



## Country profile

# Malawi

### The housing need in Malawi

More than half, or 58.9%, of the 4.8 million housing units in Malawi are substandard homes, according to the government's [2018 population and housing census](#). Typically, these houses are made of mud walls and grass thatched roofs. To meet the current housing demand, an estimated 21,000 new units will have to be constructed annually in the next 10 years.

Anchored by the conviction that safe and affordable housing provides a path out of poverty, Habitat for Humanity Malawi has partnered with almost 133,600 families to access decent housing. We work with vulnerable groups to build or improve the place they call home, improve water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, help families recover and rebuild following disasters, and provide informal vocational training. We also advocate for security of land tenure as well as sustainable and inclusive policies and systems that promote access to decent housing

#### HABITAT FACTS:

- Habitat started in Malawi in 1986.
- **Individuals served in FY2024 – 1,893**
  - Through new construction – 190
  - Through incremental construction – 1,703



#### COUNTRY FACTS:

**Capital city** – Lilongwe  
**Population** – 20.9 million  
**Life expectancy** – 66 years  
**Unemployment rate** – 5.4%  
**Below poverty line** – 71.7%  
 Source: World Bank

# How Habitat addresses the need

Through the following programs, Habitat for Humanity Malawi works with families to build a better future:

## **Vulnerable group housing**

Habitat Malawi builds homes and sanitation facilities with orphans and other vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities in rural communities. We also provide complementary services such as training to raise awareness of malaria and HIV prevention as well as property and inheritance rights. To date we have supported 7,638 households.

## **Water, sanitation and hygiene, or WASH**

We help improve the health and well-being of informal settlement residents and rural communities through constructing user-friendly, sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene, or WASH, facilities. We build communities' capacity to manage the WASH structures and conduct hygiene and sanitation campaigns to raise awareness. To date, 32,870 households have since been served through our WASH interventions.

## **Disaster risk reduction and response, or DRRR**

Habitat Malawi empowers local communities through the Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness, or PASSA, to build back better and safer after disasters. We also train local masons to increase their knowledge and skills in building disaster-resilient homes. To date Habitat Malawi has supported 19,093 households.

## **Advocacy**

We advocate for greater access to land and housing. We also promote policies that increase access to adequate, affordable housing for vulnerable groups and low-income families, including the enactment of the National Urban Policy and security of land tenure.

## **Volunteer engagement**

Habitat Malawi is thrilled to welcome Global Village volunteers from around the world, following a hiatus in 2020 due to COVID-19. During the pandemic, we stayed connected with our volunteers through virtual builds, allowing them to watch our construction work online. Since re-opening in FY2024, we have welcomed 135 Global Village volunteers from the Netherlands, Germany, France, Belgium, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Together, we have built 17 houses with families. We look forward to more opportunities to involve volunteers in meaningful ways to support Habitat's mission and drive sustainable development.

## **Promoting sustainable construction materials in Malawi**

We have set up a facility in Blantyre to contribute towards production and use of sustainable construction materials such as cement blocks and soil stabilized blocks. Through this center we provide training to the disadvantaged youths and other vulnerable groups in vocational skills that relate to the housing industry.

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# What you can do

## **DONATE**

To donate directly to Habitat Malawi, please contact us via the details below or visit [habitat.org/donate](https://www.habitat.org/donate) and select "Designate your donation" to donate to Habitat Malawi.

## **VOLUNTEER**

The Global Village program has resumed in Malawi. Please visit [habitat.org/gv](https://www.habitat.org/gv) for more information and updates.

## **TITHE**

Habitat affiliates in the U.S. support the international work through an annual tithe. For additional information, email [tithe@habitat.org](mailto:tithe@habitat.org) or contact your local Habitat organization.

## **CONTACT**

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