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Gaza: 94 per cent of households in need of shelter aid

20 August 2026

An estimated 1.98 million Palestinians in Gaza, 94 per cent of the population, need shelter and basic household assistance, according to a new report by the Shelter Cluster, led by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

The report reveals a shelter crisis which runs far deeper than just physical damage. According to the report's severity classification, more than four in five households face Critical or Catastrophic living conditions in their current shelter. This reflects severe gaps in the conditions and resources families need to live safely and with dignity, including fuel, energy and essential household items. These constraints affect basic daily activities such as sleeping, cooking, washing, storing food and water, having adequate lighting, and coping with heat and cold.

"A shelter is not adequate simply because it has four walls or a roof," said Jehan Salim, National Shelter Cluster Coordinator. "Families need to be able to sleep, cook, wash and keep their children safe inside it. Ten months after the October 2025 ceasefire, most families have lived more than a year in shelters that were never designed for long-term accommodation. The materials needed to repair homes, restore basic services and provide improved shelters are still not entering Gaza at anything close to the scale required."

Only one in ten households received shelter or basic household assistance in the month before data collection in June 2026. By then, stocks of tents, blankets and mattresses inside Gaza had nearly run out. Restrictions on the entry of shelter materials and equipment, combined with funding shortfalls, have kept assistance far below the level of need.

Nearly two-thirds of households lived in tents or makeshift shelters, structures that are not designed for long-term accommodation. More than half of households in tents had already used the same tent for over a year, while more than half of tents and makeshift shelters assessed were in poor or very poor condition. Major deterioration to flooring,

walls and frames left more than 100,000 households living in shelters that posed serious risks to their health, safety or dignity.

The dangers extend beyond the shelter itself. Ninety-eight per cent of households reported at least one environmental hazard within 10 metres of where they lived, including rodents, stray dogs, solid waste, rubble or sewage. Rodents were reported inside 89 per cent of shelters, while 71 per cent of households across all shelter types, including tents, makeshift, and even residential buildings, had experienced flooding since the start of winter 2025–26. With another winter approaching, these conditions leave families dangerously exposed to rain, cold, and flooding.

The Shelter Cluster calls on donor states to press Israel to lift restrictions on the entry of tents, repair and construction materials, fuel, solar equipment, water-storage items and machinery needed for debris clearance, and to provide funding that reflects the scale and severity of the crisis.

Notes to editors

- The Shelter Cluster's new report, *Exposed on All Sides*, can be downloaded [here](#).
- Photos and videos are available for use [here](#) and [here](#).
- The Palestine Shelter Cluster, which coordinates humanitarian organisations working on shelter needs in Gaza and the West Bank is led by NRC and co-coordinated by the International Organization for Migration.
- The assessment draws on 1,951 household interviews conducted between 14 and 28 June 2026 in accessible areas of North Gaza, Gaza, Deir al-Balah, and Khan Younis. Rafah and other inaccessible or unsafe areas were excluded.
- The assessment used a stratified, probability-based sampling methodology and achieved an approximate aggregate margin of error of ± 2.4 percentage points at the 95 per cent confidence level.
- The scoring framework classified each substantive response option according to five severity phases. These definitions provided the common basis for reviewing and validating the scores: Minimal (1), Stressed (2), Crisis (3), Critical (4), and Catastrophic (5)

- The finding that more than four in five households face Critical or Catastrophic living conditions refers to the assessment's living-conditions pillar, which measures households' ability to carry out essential daily activities safely and with dignity.
- Additional findings include:
 - 71 per cent of households experienced sleeping difficulties.
 - 64 per cent could not adequately store sufficient food and water.
 - 61 per cent lacked sufficient personal hygiene items.
 - Households with seven or more members and households including a person with a disability each had around twice the odds of severe shelter need.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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