



A comprehensive housing ecosystem approach in Asunción

Innovative, affordable housing solutions in any context require evidence-based community-, market- and policy-level solutions that stem from a deeper analysis of the entire housing ecosystem. This includes understanding the housing market conditions; the policy environment; and the social, economic and environmental realities that communities face. Relevant assessments that identify constraints and optimize opportunities are essential for supporting the implementation of sustainable housing interventions, as is establishing strategic people-public-private partnerships.

Comprehensive urban housing programs help improve the living conditions in vulnerable and low-income communities, and systemic market and policy interventions in targeted geographic areas lead to greater outcomes and demonstrate the transformational impact of housing.

HOUSING OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Habitat for Humanity Paraguay helps provide housing solutions to vulnerable informal communities through integrated development planning and voluntary relocation assistance. In Asunción, Habitat Paraguay has mobilized community members to create proposals for securing land tenure and has mediated the process of voluntarily relocating 1,000 families from flood-prone areas to subsidized housing.

Habitat moderated the relationship between the community and the government in supporting the implementation of public policy around relocations. Habitat Paraguay's efforts have contributed to the systematization of urban transformation processes, including technical and social diagnostics, regulations, evaluation matrices and basic adaptation methodologies tailored to the local environment. Habitat Paraguay oversees the application of these to improve local economies and ensure their sustainability. Altogether, this work has resulted in:

- Improved living conditions, health status, resilience and reduced threat of evictions for slum dwellers.

COMMUNITY-LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

- Imagination workshops to facilitate participatory development of urban transformation.
- Community mapping, including geo-referencing and inventory of houses.
- Social and technical cartography.
- Risk assessment.
- Historic reconstruction.
- Voluntary resettlement of 1,000 families from flood-prone areas.

MARKET- AND SECTOR-LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

- Establishing an interinstitutional table and work schedule with implementing partners.
- Adapting MIB methodology to the local context.

POLICY-LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

- Researching urban issues and country policies around land tenure to inform proposal for property regularization.

- Systemic changes in planning, budgeting and service delivery for urban slum communities.
- Systemization of urban transformation processes, especially around relocations.
- Improved skills and abilities of communities.
- Development of social and community identities for relocated communities.

A COMMUNITY-FOCUSED APPROACH

Community-led development is central to Habitat’s Global Urban Approach. Through community mapping, Habitat Paraguay found that Chacarita, one of Asunción’s first neighborhoods, is divided in two. Upper Chacarita did not have a formalized process for land tenure. The community lacked basic services and a physical route to central Asunción, which contributed to distrust in government and low community participation. In a wave of migration, lower Chacarita was informally inhabited and populated by 1,300 households feeling the effects of low-quality housing materials, overcrowding and a lack of basic services. Situated in the wetlands of the Paraguay River, lower Chacarita is characterized by cyclical flooding and a lack of public recreational spaces.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

To develop an integrated development proposal in collaboration with the upper Chacarita community, Habitat Paraguay conducted **Imagination Workshops**. The workshops enable stakeholders to co-create interventions, outline their roles, and strengthen community participation and organization.

Habitat Paraguay also engaged the National Secretary of Housing and Habitat, or SENAVITAT; Itaipu Binacional; and the municipality of Asunción through an **interinstitutional table** to provide housing solutions for lower Chacarita. The table fosters integrated knowledge management, allowing implementing partners to identify families in the intervention area and establish public and horizontal lines of communication for project processes. In a collaborative work schedule developed by stakeholders, SENAVITAT administered loans and managed housing policy and ground work. Itaipu Binacional financed the construction of 1,000 housing units, along with community spaces and services – just 8 kilometers from the Chacarita neighborhood. The municipality of Asunción implemented the process for land regularization and tenure security, while Habitat Paraguay executed the social components of the project, representing the community in the technical group and supporting families’ relocation and basic adaptation to their new neighborhood.

PROGRESS IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Voluntary relocation was the last option to safeguard these 1,000 families from the loss of life and property caused by flooding. Given the complex economic and social considerations, relocation processes must be multidisciplinary and interinstitutional and must integrate implementation development policies.

Habitat Paraguay’s work contributes to making communities and cities more **inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable** by addressing the following Sustainable Development Goals:

Goals 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 13 by formalizing housing-related processes and empowering urban dwellers to improve their living conditions through active participation and community organization.

Goal 17 by engaging community members and urban stakeholders in a transparent, participatory process of urban transformation.

