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Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

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# Palestine

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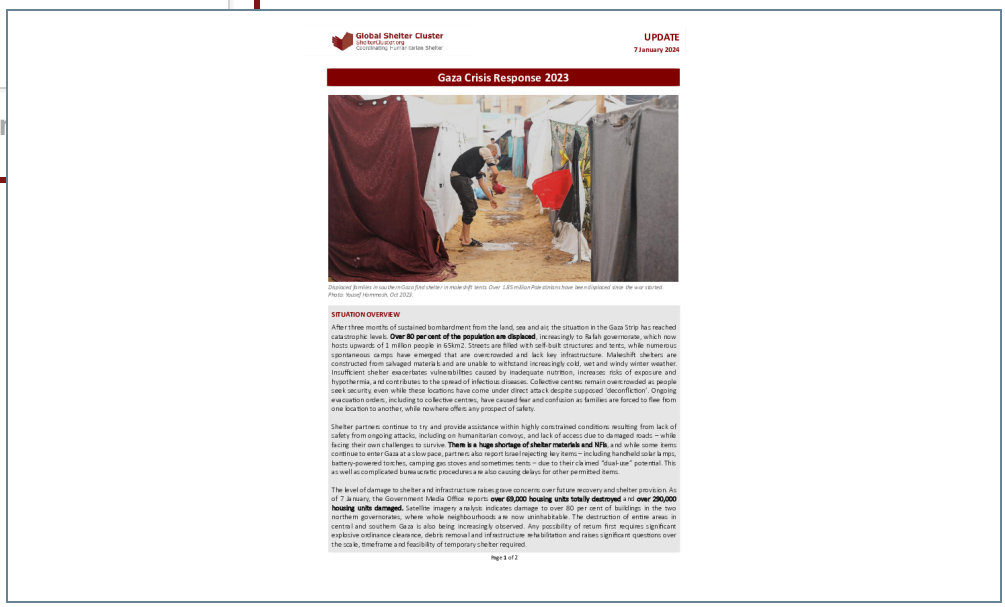
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## GAZA CRISIS RESPONSE 2023 SHELTER UPDATE 7 JAN

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UPDATE
7 January 2024

Gaza Crisis Response 2023

Displaced families in southern Gaza find shelter in make-shift tents. Over 1.85 million Palestinians have been displaced since the war started.
Photo: Yousef Hammash, Oct 2023.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

After three months of sustained bombardment from the land, sea and air, the situation in the Gaza Strip has reached catastrophic levels. **Over 80 per cent of the population are displaced**, increasingly to Rafah governorate, which now hosts upwards of 1 million people in 65km2. Streets are filled with self-built structures and tents, while numerous spontaneous camps have emerged that are overcrowded and lack key infrastructure. Makeshift shelters are constructed from salvaged materials and are unable to withstand increasingly cold, wet and windy winter weather. Insufficient shelter exacerbates vulnerabilities caused by inadequate nutrition, increases risks of exposure and hypothermia, and contributes to the spread of infectious diseases. Collective centres remain overcrowded as people seek security, even while these locations have come under direct attack despite supposed 'deconfliction'. Ongoing evacuation orders, including to collective centres, have caused fear and confusion as families are forced to flee from one location to another, while nowhere offers any prospect of safety.

Shelter partners continue to try and provide assistance within highly constrained conditions resulting from lack of safety from ongoing attacks, including on humanitarian convoys, and lack of access due to damaged roads – while facing their own challenges to survive. **There is a huge shortage of shelter materials and NFIs**, and while some items continue to enter Gaza at a slow pace, partners also report Israel rejecting key items – including handheld solar lamps, battery-powered torches, camping gas stoves and sometimes tents – due to their claimed "dual-use" potential. This, as well as complicated bureaucratic procedures, are also causing delays for other permitted items.

The level of damage to shelter and infrastructure raises grave concerns over future recovery and shelter provision. As of 7 January, the Government Media Office reports **over 69,000 housing units totally destroyed** and **over 290,000 housing units damaged.** Satellite imagery analysis indicates damage to over 80 per cent of buildings in the two northern governorates, where whole neighbourhoods are now uninhabitable. The destruction of entire areas in central and southern Gaza is also being increasingly observed. Any possibility of return first requires significant explosive ordnance clearance, debris removal and infrastructure rehabilitation and raises significant questions over the scale, timeframe and feasibility of temporary shelter required.

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