

# HOW AFFORDABLE HOMES HELP FAMILIES BUILD STEPPINGSTONES FOR THEIR FUTURES

**REAL HAS BEEN WORKING IN KENYA TO BUILD A COMMERCIALY VIABLE AFFORDABLE HOMES MOVEMENT SINCE 2005, PARTNERING WITH NACHU\*.**



A NACHU affordable housing project site in Nairobi.

## BEGINNINGS

When Fabian left his home village for Nairobi he moved into the slum neighbourhood of Kware with his brother. His wife and three children stayed back in their home village, and Fabian back sent any money that he earnt.

When his brother tragically passed away shortly afterwards, Fabian and his wife agreed to take on the brother's family, which included four more children. The financial demand on Fabian to support the two families was draining.

## LIFE IN THE CITY

Despite being trained as a qualified doctor, finding reliable well-paid work proved harder than Fabian had anticipated. Without the necessary experience he was forced to take up locum work with irregular hours, and accepted any additional jobs that he could find, mainly in tarmacaking.

With the two families back at home, he never had enough income to consider moving out of the slum, and getting a

mortgage to purchase a home of his own felt impossible. Instead he rented space in a friend's one-room house, constructed from metal sheeting with just a curtain to divide the bedroom and living space.

Fabian lived in the slum for over two years. The house had electricity through an illegal connection, however water became a major problem. Fabian would have to queue for hours to purchase 20 litre jerry cans of water that was often dirty.

Then, in 2011 the houses were demolished, leaving the residents with nowhere to go.

**"WE HAD NOWHERE TO RUN TO, THANK GOD PEOPLE CAME IN AND HERE WE ARE."**

## A NEW HOME

For Fabian, after living in Kware slum and seeing his home demolished, owning his own house is akin to living

**FABIAN WAS ABLE TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF HIS CHILDREN AFTER PURCHASING HIS OWN AFFORDABLE HOME.**

like a king. In his new home, there is clean water and the environment is much better. His life is now much more stable, and he continues to support his family back in the village, sending them money and food that he grows in the kitchen gardens at [Ngumo Mbega](#).

When he is not working, Fabian often visits the village, but otherwise he has to spend all of his time in the city to avoid losing his locum. He is now employed at a local hospital in emergency response work.

## THE IMPACT

Although often separated from his family and children, Fabian is content in knowing that they can now have a stable life. Next year, when he reaches the age of sixty he hopes to retire, but if Fabian's children ever need to move to the city for work, like he did, they will not have to start in the slums. Instead, they can come to the Ngumo Mbega project and live in decent housing. In this way the project has given Fabian's children a steppingstone for their futures.

\*The National Union for Housing Cooperatives in Kenya