



**Habitat**  
for Humanity®

# PASSPORT

for Europe, Middle East and Africa





# Welcome to Europe, Middle East and Africa



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Habitat for Humanity is a global, nonprofit housing organization with over 40 years of experience. We empower people through shelter and help communities overcome the chronic lack of decent and affordable housing. Approximately two billion people live in the Europe, Middle East and Africa region. We estimate that at least 400 million face problems related to poverty housing.

In Africa, harsh conditions, years of conflict and violent changes of government have taken their toll. People are moving to the cities at unprecedented rates. It is estimated that African cities will have to accommodate more than 300 million new residents over the next 25 years. In the Middle East, some countries are accommodating refugees fleeing conflict and civil war in their home countries. Habitat for Humanity is meeting the challenge by working in partnership with companies and other agencies to build new homes or renovate existing shelter structures, and installing water and sanitation.

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the fall of socialism led to large-scale unemployment, migration to urban centers and deterioration in buildings. Mass privatization of houses in the 1990s produced a class of homeowners with no real understanding of their property rights and responsibilities. Here, Habitat for Humanity is building new homes, completing renovations of existing structures, renovating entire apartment blocks and upgrading their energy efficiency.

Many of these projects we cannot do on our own and need support from volunteers who come and offer time and skills on the construction site. In this brochure, you can explore our region and see where and how to offer a hand up to the families in need of simple and decent shelter.

We look forward to welcoming you in person as a volunteer.

In partnership,

*Torre Nelson*

Area Vice President  
Habitat Europe, Middle East and Africa

## About Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is a global nonprofit housing organization working in approximately 70 countries around the world. Founded in 1976 by Millard and Linda Fuller, Habitat for Humanity is a true world leader in addressing the issues of poor housing conditions. It's vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Habitat works toward this vision by **building strength, stability and self-reliance** in partnership with people and families in need of a decent and affordable home. At Habitat for Humanity, we know that safe, decent and affordable shelter plays an absolutely critical role in helping families to create a new cycle, one filled with possibilities and progress.

A Global Village team is a team of volunteers traveling abroad and building with a Habitat affiliate or branch in another country. Global Village teams are an integral part of Habitat's work and make a significant contribution to its mission. By living and working with host communities, participants have the opportunity to witness and contribute to Habitat's effort to eliminate substandard housing throughout the world. To learn more, donate or volunteer, visit [habitat.org/emea](https://www.habitat.org/emea).

## Short-term volunteering opportunities with the Global Village program in Europe, Middle East and Africa



Armenia



Kenya



Portugal



Bulgaria



Lesotho



Romania



Ethiopia



Macedonia



South Africa



Hungary



Malawi



Tajikistan



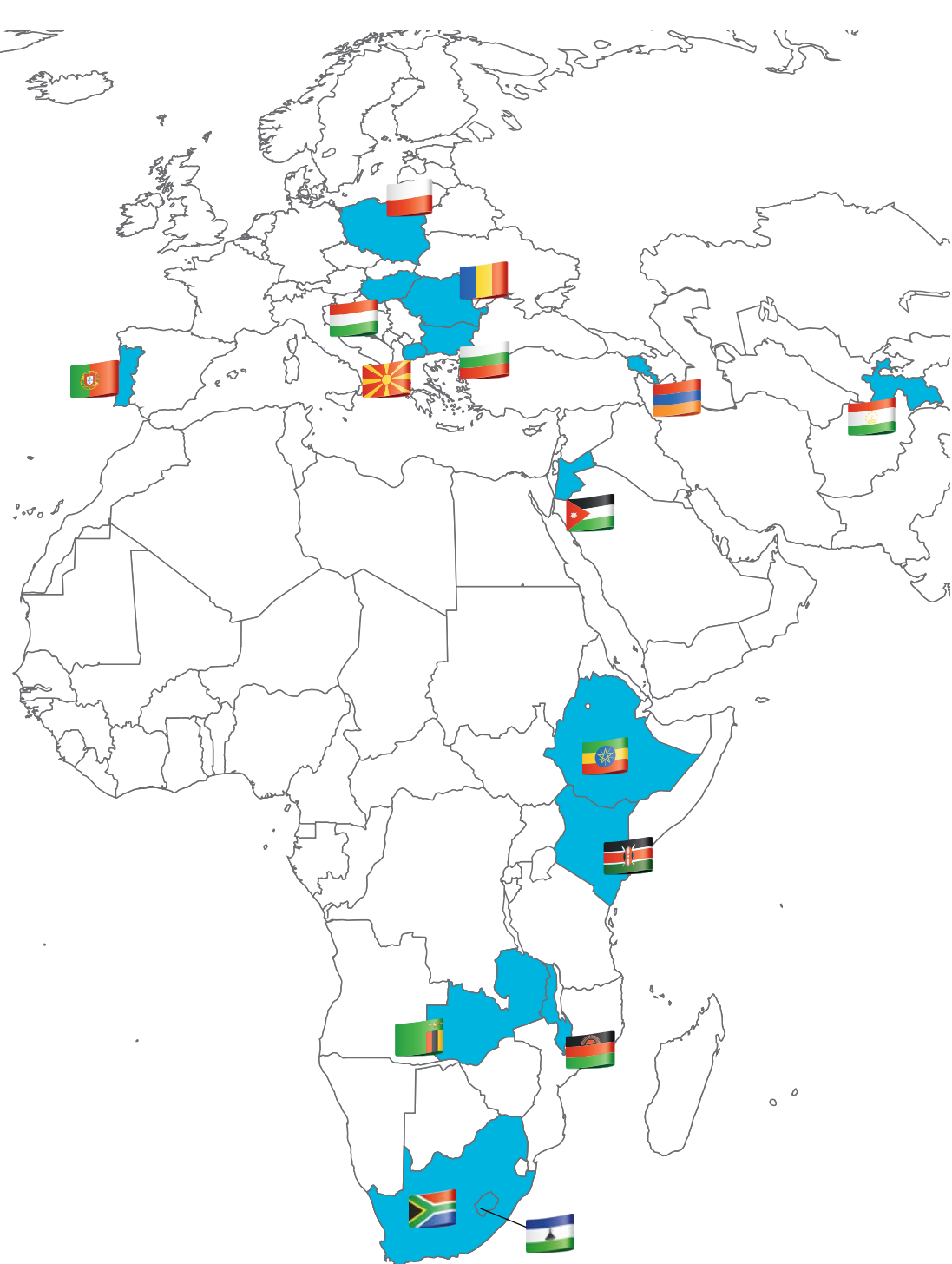
Jordan



Poland



Zambia





# JORDAN

Jordan is a Kingdom rich in history. It is the home to the Dead Sea, and the lowest place on earth. Water supplies are inadequate. In the villages, it is not uncommon for 12 to 15 family members to share a small two-room house. Due to the turmoil in the Middle East, hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees found a peaceful refuge in Jordan.

Habitat Jordan is currently working with 11 partner communities, called Jama'iat in Arabic. Habitat also works in urban communities in the Greater Amman area. Houses are made of cement blocks. The average home is 55 square meters.

## Country facts

- Capital city: Amman
- Population: 8 million
- Population living below poverty line: 14.2%
- Unemployment rate: 11%
- Life expectancy: 74 years

## Did you know?

- The Dead Sea or the Salt Lake in Jordan is the Earth's lowest point and lies 418-430 meters below mean sea level.
- The city of Petra was carved into rock 2,000 years ago.





# KENYA



Kenya is among the most advanced economies in Eastern and Central Africa. However, it is still a developing country, with huge social-economic inequalities. Its growing population and increasing urbanisation contribute to the housing deficit. Women, children, persons living with disabilities, the elderly and orphans are worst hit.

## Country facts

- Capital city: Nairobi
- Population: 46.8 million
- People living in extreme poverty: 33.6%
- HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate: 5-6%
- Life expectancy: 64 years

Habitat Kenya works with low-income families to enable them access decent and affordable houses through building, renovating and preserving homes. Volunteers work with communities to build in one of the following locations: Homabay Asumbi, Laikipia or Ndhiwa and Mbita.

## Did you know?

- Mount Kenya (5,199 m) is the highest mountain in the country.
- Kenya only has two seasons – rainy and dry.
- There are 43 official ethnic groups in the Kenya.



# LESOTHO

## Country facts

- Capital city: Maseru
- Population: 2.2 million
- Population living below poverty line: 60%
- HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate: 23%
- Life expectancy: 53.7 years

Lesotho is known as the Kingdom in the Sky because of its lofty altitude. It is landlocked and enclaved – completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Poverty and HIV/AIDS are prevalent and affect the vulnerability of households. Adult HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is estimated at 23 percent.

Houses of the poorest families are built out of mud, stones or sticks, and often lack proper ventilation due to the absence of windows. Habitat Lesotho constructs simple, yet durable two-room houses with concrete blocks and corrugated iron sheet roofs. A ventilated pit latrine is constructed to improve sanitation.

## Did you know?

- Lesotho is the only country in the world, being entirely more than 1,000 meters above sea level. Still, it has about 300 days of sunlight per year.
- The Katse Dam is the second largest dam in Africa and provides water for South Africa, and electricity for Lesotho.





# MALAWI



Malawi is also nicknamed “The Warm Heart of Africa”. Despite its economic growth in recent years, Malawi is among the world’s poorest countries and one of the world’s worst-hit by HIV-AIDS. An estimated four out of five families live in substandard structures, with little hope of ever being able to afford a decent house.

## Country facts

- Capital city: Lilongwe
- Population: 18 million
- Population living below poverty line: 70%
- HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate: 10%
- Life expectancy: 58 years

Habitat Malawi houses are made of burnt bricks, glass windows and iron sheet roofs. Each house has a foundation made from burnt bricks and cement mortar. By providing decent shelter, Habitat Malawi has reduced the occurrence of malaria, respiratory illnesses and intestinal parasites among its beneficiary families.

## Did you know?

- Lake Malawi is sometimes called the Calendar Lake as it is about 365 miles long, and 52 miles wide.
- Tobacco accounts for more than half of Malawi’s exports.



# POLAND

## Country facts

- Capital city: Warsaw
- Population: 38.52 million
- Population living below poverty line: 17%
- Urbanisation: 60.5% live in cities
- Life expectancy: 77.6 years

The last twenty years have been a success story for the Polish economy, which grew faster than any other in Europe. But there is a serious housing shortage, with Poland having the lowest rate in Europe of number of homes for its population. Almost 15 percent of Poles live in overcrowded conditions and poverty housing.

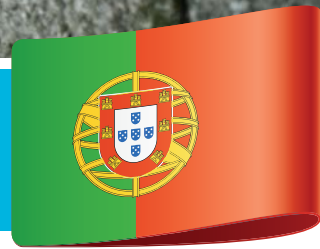
## Did you know?

- During and after Warsaw uprising in 1944, 30 percent of the city was destroyed by German forces.
- Pierogi – dumplings with meat (or other fillings) – is one of the national foods of Poland.

Habitat for Humanity Poland was established in 1992 as the first Habitat branch in Europe. So far it has served more than 1,300 families, helped to build 120 new housing units, and hosted more than 2,000 volunteers.



# PORTUGAL



Once the poorest country in Western Europe, its prosperity increased significantly after joining the European Union in 1986. Still, many places, especially in the countryside, remain undeveloped and there is a big gap between the richest and the poorest people. Housing is a major concern of poor Portuguese families.

Many poor families live in collapsing homes in rural areas, or shacks in the big cities. Many houses lack sanitation, running water, or living space. Habitat Portugal works with low-income families by building new homes on family-owned land, and by renovating houses in the municipalities of Braga and Amarante.

## Country facts

- Capital city: Lisbon
- Population: 10.3 million
- Population living below poverty line: 18.7%
- Unemployment rate: 10%
- Youth unemployment rate: 25%

## Did you know?

- Portugal is one of the oldest countries in the world. Its borders have remained almost the same since 1139.
- Portugal is the largest cork producer in the world. Cork is stripped from the trunks of specific kind of oaks every nine years.





# ROMANIA

Despite the fact that Romania is part of the European Union, many people there still live in extreme poverty. Two-thirds of Romania's poor live in rural areas. In the cities, many dwellers live in cramped apartments blocks. According to the national statistics, 35 percent of the housing stock in Romania is in a state of complete neglect and needs repairs.

Habitat for Humanity Romania acts as a catalyst for improving housing conditions and offering support, expertise and experience to various stakeholders. The organization has taken leadership in tackling repairs, renovations and rehabilitation of old communist-era apartment blocks and disaster response projects.

## Country facts

- Capital city: Bucharest
- Population: 21.6 million
- Population living below poverty line: 22%
- Unemployment rate: 5.4%
- Life expectancy: 75 years

## Did you know?

- The Palace of Parliament in Bucharest ranks as the second-largest office building in the world, after the U.S. Pentagon.
- Bran Castle in Transylvania is said to be the residence of Bram Stoker's fictional character Dracula.



# SOUTH AFRICA



South Africa is often referred to as the “Rainbow Nation” to describe the country’s multicultural diversity – encompassing a wide variety of cultures, languages, and religions. It is an upper-middle-income economy, but poverty and inequality remain widespread, with about a quarter of the population unemployed.

## Country facts

- Capital city: Pretoria
- Population: 55 million
- Population living below poverty line: 53.8%
- Urbanization: 64.8% live in cities
- Unemployment rate: 26.8 percent
- Life expectancy: 63.1 years

Cities in South Africa and beyond cannot keep up with the demand for housing – at least, not using traditional methods. Habitat for Humanity South Africa has expanded its core focus from building individual houses to building entire communities.

## Did you know?

- Table mountain, overlooking the city of Cape Town, is one of the oldest mountains in the world.
- Vilakazi Street in Soweto was the residential address of two Nobel Peace Prize winners – Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.





# TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan is a landlocked country in Central Asia and the poorest former Soviet republic. Driven by high unemployment, many workers leave the country for seasonal or permanent employment in Russia and elsewhere. Wages are extremely low, with an average gross monthly wage around \$130 USD.

Poverty results in the poor maintenance of the housing stock. The state no longer provides social services, and private owners do not have funds to invest into property maintenance. Many people live in sub-standard homes without proper windows and doors that could protect families from harsh winters.

## Country facts

- Capital city: Dushanbe
- Population: 8.33 million
- Population living below poverty line: 35.6%
- Urbanisation: 26.8% (almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of population live in the countryside)
- Life expectancy: 67.7 years

## Did you know?

- The 'Silk Road', forming a major trade route between China and Europe, passed through Tajikistan.
- More than 50 percent of Tajikistan's land lies more than 3,000 meters (approx. 10,000 ft) above sea level.



# ZAMBIA



Despite its wealth in natural resources, about 60 percent of the Zambian population are extremely poor. Villagers rely heavily on subsistence agriculture. Families are often crowded into a single room, which often serves as a kitchen, therefore children are daily exposed to life-threatening environments.

## Country facts

- Capital city: Lusaka
- Population: 17 million
- Population living below poverty line: 64%
- HIV/AIDS prevalence: 12.4%
- Life expectancy: 62 years

Habitat Zambia has expanded into six of the country's nine provinces, and has also facilitated multiple development initiatives. Habitat builds in both rural and peri-urban areas. The Orphans and Vulnerable Groups housing program provides appropriate, subsidized housing solutions to families in need.

## Did you know?

- Zambia comprises amazing 72 ethnic groups.
- Victoria Falls present a spectacular sight of awe-inspiring beauty and grandeur on the Zambezi River, forming the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe.



# What will you build in...

## - ARMENIA

Renovation and completion of half-built homes all across the country.

## - BULGARIA

Building of new homes, condominium building renovations and home repairs.

## - ETHIOPIA

Renovation of old houses, construction of traditional Chika (fermented mud and stick) houses, new homes from concrete blocks and construction of toilets.

## - HUNGARY

Helping homeless individuals and families move into decent homes, and advocating for better housing policy in Hungary.

## - JORDAN

Community based organization partnerships focusing on new construction, repair and renovations.

## - KENYA

Construction work using the innovative low cost house building technology with interlocking stabilized soil blocks.

## - LESOTHO

Construction and renovation of homes for Orphans and Vulnerable Groups, inclusive of elderly and the disabled.

## - MACEDONIA

Energy efficient upgrades, including insulation of walls and roofs to improve current living conditions of homeowners.



## ...Europe, Middle East and Africa

### - MALAWI

Construction of new homes for Orphans and Vulnerable Groups.

### - POLAND

Construction, renovation and adaptation of houses for low-income families or residential facilities serving vulnerable populations, including the homeless, or physically and intellectually handicapped people.

### - PORTUGAL

Traditional brick-house building for families currently living in sub-standard conditions.

### - ROMANIA

Building homes using either wooden framing or clay bricks, insulated with either polystyrene or stonewool boards, finished with drywall and plaster on the interior; home renovations and repairs.

### - SOUTH AFRICA

Renovations and upgrades of existing housing for community currently living in sub-standard conditions.

### - TAJIKISTAN

Preparing houses for winter - installing doors, windows and roofs, and other renovation and winterization works for poor families in Kumsangir district.

### - ZAMBIA

Construction of new homes for Orphans and Vulnerable Groups.





## One family at a time

Sharofidin Shamslov lives with his six children and their families in a house in Rasht, Tajikistan. Just like many others, Sharofidin's house was damaged by an earthquake in 2006, because the structure was not able to withstand the tremors. Through its disaster response project in Rasht, Habitat provided the family with technical assistance and locally available construction materials, like mulberry branches, for house reinforcement. With Habitat's support and the help of Global Village volunteers, Sharofidin was able to reinforce two rooms of his house.

*"Now that my house is reinforced, I am no longer worried about my family's safety. I am sure the house can protect them from earthquakes in the future. I am very grateful for Habitat's help and the volunteers who came and worked with us shoulder by shoulder to rebuild my house.*

*We still keep in touch with them and recently one of the GV team members called and congratulated my daughter on her 21st birthday. Thank you very much for your help and generosity, Habitat for Humanity!"*





## Volunteer story

After returning from her Global Village trip to Jordan, Renad, an aspiring speech pathologist living in Saudi Arabia, remembered the words of a Habitat staffer who said: *"The house is nothing but dry and cold walls. But the home — the home is love and warmth. You are not just here to build the walls of this house; you are also building the love and the warmth of this home."*

Contemplating on her Habitat trips, Renad said: *"During my trips, I've learned a lot about different cultures, languages and cuisines. More importantly, my trips have allowed*

*me to build deep and meaningful friendships with all kinds of people from different walks of life."*

Renad is grateful for the friendship she made with the young Jordanian couple and their extended family who would be living in the home she had built with her Global Village team: *"They were extremely friendly, grateful and amazed that we came from all over the world just to help them build their house."*



## Volunteer testimonies

■ Christina Kaye, Global Village volunteer from California:

*"Whatever the task; digging dirt, moving boulders, laying cement or placing tile....I felt honored to be a part of something that touches the lives of others. I am forever humbled by the many ways Habitat for Humanity fulfills dreams for families and reminds me **how much satisfaction you can feel by giving away something so simple...your time.**"*

■ Laura McCann about her GV trip to Ethiopia:

*"My trip with Habitat is **one of the best things I've ever done.** It has changed my perspective by showing me the power of having a home."*

■ Shane Roberts about his GV trip to Bulgaria:

*"Working side by side with people who were **strangers when we started but dear friends by the time we finished** made me realize that building relationships and opening your heart and mind to others, including other cultures, is just as important as building homes."*



## Volunteer testimonies

■ Kim Carolin Voll about her GV trip to Macedonia:

*"It helped me see how **hard work and progress can create something beautiful** for people that aren't as privileged as one is."*

■ Diana Muniz about her GV trip to Portugal:

*"Every part of this has been so amazing. So inspirational! **An experience I will never forget** thanks to all the wonderful people involved."*

■ Joeri Hamal about his GV trip to Romania:

*"It was an absolutely fabulous experience, on all kinds of levels - professionally, culturally, emotionally - and it was a great feeling to help people that really needed it. **There's no better way to get to know local people and to learn about their problems, needs, values.** I am very happy to have been part of this unique experience."*



## Global Village program

Hundreds of thousands of volunteers have contributed to Habitat for Humanity by raising funds, building homes and advocating to eliminate poverty housing. More than 500,000 simple, decent, affordable Habitat houses sheltering 2.5 million people have been built, in large part, by volunteer labor.

To date, Habitat for Humanity has sent out thousands of volunteer teams through the Global Village program. The teams—schools and universities, corporations, church groups, or groups of family members, friends and strangers—help fund and build homes, working alongside families in need.

Our trips offer more than just the opportunity to swing a hammer. You'll experience the country like a local, with the locals. Meet people from around the world with all different kinds of backgrounds, races and religions.

Your participation in one of these trips helps support Habitat's ongoing homebuilding efforts. While your personal trip may last for a week or more, your financial, emotional and physical contributions can be life-changing for both those in the communities where you work and in your own life for years to come.





# You can help

**PASSPORT**  
for Europe, Middle East and Africa



**Signature**  
*Habitat Volunteer*

**Type**  
HFH

**Code**  
EMEA

**Number**  
01012018



**Name**  
Habitat Volunteer

**Citizenship**  
Global

**Volunteer**  
[gv.emea@habitat.org](mailto:gv.emea@habitat.org)  
[habitat.org/emea/volunteer/global-village/trip-schedule](https://habitat.org/emea/volunteer/global-village/trip-schedule)

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