



A house to live in  
A place to call home

**Solid House Foundation**

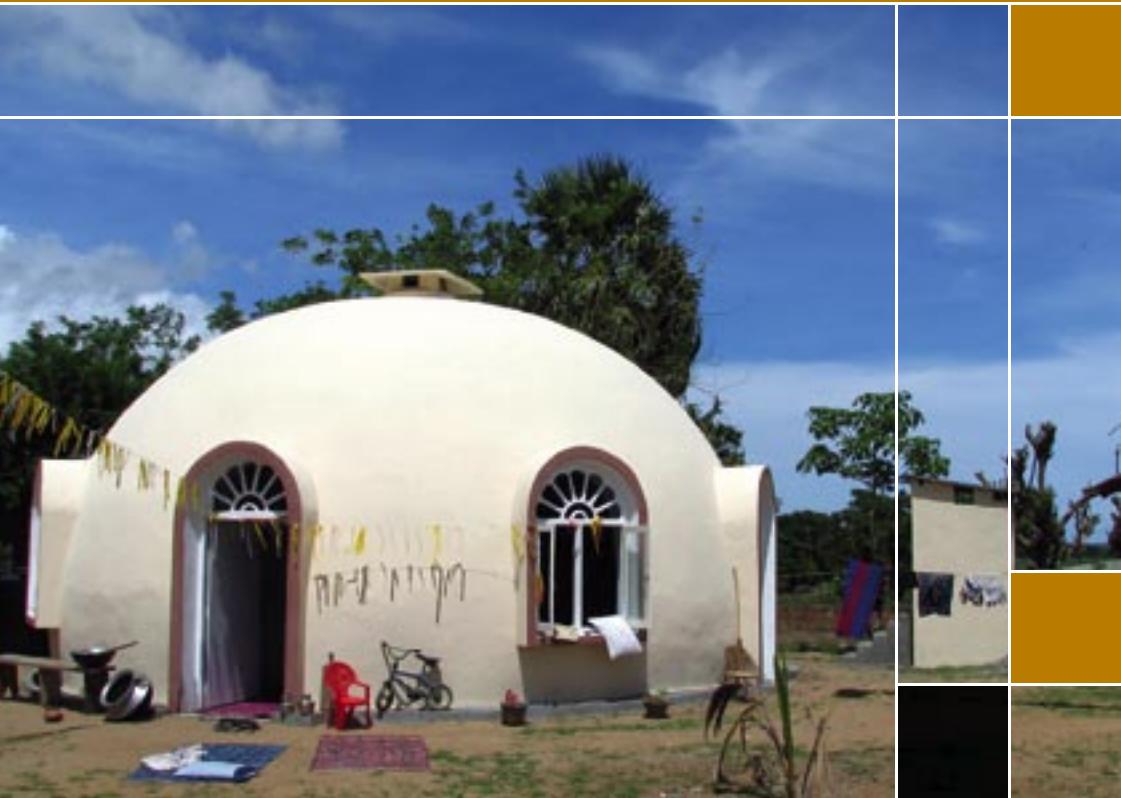
## Over a billion houses needed...

There is a world shortage of more than a billion homes. We desperately need good housing programmes. It is understandable that one of the United Nations' eight **Millennium Development Goals** for 2015 is to have a greater number of sustainable homes in a healthy environment.

Solid House Foundation was set up in November 2003 to create social housing, education and permanent infrastructure for low income groups in developing countries, providing safe and healthy housing which has a positive effect on the health of the people. Building these houses also generates economic activity and stability.

*"The relative simplicity of the construction and execution of SHF projects as well as the characteristics of the SolidHouses seem to me to exactly fit the bill in the world of habitat projects."*

Erik Beijer, director of Dutch International Guarantees for Housing (DIGH)





## Own responsibility

An important starting-point for SHF is that the people involved actually participate themselves. As future inhabitants they are practically and financially responsible for the housing project. Habitat projects for low income groups are often intended for women (and their children). That is why SHF wants to pay special attention to the different positions of women and men, a **gender-specific** approach. SHF is responsible for the preparation and guidance of the housing projects. The local population will also be educated to enable them to make the project successful.

## Integrated approach

SHF is not simply concerned with the building of a house but with improving the entire living environment in the long term: providing an integrated approach to housing, water and sanitation, education, economic development, health and safety, and community building.



*"We need solid houses like these. In the past we have lost our homes many times due to conflict and Tsunami. These homes are custom-made for us; we don't want any other houses."*

Future inhabitant,  
Mrs. T. Jeyaledsumy,  
president Women Rural  
Development Society  
Sri Lanka.

## Easy-to-build dome homes

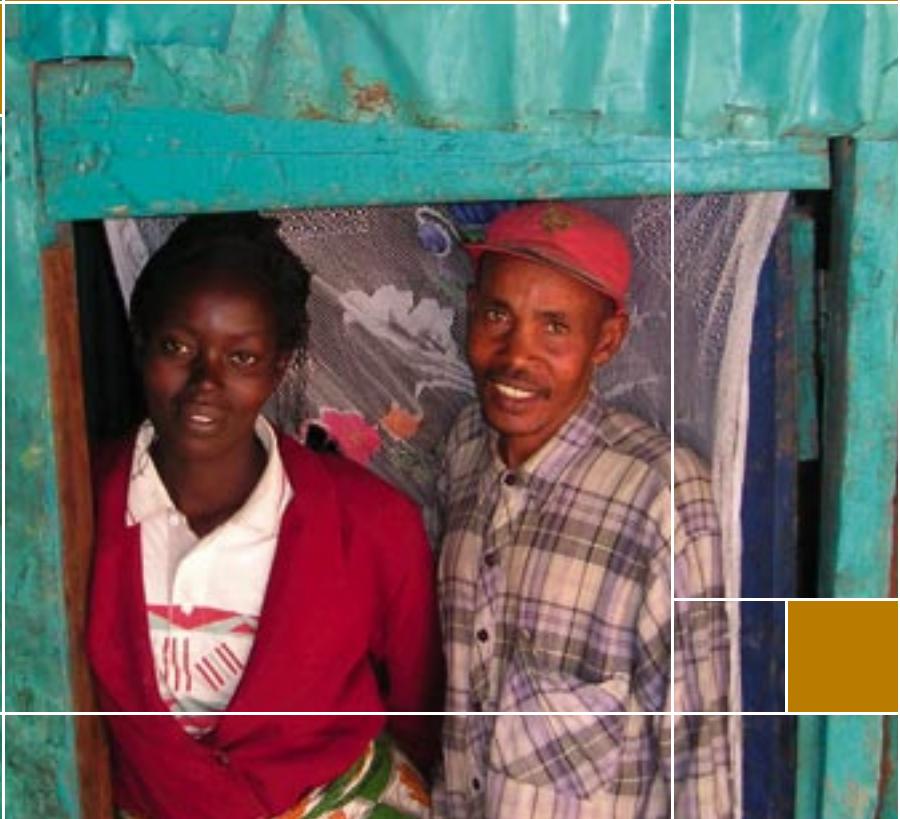
The simple construction method of the 'SolidHouse' means that durable homes can be quickly built. The houses can withstand extreme weather conditions and natural disasters. Another important advantage is that local community members can build these houses themselves at a low cost. SHF educates some of the future inhabitants enabling them to build these houses themselves, carry out future projects and perhaps earn a living by doing so.

The future inhabitants will also have to contribute financially. The idea behind this is that it will ensure optimal involvement by the local people when building their homes. SHF can support the inhabitants financially with their dome homes, for instance by acting as a broker or as an intermediary when applying for microcredit.

### Advantages of a dome home

- A relatively cheap home built in just a couple of weeks.
- Necessities: simple tools, easily obtainable construction material, some practical training and coaching. Highly qualified staff is not a necessity!
- Self-supporting dome construction. Durable and resistant to earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes and any other violent forces of nature.
- Less maintenance required than traditional constructions.
- Extremely flexible lay out arrangements.
- Simple adaptation of the exterior to the local culture and traditions.





## Building according to local situation

This building principle has been a tested concept for several years now. SHF pays particular attention to providing homes that answer local needs. Naturally the availability of local materials and the prevailing climatic conditions are of essential importance.

Inside, the SolidHouses can be flexibly arranged. Once the building is completed, inhabitants can simply adjust the house to their requirements and preferences. And this applies for the rest of their lives.



*"Of all the post-tsunami houses this is the best one I have ever seen."*

A.L.M. Azmi, Divisional Secretary Pottuvil, Sri Lanka.



## Long term co-operation

SHF aims at low income groups in developing countries who have organised themselves formally: like a women's group or an agricultural co-operative. Together with a local partner organisation, SHF works towards **community mobilisation**. Mostly, the partner is a local NGO, or an organisation offering technical assistance for the construction or improvement of houses. However, it could also be an institution providing microcredit or one supporting and reinforcing **Community Based Organisations**.

## Broadly based social support

Apart from local partners, SHF also wants to co-operate with other parties. These parties could be public organisations, governments, universities and citizen's initiatives. In this way, the social support for durable housing will be as broad and as well grounded as possible.

*"Dedicated management involvement, a well-earned reputation in the world of habitat organisations, close involvement and final responsibility by the target group, will ensure enduring public support."*

André Dellevoet, Deputy Ambassador Netherlands Embassy, Kinshasa, Congo

## Thanks to the dedication of many!

SHF does not aim to make a profit, but it does co-operate with numerous business partners. Quality and transparency are therefore essential. Solid House Foundation's activities can only succeed because of the dedicated commitment of many. Not in the least, thanks to the enthusiasm and the generosity of a large group of people and organisations donating money both at the project locations abroad and in the Netherlands.

SHF has an extensive national and international network and co-operates with other habitat organisations, UN Habitat, housing corporations, NGOs, private enterprises (including real estate companies), universities, colleges and schools.

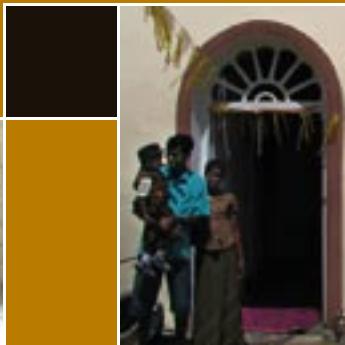
## As little overhead as possible

Organisation, administration and policy are professionally managed. SHF has a small office in Utrecht, employing a few people. This office is supported by a think tank consisting of (creative) experts advising SHF in their various capacities. SHF also has a board of governors and a committee of recommendation. Overhead costs are kept very low. In this way, the available resources can be directed optimally towards those who need them most.



*"To our community, the 'dome' is a representative space, where we can meet. As a co-operative we can now start small companies servicing the entire area. "*

Maryloise Wairimu  
Wanyoike, chairperson  
Rehema Housing  
Co-operative Society,  
Kenia.





## More information?

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SHF has ongoing projects in various countries in Africa, Asia and Latin-America.  
You can find up-to-date information on our website [www.solidhouse.nl](http://www.solidhouse.nl)