

# Macedonia

## Habitat for Humanity in Macedonia

Habitat for Humanity Macedonia began work in 2004. From the outset, it piloted several projects. The Home Improvement Fund was named among the three most innovative development projects worldwide by the Global Development Network, a World Bank-affiliated institution. Currently, Habitat Macedonia has nine active projects, which are impacting community development through traditional programs for most vulnerable segments of the population; housing market development through developing new products, services and channels aimed at collective apartment buildings and housing microfinancing partnerships; and housing and social development through mobilizing volunteers, civil society organizations and others around the cause of affordable housing.

## The housing need in Macedonia

Macedonia has come a long way in its transition from a centrally planned system to a market economy since its independence in 1991. However, the country's integration into the European Union and international structures has been slow and challenging. About 80,000 households still lack long-term housing solutions, and 12 percent of the housing stock is substandard. The average age of buildings in Macedonia is 30 years, and because of poor maintenance, about 100,000 units in collective apartment buildings are in need of immediate energy efficiency intervention. Housing conditions are particularly grave for Roma households. About 320,000 people, almost 15 percent of Macedonia's population, live in illegally constructed buildings. The capital city, Skopje, has squatter settlements of about 120,000. It has the largest Roma community in Europe, which lives in a ghetto-like environment.

## Habitat's contribution in Macedonia

Habitat Macedonia has developed diverse projects to alleviate the housing need. It strove to create various models to reach a greater number of families and improve the aging housing stock, largely through innovative financial mechanisms. In line with its commitment to help vulnerable groups, Habitat Macedonia responded to the current migrant crisis by providing temporary shelter.



## COUNTRY FACTS\*

<b>Capital</b>	Skopje
<b>Date of independence</b>	1991
<b>Population</b>	2.1 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	57.3%
<b>Life expectancy</b>	76.4 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	23.4%
<b>Population living below the poverty line</b>	21.5%

\*Find more country facts on:  
**CIA The World Factbook – Macedonia**

## HABITAT FACTS

**Date when Habitat started working in the country**  
2004

**Individuals served in FY18**  
21,905\*\*

\*\*Includes 17,975 served through market development and 3,565 served through professional services

**Volunteers hosted in FY18**  
171

**Housing solutions**  
New homes, repairs, market development, professional services



# Our programs

## Home improvement fund and Roma housing fund

Habitat Macedonia, in cooperation with a local microfinance partner, set up a Home Improvement Fund offering affordable, short-term home improvement loans. A similar model was applied for the Roma Housing Fund project which is serving the vulnerable Roma communities in five different municipalities on the outskirts of the capital, Skopje.

## Residential building management

After the stated controlled mechanisms for maintenance of apartment buildings were abandoned, the decay of homeowners' organizations in Macedonia has not been addressed until recently. Habitat Macedonia developed a new service that focuses on improving the management of collective apartment buildings. At least 150,000 housing units in collective apartment buildings need proper management and maintenance, so with this project Habitat Macedonia is improving housing in such buildings.

## Energy-efficiency upgrades

In Macedonia, residential energy consumption is high, unaffordable, environmentally degrading and inefficient. Habitat Macedonia provides low-income families with small loans for minor repairs, such as window or door replacements that will maximize energy efficiency of their homes. Even these small repairs can contribute towards better living conditions of these families. 'Green,' atmosphere-friendly homes will lower the heating costs and decrease energy loss significantly which should improve the health of family members during winter.

## House building

Many families in Macedonia live in overcrowded homes with parents or grandparents and cannot afford new apartments. To address the need, Habitat Macedonia started construction of an entire housing complex in Veles, an industrial city in the center of the country. Since the groundbreaking in 2008, this project has provided new affordable homes for 36 families in need.



## Meet a Habitat family

Igor and Aleksandra have three daughters, Jelena, Mihaela and Kristina. Igor works as a driver and Aleksandra works in a private company as a bookkeeper. The family used to live with Igor's parents but moved out and changed location two different times before finding a flat they could afford to rent. They rented it for seven years, living on the ground floor with low ceilings, very little light, and lots of moisture. The flat had old doors and windows, and the old electrical installations did not allow two electronic devices to be used at the same time.

Housing loans from banks were neither available nor affordable for the family. They learned about Habitat for Humanity from relatives and decided to apply for a Habitat home. They were full of hope that they would finally get a home of their own and the Habitat home in which they live now is everything they hoped for.

"To have our own place – that means everything to us," Aleksandra said. "Our Habitat home is finally the healthy and decent place our children deserve... that any child deserves. It fills our hearts with joy to watch them grow up here."

# What you can do

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

**Volunteer** Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Macedonia or lead your own. [Contact us](#) to learn more.

**Tithe** All affiliate tithe gifts are sent internationally to serve families outside of the United States.

To support the work of Habitat **MACEDONIA**, please send your tithe to: Habitat for Humanity International P.O. Box 6598 Americus, GA 31709-3498

**Contact** To learn more about Habitat projects in Macedonia, please contact us.

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