



PALESTINE
SHELTER CLUSTER

Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements

NATIONAL RESPONSE STRATEGY

2026-2027



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Lead agency	Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
Co-coordination	International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Technical coordination	Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and IOM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The shelter crisis in Palestine remains severe in both occupied Gaza and the West Bank. In Gaza, the response remains an acute emergency shaped by mass displacement, large-scale housing destruction, repeated shocks, and restricted entry of shelter materials¹. In the West Bank, demolitions, military operations, settler violence, and prolonged displacement continue to generate urgent shelter and protection needs.

Strategically, the response pursues two distinct outcomes. In Gaza, the priority is life-saving shelter assistance, safe return where technically feasible, and incremental interim shelter pathways under

severe access constraints. In the West Bank, the priority is protection of presence, prevention of further displacement, and support to households facing demolition, settler violence, and protracted displacement.

This strategy focuses on four priorities:

- (1) emergency shelter and household items,
- (2) transitional shelter pathways where feasible,
- (3) seasonal risk reduction, and
- (4) stronger advocacy for access, materials, and flexible funding.

1. OBJECTIVE

The overall objective is to provide shelter support that increases the privacy, dignity, and protection of affected households from external threats, while supporting the conditions needed for the first steps toward recovery. The strategy serves as a transitional framework linking emergency shelter response with transitional solutions, site-level improvements, housing, land and property (HLP) rights-informed recovery, towards early recovery interventions. It covers a continuum from immediate emergency response through recovery-oriented interventions and seasonal risk reduction across both contexts, recognizing that these phases may occur in parallel, particularly in Gaza.

2. COORDINATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Shelter Cluster is led by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and co-coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with technical coordination support from IOM and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). The Shelter Cluster works in close coordination with the Site Management, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Protection, Health, Housing, Land and Property (HLP) and the Logistics Clusters, along with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and recovery actors to align strategy, access, and technical guidance.

The cluster works to three lines of accountability: the affected population, cluster partners, and donors and coordination systems. Accountability to affected people is pursued through community participation in shelter option design, safe and accessible feedback and complaint channels, and validation of targeting. Accountability among partners is pursued through shared targeting criteria, deduplication, referral tracking, and regular reporting against agreed indicators. Accountability to donors and coordination systems is pursued through transparent prioritization, gap analysis, and monitoring of response performance.

Governance element	Purpose	Operational note
Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and Technical Working Groups (TWG)	Endorse technical direction, standards, and positioning.	TWGs develop and recommend technical guidance, while the SAG endorses strategic direction, and the cluster coordination team facilitates dissemination and implementation through partners.
Partner accountability	Support evidence-based targeting, reporting, and gap analysis.	All partners are expected to apply cluster vulnerability criteria and report disaggregated data.

¹ OCHA oPt, Humanitarian Situation Report, 5 June 2026, noting continuing constraints on entry of essential items into Gaza, including shelter materials. www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-report-5-june-2026

Strategic Advisory Group (SAG)	
National SAG	CRS, IOM, MA'AN, NRC, PHC, PARC, UNDP, UNRWA, WeWorld
Gaza SAG	ACTED, BLDA, CRS, IOM, NRC, MA'AN, UNDP, PHC, UNRWA
West Bank SAG	ACF, ACTED, CRS, NRC, MA'AN, PARC, PHC, UNRWA, WeWorld, MoSD

3. OPERATING CONTEXT

3.1. HUMANITARIAN RESET AND SHELTER, LAND AND SITE COORDINATION TRANSITION

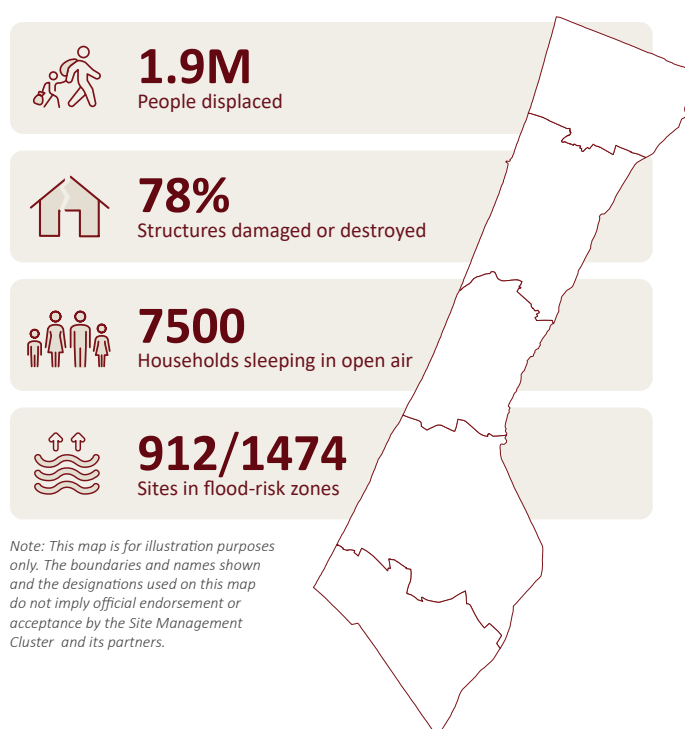
As part of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Humanitarian Reset agenda, the global humanitarian coordination architecture is undergoing reform to improve efficiency, reduce fragmentation, and promote more integrated responses to increasingly complex and protracted crises. Within this framework, the former Shelter Cluster, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, and Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Area of Responsibility are being brought together under a new Shelter, Land and Site Coordination (SLSC) architecture, co-led globally by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

In Palestine, where displacement, housing destruction, land-related constraints, and site-level vulnerabilities are deeply interconnected, the transition presents an opportunity to strengthen coordination and promote more holistic responses. The Shelter Cluster will continue to work closely with partners to ensure that life-saving shelter assistance remains at the core of the response while progressively strengthening linkages with site coordination and HLP considerations. The transition will be implemented in a phased manner, maintaining continuity of existing coordination services while aligning with emerging global guidance and supporting more coherent planning, prioritization, and advocacy across the humanitarian response.

3.2. GAZA

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza is now in its third year. An estimated 1.9 million people, approximately 90 percent of the population, remain displaced. The Shelter Cluster's multisource damage mapping (January 2026) identifies 320,181 damaged housing units affecting 1,696,959 people, representing around 78 percent of all structures and 60 percent of the pre-war housing stock. Site-level data from a Site Management Cluster site verification report (1,642 sites, April 2026) shows 44.1 percent of sites with visible fire hazards, 58.5 percent with rainwater accumulation, and 124,629 households with no shelter assistance in the previous six months.

Following the resumption of military operations in March 2026, access deteriorated rapidly, and shelter stocks approached depletion. Summer conditions, extreme heat, and fire risks in congested sites add further urgent risk. Extremely limited humanitarian access to critical items, INGO registration requirements, and the blocking of UNRWA's access since March 2025 continue to significantly constrain operational capacity.



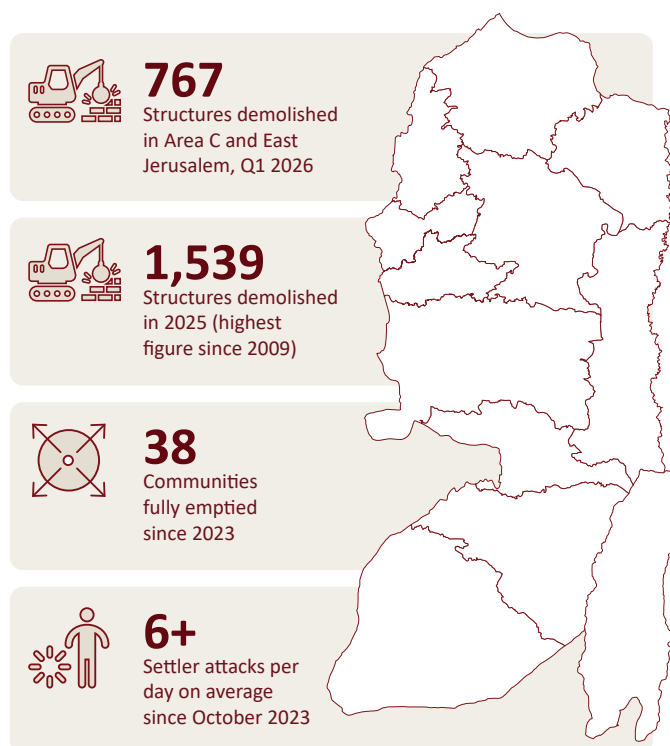
Access and material entry remain the central operational constraint in Gaza. Entry of shelter materials is governed by layered approval processes, with frequent rejection of dual-use items, including basic fixing materials. Entry volumes are far below need, corridor availability is unpredictable, and INGO registration requirements further limit who can operate and at what scale. These constraints shape the entire response: they restrict prepositioning, narrow modality choice toward whatever materials can enter, and hold back any scale-up of repair and transitional shelter. Cluster planning therefore assumes constrained and variable access as the baseline rather than the exception.

3.3. WEST BANK

Shelter needs are driven by military operations, demolitions, settler violence, and prolonged displacement across Area C, East Jerusalem, the northern camps, and beyond. Demolitions have accelerated year on year since 2023: 767 structures were demolished in Q1 2026 alone, and the 1,539 structures demolished in 2025 were the highest annual figure since systematic monitoring began in 2009. By the end of Q1 2026, 38 communities had been fully emptied² since 2023. Settler violence has exceeded six attacks per day on average across approximately 90 communities.

These conditions may amount to forcible transfer under international humanitarian law. Shelter interventions are an essential tool for sustaining Palestinian presence and preventing further displacement.

Displacement in the West Bank is shifting from temporary to increasingly protracted, particularly in the northern camps and high-risk Area C communities. This changes what the response must provide: longer rental assistance with clearer exit options, attention to host-family fatigue, and choices between repair and relocation. It also raises the need for interim shelter solutions that do not create additional legal or demolition risk. East Jerusalem remains a priority area due to the high risk of displacement. Partners are providing rental assistance to displaced families and implementing housing support projects. The area continues to face significant housing, planning, and residency-related pressures that contribute to demographic change and may compel Palestinian residents to relocate outside the city.



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the Site Management Cluster and its partners.

The current displacement trend is increasingly becoming permanent rather than temporary. Displaced families are rarely returning to their communities due to ongoing insecurity, destruction of homes, and persistent protection risks. Many have settled in alternative locations, highlighting the need for longer-term shelter and housing solutions alongside emergency assistance.

Area	% of West Bank	Control	Key Characteristics	Main Shelter Challenges
Area A	18%	Full Palestinian civil and security control	Highly urbanized. Overcrowding strains housing availability. 19 UNRWA-recognized refugee camps. Limited space and tenure constraints restrict upgrading.	Military operations cause recurrent housing damage. Extreme density in refugee camps with poor ventilation and aging shelter stock. Elevated protection risks.

² OCHA oPt, Humanitarian Situation Report, 27 March 2026, reporting that displacement linked to settler violence and access restrictions in the first quarter of 2026 surpassed the 2025 total, and that 38 communities had been emptied since 2023.

Area	% of West Bank	Control	Key Characteristics	Main Shelter Challenges
Area B	22%	Palestinian civil control / Joint Israeli-Palestinian security control	Mixed semi-urban and rural context. Predominantly low-rise apartment buildings and detached housing, often built incrementally.	Risk of demolitions and stop-work orders. Restricted building permits. Fragmented planning authority creates uncertainty for construction and rehabilitation.
Area C	60%	Full Israeli civil and security control	Predominantly rural with scattered Palestinian communities and expanding Israeli settlements. Severe restrictions on building permits and very low approval rates.	High risk of demolitions, evictions, and stop-work orders. Land confiscation and settlement expansion. Legal and operational constraints on shelter materials, repairs, building permits, design, and permanence. Heightened settler violence and displacement.

3.4. CURRENT SHELTER CONTEXT

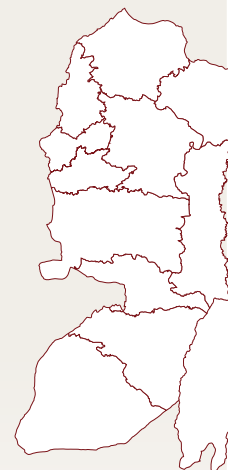
Gaza

- Displacement continues, with repeated movements and severe shelter deterioration.
- Structural destruction is widespread, and the shelter response is constrained to a limited entry of emergency shelter items.
- Congestion, flooding, fire risk, structurally damaged buildings that are occupied and at risk of collapse, and extreme summer heat create life-threatening settlement conditions.
- Restricted entry of materials continues to block replenishment of emergency response and scale-up of repair and transitional shelter solutions.



West Bank

- Shelter needs are driven by military operations, demolitions, settler violence, and prolonged displacement.
- Area C, East Jerusalem, and the northern camps remain priority areas for response and protection-oriented shelter action.
- Displacement increasingly extends beyond camps into villages and towns affected by operations and access restrictions.
- Shelter support remains critical to reduce further displacement and sustain Palestinian presence in affected communities.



4. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PALESTINE SHELTER RESPONSE

The response in Palestine is increasingly being characterized as protracted with sudden, rapid on-set emergencies, and currently with limited resourcing and capacity to progress beyond the emergency response stage. The principles below are outlined by the Shelter Cluster SAG to ensure a streamlined humanitarian shelter response that adheres to Do-No-Harm Principles.

- All shelter interventions are informed by robust needs analysis, vulnerability-based targeting, and coordinated prioritization in line with Shelter Cluster's guidance³, directing limited resources to households facing the highest risks of shelter, protection, and displacement.
- Shelter responses should promote localization as a core principle, recognizing national NGOs, municipalities, local engineers, local workshops, skilled labor, and affected households as central actors in planning, decision-making, and delivery, while strengthening local capacities and leadership wherever feasible.
- Shelter interventions are coordinated with other sectors for complementarity where conditions allow.
- Shelter cluster partners continue to advocate for incremental and versatile shelter approaches, i.e., bringing in diverse shelter materials and developing assistance packages applicable in the implementation of different shelter typologies.
- While encouraging cash and market approaches, shelter responses must always assess the appropriateness and scope of cash-voucher assistance (CVA) based on market conditions.
- The cluster continues to advocate for the entry of materials beyond tents and tarpaulins, particularly durable flooring, cladding, and roofing, without which the response cannot scale beyond basic emergency items and local coping.
- Housing, land and property (HLP) considerations are mainstreamed across all shelter interventions through risk-based due diligence, promotion of tenure security, prevention and mitigation of HLP disputes, protection of vulnerable groups, and integration of HLP principles across emergency, recovery, and durable solutions programming.
- Emergency non-food items (NFI) and basic shelter items may require lighter checks, while rental assistance, repairs, prefabricated units, transitional shelter, and upgrades require stronger tenure verification, eviction-risk analysis, landlord/owner consent, tenure agreements, and referral to Legal actors where needed when feasible.
- All shelter and household item interventions integrate seasonal adaptation for both summer heat and winter cold, anticipating seasonal risks in design, timing, and prepositioning rather than responding after onset.⁴
- Shelter interventions to be designed and implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner, ensuring equitable access, minimizing tensions between affected groups, and adhering to the principles of neutrality, impartiality, and do-no-harm.
- Ensure affected populations have access to safe, inclusive, and accessible feedback and complaint mechanisms, with regular monitoring and analysis of feedback to inform decision-making and improve shelter responses.
- All shelter interventions apply protection mainstreaming, ensuring safe and dignified access, privacy, mitigation of gender-based violence risks, disability and age inclusion, conflict sensitivity, and functioning referral pathways across sectors and throughout programme cycle.

³ Targeting and Prioritization Guidance Note; Shelter Cluster Vulnerability Criteria; Social Vulnerability Scoring Tool.

⁴ See SC summer priority and SC winterization recommendation.

5. GAZA RESPONSE

5.1. MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSE

The cluster's response is organized into three sequenced areas along the shelter pathway: emergency shelter and essential household items; improved emergency shelter; and transitional shelter solutions. Repairs cut across the emergency and transitional areas. Seasonal preparedness and risk reduction are integrated across all areas, and continuous advocacy for access and shelter materials underpins the response. Modality, whether cash, vouchers, in-kind, or hybrid, is determined by partners based on access and market conditions.

Main Areas of Response	
Emergency shelter and essential household items	Provide immediate shelter support that reduces exposure to weather elements, enables domestic functions, restores at least minimal privacy, and meets essential household needs. Includes tents, tarpaulins, sealing-off, and basic household items.
Improved emergency shelter	Raise durability, habitability, and thermal performance where materials allow, through emergency shelter kits (ESK) and upgraded kits (ESK plus). This is the interim step between emergency and transitional shelter and is kept distinct from transitional solutions.
Transitional shelter solutions	Please change the text: Enable incremental transitional shelter aligned with the Shelter Cluster transitional shelter standards, where access and conditions allow. Transitional shelters should last for 4-6 years and in Gaza, 10 years considering the timeline that may be required for reconstruction. Transitional shelters are critical for dignified and adequate medium-term sheltering for a staggering number of displaced persons in Gaza who are in sites with no alternative sheltering options. Hence these solutions can only be enabled through proportionate funding streams and material access of durable materials such as cement, timber, steel, roofing sheets etc.

Repairs and reoccupation support cut across the emergency and transitional areas and are conditional on technical assessment and safety clearance. Seasonal preparedness and risk reduction, covering summerization and winterization, are integrated across all areas. Continuous advocacy for the entry of shelter materials underpins the entire response.

5.2. SCENARIO-BASED AND ADAPTIVE POSTURE

Given the unpredictability of the operational environment, the cluster maintains a scenario-based, adaptive posture, distinguishing shock-response events from access-and-supply operating scenarios.

Shock-response events	
Scenario	Response Approach
Displacement following evacuation orders and airstrikes	Preposition shelter materials in accessible locations and coordinate a rapid integrated response with other clusters, with the Shelter Cluster focusing on emergency shelter and essential household items. Contingency stock cannot be held at the scale of need due to limited entry and storage, so prepositioning covers only part of the caseload and is prioritized based on the likelihood of displacement and household vulnerability.

Return to damaged buildings	Conditional on coordination with UNMAS and damage assessments, and on technical safety clearance covering structural safety, explosive ordnance screening, and habitability. Partners provide emergency repair assistance to the most vulnerable households. Refer to the TSA TWG guidance.
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Access and supply operating scenarios	
Scenario	Response Approach
Severely limited material entry through humanitarian and commercial corridors	Prioritize localized approaches using available and salvaged materials based on market conditions, drawing on tested models for local fabrication, debris reuse, and cash-for-work shelter improvements adapted to the Gaza context. Strengthen shelter and livelihoods linkages. Apply cluster-endorsed targeting and the social vulnerability scoring criteria.
Entry of limited shelter product types is permitted	Contextualize for Gaza based on community consultations, integrating thermal adaptations, maintenance, and access to essential services. Continue advocacy for a diverse shelter response proportionate to needs.
Diverse shelter materials available, such as CGI, timber, and toolkits	Partners scale up improved emergency and interim shelter kits, as well as transitional shelter solutions. The same materials support more substantial repair works.

For the medium and longer term, the cluster will develop further guidance on debris management sequencing, the import of construction-grade materials and heavy machinery, HLP rights, protracted transitional shelter standards, site planning for higher-density urban recovery, and the humanitarian-to-development transition. Repair and reoccupation support is subject to a technical gateway before assistance: structural safety screening; explosive ordnance and rubble-risk screening; access safety; habitability and WASH access checks; and HLP and occupancy verification.

5.3. SCENARIO-BASED AND ADAPTIVE POSTURE

 1,696,959 Persons affected by housing damage	 320,181 Total damaged housing units, all damage levels	 60,000 Partially damaged units assessed as repairable under emergency conditions
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Figures are drawn from the Shelter Cluster multisource damage mapping, January 2026, consistent with the Gaza context section. The 60,000 repairable units are a subset of the total damaged stock. Damage will continue to be monitored and may rise subject to ongoing military operations and subsequent structural failures.

An estimated 60,000 partially damaged homes in Gaza are assessable for repair under emergency conditions, a subset of the total damaged housing stock. Large-scale repair remains severely constrained by limited access to materials, explosive ordnance contamination, and entry restrictions on repair and fixing materials. Where feasible, the cluster supports partial damage repairs through in-kind, cash-for-shelter, or cash-for-work modalities, prioritizing households that can remain in or return to their damaged structure and reducing reliance on displacement sites. Repair and reoccupation support is contingent on a technical assessment and on meeting minimum safety and habitability thresholds, including structural safety clearance, explosive ordnance screening, and informed household consent. Support is not provided where it would encourage unsafe return to structurally compromised buildings.

5.4. RESPONSE PACKAGES FOR GAZA

Implementation can be based either on international procurement or on locally available materials within Gaza, depending on feasibility and access conditions. For NFI assistance, delivery may be through voucher modalities or international procurement, subject to market functionality and operational feasibility. Activities should be complemented and coordinated with other relevant sector interventions to ensure an integrated response.

Seasonal items are risk-reduction layers applied across shelter types, not substitutes for shelter solutions. Year-round household items are distinct from winter-specific items and are planned ahead of each season.

Emergency shelter		
Activity	Description	Modality
Tents	Humanitarian-standard family tents for immediate, life-saving cover for newly or repeatedly displaced households with no safe shelter. The cluster recommends humanitarian-standard tents over non-standard products. Tents deploy rapidly but have a short lifespan in Gaza conditions, around six months, so predictable replenishment matters more than one-off delivery. Non-humanitarian tents are used only if upgraded with reinforcement, insulation, waterproofing, anchoring, shading, and privacy adaptations. <i>See SC guidance on tents and advocacy on tents</i>	In-kind
Sealing-off kits and emergency repairs	Sealing off partially damaged units using tarpaulin and timber to close windows and damaged walls, restore critical domestic functions, and make units weather-safe and usable. Among the most cost-effective and logistics-efficient options where buildings are partially habitable. Emergency sealing may require replenishment over six to twelve months, and progression to durable repairs depends on the entry of cement and finishing materials.	In-kind, cash, hybrid
Emergency shelter kits (ESK)	Cluster-endorsed kit of timber framing, tarpaulins, and a toolkit, used as a standalone emergency shelter and for emergency repairs to war-damaged units. More stable and adaptable than a tent, built by the household with technical support, and upgradable over time. Implemented through international procurement where access allows, the Gaza market when feasible, and localized approaches such as salvaged material recycling and small-scale manufacturing. Always accompanied by IEC materials. Material entry is the single biggest constraint on scale-up. <i>See SC guidance</i>	Hybrid, in-kind, cash
Improvement of makeshift shelters and deteriorated tents	Rapid improvements to deteriorated tents that cannot be replaced due to material entry restrictions, and to non-humanitarian tents and makeshift shelters, for better weather protection, safety, and privacy. Builds on existing household coping mechanisms and is delivered in kind or through cash, based on access.	Hybrid, in-kind, cash
Improved emergency shelter		
Activity	Description	Modality
Emergency shelter kits plus (ESK plus)	An incremental upgrade from the ESK using more durable cladding such as OSB or wood panels, CGI roofing, and an improved floor. It bridges emergency and transitional shelter, offering improved weather protection and thermal comfort for households facing longer displacement, while remaining flexible for further upgrades. Piloted to a limited extent so far; scale-up requires large-scale entry of timber, plywood, and CGI.	Hybrid, in-kind, cash

Relief housing units (RHU)	Flat-pack improved emergency shelter with metal framing and semi-hard panels, providing more solid, lockable walling and better standing height than a tent, installed by trained teams. Used for targeted caseloads where the unit type is appropriate and installation capacity exists, and accompanied by site planning, thermal adaptation, ventilation, drainage, safe spacing, partitions, and increased walling opacity for privacy. Summer thermal performance is a documented risk. On cost, installation needs, and capped annual production, RHUs are not a primary response at scale. <i>See SC guidance on RHU</i>	In-kind
Repairs		
Activity	Description	Modality
Emergency repair for partially damaged housing units	Limited to non-structurally damaged units. A household-led, phased approach, more cost-efficient than contractor-driven models, keeping households at the center, supporting safe return where feasible and reducing pressure on congested sites. Conditional on technical damage assessment by qualified experts, structural safety clearance, explosive ordnance screening, and informed household consent, using the cluster damage assessment verification tool. Progression to durable repairs depends on the entry of cement and finishing materials. <i>SC has a developed tool for rapid damage assessment and vulnerability related to this activity also see SC Module 2 on repair programing.</i>	Hybrid, in-kind, cash
Transitional shelter		
Activity	Description	Modality
Transitional shelter solutions	The Shelter Cluster is advocating for and developing transitional shelter solutions for Gaza, as the durable end of the incremental shelter pathway. This will be expanded in the next strategy update, subject to the evolving context in Gaza. <i>See Beyond Temporary Shelter: Pathways to Adequate Transitional Shelter in Gaza and Transitional Solution Standards.</i>	In-kind
Distribution year-round household items		
Activity	Description	Modality
Kitchen sets	Standard or adapted kitchen sets aligned with household size.	In-kind, Voucher
Solar lights	Household solar lighting to enhance protection and energy access.	In-kind, Voucher
Tool kits	Basic shelter tool kits for household-led construction, upgrading, and repair, including hand tools and fixing materials. Entry of fixing materials is frequently restricted, so distribution depends on access.	In-kind, Voucher
Seasonal items (risk-reduction layers across shelter types, not substitutes for shelter solutions)		
Activity	Description	Modality
Summer-specific items	Bedding sets designed ahead of each season for both summer and winter needs. <i>See shelter cluster package assistance.</i>	In-kind, Voucher

Seasonal bedding sets	<i>Shading nets, summer clothing, and solar fans (subject to access)</i>	In-kind, Cash or Voucher
Seasonal clothing	Seasonal clothing, prioritized for winter and targeting vulnerable household members, planned ahead of the season. See SC clothing lessons learned .	In-kind, Voucher
Winter-specific items	Winter blankets, fuel, heaters, and weatherproofing tarpaulins, distributed ahead of winter.	In-kind, Voucher

Currently, there is no fuel, stoves, heaters, or solar fans in the humanitarian shelter pipeline. The Shelter Cluster is monitoring some of these items in the market and will work towards their entry once the entry of prioritized shelter items is stable. Available market assessment from 2026 is in [this link](#).

6. WEST BANK RESPONSE

The West Bank response addresses three overlapping shelter situations: displacement from military operations in the northern camps; demolition-driven displacement in Area C and East Jerusalem; and broader shelter degradation across communities affected by settler violence, discriminatory planning regime, annexation, coercive environment and access restrictions. The response is structured across three-time horizons.

6.1. WEST BANK ACTIVITY PHASES

Phase	Activities
0 to 3 months	Essential NFIs for displaced families. Rental cash support (3 months). Support for internally displaced persons (IDP) in collective centers. Structural safety assessments. Focus on Jenin, Tulkarem, and demolition-affected communities.
3 to 6 months	Extension of rental support for highest-vulnerability cases. Continued shelter repairs using cash-for-shelter, Occupancy Free of Charge, or in-kind modalities. Exploration of alternative temporary solutions. NFI stock replenishment.
6 to 12 months	Shelter upgrade to minimum standards. Continuation of repairs. Technical support to partners. Integration of disaster risk reduction and climate risk. Strengthened information management and accountability systems.

The phases are indicative and overlap in practice. They sequence the response over time, while the activity menu below sets out the response by type. The activity categories broadly mirror the Gaza sequence, with West Bank-specific additions for rental and occupancy support and for protection measures.

The rental cash support program is time-bound, with safeguards against market and protection risks and a defined transition to repair, occupancy, or other interim solutions for protracted cases. Detailed safeguards and transition thresholds are set out in the rental assistance guidance. Deduplication is managed through a shared vulnerability and poverty baseline and geographic area-of-responsibility splits agreed upon by partners.

6.2. RESPONSE PACKAGES FOR WEST BANK

Phase	Activities	Areas	Target Households	Modality
Direct Material and Item Support	Emergency shelter materials (tents, tarpaulins, SOKs)	A, B, C	IDPs and displaced households	In-kind
	Household items / NFIs (bedding, kitchen sets, etc.)	A, B, C	All affected households	In-kind or vouchers (preferred where market access exists)
Rental and Occupancy Assistance	Rental assistance	A, B (C case-by-case)	IDPs	Cash (6 months for protracted displacement; 3 months for temporary displacement)
	Occupancy free of charge / reduced rent	A, B only	IDPs	Cash support to landlords for unit repairs to humanitarian standards
Repair and Structural Improvements	Shelter repairs (non-structural damage)	A, B, C	Returnees and households in damaged shelters	Cash or vouchers
	Upgrade of substandard buildings	A, B, C	Returnees and households in substandard shelters	Cash with technical support
Protection and Safety Measures	Protection measures against settler violence and demolition threats	A, B, C	Highest-risk communities	In-kind or cash
Transitional Solutions	Prefabricated shelters and other transitional options	Case-by-case across all areas	Subject to risk analysis, HLP review, and community acceptance	To be determined based on context and risk assessment

Notes: Rental assistance is applicable in Area C only on a case-by-case basis where market access exists and risk is manageable. Transitional solutions including prefabricated shelters are subject to risk analysis, legal and HLP review, and community acceptance across all areas. The substandard nature of shelters in Area C is often a result of planning and regulatory constraints, not only military operations.

6.3. PRIORITIZATION TRIGGERS

The table below designates the response activity for specific triggers, to support consistent prioritization across shelter cluster partners.

Response	Trigger
Demolition response	A confirmed demolition or stop-work order affecting a household's shelter.

Settler-violence response	Displacement or shelter damage from a settler attack or imminent threat in a high-risk community.
Rental and occupancy support	Loss of habitable shelter through displacement, where rental or hosting markets exist, and risk is manageable.
Repair and upgrade	Non-structural damage or substandard conditions in a shelter the household can occupy or return to.
Transitional shelter options	Protracted displacement with no rental or repair pathway, subject to risk, legal and HLP review, and community acceptance.
Collective shelter support	Concentration of displaced households in collective centers requiring upgrade and management support.

7. FLASH APPEAL 2026

The 2026 Flash Appeal was designed primarily to address acute emergency needs: life-saving shelter distributions, emergency NFIs, and immediate response to displacement. As of April 2026, the appeal was funded at approximately 6 percent, severely constraining partners' capacity and limiting options to move beyond repeated emergency distributions.⁵

The current scale and protracted nature of the crisis require revising the Flash Appeal framework to reflect the full scope of the shelter response. This includes post-emergency repair and rehabilitation of partially damaged housing, interim and transitional shelter for households with destroyed homes, site-level improvements, and the enabling conditions for early recovery.

It also requires flexible, multimodal funding that can shift among emergency distributions, sealing off, repairs, site improvements, rental and hosting support, and transitional shelter as access and market conditions change. Without this revision, the appeal risks locking the shelter response into a permanent emergency cycle while durable solutions remain out of reach.

Updated funding requirements and budget targets will be incorporated into the next revision of this document once finalized in coordination with the team.

Target OPT	1,562,946
• Reached in Gaza Strip	527,780
• Reached in West Bank	37,863
• Reached OPT	565,643
• % Reached	36%
• Requirements	193,730,638
• Fund	11,033,355
• % Funded	6%

As of April 2026, only 6 percent of the emergency shelter and NFI requirements for Gaza and the West Bank had been funded.

⁵ OCHA oPt, Flash Appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2026, 16 December 2025. The appeal seeks US\$4.06 billion to support 3 million people. <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/flash-appeal-occupied-palestinian-territory-2026>

8. DELIVERY CONDITIONS AND STRATEGIC ASKS

The following summarizes the main constraints shaping shelter delivery, what the cluster needs from its partners, and what donors and diplomatic actors can do to improve response conditions and outcomes.

MAIN CONSTRAINTS

Gaza

- Restricted entry of shelter, repair, and transitional materials.
- Unpredictable access and corridor stability.
- Congestion, weak site infrastructure, and land limitations.
- Repeated displacement and rapid shelter deterioration.
- Non-functional heavy machinery limiting debris management.

West Bank

- Demolitions, stop-work orders, and settler violence driving displacement.
- Legal and planning constraints on shelter, repairs, and building permits, particularly in Area C and East Jerusalem.
- Protracted displacement and host-community fatigue.
- Accelerated annexation plans and settlements expansion.

WHAT PARTNERS NEED

Gaza and West Bank

- Alignment with agreed targeting criteria and technical standards.
- Regular reporting and participation in coordination.
- Operational flexibility to shift modalities as access changes.
- Stronger field feedback, monitoring and evaluation system to improve guidance and prioritization.
- A consistent referral system to reach the most vulnerable effectively.

WHAT DONORS AND DIPLOMATIC ACTORS CAN UNLOCK

Donors (Gaza and West Bank)

- Flexible, multi-year funding across emergency response, repairs, and interim and transitional solutions.
- Support for seasonal preparedness for shelter and sites.
- Support to local and national delivery capacity.
- Investment in technical assessment capacity.

Access, Gaza

- Predictable entry of shelter and repair materials, including timber, CGI, fixing materials, and tools.
- Entry of heavy machinery and support for rubble and debris management.
- Corridor stability and predictable access.
- Support for local production within Gaza.
- Entry of transitional shelter materials.

Access, West Bank

- Protection of Palestinian presence and prevention of further displacement.
- A halt to demolitions and stop-work orders.
- Reduced legal and HLP risk in Area C and East Jerusalem.
- Protection from settler violence.

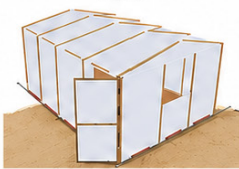
8.1. TRANSITIONAL AND INCREMENTAL SHELTER PATHWAY

Alongside the continued emergency response, the Shelter Cluster works through its technical working groups to develop the transitional and incremental shelter pathway, subject to context stability and material access. The cluster hosts a Transitional Shelter Assistance (TSA) technical working group, under which technical guidance for repairs and transitional shelter standards has been developed, and which is currently developing guidance on the use of cash and markets for shelter assistance and on transitional shelter designs. The approach rests on incremental shelter support with an emphasis on household-led shelter programs. As transitional shelters are not currently feasible at scale in Gaza, the cluster has sequenced its designs from emergency shelter to improved emergency shelter as an interim step, and on to transitional shelter (see [Beyond temporary shelter: pathways to adequate transitional shelter](#)). Early recovery remains the horizon for this pathway and the reference point for the transition to the Shelter, Land and Site Coordination (SLSC) architecture, but progression along it depends on enabling conditions that are not yet in place.

The shift from emergency response toward recovery is only possible under enabling conditions. The cluster will continue to generate technical, evidence-based advocacy for the entry of diverse shelter materials, machinery, and tools. It approaches the pathway from a holistic perspective that incorporates the adequacy of domestic functions, site-level improvements, and access to services, so that sheltering remains safe and dignified until longer-term solutions become possible. To inform operational planning and advocacy, a comprehensive Shelter Severity Classification assessment has been completed in July, aligned with the global SLSC cluster tools.

SHELTER RESPONSE EVOLUTION IN GAZA

Our Strategy: An Incremental Approach

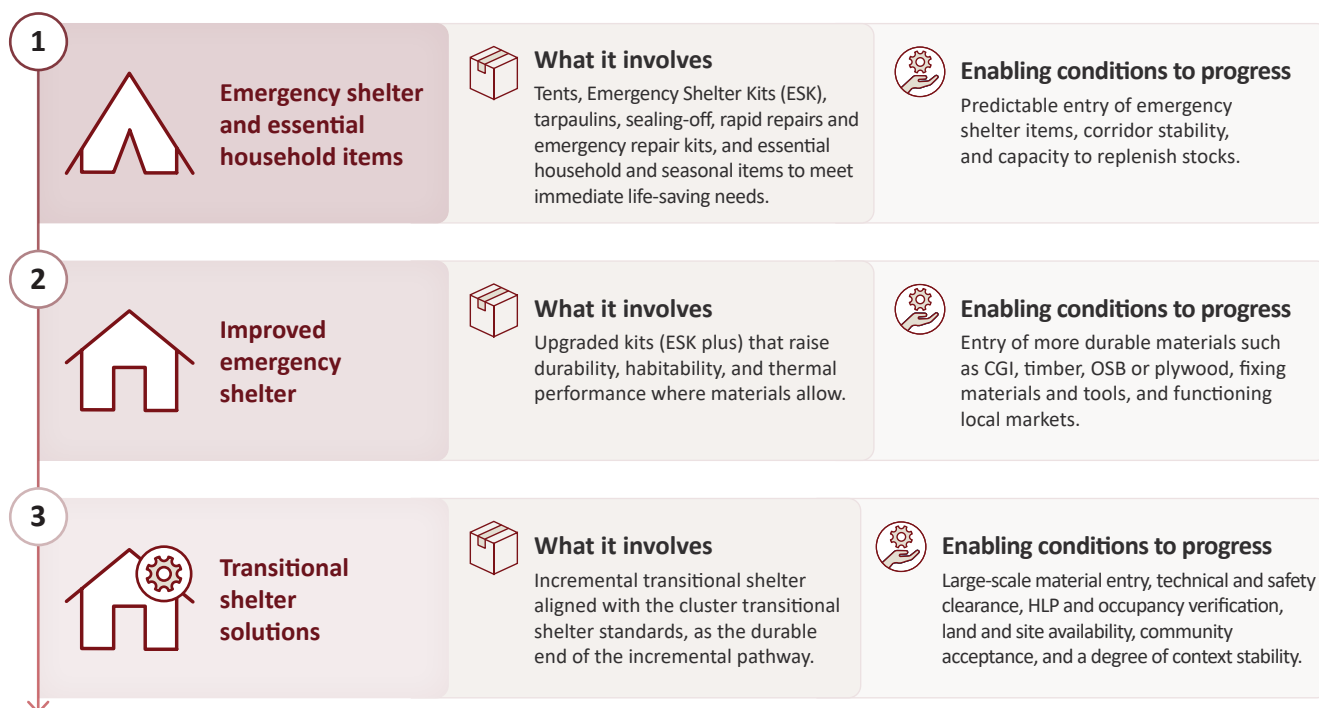
EMERGENCY	IMPROVED EMERGENCY	TRANSITIONAL
 TENT  ESK*	 RHU  ESK+	 TIMBER/STEEL SHELTERS
6 – 12 MONTHS	6 MONTHS – 3 YEARS	5 YEARS +
 Rapid installation	 Improved stability	 Semi-durable structure
 Limited durability	 Suitable for phasing upgrade	 Can support neighborhood return approach
 Immediate life-saving response	 Bridge to more durable solutions	 Supports recovery and dignified living

→ **INCREMENTAL BY DESIGN:** We start with tents and can progressively move toward ESKs, RHUs, and ultimately transitional shelters. This flexible approach allows us to adapt to needs, resources, and timing on the ground in Gaza.

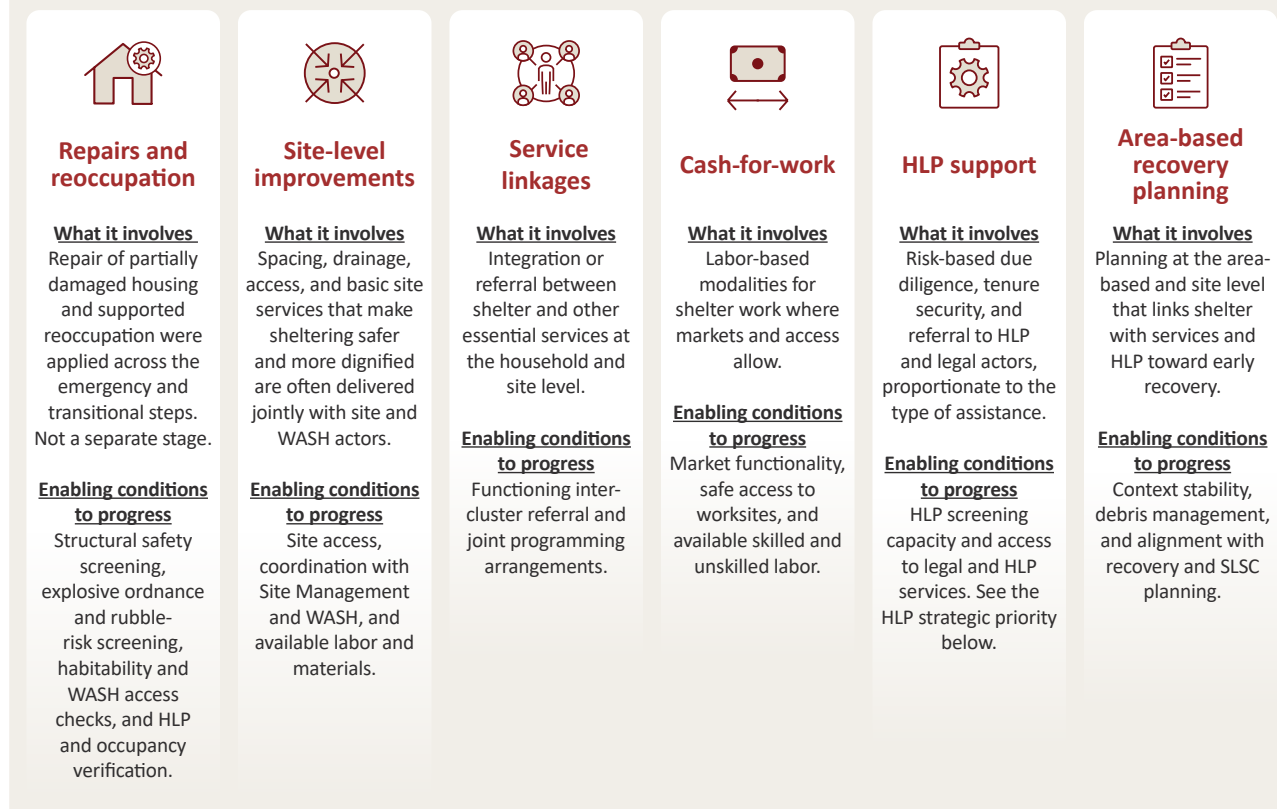
* ESK: Enhanced Shelter Kit

The stepped pathway

The pathway sequences shelter assistance from life-saving response toward more durable solutions, in line with the cluster shelter terminology. Progression between steps is not automatic: each step depends on enabling conditions being in place, and in Gaza, several steps run in parallel rather than in strict sequence. Repairs cut across the pathway and are not a separate stage.



Cross-cutting across the pathway



Across all steps, shelter assistance applies the cluster protection mainstreaming, accountability to affected people, referral, and deduplication arrangements set out under the strategic priorities, ensuring safe and dignified access and functioning feedback and referral pathways.

8.2. SITE-LEVEL APPROACHES

A growing feature of shelter assistance in Gaza is the layering of multi-sectoral needs at the site level. While primary responsibility for specific services rests with the respective clusters, stronger program-level integration and referral between shelter and other basic services are required. Several partners deliver both shelter and site services, which allows shelter assistance to be combined with site improvement and maintenance, including cash-for-work for site, WASH, and shelter works. Site considerations are designed by shelter typology and include spacing, fire safety, drainage trenches around shelters, and access to latrines, washing, and bathing facilities, in line with Site Management guidance.

A majority of shelter risks faced by households living on sites are closely linked to improvements and planning of sites, such as risks of flood and fires. Site improvement and planning where feasible, and in coordination with SMC, should be considered not only as complementary but as a strong risk mitigation measure in displacement sites. Link on minimum site planning standard available [here \(see page 7\)](#).

8.3. STRATEGIC PRIORITY: MAINSTREAM HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY (HLP) ACROSS SHELTER PROGRAMMING

Integrate HLP considerations across all shelter interventions to ensure safe, equitable, and sustainable access to adequate housing while safeguarding HLP rights and shelter investments and reducing protection risks. All shelter modalities, including emergency shelter, collective centers, rental assistance, shelter repairs, transitional shelter, housing rehabilitation, and reconstruction support, should incorporate HLP due diligence prior to implementation to identify and mitigate the risk of HLP rights violations and participant's increased exposure to protection risks, including but not limited to risks related to eviction, dispossession, tenure insecurity, land and property disputes, and secondary occupation.

Shelter programming should strengthen security of tenure through practical, context-appropriate arrangements; support equitable access to shelter assistance for vulnerable groups, including women, women-headed households, children, persons with disabilities, tenants, informal occupants, and displaced populations; and adopt conflict-sensitive approaches that prevent the exacerbation of existing disputes and social tensions.

Through strengthened coordination between Shelter and HLP actors, HLP safeguards should be embedded in shelter assessments, targeting, technical standards, response planning, and reconstruction efforts. Shelter interventions should also ensure access to legal assistance through referrals to legal actors for HLP documentation, tenure security agreements, and dispute resolution, thereby contributing to improved protection outcomes, sustainable housing recovery and land use, and supporting pathways toward durable solutions.

8.4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is central to the pathway. Shelter assistance is household-led and, where feasible, community-led, with affected people involved in the design and validation of shelter options and site layouts. Accountability to affected people is supported through feedback and complaint channels, referral tracking, and deduplication. A neighborhood approach is used for area-based shelter, repair, and site works, supporting local labor and cash-for-work, social cohesion, and conflict-sensitive delivery.

This is a living strategy document and will be updated as operational conditions evolve, new assessments become available, or ahead of seasonal planning cycles. Full technical guidance, position papers, and IM products are available at sheltercluster.org/palestine

