
HOUSING HONDURAS
2025 DESIGN COMPETITION
HOMES 4 HOMES

INTRODUCTION

The social crisis of Latin America finds one of its most intense expressions in the informal settlements scattered across the region.

Honduras, one of the most impoverished countries in Latin America, is no exception. In towns and villages like Santa Rita, thousands of families live in unstable conditions, struggling daily against poverty, security, and a lack of basic needs. Across the country, approximately 60% of the population lives below the poverty line, and informal settlements continue to grow as rural-to-urban migration accelerates.

For any community to truly thrive, five essential elements must be in place: access to clean water, medical care, housing, education, and proper sanitation. Yet, in many settlements, these necessities remain out of reach, forcing residents to navigate daily hardships without the infrastructure needed to break the cycle of poverty.

The emergence of these informal communities stems largely from weak urban planning, a lack of affordable housing policies, and the absence of effective government intervention. Many families migrating from rural areas to towns like Santa Rita in search of better opportunities find themselves forced to settle in overcrowded, underserved neighborhoods with little infrastructure and limited economic prospects.

The rapid and unstructured growth of these settlements leads to severe consequences, including heightened vulnerability to natural disasters, poor health conditions, and increased crime rates. Despite these challenges, the people of Honduras persevere—building their communities through resilience, solidarity, and the hope for a better future. However, urgent action is needed to address the deep structural inequalities that perpetuate these living conditions, ensuring access to dignified housing, basic services, and economic opportunities for all.

WHO IS HOMES4HOMES ?

Homes4Homes is a nonprofit organization committed to transforming lives by providing secure, dignified housing to families in need.

The organization offers an efficient model that empowers local leaders and construction teams to build homes for at-risk members of their own communities.

By sourcing leaders, labor, materials, and designs locally, they ensure that each project not only provides shelter but also stimulates local economies and fosters community ownership.

To date, Homes4Homes has constructed over 1,300 homes, housing more than 7,800 people across 14 communities. Their 100% model ensures that all donations go directly to construction, maximizing the impact of every contribution.

In this charrette, Homes4Homes is collaborating with IC13, a ‘boots-on-the-ground’ nonprofit organization teaching local laborers and overseeing the execution of build projects. This partnership aims to address the critical housing needs in Santa Rita, Honduras, fostering sustainable community development and improving the quality of life for its residents.

HONDURAS : CLIMATE

Santa Rita, Honduras, is situated in the Yoro Department within the Valle de Sula region, characterized by a **tropical monsoon climate** (Am) under the Köppen–Geiger classification. This climate features warm temperatures and significant rainfall throughout the year.

Temperature: The district's yearly average temperature is approximately 23.2°C (73.7°F), slightly lower than the national average. Monthly average temperatures range from 21°C (70°F) in the cooler months of January, November, and December to 26°C (78°F) during the warmer months of April, May, and June. Daily temperatures typically vary between 20°C (68°F) and 25°C (77°F), with rare extremes reaching as low as 11°C (52°F) or as high as 37°C (99°F).

Precipitation: Santa Rita receives an average annual rainfall of approximately 1,304 mm (51.3 inches), distributed over about 187 rainy days per year. The rainy season extends from May to December, with the heaviest precipitation occurring between June and October. Monthly rainfall averages range from around 23.1 mm (0.9 inches) in March to approximately 227.8 mm (9 inches) in July.

Humidity: The region experiences high humidity levels year-round, contributing to a muggy atmosphere.
Sunshine: Santa Rita enjoys an average of 3,470 hours of sunshine annually, with daylight hours varying from approximately 11 to 13 hours per day.

Implications for Construction: Given Santa Rita's tropical monsoon climate, building designs must account for high temperatures, significant rainfall, and elevated humidity. Effective ventilation, moisture-resistant materials, drainage/waterproofing and robust roofing systems are essential to ensure durability and comfort in this environment.

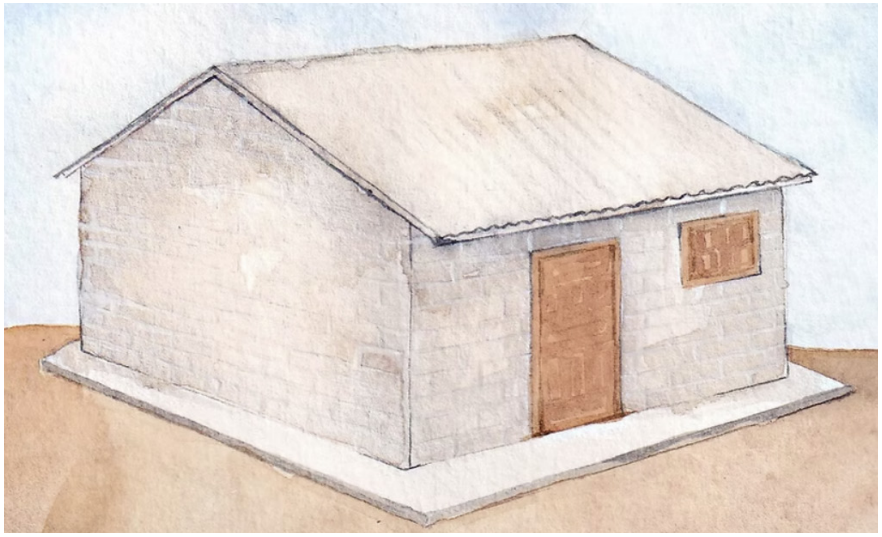
CURRENT MODEL

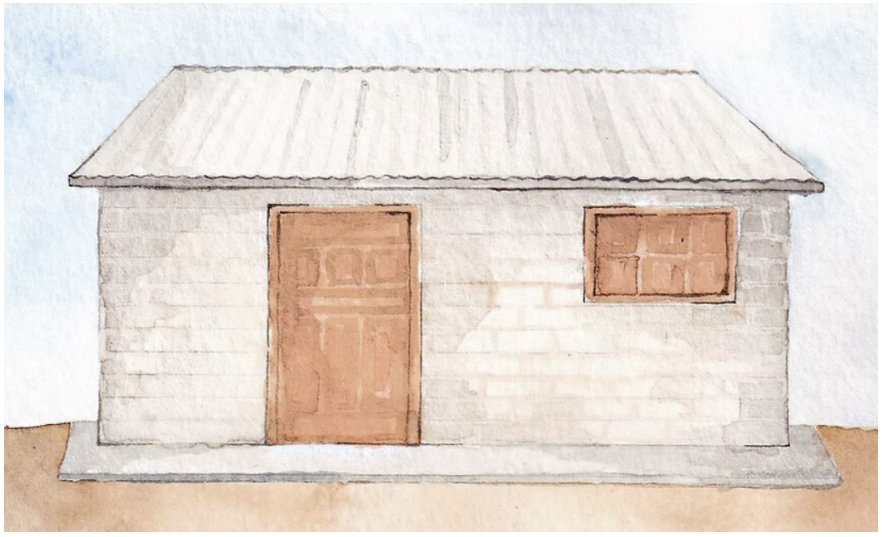
Homes4Homes' current housing model provides a durable, cost-effective solution for families in Honduras, typically accommodating 3 to 6 members.

The design prioritizes safe, dry shelter while ensuring access to basic sanitation. Constructed with a solid concrete slab foundation, CMU block walls, and a metal sheet roof, the structure is built to withstand local environmental conditions.

To enhance stability, rebar is incorporated throughout the frame, with each rebar tie manually secured for added strength and durability. Given the limited access to power tools, the construction process relies on local manual labor, tying rear by hand and mixing cement manually.

For cost breakdowns, detail plans, elevations and more details, please visit: **https:\\homes4homes.org**





THE CHALLENGE

Homes4Homes is calling for proposals to redesign the current housing model for communities in Santa Rita, Honduras.

This competition aims to provide a long-term, scalable solution for housing in Honduras, helping to build safer, more resilient communities. The winning design will be used as the new model and it will be built throughout the village and country.

The primary goals of this competition are:

Accelerate construction timelines and streamline the logistical challenges inherent in the current model, making the process faster and more efficient.

Lower the overall cost compared to the existing model, ensuring affordability without compromising on quality.

Utilize locally available, sustainable materials that are easy to source and work with.

Enhance the livability of the space, improving the quality of life for families by optimizing functionality, ventilation, and overall comfort.

Prioritize safety and shelter as designs should maintain or improve the current provision for these needs.

All details regarding these and other goals of the competition can be found in the following pages.

HOUSE REQUIREMENTS

Each housing unit must include designated spaces for a bathroom (including a pour-flush toilet), an open living area with a kitchen, and two bedrooms—however, interior divisions are flexible and can be designed according to your approach.

The current model is built on a **$4,000 USD budget**, covering all materials and transportation costs. The house must be self-built by a team of 3-5 non-specialist laborers in under four weeks, prioritizing simple construction techniques. Only mechanical hand tools (e.g., shovels, hammers, screwdrivers) should be required—no electrical tools can be used. Additionally, all materials must be transportable by two people, ensuring accessibility in remote areas with narrow, poorly maintained roads. **Beyond the core spaces, families commonly add functional areas to support daily life. A new design could incorporate:**

A pila, a traditional stone or concrete wash basin, is vital for washing clothes, dishes, and storing water in areas with limited plumbing. It's used daily in rural areas where access to water is more basic.

A mirador stove (or "Dos por Tres"), a durable and cost-effective cookstove designed to meet all cooking needs, is typically custom-built from brick and mortar. The rocket elbow design ensures more efficient cooking, requiring less wood and reducing environmental impact.

Outdoor spaces for activities like gardening, drying clothes on clotheslines, and other essential functions, providing families with multifunctional areas for daily tasks.

Participants are encouraged to design a **rainwater collection system** to help families store and use water for cooking, washing, and bathing. Keep in mind Honduras' distinct wet and dry seasons—rain is abundant from May to October, but water scarcity is a challenge for the rest of the year.

Given the **lack of reliable energy sources**, the design should maximize passive cooling, ventilation, insulation, and natural light to improve comfort. Installing a solar panel is not currently planned since they typically require maintenance that cannot be provided.

NOTE: family safety is essential, as it is the main concern for families, especially when it comes to shared spaces. While combining spaces can be an effective way to foster community, it's crucial that the design offers secure, private spaces to protect families from theft or harm. For many, simply having a roof over their heads and a door that locks is a life-changing source of stability and peace of mind.

COMPETITION DETAILS

Details about the charette, timeline, team eligibility and awards coming soon. Estimated dates are as follows:

Competition kikcoff event - 6/4

RFI period opened - 6/4
Please submit RFIs to charrette@homes4homes.org

RFI period closed - 6/27
Please submit RFIs to charrette@homes4homes.org

RFIs answered - 7/7

Informal QA (virtual) - 7/8

Proposals due - 5pm 8/12

Award ceremony - 8/20
Time: 6-7:30PM
Location: Walk Your Plans
2937 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37214

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