Habitat for Humanity in Portugal

A group of volunteers concerned about poverty housing in Braga, in northern Portugal, started a Habitat affiliate there in 1996. Two groups of international and local volunteers helped build Portugal’s first Habitat house in the town of Vieira do Minho in 1999. In 2002, Habitat expanded its activities to renovating existing homes of low-income families. Habitat in Braga partners with local municipalities to build and rehabilitate homes for people living on small incomes.

The housing need in Portugal

Housing is a major concern of poor Portuguese families, who often live in dilapidated homes in rural areas or shacks in the big cities. Successive governments have liberalized key areas of the economy over the past 20 years after decades of military dictatorship, but economic growth has been slowing, especially after the 2008 crisis. Many people were left without jobs or savings to improve housing conditions.

At the same time, the need for housing is growing, especially in urban areas. The state cannot support the development of new social housing units. Portugal has been a destination for emigrants, mainly from former African colonies and Brazil.

How Habitat addresses the need in Portugal

Habitat for Humanity in Portugal helps low-income families by building new homes on family-owned land and by renovating houses in the municipalities of Braga and Amarante. Homes are made of traditional local materials: bricks, red roof tiles, shutters on the windows, and ceramic tiles inside. Recently, the Habitat Portugal has been looking for local opportunities to raise funds to build more simple and decent homes.
Meet a Habitat family

For many years the Lage family has dreamed of having their own home. The family is comprised of Madalena and Fernando, and their three children. Their daughter Ana suffers from a mental impairment, and although she is physically independent, she needs monitoring and assistance. The family presently live in a rented house with poor living conditions, including very limited space, high levels of humidity, an outdoor bathroom, and low indoor temperature as some exterior walls are made of wood. The house Habitat Portugal is going to rebuild is a family inheritance, but is currently not suitable for living. In this project, outdoor and indoor renovations will be done and after so many years, this family will finally have their own home, where they can have a happy life as a family.

What you can do

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

DONATE
USD $: habitat.org/donate/portugal

VOLUNTEER
Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Portugal or lead your own. For more information go to: http://www.habitat.org/emea/volunteer/global-village/trip-schedule

TITHE
Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote 813801, PORTUGAL 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 Portugal please contact us.

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