

Habitat for Humanity is a global nonprofit housing organization operating in over 70 countries, dedicated to overcoming the chronic lack of decent housing. Our mission is to bring people together to build homes, communities, and hope. Since 1976, we have empowered more than 62 million people to build or improve their homes.

In Africa, we have partnered with millions to address the significant housing need. In April 2022, we opened an Africa area office in Nairobi, Kenya, to enhance our growth strategy and impact. We are currently active in **Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia**. Through these efforts, we continue to build a world where everyone has a decent place to live.

Housing Crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa

With **238 million people** living in overcrowded and unsafe informal settlements, the region faces an urgent shortage of approximately **56 million housing units**. Rapid urbanization further exacerbates this crisis as affordable housing construction lags behind.

Systemic pressures, including climate change, population growth, political instability, and health emergencies like COVID-19, compound these challenges. Without immediate intervention, living conditions will worsen, perpetuating cycles of vulnerability and inequality. Immediate action is needed to address these issues and improve living conditions for millions.



"Since learning how to make Interlocking Soil Stabilized Blocks (ISSBS), we formed a group and have been able to produce these blocks and sell them to other community members and even construct houses for ourselves, our families, our community and even the neighboring communities!"

Catherine - Youth trainee and community member in Laikipia, Kenya

Habitat for Humanity Program areas in Africa

Habitability: Building sustainably with appropriate construction technologies

We construct affordable, durable, and healthy homes using locally available materials and innovative techniques, ensuring they meet national building codes. We also train local builders in disaster-resilient methods. For example, in Malawi, over 700 flood-resilient houses have been built, and 1,900 builders trained in the past three years. Innovative techniques like soil-stabilized blocks in Côte d'Ivoire and interlocking bricks in Uganda have reduced construction costs by 30% and minimized environmental impact.

Affordability: Developing inclusive housing market systems

To help families struggling to access financial solutions, Habitat established the Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter (TCIS) in 2016. TCIS works with the private sector and financial institutions to expand affordable housing products, services, and financing. Nearly 70% of families build their homes incrementally as finances allow, and TCIS engages as a convener, think tank, implementer, and technical advisor to improve housing markets for low-income households.

Tenure security: Creating sustainable communities through advocacy and our urban approach

Habitat for Humanity advocates for documenting land and property rights in Africa, where 90% of rural land lacks formal documentation. Customary practices often exclude women and marginalized groups from land ownership. Recognizing tenure security as critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Habitat supports inclusive housing policies. For example, in Ethiopia, Habitat's efforts include urban slum upgrades, providing families with improved homes, sanitation, and water access.

Basic Services: Improving health and self-reliance through water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives

At Habitat for Humanity, we integrate WASH solutions into our housing standards to provide safe and affordable water and sanitation. Our initiatives include water kiosks, solar-powered boreholes in Zambia, and reservoirs and pipelines in Ethiopia, saving families significant time and reducing waterborne diseases.

A key aspect of our approach is fostering community ownership through WASH committees, ensuring sustainable management of facilities. By addressing WASH needs alongside housing, we improve health, livelihoods, and overall quality of life for vulnerable populations.



Examples of our initiatives in Africa

Climate change - Resilience :

Together with UN-Habitat, governments and partners, we are building climate-resilient coastal communities in **Côte d'Ivoire** and **Ghana** through the Improved Resilience of Coastal Communities project. Restoring ecosystems, and strengthening livelihoods through community-led, nature-based solutions.

Disaster response: Malawi & Ethiopia

Assisting disaster-affected areas to recover and prepare for future risks, with projects addressing urban flood risks through Green-Gray Infrastructure and promoting Inclusive Solid Waste Management. For example, we supported the 2024 Gofa landslides in Ethiopia and the 2023 Cyclone Freddy in Malawi.

Healthy Housing: Kenya

Working with key stakeholders in the built environment and public health sector to develop innovative, affordable, and health-conscious housing solutions. Among these initiatives is the development of vector-proofing solutions to safeguard existing houses in malaria-endemic regions, effectively preventing the entry of mosquitoes. We have piloted projects aimed at enhancing climate resilience thereby mitigating climate-induced health risks within low-income communities.

Youth Employability: Uganda

Our youth innovation hubs in Uganda mentor and empower young people in vocational skills. Since 2018, 6,000 young people have been trained in skills such as brick making, welding and metal fabrication among others. Based on an evaluation study of the youth hubs, 85% of trained youth have been absorbed into self-employment, and 15% into government employment. The trained youth have been involved in building houses using low-cost housing technologies.

Why collaborate with Habitat for Humanity in Africa?

Your support to Habitat for Humanity in Africa will make an impact on critical regional matters, such as climate issues, sustainability and gender equity while contributing to addressing the massive housing need. Together we can make a lasting impact, break the cycle of poverty and enhance the quality of life for countless families.