlo and 4-year-old Willa. And it wasn’t just their family facing the prospect of leaving. Lyssa saw firsthand that a dire lack of affordable housing in the valley was the driving force behind the school district’s challenge to recruit and retain teachers. “It’s impossible to find any housing on a teacher’s salary,” Lyssa says. “Our valley loses a lot of teachers because of housing.”

Lyssa hated the choice she faced: change her career or move to a more affordable area. Her young family lived in a two-bedroom rental apartment that was owned by the Aspen School District and offered to teachers at subsidized rent for up to five years. Their lease was soon ending, and their family was already outgrowing the small space.



If they moved away, they'd not only have to restart their lives, but they'd be leaving two critical jobs vacant. Jeremy works as an information technology professional for the Pitkin County government. Lyssa says county workers, much like teachers, are experiencing a “mass exodus” due to housing unaffordability.

### **Partnering for affordability**

Lyssa and Jeremy feared they would need to leave the valley until they heard about Habitat for Humanity Roaring Fork Valley's new Basalt Vista neighborhood, a 27-home community devoted to bringing affordable homeownership opportunities to schoolteachers and county workers. Lyssa and Jeremy, who qualified for the program





through Jeremy's Pitkin County job, perfectly fit the bill. In September 2020, the couple moved into Basalt Vista and exhaled with relief that they would be staying in the Roaring Fork Valley.

Habitat had forged key local partnerships to create the multifamily development. The Roaring Fork School District donated an estimated \$3 million of land, and Pitkin County gave \$4 million to go toward building costs. The partnerships opened doors for Habitat, the school district and the county to design a neighborhood where county workers and in-district teachers could thrive in the same community they work.

Local companies Holy Cross Energy and Community Office for Resource Efficiency also made critical contributions to ensure the community was built with energy efficiency top of mind. The net-zero homes are equipped with solar panels, Energy Star appliances, electric



vehicle charging stations, and an air-source heat pump which can efficiently heat or cool the house, says Gail Schwartz, Habitat Roaring Fork Valley president. As a result of these features, homeowners spend as little as \$14 a month on their electric bills.

### “More rooted in the community”

Basalt Vista is set at the foothills of a beautiful, imposing mountain lined with biking and hiking trails. Across the street from the community sits Basalt High School, which makes for a quick commute for some of the teachers living in the new neighborhood.

All 27 of Basalt Vista’s homes include a teacher or county worker in residence, creating a cheerful, energetic neighborhood that allows critical workers to live close to where they work and fosters togetherness. Arlo and Willa love playing outside with friends after school.

“It’s a little community of teachers and county workers that are very grateful to be there,” says Katie, a Spanish teacher at nearby Basalt Elementary School. The three-minute drive to Katie’s school beats the hourlong commute along treacherous roads that she endured before moving to Basalt Vista. Beyond saving time and money on gas, she says living near her school allows her to feel “more rooted in the community.”

Katie moved to Basalt Vista in February 2022 after 14 years of bouncing between different rentals in the area. Though affordable homeownership seemed elusive to the longtime teacher, she never wavered on her decision to teach. “Kids are way too important to me,” she says.



### Helping essential workers stay and serve

An absence of affordable housing across the U.S. continues to threaten the livelihoods of essential workers like Lyssa and Jeremy and Katie. Through Basalt Vista, Habitat Roaring Fork Valley and partners have created a housing solution to help 27 families stay in the area and continue serving the community.

Katie often stands on her porch and reflects on becoming a homeowner. “My home is very important. It’s my sanctuary,” Katie says. “What does this house mean for me? It changed my life.”



# Neighbors thrive in

**W**hen Park Preserve neighborhood welcomed its first homeowner in 2010, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Nashville had dreams of building a thriving, affordable community to combat the city's surging housing market. Much like elsewhere in the United States, Nashville's housing affordability crisis was making it more and more financially impossible for many families to remain in the city.

More than a decade later, 178 Habitat homeowners — 21 of whom built their homes during the 36th Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project — now call Park Preserve home. Across the next few years, 26 more affordable Habitat homes and a 59-acre park developed by Metro Nashville Parks and Recreation in partnership with Habitat Greater Nashville will adjoin Park Preserve.

The tight-knit community bustles with neighbors tending to their gardens and children riding their bikes and playing basketball in a cul-de-sac. The addition of the park — flanked by the soon-to-be restored Parkwood Baseball Community fields and set to feature walking trails and a playground — will create even more space for the families to enjoy their community.

For Park Preserve residents Erica and Neil, Tara, and D'Shawna, having a strong community and a safe, affordable place to call home has been life-changing.



## **“This is our house forever”**

Three years ago, Erica and Neil's family of five packed with renewed energy, knowing this move would be different because they were moving into their own Habitat home. “This is our house forever,” Neil says.

“I grew up in a number of homes we constantly rented,” Erica says. “There was never a feeling of home and security for me when I was growing up. So the fact that we have this house, the rent is not going up, and my kids are



# n Nashville



able to have that sense of security and stability is just such a relief for me as a mom.”

The family enjoys gardening, meeting neighbors and feeling part of their community. “My kids won’t feel the uncertainty that I grew up feeling,” Erica says. “That they have a yard to play in, they have neighbors that they can make actual friendships with through the years, means a lot to me.”



## Stability in a new community

Before moving into their home, D’Shawna and her daughter, Ariana, were sharing a bedroom and bathroom in her uncle’s basement. When her uncle relayed his intentions to sell the house, D’Shawna partnered with Habitat to build a home for Ariana.

“She has somewhere that she knows will always be here, she has a home, she has a foundation. And coming from a home where you feel safe and loved and have a lot of good energy, I think that will open a lot of opportunities for her in the future. I think she’ll be capable of everything,” says D’Shawna, who has gone back to school to finish her bachelor’s degree.

When D’Shawna walks down the hall of her home, she’ll steal a glance into Ariana’s room and watch her daughter’s imagination take shape as she plays with building blocks and reads books. “She has her own space,” D’Shawna says. “And I’m grateful to be able to give her that.”



## “It was like opening a new chapter”

Tara moved to Nashville with her daughter, Kennedy, more than a decade ago but spent her first several years living in high-priced apartments located far away from her work.

The morning after her first night as a Habitat homeowner, Tara remembers the radiant sunlight entering her home. “It was like opening a new chapter in my life,” Tara says. “I don’t know if everyone understands how much mental space not having a safe place to live takes up in your mind. Having that taken care of in my life is the launching board for everything else I need to do.”

Since moving into her home in 2020, Tara has been promoted three times. And yet Tara — now a director of supportive and family services at a



local nonprofit— has her sights set even higher. “My five-year goal is to become a CEO of a nonprofit. And I know that I’ll be able to do it while I’m living here.”



# Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project 2023



*Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood to host*

In October 2023, Habitat for Humanity will once again welcome volunteers, staff and community members for our Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project.

President and Mrs. Carter are enjoying their retirement in Plains, Georgia, and will not attend the 2023 project, which will be hosted Oct. 1-6 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood will help uphold President and Mrs. Carter's enduring legacy by hosting.

"Though we could never fill their shoes, we are so incredibly honored to be given the opportunity to carry President and Mrs. Carter's legacy forward through the continuation of the Carter Work Project," Brooks says.

This Carter Work Project will mark Brooks' and Yearwood's 13th. They first volunteered with Habitat in 2007 in New Orleans to help build post-Katrina on the U.S. Gulf Coast and have since lent their names and support to numerous Habitat events and projects. Along with the Carters, Yearwood and Brooks were recognized as Habitat Humanitarians in 2016.

Future homeowners will work alongside Brooks, Yearwood, and hundreds of other volunteers from Charlotte and around the world to build 20 homes on nine acres that formerly housed an all-Black school that

was a transformative education and civic space for the Black community from the early 1900s through the mid-60s. Habitat Charlotte Region broke ground on the project Sept. 8, 2021. With seven homes already under construction, the entire 39-home project is expected to be completed by early 2025.

"The Carter Work Project was last held in Charlotte 36 years ago, not long after the city demolished Plato Price School. It is striking and significant to have the opportunity to rebuild and revitalize an area that was once an important keystone for the Black community in Charlotte," says Jonathan Reckford, Habitat for Humanity International CEO.

"The example set by President & Mrs. Carter on how to care for those in our community in need of housing is inspiring," says Laura Belcher, Habitat Charlotte Region president and CEO. "It is an honor to be selected to be part of that story and to carry on their legacy as we enter our 40th year in Charlotte."

**Visit [habitat.org](https://www.habitat.org) to learn more.**

A close-up photograph of water being poured from a metal tap into a bright green plastic bucket. The water is splashing and creating ripples in the bucket. The background is slightly blurred, showing a person's arm in a patterned sleeve.

# WASH around the world

Habitat's  
work in water,  
sanitation and  
hygiene creates  
life-changing  
results

Health. Gender equality. Economic opportunity. In many communities around the world where we work, a critical component to achieving these fundamentals is access to safe and reliable water, sanitation and hygiene, or WASH. Habitat for Humanity knows that — in addition to walls, floors and doors — a decent home includes access to basic WASH services.

But lack of access is the reality for billions of people. According to the UN, 1 in 4 people worldwide don't have access to safe drinking water. The toll of WASH insecurity is staggering: Millions of lives and livelihoods are lost each year, and women and girls especially are deeply impacted. Limited access to household toilets, for example, as well as long journeys to fetch water exposes them to gender-based violence and lost opportunity.

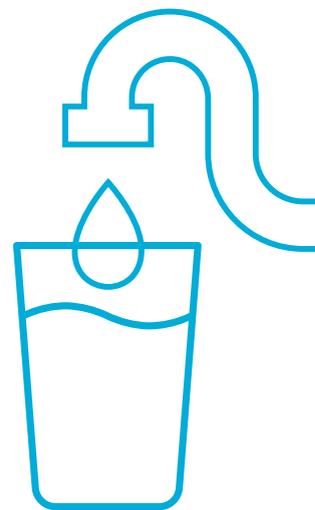
Habitat includes WASH work as an important part of our holistic approach to helping families achieve decent and affordable housing around the



world. Our expertise positions us well to tackle the biggest needs in the communities where we work, and our far-reaching WASH solutions — building community latrines, setting up clean water points, establishing handwashing stations and more — improve household and community resilience.

With improved access to clean water and adequate sanitation, families can unlock more opportunities instead of spending hours fetching water or battling water- and sanitation-related illnesses. Girls can further their education in schools equipped with new facilities, and women have a chance to invest their time in starting income-generating businesses. The entire community wins.

By partnering with residents to bolster access in their communities, Habitat has helped millions of families improve their quality of life and the places they call home. From Brazil to Liberia, read on to learn the different ways Habitat works in WASH.



## Bolivia

In Bolivia, 44% of families in rural and peri-urban areas don't have access to safe water, exposing thousands of people to preventable waterborne illnesses. Habitat Bolivia partnered with Water for People Bolivia and Food for the Hungry Bolivia Foundation to create a five-year Bolivia with Water campaign to help families in low-income communities gain access to safe drinking water.

During the first year of the campaign, water points built throughout 19 communities in Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, La Paz and Potosi improved access to safe drinking water for 3,640 people.

## Ethiopia

Without a reliable source of clean water, residents in Ethiopia's drought-prone district of Arsi Negele often resorted to drawing water from muddy pits, exposing them to sometimes deadly illnesses including cholera, scabies and diarrhea. The burden was heavy for women like Gishu, who had to travel two hours to fetch water and lug it home for her family.

In response, Habitat Ethiopia constructed 24 water points that serve an estimated 36,000 residents in the district. One of the water points was built in front of Gishu's home, improving her family's health, hygiene and overall quality of life.

"We suffered a lot of years; many of my children were forced to drop out of school to support me in collecting water," Gishu says. "Now, we are very happy to get safe water near our home."





## Jordan

Diminished rainfall, depleted groundwater sources and an increasing population has turned Jordan into the second most water-scarce country in the world, the effects of which can be especially felt among the country's millions of refugees. Through the Middle East Refugee Crisis Initiative, Habitat Jordan has improved WASH conditions for more than 100 households by installing kitchen sinks, toilets, faucets, showers and water tanks. Habitat Jordan complemented the upgrades, which improved leaks and decreased water wasting, with water conservation awareness trainings.

## Liberia

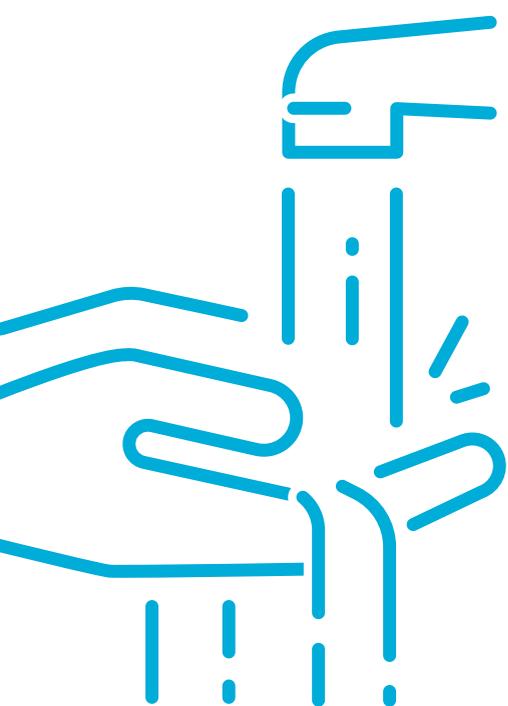
Uncollected waste, informal dumping sites and a lack of access to drinking water have created major health hazards for the 36,000 residents living in Peace Island, a large informal settlement in Monrovia, Liberia. In partnership with World Hope International, Cities Alliance and the Liberian government, Habitat helped build a water system equipped with two deep wells, two solar-powered pumps, a water tower and water treatment facilities that serve more than 70% of the Peace Island community. The project also created a solid waste management system with timely door-to-door waste collection as well as composting and recycling.

## India

Habitat India built a community sanitation complex in the state of Maharashtra to reduce open defecation and maintain the safety of women and young girls by offering them easier access to clean sanitation facilities. Residents access the 24-hour, well-lit facility by using a smart card that accrues points which can be redeemed later for things like transportation tickets. The complex was built through Habitat India's Sensitize to Sanitize Coalition, which ran from 2015 to 2022 and convened organizations to tackle sanitation challenges in the country. Residents now maintain the complex.

## Egypt

Habitat Egypt's pilot WASH initiative offered residents in Upper Egypt's Minya Governorate hygiene-awareness manuals and kits and featured three public health and hygiene-awareness campaigns. In addition, Habitat Egypt trained 10 health workers who conducted home visits with 300 families.



## Brazil

Nearly half of all Brazilian households lack adequate access to basic sanitation. In response, Habitat Brazil has installed handwashing stations and water tanks, renovated shared bathrooms, and built cisterns to store rainwater. In 2020, Habitat Brazil built 404 community sinks throughout 218 communities across the country, enabling 121,000 people to wash their hands each day. The installation of cisterns for rain catchment saved 1.2 million liters of drinkable water in Brazil's northeastern semiarid region in 2020.

## Fiji

Women in Fiji have historically been excluded from water committees that have governance over community WASH decisions. Habitat Fiji's Water for Women project has helped 36 women across 18 rural communities in the Ba and Ra provinces join water committees and become WASH leaders. The project also engages with schools to help raise awareness of and provide information about WASH-related topics, including proper menstrual hygiene.



# Remaining part of their community



When Lauri and Jemeel moved their young family of five to Culver City, California, in 2013 to be closer to Jemeel's job, the family was determined to put down roots in the community. They became members of their school's parent-teacher association, joined booster clubs and coached Little League. Jemeel worked for the city, and Lauri substituted for the school district.

Even though the couple qualified for a program that offers city workers and teachers reduced rental rates, they still served as property managers at their apartment complex to make their two-bedroom rental affordable. This meant that their three children — 14-year-old Leena, 13-year-old Evan and 10-year-old Emma

— shared a bedroom. But as their kids continued to grow, so did the need to find a home they could afford with enough room for their family.

## **The family's journey to Culver City**

The couple never expected that a move to a bigger space in Culver City would be possible. The family had been on a winding journey to move there in the first place, and now the cost of real estate in the city — much like many communities across the United States — threatened to price them out of the community they served.

Jemeel and Lauri were both professional athletes before changing careers and starting their family. Jemeel played professional football for one year, and Lauri played



“The fact that we’re able to own a home in the area that we do is just a blessing.”

**JEMEEL**, HABITAT HOMEOWNER

professional basketball in Switzerland for one season. When their playing days were over, Lauri became a physical education teacher before taking some time off when her children were born, and Jemeel worked two jobs.

Despite Jemeel splitting his time working in Culver City and across town in Torrance, housing costs and new childcare demands forced the family to move in with Lauri’s parents in Diamond Bar, California. Jemeel withstood hours-long commutes from the Los Angeles suburb to his two jobs, costing him

money and time away from his kids. After three years with Lauri’s parents, the family moved into their two-bedroom rental in Culver City.

But they also contemplated a cross-country move to find something more affordable, which would have meant new schools for the kids, new jobs for Lauri and Jemeel, and being away from their beloved extended family.

### **Staying put as homeowners**

Everything changed when the family learned about Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles through a connection Jemeel made at work. Soon, the family was driving down a city street lined with weeping willow trees to the site of the home that would mean they could stay and thrive in Culver City. After building alongside Habitat Greater LA volunteers, Jemeel and Lauri turned the keys to their new two-story, three-bedroom home in August 2019.

“We’re grateful for Habitat for even laying down the platform for our kids to see that you don’t just get a home with the snap of a finger,” Lauri says. “It comes with hard work. They’re going to have that in them for the rest of their lives.”

### **Flourishing in the community**

Today, Lauri runs a character-building girls empowerment camp in the summer. Her oldest daughter, Leena, is a junior counselor. Lauri also leads an afterschool basketball camp for elementary school students, sharing her love for the game with kids around Culver City just as she has with her own children.



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Leena, Evan and Emma are all multisport athletes, but what's most important to Lauri and Jemeel is that they "grow up to be good human beings," Lauri says. With a supportive family, a strong community and a stable home, the kids have room to flourish in Culver City. Leena graduated middle school as salutatorian with a 3.99 GPA; Evan excels in math as much as he does on the football field; Emma hopes to play sports in college while earning a degree in the medical field.

### Creating family traditions

Lauri reflects on all the special memories the family has created in their new home, including the first Thanksgiving they hosted. With the bigger space, they could welcome their parents over for the holiday, something that wasn't possible in their old apartment.

The family held hands while sitting around the dinner table and shared what they were grateful for. When it was Lauri and Jemeel's turn to share, they didn't hesitate; they were grateful to be surrounded by loved ones in the comfort of their very own home in Culver City.

"The fact that we're able to own a home in the area that we do is just a blessing," Jemeel says. "I just feel extremely blessed."



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## Finding peace in Poland



**Y**ana and Victor were happily raising their three children — 14-year-old Dmytro, 12-year-old Mykhailo and 9-year-old Viktoriia — in central Ukraine when Russia invaded in February.

Early on, the family opened their own home to those fleeing the capital city of Kyiv, giving 18 people safe accommodations and helping them meet their immediate needs. But as hostilities crept closer to their town, the couple decided it was time to leave the country. In April, the family left Ukraine for Gliwice, Poland, where family friends were already living.

Victor, a welder, was able to find work in their new city, but the family had trouble finding housing that was affordable and comfortable. They moved into a single-room hostel on the industrial grounds of Victor's new job. Space was cramped, and the family shared a bathroom and small kitchen with other hostel residents. After six weeks, their search for a long-term housing solution led them to Habitat for Humanity Poland.

The family partnered with Habitat Poland to move into an affordable apartment spacious enough to comfortably fit their young family. Habitat Poland leases units to low-income families at below-market rates through its social rental program and is providing larger subsidies for refugees seeking shelter in the country. Victor says the Habitat-subsidized apartment gives them a foundation to flourish in their new community. Dmytro, Mykhailo and Viktoriia attend school nearby and are happily making friends, while Yana is taking language classes and is hoping to restart her career as a teacher.

Months after leaving their homeland in pursuit of safety and security, the family has found peace in Poland. "The apartment has made our dreams come true," says Victor. "Above all, we're safe here. What else could you want?"



**Lowe's**, one of our long-standing partners, has made a generous \$2.5 million contribution to establish the **2022 Year-End Challenge**.

**S**heron loves her home and looks forward to enjoying it throughout her retirement years. However, her stairs were in disrepair. She had even fallen down the broken steps and sprained her ankle. Additionally, her bathroom pipes were stripped, and her arthritis made it difficult for her to turn her faucets on and off. Now – thanks to Habitat and Lowe's – Sheron can walk up and down her stairs with confidence. The stairs and plumbing have been repaired, and she can live safely in the place she's called home for more than 20 years.

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