



## Country profile

# South Korea

### Habitat for Humanity in South Korea

In the past decades, the housing gap in Korea has continued to shrink. However, for many households, housing prices are still too high. While homeownership is unaffordable, rental options are inadequate and expensive, particularly in the Seoul metropolitan area that houses half of Korea's population. The adequate housing challenges are exacerbated by the spread of COVID-19 which has forced many low-income households, especially vulnerable groups such as older people and children to remain in poor housing conditions where they face the risks of respiratory diseases. Habitat Korea addresses the need for safe and affordable housing through various campaigns and online initiatives to raise awareness and funds.



#### HABITAT FACTS:

- Habitat started in South Korea in 1994.
- **Individuals served in FY2020 – 1,215**
  - Through new construction – 150
  - Through rehab – 5
  - Through repairs – 1,060
- **Volunteers engaged in FY2020 – 3,783**

#### COUNTRY FACTS:

**Capital city** – Seoul  
**Population** – over 51.7 million  
**Life expectancy** – 83 years  
**Unemployment rate** – 3.8%  
**Below poverty line** – 14.4%

# How Habitat addresses the need

## **Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic**

With housing being the first line of defense against the coronavirus, people living in inadequate homes are among the most vulnerable. They are also badly affected by the economic downturn triggered by the pandemic. To address their needs, Habitat Korea launched an online campaign to raise funds for emergency response kits containing food and personal hygiene products. Ready-to-eat meals were also sent to medical frontliners.

## **Advocating for housing rights**

Studies have shown that low-quality housing is strongly linked to physical health problems for children and affects their emotional and psychological development and social relationships. Through online campaigns and virtual “live” concerts on social media, Habitat Korea raises awareness and advocates for children’s rights to adequate housing.

## **Building homes and hope with KOICA funding**

Partnering with the Korea International Cooperation Agency, Habitat Korea has supported the construction of new homes, community buildings, sanitation facilities, and improving hygiene standards in countries such as Bangladesh and Ethiopia. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Habitat Korea and KOICA provided homeowners in Ethiopia with emergency response kits and training to raise their awareness of the importance of maintaining a hygienic environment.

## **Engaging with volunteers**

Due to restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Habitat Korea mostly engaged with volunteers through online activities in 2020. On August 15, 2020, Habitat Korea successfully organized a virtual run to mark Liberation Day during which participants could run at a time and place of their choice and promote the event online in a show of support for Habitat Korea's mission.

# What you can do

## **DONATE**

In Korea, please click on [donate.habitat.or.kr](https://donate.habitat.or.kr)

## **VOLUNTEER**

The Global Village program was suspended in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please go to [habitat.org/gv](https://habitat.org/gv) for updates, including when and where the program will resume.

## **CONTACT**

Habitat for Humanity Korea, 2nd-5th Floors, Songjook Building

Dongho-ro 195-7, Jung-gu, Seoul, Korea, ZIP code: 04598

Tel: +82 2 1544 3396 Fax: +82 2 2272 1067

Email: [khabitat@habitat.or.kr](mailto:khabitat@habitat.or.kr) Website: [habitat.or.kr/en/](https://habitat.or.kr/en/)

[facebook.com/habitatkor](https://facebook.com/habitatkor) [instagram.com/habitatkorea](https://instagram.com/habitatkorea) [youtube.com/user/HFHKorea](https://youtube.com/user/HFHKorea)