



Habitat for Humanity Turkey

Country profile

Although we work in nearly 100 countries worldwide, we do not have, at the moment, any active programme in this country.

Housing need

In Turkey, housing is a complex social issue. Thirty years ago, three quarters of the population lived in the countryside and a minority lived in major cities. Now, the situation is reverse. Most villagers who migrated to the cities looking for work could not afford decent housing so they built temporary shelters in the outskirts. These shelters soon became neighborhoods of shacks, with no piped water or electricity. Poverty and crime became main characteristics of these growing urban slums.

Into this environment of substandard housing, which ignored earthquake hazards, came the tragedies of August 1999 tremors and aftershocks. Cheaply built, illegal housing lies at the heart of that earthquake disaster. It explains why so many houses crumbled like packs of cards. Much of the housing in poorer urban areas was substandard. It was constructed from mud brick and was unable to withstand the impact of a strong tremor.

Habitat in Turkey

In 1999, a devastating earthquake shook the western part of Turkey killing more than 20,000 people and leaving more than a half a million homeless. Worst hit was the area around the city of Adapazari, in the wealthier and more developed region of Turkey. Altogether, some 15 million

people were affected by the destructive tremor.

Habitat for Humanity entered Turkey shortly after the earthquake as it was invited to participate in a housing project for families whose homes had been destroyed. HFH partners with Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a local Turkish NGO in a joint project located in the town of Berikoy that lies just outside the ravaged city of Adapazari. HFH and its partners are committed to build 50 homes for families who lost everything in the earthquake. More than just building houses, the project is aiming at creating permanent and sustainable communities. Like Habitat homeowners across the globe, partner families in Berikoy are involved in every stage of building, from planning to mixing cement for the foundations of their new homes.

In the early spring of 2004 the first eight homes of the Berikoy project are expected to be completed. The outer walls and roofs have already been finished and the road leading to the construction site flattened and opened. Berikoy project builds houses mixing local tradition and modern construction methods. The framework of houses is enforced with galvanized steel to offer better protection from earthquakes. Each house will have a solar panel and windmills will also be built. It will provide the community with cleaner, renewable energy while at the same time making it more self-sustainable.

Contact information

HFH Turkey
Zochova 6-8
Bratislava 811 03
Slovenia

Phone: +421 233669000
E-mail: spetrie@habitat.org