ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

Lessons Learned from Gaza Shelter Response

Report

Occupied Palestinian Territory

September 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context overview

From July to August 2014, Gaza witnessed fifty-one days of hostilities, one the most destructive intensifications of conflict since 1967. This resulted in an unprecedented scale of destruction, devastation and displacement. At the height of the conflict, almost 500,000 people were internally displaced. The concentration of damage was mainly found along the Armistice Line, however multiple districts located beyond this line had a vast majority of structures completely demolished.

Significant damage to housing and infrastructure as a result of the conflict, combined with nine years of blockade and three major escalations of hostilities over the past six years, caused large-scale destruction to Gaza's economy, productive assets. In March 2013 Gaza was already facing a housing shortage of around 75,000 homes[1]. Data collected during the final housing damage assessment from this conflict established that 11,000 housing units were totally destroyed, 6,800 with severe damage, 5,700 with major damage and 147,500 with minor damage. Of these, a total of 17,800 housing units were estimated to be uninhabitable.

Over the past two years, donors and aid actors have made significant efforts to provide humanitarian shelter assistance to the affected population in Gaza, although a number of challenges, gaps and blockages remained. To coincide with preparations for the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), the coordinators of the humanitarian shelter response, Shelter Cluster Palestine and local authorities, requested REACH to lead a review and evaluation of the progress of the shelter response since the 2014 hostilities.

Methodology and objectives

The objective of the evaluation was to measure the outcomes of the provision of emergency, temporary and durable shelter assistance, to better understand the key achievements; establish best practices; identify residual response gaps; and draw lessons learned and recommendations. The evaluation process has been divided into two phases: (1) a qualitative participatory evaluation through a secondary data review, a lessons learned workshop, an online survey, and purposively sampled semi-structured key informant interviews; (2) a quantitative evaluation through statistically significant primary data collection at household level. This report is the result of the first phase of this evaluation.

Coordination

Most actors recognised that the coordination framework for providing assistance had improved compared to previous responses and since August 2014. The scale of the crisis was unprecedented but aid actors were able to provide emergency shelter assistance in a timely manner, thanks to the effective coordination of the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and the IDP working group. The detailed housing damage assessment which took place shortly after the cease fire, was agreed upon and carried out in a coordinated manner between the Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MoPWH), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). The figures of the damage assessment were quickly released which allowed agencies to provide immediate assistance and enabled families to move out of emergency shelters into temporary solutions: caravans, transitional shelters, rented accommodation or host families. The rapidity of the emergency shelter assistance, the quick transition to temporary support systems and the coordinated damage assessment were highlighted as some of the good practices of this response.

However a number of challenges limited the effectiveness of the support provided and reduced the overall impact of the shelter response. Key informants and workshop participants explained that, although improved, stronger coordination was required and that this remained a critical weakness of the shelter response. Coordination between different aid actors and the authorities was initially well perceived in the EOC, but was later

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[1] Overview of the Housing Situation in the Gaza Strip, NRC, March 2013.

compromised during the early recovery response. Many factors contributed to this including the "no contact policies" with local authorities in Gaza; the presence multiple actors with different mandates; the reluctance of some actors to further coordinate with others; the lack of adherence to agreed sectorial strategies and standards; as well as multiple layers of government and sectors to coordinate with.

Furthermore, **a lack of agreed key terminologies between reconstruction actors,** such as categories of damage, definitions of "household", "family" or "housing units", and the confusion around the definition of IDPs in Gaza had a critical impact on humanitarian planning and implementation, shelter strategy, programming, selection of beneficiaries and communication with communities.

The detailed housing damage assessment also presented some gaps in the type of information collected and the process of data collection. **The assessment did not collect socio-economic data or information on existing housing condition and only focused on damage sustained by the housing units**. This information gap probably contributed to the lack of prioritisation of vulnerable families with few resources to recover, or living in sub-standard conditions. Workshop participants also suggested improving the effectiveness of the assessment process by forming assessment teams based on geographical areas, rather than based on the status of the affected population, refugee or non-refugee.

Shelter Response

The protracted nature of the Gaza crisis, the nine years of blockade, the three conflict escalations, the restrictions on movement and import of construction materials combined with the lack of follow through on donor pledges from the Cairo conference – which stood at only 40% in March 2016 – created an unpredictable and challenging response environment for aid actors.

By August 2016, two years since the cease-fire, about 50% of households who endured minor or major housing damage[2] had received cash for repairs, with some also benefiting from technical support. However, only 31% of households from the severe and totally damage caseload[3], most likely those displaced due their housing being uninhabitable, had received such assistance. The slow pace of shelter assistance for temporary and durable shelter maybe be explained by a number of factors.

Information gaps from the housing damage assessment combined with the weak monitoring culture of shelter assistance and the lack of sectorial agreed monitoring framework: This limited humanitarian actors' ability to review and adapt their response strategy to the funding constraints and material restrictions.

• **Weak strategic prioritisation of vulnerable groups and slow transition between temporary to durable shelter solutions:** Initially, major actors were prioritising households in need of minor repairs, although families who endured severe and total damage to their homes represented the most vulnerable households, as their houses were rendered uninhabitable and most were considered displaced. This prioritisation of assistance may be explained by several factors including higher numbers of minor repairs, generally smaller cash quantities and less technical assistance required. Eventually aid actors changed their response strategy, and switched their targeting from minor to severe damage but this was mostly driven by funding constraints rather than response monitoring and humanitarian needs.

• **Implementation delays and gaps**, mostly as a result of by funding constraints and the change in targeting. Implementation delays were also described as another effect of the un-synchronised and uncoordinated planning for durable shelter solutions.

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[2] Calculated from combining the assistance provided for minor and major damage using the data from Shelter Cluster Factsheet – August 2016.
[3] Calculated from combining the assistance provided for severe and total damage using the data from Shelter Cluster Factsheet – August 2016.

• **General gaps in technical guidance**: This evaluation took stock of the existing policies and standards which guide selter interventions in Gaza. Many of these documents were difficult to find, often unavailable online, while workshop discussions showed a lack of awareness of existing policies and standards. Some have not been uploaded, have remained as drafts and internal documents, some are outdated, while others are incomplete or leave a lot of space for interpretation. The technical guidance gap and weak dissemination of these standards have resulted in a low rate of compliance with existing standards and a lack of harmonisation of the shelter response.

• **Lack of communication with communities:** While it was recognised that overall agencies improved their understanding and consideration of different needs, including the displaced population, communication with communities was considered a major weakness and recommendations on harmonising monitoring and feedback mechanism was suggested.

The report concludes with a number of recommendations which have been summarised and prioritised. These were also ranked during the workshop feedback session, through the online survey, key informant interviews and feedback on the draft of this report. They are ordered from the highest to the lowest key priority. Annex 1 provides the full list of recommendations identified throughout this evaluation.

Priority recommendations 1 – Data collection & data sharing
1. R6: Review the detailed damage assessment process and form; agree on terminology; use a geographical distribution of teams to collect data, and include socio-economic questions and appraisal on living conditions.
2. R2: Set up a Technical Working Group (TWIG) or organise a workshop to develop and agree on data coordination, data sharing and analysis strategy for a unified database of needs assessment data.

Priority recommendations 2 – Shelter Strategy and leadership
3. R11: Humanitarian shelter actors through the Shelter Cluster Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) should develop an agreed response strategy based on needs rather than coverage and advocate to donors jointly to respond to a realistic caseload.

Priority recommendations 3 – Guidelines and Standards
4. R15: Develop guidelines for assistance types which currently do not have inter-agency agreed standards, in consultation with the SAG and other experts whilst ensuring buy-in. For example, develop a set minimum standard of living, to enable aid actors to provide assistance based on living standards rather than only on damage.
5. R14: Edit, detail, update and refine the existing technical standards, in consultation with the SAG and other experts, whilst ensuring buy-in.
6. R17: Promote the use of cash modality for emergency, temporary and durable shelter assistance, when the conditions for the use of cash are adequate.

Priority recommendations 4 – Shelter Coordination
7. R3: Carry out comprehensive primary data collection, to deepen the understanding on what has been done so far, to understand the impact of humanitarian assistance, levels of self-recovery, current level of living conditions and remaining vulnerabilities. (Phase 2 of this evaluation)
8. R1: Use the Shelter Cluster SAG as an independent humanitarian platform to improve coordination and build consensus amongst actors whilst defining an agreed humanitarian shelter response strategy.

Priority recommendations 5 – Communication
9. R13: Improve dissemination of policies and standards across the sector, to ensure that all actors engaged in shelter response have access to the latest versions of endorsed guidelines, policies and standards.

10. R18: Establish stronger communication with communities, develop programmes which promote community cohesion to reduce community tensions, implement feedback mechanisms and referral systems and act upon them.

Priority recommendations 6 – Advocacy

11. R10: The humanitarian community should continue advocating for resolving the restriction on movement and material import.

ACRONYMS

BoQ	Bill of Quantities
DNA	Detailed Needs Assessment
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
GoI	Government of Israel
GoP	Government of Palestine
GRM	Gaza Reconstrion Mechanism[4]
GRRG	Gaza Recovery and Reconstruction Group[5]
GSC	Global Shelter Cluster
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan (new SRP)
IDP	Internally Displaced Population
NORG	National Office for the Reconstruction of Gaza
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
MoPWH	Ministry of Public Works and Housing
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
OCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SC	Shelter Cluster Palestine
SRP	Strategic Response Plan (former HRP)
TDS	Transitional Displacement Sites
TSCA	Transitional Shelter Cash Assistance
TWIG	Technical Working Group
UDOC	Urban Displacement Out of Camp
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOSAT	United Nations Operational Satellite Applications Programme
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees

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[4] For further information on the GRM, refer to http://www.unsco.org/ and http://grm.report/#/
[5] The GRRG is a multi-agency platform formed under the Palestine UN Country Team in September 2015 that has two functions. One is to improve coordination and information exchange between agencies on the reconstruction of infrastructure (housing, water, energy, sanitation) livelihoods and economy, social protection, social development (health, education and culture) and governance. The other function is to strengthen the Palestinian Authority institutions to take the lead of the reconstruction. While collaborating closely with the humanitarian interventions the purpose is to move as fast as possible towards a developmental approach.

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INTRODUCTION

In July and August 2014, Gaza witnessed the most destructive intensification of conflict since 1967. Fifty-one days of hostilities resulted in an unprecedented scale of destruction, devastation and displacement. At the height of the conflict, almost 500,000 people were internally displaced, staying predominantly in schools, both run by the government and by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), and in informal shelters.

Concentrations of damage to buildings and infrastructure were found overwhelmingly along the Armistice Line with 74% of destruction within 3 kilometres of the line.[6] Significant damaged buildings located more than 3 kilometres from the line were also identified, with more than 5,900 destroyed or damaged. The UNOSAT analysis indicated that multiple districts such as Shejaiya and Beit Hanon, were almost completely razed with the vast majority of structures, public buildings, residential units, and businesses, completely demolished.

Map 2: Overall damage assessment map – UNOSAT September 2014[7]
The building and infrastructure damages described here refer to all types of buildings including residential, private and public buildings.
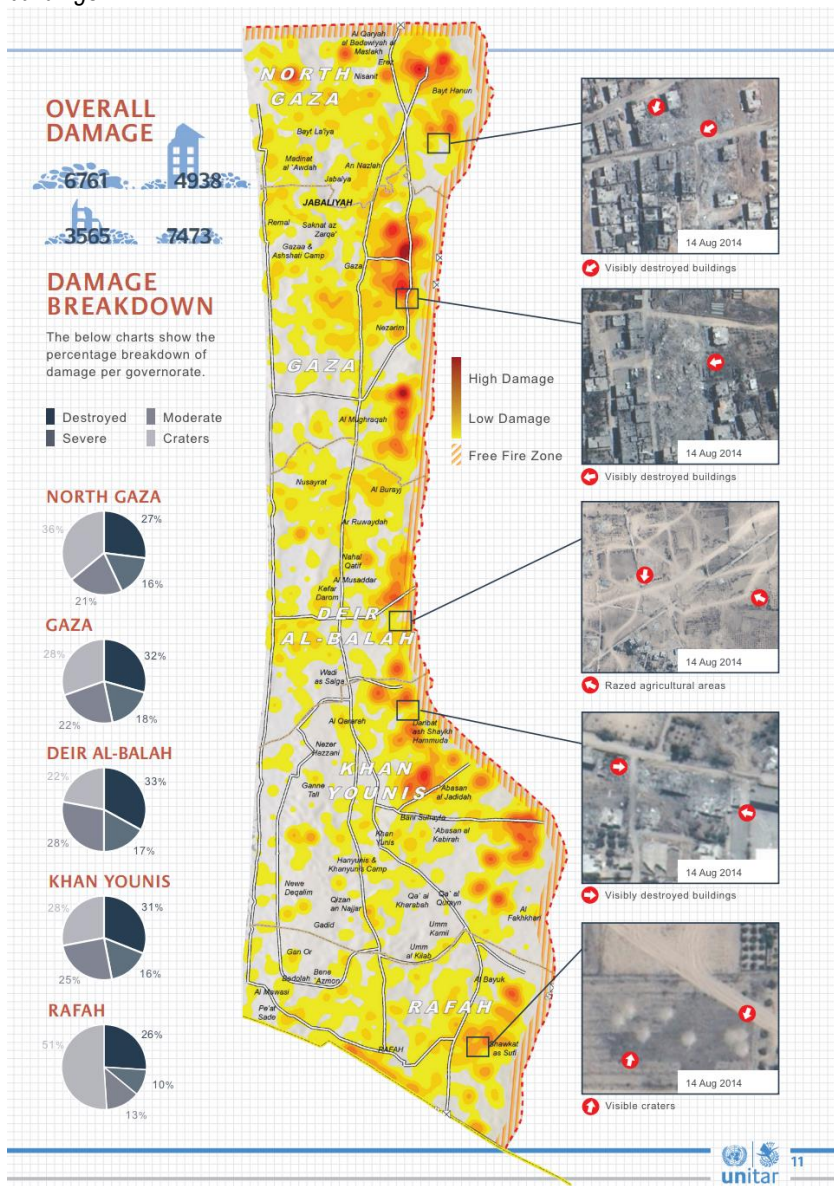
[6] Impact of the 2014 Conflict in the Gaza Strip – UNOSAT Satellite Derived Geospatial Analysis, UNOSAT 2014.
[7] UNITAR, UNOSAT, *Impact of the 2014 Conflict in the Gaza Strip, UNOSAT Satellite Derived Geospatial Analysis*, 2014., p.11.

Significant damage to housing and infrastructure as a result of the conflict, combined with nine years of blockade and three major escalations of hostilities over the past six years, caused large-scale destruction to Gaza's economy and productive assets. In March 2013, Gaza was already facing a housing shortage of around 75,000 homes[8].

The detailed housing damage assessment was carried-out between September 2014 and January 2015, by the Ministry of Public Work and Housing (MoPWH) with the support of UNDP for the non-refugee caseload, and by UNRWA for the refugee caseload. The final housing damage figures counted 11,000 totally destroyed housing units, 6,800 with severe damage, 5,700 with major damage and 147,500 with minor damage. Of these, a total of 17,800 housing units were estimated to be uninhabitable.

Figure 1: Final housing unit damage assessment figures
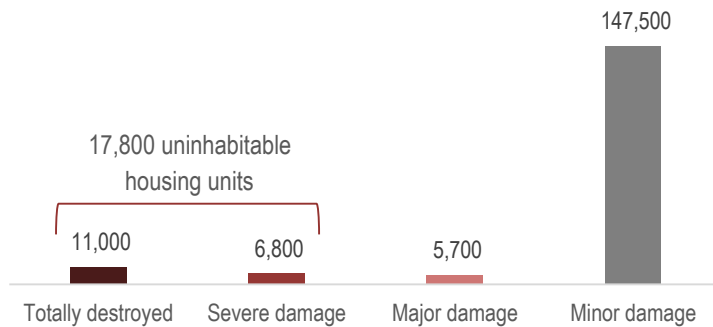
Shelter remained a key humanitarian concern throughout the response due to the high levels of damage, the unprecedented number of families displaced, restriction on the import of construction materials and limited funding. To overcome the challenges of material restrictions, the Government of Palestine (GoP) and the Government of Israel (GoI) agreed on the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM)[9] in September 2014. The agreement allowed for the controlled entry of restricted construction materials based on the Bills of Quantities (BoQ) generated from the housing damage assessment mentioned above. This new mechanism was challenged by the large amount of materials required and the slow pace in establishing an agreement for entry of materials for the totally destroyed houses. At the same time, a lack of follow through on donor pledges from the Cairo conference – which stood at only 40% in March 2016 – slowed the pace of the reconstruction and resulted in an increased need for humanitarian assistance.

In the past two years, donors and aid actors have made significant efforts to provide humanitarian shelter assistance to the affected population in Gaza, although a number of challenges, gaps and blockages remained. While repairs and reconstruction progressed, the implementation of durable solutions was slow notably due to issues related to the import of construction materials and limited funding.

In August 2016, the Shelter Cluster reported that out of the 147,500 housing units with minor damage 77,446 were repaired and out of the 11,000 totally destroyed housing units only 1,217 were reconstructed. This means that two years since the cease-fire, about 50%[10] of households who endured minor or major housing damage had received cash for repairs, with some also benefiting from technical support; while, only 31%[11] of households under the severe and totally damage category, most likely those displaced due to the un-inhabitability of their housing, had received similar assistance to repair or reconstruct their property. Many of the IDPs still required temporary shelter assistance and the housing shortage in Gaza left the temporarily displaced population with very limited options.

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[8] NRC, *Overview of the Housing Situation in the Gaza Strip,* NRC, March 2013.
[9] Further information http://www.unsco.org/ and http://grm.report/#/
[10] Calculated from combining the assistance provided for severe and total damage using the data from Shelter Cluster Factsheet – August 2016.
[11] Calculated from combining the assistance provided for severe and total damage using the data from Shelter Cluster Factsheet – August 2016.

Figure 2: Progress of the reconstruction - housing units repaired or reconstructed in August 2016 [12]

	# housing units	Completed[13]	In progress	Remaining Funded	Gap
Totally destroyed	**11,000**	1,217	3,245	2,494	**4,044**
Severe damage	**6,800**	4,424	1,820	120	**436**
Major damage	**5,700**	600	1,472	500	**3,128**
Minor damage:	**147,500**	77,446	13,552	0	**56,502**
Total:	**171,000**	**83,687**	**20,089**	**3,114**	**64,110**

To coincide with preparations for the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), the coordinators of the humanitarian shelter response, Shelter Cluster Palestine and local authorities, requested REACH to lead a review and evaluation of the progress in the shelter response since the 2014 hostilities, key findings of which are presented in the present report. It aimed to assess the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of the response, establish best practices, identify residual response gaps and draw lessons learned and recommendations. To carry out this evaluation, key objectives were formulated and a clear methodology was agreed upon.

METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this evaluation was to measure the outcomes of the provision of emergency, temporary and durable shelter assistance in response to the 2014 Gaza escalation, to better understand the key achievements, best practices, critical gaps and challenges, and to draw out lessons learned and recommendations.

The evaluation process was divided into two phases: (1) a qualitative participatory evaluation through a secondary data review, a lessons learned workshop, an online survey and purposively sampled semi-structured key informant interviews; (2) a quantitative evaluation through statistically significant primary data collection at household level.

This report is the result of the first phase of this evaluation and the outcomes and recommendations will inform the second phase for the quantitative detailed household level data collection.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the first phase described above, this evaluation sought to answer the following research questions, as defined and agreed by the Shelter Cluster Palestine and its members:

1. **Objectives, targets and modalities**
   Were any additional modalities used or additional groups of affected population targeted? How were the needs and target groups identified for different types of assistance? How was assistance coverage justified?
2. **Positive outcomes and best practices**
   What worked well? What were the positive outcomes, the key achievements, and the best practices?
3. **Unintended outcomes and challenges**
   What else happened*?* How was the assistance used? Were there unintended outcomes? What were the challenges?
4. **Recommendations**
   What could be improved? What would be the recommendations explaining how to address the issues?
5. **Information gaps to inform the second phase of the evaluation**
   Are their remaining gaps in information? What do we not know? What information are we unsure of and we would need to confirm? Are we missing information from the field?

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[12] Extracted from the Shelter Cluster August 2016 Factsheet
[13] According to the Shelter Cluster Factsheet August 2016, "*completed* is defined as a unit repaired or reconstructed"

The answers to these questions supported the appraisal of the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the different response strategies and modalities employed in the Gaza shelter response.

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

To conduct the first phase of this evaluation, the following methods were adopted to collect, analyse and cross reference the best practices, and to draw lessons learned and recommendations:

- **Desk review** (refer to Annex 6: Bibliography for further information)
  A thorough desk review and comprehensive analysis of documentation, files and reports, provided by the Shelter Cluster. Additional information found online was also utilised to complete the review. This included assessment documents, situation reports, and other information found on shelter partners' websites.

- **Key informant interview** (refer to Annex 4: Key information interview list).
  A purposively sampled group of 10 key informants were interviewed using a list of agreed questions related to the research questions listed above.

- **1-day workshop** (refer to Annex 3: Workshop Agenda).
  The lessons learned workshop was conducted in a participatory manner allowing for all those invited to contribute to the evaluation. The day was divided into 3 parts: (1) opening remarks by key actors, including the MoPWH, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), UNRWA, UNDP and the Shelter Cluster; (2) a technical discussion with all key implementing actors, where some were invited to present their programmes which was followed by round table discussions to identify best practices, discuss challenges and recommend lessons learned; (3) the feedback session invited a broader audience to comment and react on some of the findings from the technical discussion. The recommendations identified during the technical discussion were discussed and ranked, and the day concluded with an open flow for discussions and conclusions.

- **Online survey** (refer to Annex 5: Survey questionnaire).
  An online anonymous questionnaire was shared in order to reach a wider audience, and to validate and quantify some of the findings identified during the workshop.

The data collected enabled to produce a number of tools to analyse the response. A timeline of events allowed to better understand the correlation between events and the subsequent shelter response. Tables and graphs with facts and figures provided an analytical framework to compare figures and draw attention to specific trends. Assumptions and conclusions were drawn by these tools and data analysis methodologies. The recommendations presented were a combination of recommendations identified throughout the workshop discussions, key informant interviews, online survey, as well as conclusions drawn from the data analysis.

LIMITATIONS

This lessons learned exercise reviewed the shelter response from the perspective of shelter actors, donors, government and coordination structures. It does not capture beneficiary perspectives, and if so only through secondary information relayed from agency monitoring frameworks and the two community representatives present during the workshop.

This review is focussed on humanitarian shelter activities, emergency shelter, temporary assistance and durable repairs, but it does not review successes and challenges related to the long-term reconstruction of the totally destroyed housing units. It should also be noted that this review is not a follow-up to the reconstruction workshop of May 2015.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE GAZA 2014 SHELTER RESPONSE

This report is structured into two parts, the first section reviews the coordination of the shelter response and the coordinated damage assessment; and the second part analyses the shelter response through a timeline of events, exploring exiting and missing policies and standards, and examines the approaches and modalities of the shelter response in Gaza. Each section concludes with detailed recommendations presented in relation to the findings to which they correspond. Priority recommendations are presented in the conclusion. Annex 1 provides the entire list of recommendations.

COORDINATION

Shelter Response Coordination

Several key informants and workshop participants mentioned a clear improvement in coordination between humanitarian actors and the government compared to previous conflict responses and since August 2014. Both the joint damage assessment and the agreement on various shelter policies are examples of improved collaboration between implementing actors and key decision makers. However they also explained that stronger coordination was required and that this remained a critical weakness of the shelter response. Several factors may explain these challenges:

- **"No contact policies"**[14] with local authorities in Gaza: It affected the coordination between some humanitarian actors and the local authorities. The Shelter Sector, which preceded the Shelter Cluster, was initially established as a coordination structure in 2009 to enable better coordination and mitigate the impact of such policies. However, this coordination structure has sometimes lacked recognition, legitimacy, as well as the resources and the capacity to coordinate and support decision making. Thus the "no contact policies" remained a blockage and limited the effectiveness and coordination of the response.

- **Multiplicity of actors with different mandates:** During the emergency, the MoSA and the Shelter Cluster were coordinating the shelter response under the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) run by OCHA and the dedicated IDP working group. During the recovery phase, the MoPWH, the Shelter Cluster to some extent, the Gaza Recovery and Reconstruction Group (GRRG) and the National Office for the Reconstruction of Gaza (NORG) were supporting the coordination of durable shelter and long-term reconstruction. UNRWA and UNDP held a significant position in the implementation and together received 90% of the funding for the shelter response, leaving INGOs and NGOs with a very small operational space. In addition, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) also held a prominent position within the INGO community by hosting the Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA) and the Shelter Cluster. This multi-faced leadership structure with actors having different mandates has resulted in a lack of clarity on mandates and on legitimate leadership structure to make strategic decisions.

- **Individualism:** The tendency of some actors to work on their own, not necessarily coordinating with others or adhering to agreed standards, policies and practices contributed to challenge the coordinated response. Although in some cases the coordination between key actors was effective and productive, staff turn-over, unexperienced staff and a lack of agreed strategic vision impeded the humanitarian response.

- **Lack of coordination with the different levels of government**: Some key informants explained the challenges in a large scale response to coordinate with all levels of government, from national level (MoPWH and MoSA), to local government, municipalities and community leaders. According to key informants and workshop participants, this was mainly the case during the early stages of the recovery.

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[14] Explanation on the "no contact policies" can be found p.14 at https://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_special_focus_2010_05_27_english.pdf

- **Further coordination with other sector and inter-sector working groups**: Although inter-cluster coordination, through the effective support and coordination of OCHA, has been considered effective throughout the response, some implementing partners requested further bi-lateral or inter-sectoral collaboration with specific sectors, especially those closely related to shelter such as WASH. In addition, the inter-sectoral IDP working group led by OCHA has been a critical structure to address some of the major challenges and coordination gaps with regards to displacement.

- **Information gap:** Key informants stated that "we have not been able to find recent data on what has happened"; "we have no data on the rate of self-recovery or current number of families living in sub-standards units"; "we have little information on the impact of cash assistance (Transitional Shelter Cash Assistance (TSCA) and repairs)" and "we need better data to inform the HRP process". The detailed damage assessment only captured the different levels of building damage and did not collect information on socio-economic vulnerability. The general reluctance on monitoring the impact of cash assistance and general shelter programming from some of the major actors was mentioned as another critical concern. Several actors collecting data and producing monthly reports, including the MoPWH, NORG, the Shelter Cluster, and UNRWA, focussed their reports on the assistance provided and often did not capture beneficiary feedback, self-recovery or self-funded repairs. They were based on a voluntary reporting system which captured the data shared by agencies. They did not capture the number of families requiring urgent humanitarian assistance due to their vulnerability or poor housing standards and therefore, these reports present a partial view of the context. Further data collection would enable all actors to better understand the context, set realistic objectives on the remaining humanitarian needs, and request for funding to provide more targeted assistance.

- **Lack of coordination, sharing and analysis of data:** The concerns revolved around the lack of a centralised data system for beneficiary registration, cross-checking of beneficiary data and levels of damage. The recommendation was to create a unified data sharing system.[15] However the reality of the data sharing culture in Gaza is complex, with many agencies willing to share only a portion of their data on a regular basis, and others only to share it once facts have been verified.

R1: Use the Shelter Cluster Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) as an independent humanitarian platform to improve coordination and build consensus amongst actors whilst defining an agreed humanitarian shelter response strategy. Identify the appropriate coordination platform which focuses on development and reconstruction issues, allowing for an appropriate coordination between both entities.

R2: Set up a Technical Working Group (TWIG) or organise a workshop to develop and agree on data coordination, data sharing and analysis strategy. The unified data sharing system would have to be designed and implemented in coordination with all Shelter Cluster actors, members and observers. The appropriate entities should be identified and capacitated to legitimately host and manage the data and such a system would need adequate resources for an effective management and monitoring. The TWIG or workshop should develop and agree on SOPs for information hosting and management, information sharing and access, and data analysis. This system should also include a monitoring system to enable an integrated feedback mechanism to ensure accountability. Seeking advice from the GSC information management team could be beneficial to the learning process. The IDP working group might also be an interesting source of knowledge in terms of their data management of the IDP registration and tracking system. This system may include:

- Registration systems
- Cross checking of beneficiaries lists
- IDP tracking

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[15] In 2009 a Unified Shelter Sector Database (USSD) was created to coordinate data, and more specifically to cross-check beneficiary lists to avoid duplication between implementing agencies and the government. This system was managed by NRC, which was formalised as Shelter Sector and later became the Shelter Cluster. This system was outdated after the 2014 conflict due the lack of updated information, it was deactivated in February 2015 (refer to Shelter Cluster meeting minutes).

R3: Carry out comprehensive primary data collection under the cluster mandate to deepen the understanding on what has been done so far and to understand the impact of humanitarian assistance, levels of self-recovery, current level of living conditions and remaining vulnerabilities. Statistically significant data could be collected from a representative sample of affected households in order to better understand the impact of the humanitarian assistance and the current level of recovery and self-recovery. This data should provide clarity on the remaining vulnerable caseload requiring shelter assistance and inform strategic humanitarian priorities for the government, humanitarian actors, and civil society.

R4: All humanitarian actors involved in emergency and recovery response should deploy and recruit experienced staff to lead the emergency and recovery response. They should ensure that appropriate staff are in place to develop a qualitative, realistic and appropriate sectorial strategy, provide leadership, develop realistic programmes responding to the identified and agreed needs of the affected population, whilst providing the appropriate technical guidance and support to ensure good shelter programming. Providing capacity building opportunities and support to agencies providing shelter assistance should be considered.

R5: Enhance coordination with other sectors and working groups by ensuring a focal point on behalf of the sector is attending sectoral meetings and working groups discussions, and by creating stronger links between agencies working in the different sectors (sharing contact lists, meeting minutes and other relevant updates across sectors and working groups).

Coordinated Damage Assessment

The housing damage assessment was developed and agreed in August 2014 by the MoPWH, UNDP and UNRWA, with consultation of the Shelter Cluster. The assessment form was based on a detailed damage assessment form, which generated Bill of Quantities (BoQ) of the materials required for repair and reconstruction. Four categories of damage were agreed upon: minor, major, severe damage and totally destroyed.

Figure 3: Agreed damage categories

Agreed damage categories	Other terms		
Totally destroyed	Destroyed	Total damage	Uninhabitable (displaced)
Severe damage	Damaged	Severe damage	
Major damage		Partial damage	Inhabitable
Minor damage			

Overall, the coordinated damage assessment was perceived as a positive exercise by workshop participants and most key informants. The earlier agreement on the detailed assessment form and the agreed process to carry-out the assessment was a clear learning from previous response, and showed a positive move towards stronger coordination between key decision makers. While the harmonised approached and the timing of the assessment constitute some of the successes, workshop participants discussed improving its effectiveness by forming assessment teams based on geographical areas, rather than based on the status of the affected population, refugee or non-refugee.

Despite these strengths, the damage assessment process raised the following challenges:

- **Lack of agreement on key terminology (damage, population groupings and displacement status)**: For example, housing damage was often loosely referred to by using different terminologies than the four agreed categories (refer to Figure 3). Similarly, the words "household", "family" or "housing unit" were often used interchangeably, although some organisations counted these differently. There was also some confusion around the definition of "IDPs" in the Gaza context. Some actors used the term to describe all those displaced by the 2014 escalation in hostilities; others used this to describe all those who have not received a durable shelter solution, but in some cases may have returned to live in their damaged house; while for others, "IDPs" included all those who have been internally displaced and are still living in temporary accommodation. The Protection Cluster developed a draft definition of IDPs but this definition was not presented as being commonly

agreed yet. The lack of agreed terminology between the reconstruction actors, the cluster and the government had a critical impact on humanitarian planning and implementation, shelter strategy, programming, and selection of beneficiaries. It created confusion and misunderstandings across the sector.

- **Lack of socio-economic data collected in the details housing damage assessment:** The assessment form did not include socio-economic data on respondents, nor did it capture information on living standards prior to the conflict or community level damage. It only took into consideration housing damage from the 2014 conflict. This information gap probably contributed to the lack of prioritisation of vulnerable families with low socio-economics capacity to recover, or living in sub-standard conditions.

- **Lack of communication with communities about the assessment processes and the subsequent plans for shelter assistance**: One key informant explained that as a result, some beneficiaries were purposefully damaging their property[16] in the hope of receiving more assistance. If the assistance criteria were not only based on levels of damage but also on socio-economics vulnerabilities, and if this had been well communicated to communities, such self-damage could have potentially been avoided.

R6: During the contingency planning and/or prior to an assessment:
- Agree on a geographical distribution of teams for a future housing damage assessment.
- Review the methodology of the housing damage assessment tool:
  - Use rapid assessment, such as the MIRA, to estimate caseloads of damaged housing units and vulnerable families based on household sampling
  - Examine damage assessments with a community lens providing linkages with cross-cutting issues such as HLP, gender and Urban Displacement Out of Camp (UDOC).
  - Use detailed assessment system to allow for the registration of beneficiary and identify the subsequent BoQs for repairs.
  - Review the damage assessment forms adding socio-economic questions and appraisal of previous living conditions, building and housing conditions.
- Agree on and communicate widely general terminologies, harmonising damage categories, household/family/housing units and definition of IDP.

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[16] Ministry of Public Works and Housing, State of Palestine, *The Ministry of Public Works and Housing Guide to the Gaza Shelter Reconstruction Mechanism (sheltering and direct losses of the aggression in 2014),* 2014, p3 general principles #6

SHELTER RESPONSE

An overview

Agencies were unprepared for the scale of destruction and displacement that ensued from the 2014 conflict. While contingency plans had been developed, they were based on the current capacity to respond and vastly underestimated the need for additional assistance, particularly accommodation in collective centres. Nevertheless, most actors recognised an improvement of the overall shelter response in comparison with previous ones, and in the framework for providing assistance since 2014. Strengths of the response included:

- **Speed of the emergency shelter response**, through the support of the EOC and the IDP working group both managed by OCHA, allowed for a swift move towards temporary solutions. Without going into the details of the quality of the assistance, emergency shelter needs were addressed by collective centre management and through NFI distributions. Soon after the ceasefire, the first phase of cash assistance, through the TSCA, enabled some families to quickly move out of collective centres into a temporary solution: either in caravans, rented accommodation or with host families.

- **Rapid housing damage assessment,** and the quick release of the numbers of damaged houses, facilitated by the coordination between decision makers, led to a clear menu of shelter options: NFIs, caravans, TSCA and cash for repairs.

- **Needs of the displaced population** and the importance of considering their specific needs had started to be addressed through the IDP working group and highlighted in the subsequent report[17];

- **Housing, land and property (HLP) rights** and the consequences for shelter have been supported by agency's work on HLP including NRC's housing manual[18],

- **Cross-cutting issues** such as gender, disability and HLP were generally better understood than in previous responses, although it does not mean that the understanding has yet transferred into good practice.

- **Improved inter-sector coordination for recovery** was highlighted through the work of the IDP working group, the data collected from the IDP survey, and the activation of recovery frameworks such as the GRRG, and NORG.

Timeline

The timeline below highlights the timeliness of the response: NFIs distributions began during the escalation of hostilities, while non-earmarked funding allowed initial disbursement of unconditional cash grants through the TSCA, and cash for repairs from September and October 2014. While it took until June 2015 to close the last collective centre, the intention of quickly moving out of the emergency shelter phase to more durable solutions was clearly highlighted in the timeline below.

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[17] OCHA, *In the Spotlight – Gaza Internally Displaced persons*, April 2016.
[18] NRC, *A guide to housing, land and property law in the Gaza Strip,* October 2015.

Figure 4: Timeline

2014		Materials Shelter Assistance	General Contextual Events Funding
Jul-Aug	51-day escalation – phase 1 through airstrikes, phase 2 – ground invasion Approx. 500,000 people displaced in UNRWA schools, government schools and other buildings First NFI distributions		
Aug	MIRA Agreement on the damage assessment forms, data, and process between the MoPWH, UNRWA and UNDP First caravans manufactured in Gaza, distributed immediately after the ceasefire to individual locations		
Sep	GRM Agreement between GoI and GoP brokered by the UN First damage data available, 10,000 families in collective centres First sealing off material distributions First TSCA and reintegration grant distributed		
Oct	Cairo Conference – 3,5 billion USD pledge for Gaza reconstruction (to be disbursed over 3 years) First Transitional Displacement Sites (TDS) established 5,400 families still in collective centres First cash grants for **minor/major/sever repairs disbursed** (from non-earmarked funding)		
Nov	Beginning of the minor and major repairs as first GRM Shelter stream submission are being processed, allowing for some materials to be purchased UNDP/MoPWH damage assessment data finalised First funding **for minor/major repairs confirmed**		
Dec	Launch of Humanitarian Strategic Response Plan 2015 Ongoing winterisation/sealing off		
2015			
Jan	UNRWA damage assessment data completed (verification ongoing through year) 2,700 families still in collective centres UNRWA was forced to suspend its cash assistance programme supporting repairs and providing rental subsidies to Palestine refugee families in Gaza[19] First funding for **severe repairs confirmed** (from earmarked funding)		
Feb	First cash grants for **severe repairs disbursed** (from earmarked funding)		
Mar	First funding for **total reconstruction confirmed** End of NFI/sealing off material distributions		
Apr	GRM negotiation – Residential stream 1st calculator rejected		
May	GRM negotiation – Residential stream 2nd calculator rejected		
Jun	GRM negotiation – Residential stream 3rd calculator approved – 94 submissions in the GRM Last collective centre closed		
Jul	651 submissions processed and some materials being purchased Emergency shelter response to summer heat in TDS		
Aug	Launch of the Detailed Needs Assessment (DNA) IDP re-registration and vulnerability profiling data collection started First funding for **total reconstruction disbursed**		
Oct	Aggregate removed from list of dual-use items First totally damaged house fully reconstructed (directly assisted by the international community)		
Nov	Final damage assessment figures agreed between the MoPWH, UNRWA, UNDP and Shelter Cluster Palestine (SC) First TDS site closed		
Dec	IDP re-registration and vulnerability profiling data collection completed (preliminary data was used and provided throughout the exercise and continues to be provided/updated) Emergency winterization assistance		
2016			
Jan	Emergency shelter response to flooding Individual caravans start to be returned to ministry		
Mar	40% of the Cairo pledges have been met		
Apr	Private Sector Ban on the import of cement resulting in 2,550 households are delayed in carrying out repairs or reconstruction[20]		
May	Cement for the private sector has been allowed to re-enter Gaza after a 45-day ban		
Jul	Minor emergency shelter response to summer heat in TDS		
Aug	Shelter Cluster Lessons Learned Workshop		

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[19] UNRWA Gaza Situation Report 81
[20] Retrieved from the Shelter Cluster Factsheet April 2016

While the examples provided above highlight some positive aspects of the progression of the response, further progress could be made to the following challenges:

- **Funding gaps:** The lack of follow through on donor pledges from the Cairo conference – which stood at only 40% in March 2016 – created an unpredictable cash flow for the government and for aid actors which resulted in a slow reconstruction pace and increased need for humanitarian assistance.

- **Slow transition between temporary to durable shelter solutions**, largely caused by the unpredictable funding, the blockade and material restrictions: The GRM was agreed to facilitate material import and was divided in different streams depending on the purpose of the construction, though the quantities of materials entering Gaza were always insufficient to respond to the needs. The GRM Shelter stream allowed materials to enter Gaza from October 2014 for assistance to minor, major and severe housing repairs; this stream was not designed for assisting the reconstruction of the totally destroyed units. The GRM Residential stream was developed and agreed for this purpose in June 2015, after three months of negotiation. This resulted in significant delays in providing assistance to those displaced with totally damaged housing units. However, once the GRM Residential stream was agreed, it took shelter actors another three months to secure funding, plan their response, acquire approvals and proceed with the reconstruction of that eligible caseload. Consequently, the transition between the temporary solution and reconstruction was perceived as slow, probably partially due to an unclear leadership structure (refer to *Shelter Response Coordination* p.13) to advocate for a quick agreement on the GRM Residential stream and strategic vision for long-term reconstruction. The Shelter Cluster's mandate generally does not extend past early recovery, (refer to p.12 *Limitations*) and in this context the lack of leadership for long-term reconstruction in 2014 and 2015 created a leadership gap and a slow transition between temporary to durable shelter. The GRRG[21] which was created late 2015 has since taken the lead, together with NORG, in coordinating the long-term reconstruction.

- **Information gap and lack of monitoring limited humanitarian actors' capacity to review and adapt their response strategy to the funding challenges and material restrictions.** Lack of funding should have encouraged humanitarian actors to optimise their response and change their implementation strategy. This took time due to the reluctance of monitoring assistance provided to date. Monitoring of interventions has not been systematic and monitoring forms and processes have been developed on an ad-hoc basis, agency by agency, rather than harmonised across the sector. For instance, in January 2015, UNRWA announced the suspension of its shelter programme due to a lack of funding. The next months were followed by intensive fundraising to allocate sufficient funds and resume the provision of shelter assistance to all affected refugee families. By May 2015, UNRWA's Situation Report announced that TSCAs had been delayed due to lack of funding,[22] a situation that continued into July 2016. In February 2016, only 65 out of 17,000 households who had received TSCA were monitored[23]. This example illustrates a weak monitoring across the shelter response, which hampered a better understanding of the impact of this assistance. A systematic monitoring would have been essential, especially in times of funding shortage, to establish value for money and ensure that the most vulnerable families, such as those displaced due to severe or total damage, were prioritised.

- **Implementation delays** were described as another effect of the un-synchronised and uncoordinated planning for durable shelter solutions. Although the timeline shows the quick activation of the GRM and the benefits of non-earmarked funding, key obstacles such as the small quantities of materials entering Gaza,[24] the slow

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[21] The goal of the GRRG is "to strengthen the coordination, communication and information exchange among UN agencies and Gaza based NGO's; and to support the Palestinian Authority institutions in Gaza to achieve the targets set within the 2015 DNA and Gaza Recovery Framework", retrieved from http://www.earlyrecovery.global/sites/default/files/GRRG%20newsletter%20(1%20-%20FEB16)_0.pdf
[22] UNRWA Gaza Situation Report 91, May 2015.
[23] UNRWA, *Impact of Transitional Shelter Cash Assistance as Rental Subsidies, Focus group discussion,* Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, UNRWA Gaza Field Office, February 2016.
[24] Refer the Shelter Cluster Factsheets

agreement on the GRM Residential stream and the lack of funding to respond to all those affected slowed the response considerably. Weather related emergencies such as winter storms, flooding and extreme summer heat posed additional challenges each year, delaying the response and diverting the focus away from durable shelter assistance. The lack of coordination between actors has been another contributing factor, especially when refugee and non-refugee families were living in the same building and that actors depended on each other to repair and reconstruct. For example, when ground floor building works needed to be carried out before other storeys could be erected or repaired, the coordination between actors supporting refugees and non-refugees was critical, and described as not always well synchronised. Finally, the urban planning for durable shelter and reconstruction had not been well developed and further delays and assistance gaps were seen.

- **Assistance gap:** The graph below (figure 5) shows that families with severe damage only started to receive support towards the last quarter of 2015. It reflects an assistance gap of 10 months between the suspension of temporary assistance (TSCA) in January 2015 – mentioned in the paragraph above – and the disbursement of cash for durable solutions which started late in 2015 and is still ongoing.

- **Lack of strategic prioritisation of vulnerable groups** can be partially explained by the damage assessment only capturing housing damage without collecting sufficient socio-economic information at household level.[25] In addition, according to a key informant, "assistance was provided according to the completion of the damage assessments, first assessed, first assisted". Another key informant explained that initially some agencies adopted a blanket coverage approach and a response strategy based on funding rather than on humanitarian needs. In addition, this strategy did not account for any other types of assistance received from other sector actors. The table below shows a clear prioritisation of households in need of minor repairs throughout 2014 and early 2015 over the severely damaged or totally destroyed housing units. However, it may be assumed that families who endured severe or total damage to their homes represent some of the most vulnerable households, as their house were rendered uninhabitable and most are considered displaced, either in rental accommodation, host family, temporary shelter or caravans. The prioritisation of households in need of minor repairs may be explained by the larger number of buildings with minor damage, but also by the pace of the rubble removal, which prevented some of the more severely damaged units from being assisted straight away; by the capacity of the GRM, which was being "tested" first with smaller quantities of materials for minor damage; and potentially by the strategic decision to assist a higher number of beneficiaries with the assumption that these required smaller sums of cash and required less technical supervision. Furthermore, the major damage caseload seems to have been left out of the prioritisation process, although the number of units falling into this category is approximately equal to the number of those severely damaged.

Figure 5: Percentage of repairs completed for minor, major and severe damage between February 2015 and July 2016 [26]

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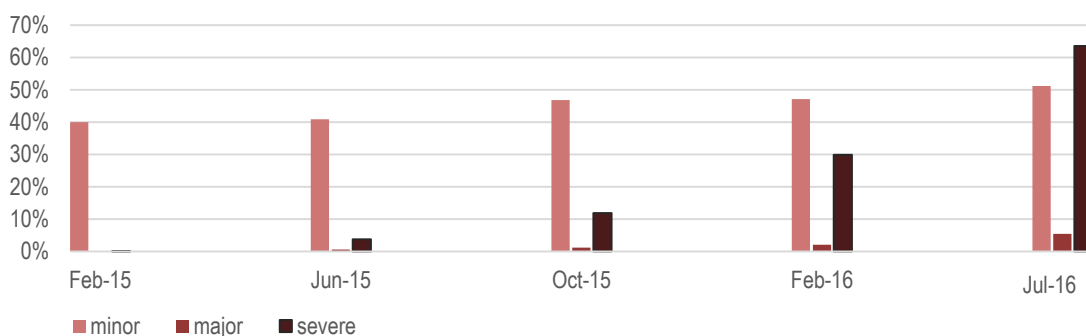
[25] It should be noted that the Shelter Cluster developed a vulnerability tool, although this was not used by all.
[26] Data extracted from Shelter Cluster Monthly Factsheets.

However figure 5 also shows that humanitarian actors eventually changed their response strategy, and switched their targeting of households from those having suffered minor damage to those having suffered severe ones. While very vulnerable households might have endured all levels of housing damage, most of the very vulnerable households remained those displaced, with severe or total damage. Therefore, targeting severely damaged houses highlighted a strategic move towards targeting more vulnerable households. This change in strategic response was probably based on a lack of funding rather than on response monitoring or humanitarian needs, as when funding was limited, prioritisation became critical. The lack of funds for TSCA could have been anticipated, partially due to the amount of cash required to maintain TSCA for all those displaced for several months or years waiting for the reconstruction.

- **Non-adherence to the strategic response plan:** The shelter section of the SRP 2015 indicated that "households at risk of displacement are not displaced from their shelter due to preventative humanitarian action".[27] Although the shelter sector strategy and the IDP working group supported reducing displacement it took some agencies several months to focus their assistance to the most vulnerable households, those displaced due to sever or total damage of their housing units. Indeed, some of the major actors did not comply with the agreed shelter strategy and preferred developing their own plans. In a context where the strategic leadership was challenged due to multiple actors in decision making positions[28], the shelter sector should reflect on how best to ensure adherence to sectorial strategies.

- **Donor driven response may become a solution when there is a low adherence to the agreed sectoral strategy.** A key informant explained that it might be advisable for humanitarian donors to provide further earmarked funding. In Gaza, a lot of donors provided non-earmarked funds. This has many advantages, especially in the early days of a response, as it facilitates the rapid deployment of resources to support an emergency response. However some donors have noticed a significant disparity of funding requested for the same assistance package, which is affecting the trust and relation between agencies and donors. For example, an agency requested one donor an average of 13,000 USD to respond to severe repairs and 21,000 USD to another donor for the same target group. When funding is limited, and donor pledges are not met, the advantages of understanding, controlling and monitoring where funds are being spent should be discussed and explored based on evidence provided by the coordination and leadership structures. In addition, a key informant explained that the "traditional development donors [were] not present, which resulted in humanitarian donors spreading too thinly". Indeed, there are advantages of ensuring targeted assistance to those most in need rather than spreading too thinly to a wider coverage. The humanitarian community, agencies and donors have a collective responsibility to ensure urgent humanitarian needs are met before aiming to assist a wider coverage of affected families.

R7: Move away from a supply based contingency plan to a scenario and needs based contingency plan.

R8: Consider rapid cash distribution to reduce the length of emergency shelter and move into temporary or durable shelter programming. Any shelter programme, including those using cash as a modality, should develop a clear strategic objective aligned with the sectoral strategy, with clear targeting, timely planning, systematic monitoring and exit strategies.

R9: Harmonise monitoring frameworks across agencies and promote systematic programme monitoring, to set-up feedback mechanisms to inform the response, provide accountability to affected population and allow for continuous learning.

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[27] Indicator 1, Objective 3, SRP 2015.
[28] Refer to page 14, 15 for further details.

R10: The humanitarian community should continue advocating for resolving the restriction on movement and material import.

R11: Humanitarian shelter actors through the Shelter Cluster SAG should develop an agreed response strategy based on needs rather than coverage and advocate to donors jointly to respond to a realistic caseload. The sectorial strategy should:

- Prioritise the provision of emergency assistance to the most vulnerable and most at risk, for example from cold winter weather (low temperatures and flooding) and extreme summer heat
- Ensure that most vulnerable families are prioritised, focusing on a combination of socio-economic vulnerabilities and levels of damage
- Formulate a strategy on the basis of need rather than on funding availability or coverage
- Identify a realistic caseload, rather than risking of spreading too thinly and compromising on quality
- Ensure adherence to agreed shelter sector strategy
- Ensure transparency and equity when requesting for funding
- Develop solid transition plans from appropriate temporary solutions to durable solutions.
- Promote systematic monitoring of assistance to learn from impact
- Address cross-cutting issues (gender, disabilities, HLP, etc.)

R12: Encourage donors to consider their funding commitments to allow agencies to plan appropriately and respond in a timely manner to humanitarian needs. Consider providing earmarked funding when strategic sectorial leadership is challenged to ensure humanitarian needs are addressed.

Shelter policies and standards

Shelter policies and standards were discussed at length during the workshop. A number of policies and standards existed from previous responses, while others were prepared, revised or tailored for this response. The table below presents the types of assistance and modalities employed, together with the status of existing policies and standards.

Figure 6: Catalogue of shelter assistance and standards

	ASSISTANCE TYPE & MODALITIES	POLICIES & STANDARDS STATUS
EMERGENCY SHELTER	Non-Food Items (NFIs) & Hygiene Kits. Modalities: in-kind materials; cash.	Shelter Cluster guidelines 09.2014, available on SC websites - 1st revision 12.2014, not available on websites. - 2nd revision 02.2015, draft not available on SC websites. Hygiene Kits guidelines available in NFI guidelines, SC document 09.2014, not available on SC websites. - 1st Revision 03.2015, draft not available on SC websites - 2nd Revision 03.2016, draft not available on SC websites - 3rd Revision 08 2016, draft not available on SC websites
	Sealing-off materials for weather protection (winter/summer) Modalities: in-kind materials; cash; technical support.	No agreed inter- sectorial guidelines, guidelines are agency specific
TEMPORARY SHELTER	TSCA (200USD to 250USD/month) Modality: unconditional cash.	Guide to the Gaza Shelter Reconstruction Mechanism, MoPWH 09.2014, not available on SC websites
	Caravans Modalities: in-kind, cash, contractor	MoPWH prefabricated units, technical specifications v3, MoPWH 10.2014, not available on SC websites. - SC revision, 11.2015, draft not on SC websites, no endorsement.
	Transitional Shelter (wooden) Modalities: in-kind and contractor.	No agreed inter- sectorial guidelines, guidelines are agency specific.
	Finishing-off unfinished units in exchange of free rent	No agreed inter- sectorial guidelines, guidelines are agency specific.
DURABLE	Minor repairs Modality: cash and technical support.	Repairs guidelines included in: - Guide to the Gaza Shelter Reconstruction Mechanism, MoPWH 09.2014, not available on SC websites. Draft Guidelines for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of war affected housing in the Gaza Strip, 3rd Edition 01.2011, available on SC websites.
	Major repairs Modality: cash and technical support.	
	Severe repairs	

	Modalities: cash and technical support	
	Total reconstruction Modalities: cash and technical support	
	Upgrades of sub-standards units. Modalities: cash and technical support	No agreed inter- sectorial guidelines, guidelines are agency specific.
CROSS - CUTTING	Inter-sectoral	- SRP / HRP, available on SC website. - IDP re-registration and vulnerability profiling exercise – detailed data available upon request / disaggregated data available online. - DNA, not available on SC website.
	Protection - Protection checklist - Disability checklist - Shelter Prioritisation tool - Gender Marker	- Protection & Prioritising the most Vulnerable Persons in the Gaza Humanitarian Response, Protection Cluster, available on SC website. - Disability checklist, Handicap International, available on SC website. - Shelter Prioritisation tool, not available on SC website. - IASC Gender marker policy
	Living Standards	No agreed minimum living standards across the sector. NRC has developed their own minimum standards to carry-out upgrades, this could be used as a benchmark.
	HLP	NRC has developed a number of tools and guidance documents including the Land Manual - not available on SC website.
	Procurement	Procurement guidance, OHCHR, not available on SC website.
	Materials	GRM – How to engage? - Version 1, version 2, version 3 all available on website. Monthly OCHA crossings report available on OCHA website

While these policies and standards have been developed prior to 2014 and others since the conflict, a number of challenges were identified and have been described as follows:

- **Lack of dissemination of policies and standards**
  Many of the policies and standards presented in this table are difficult to find online. Workshop discussions also showed a lack of awareness of the existing policies and standards. Some have not been uploaded, while others have remained as drafts and internal documents. Those which have remained as drafts, have not always been shared, sometimes because they have not been endorsed by the relevant actors.

- **Outdated and incomplete policies and standards**
  A number of these policies and standards were mentioned as being outdated or needing revision, an observation made by the MoPWH representative during the opening remarks. Some policies and documents outlining technical standards do not provide sufficient details, while others leave a lot of room for interpretation which means that standards are not harmonised in practice. For example, there were no standards for urban planning and reconstruction, even though the concept of the "neighbourhood approach" was mentioned in the DNA. In reality, community reconstruction is happening "randomly with no urban plans". In addition, the lack of awareness and subsequently lack of adherence to existing policies and standards is resulting in unplanned and uncoordinated urban reconstruction.

- **Lack of minimum agreed standard of living**
  Finally, the lack of minimum agreed standards of living for each response phase (emergency, temporary, and durable) means that the response standard for each phase differ from an agency to another. While each phase consists of different types of assistance, depending on the rural or urban context and on the implementing modality, the quality of the response should be comparable. For example, the impact on the beneficiaries receiving the TSCA, a caravan or a temporary shelter should be the same.

R13: Improve dissemination of policies and standards across the sector, to ensure that all actors engaged in shelter response have access to the latest versions of endorsed guidelines, policies and standards. Promote transparency by developing a technical index online and soft copies providing easy access to all existing documents.

R14: Edit, detail, update and refine the existing technical standards, in consultation with the SAG and other experts, whilst ensuring buy-in. Consider environmental issues, including elements of self-sufficiency, such as solar panels, rain water collection.

R15: Develop guidelines for assistance types which currently do not have inter-agency agreed standards, in consultation with the SAG and other experts whilst ensuring buy-in. For example, develop a set minimum standard of living, to enable aid actors to provide assistance based on living standards rather than only on damage.

R16: Discuss and identify ways of ensuring adherence with agreed shelter policies and standards through the SAG.

Shelter Approaches and Modalities

Various modalities were used in this shelter response: mainly in-kind during the emergency response, and later a combination of cash, contractor and technical support for the temporary and durable assistance. Some were perceived as best practices while other presented challenges as described below:

- **Cash assistance** has been perceived and described by workshop participants and key informants as the most effective and valued modality, whether provided as unconditional cash through the TSCA, or through conditional cash for repairs and reconstruction. The impact of the cash assistance should be monitored and verified through post-distribution monitoring or through a household assessments using primary data collection; whilst ensuring that those monitoring this modality are using a socio-economic lens as well as a technical appraisal ensuring quality of repairs and reconstruction.

- **Addressing tensions between communities**
  The protracted nature of the Gaza context has led to tensions between communities. Key informants explained that "due to the bad economic situation people are going against each other", and that "beneficiaries are understanding the assistance process so well that they are developing ways to manipulate the system". As a result, some agencies have developed less transparent processes to avoid abuse; other agencies have realised that promoting and working towards community cohesion has helped reducing complaints, abuse and duplication of assistance. For example, an agency explained that by providing cash in a transparent manner, disbursing part of it to building committees has proven to be a successful method of reducing tensions. This allowed families to repairs their housing units, neighbours to understand why each family received specific amounts, allow for neighbours to complete repairs of communal areas, reduced cost when contractors were carried out works for several units in the same building, and reduced tensions between neighbours.

- **Communication with communities** was also perceived as a weakness of the response, and the information provided to the affected population as well as feedback mechanisms required improvement. Affected families were sometimes refusing assistance from some NGOs, preferring to wait for support from the MoPWH or a UN agency. This might be due to the cash conditionality and the cash amount varying among actors. NGOs explained that they reacted by carrying out their assessment verification with the MoPWH staff to prove legitimacy of their assistance. This resulted in somewhat inefficient processes of duplicating staffing, whereas if communications about the harmonised assistance and agreed beneficiary selection process, tensions and duplications could have been reduced.

R17: Promote the use of cash modality for emergency, temporary and durable shelter assistance, when the conditions for the use of cash are adequate. This may include:
- o Functioning markets and that the desired items are easily available
- o Ensuring cash would allow from the adherence to minimum qualitative standards
- o Ensuring all cash programme include post-distribution monitoring activities
- o Ensuring desired impacts is fulfilled.

    o   Combining cash with technical assistance

R18: Establish stronger communication with communities, develop programmes which promote community cohesion to reduce community tensions, implement feedback mechanisms and referral systems and act upon them.

The figure below summarises the outcome from the workshop discussions and key informants' recommendations per assistance type and modality.

Figure 6: Catalogue of shelter assistance & modalities with analysis and recommendations

	ASSISTANCE TYPE & MODALITIES	ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
EMERGENCY SHELTER	Non-Food Items (NFIs) & Hygiene Kits. Modalities:-kind materials; cash.	- The NFI response after the cease fire was effective in terms of reach and speed. Challenges were faced during the hostilities due to the instability of temporary cease-fires and foreseeable security incidents. - The sector was not prepared for the scale of the displacement, and although contingency stocks were in place, the quantities of items were insufficient. Procurement for further NFIs outside Gaza was required, and some minor delays in distribution were noted partially due to materials restrictions. - NFIs were well received and cash seems to be the preferred modality. In some cases, the content of NFI kits were not appropriate to the urban context or to collective centres, and NFIs guidelines were harmonised and agreed late. The top ranked items[29] were mattress, blankets, gas bottles and, kitchen sets. - Cash assistance was perceived as best practice, especially during the early stages of the response. Some agencies explained that it might be challenging to set-up cash distributions in the midst of a conflict. Once qualitative standards were met (cease-fires were stabilised, markets were active and required items were available), cash assistance was the preferred modality. It provided families with the freedom and flexibility to respond to their specific urgent needs.
		R19: Work in coordination with all emergency shelter agencies and MoSA to develop and agree on guidelines, policies, standards and processes. Review NFI kits content and make it relevant to distribution context. Agree on an emergency shelter timeframe encouraging appropriate temporary and durable support to quickly replace emergency shelter solutions. R20: Advocate to the humanitarian coordination system for the early activation of the logistics cluster to facilitate procurement and transport of NFIs. R21: Consider cash as the preferred modality for emergency shelter response when markets are active, items are available and movement is safe.
	Sealing-off materials for weather protection (winter / summer) Modalities:-kind materials; cash; technical support.	- Winterization and sealing off included various modalities: in-kind tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, other construction materials such as windows and doors, as well as cash and technical support. This assistance allows families to seal-off minor and major damaged houses from the winter cold, and the summer heat. - Humanitarian pool funds for winterisation were often activated too late to allow agencies to mobilise, plan and provide assistance prior to the winter cold or summer heat. - Overall, there is a lack of sectorial understanding of the objectives and purposes of sealing off support. The perception is that it might be duplicating the minor repair assistance. It was agreed that sealing-off could target families receiving TSCA, to improve the sub-standard units of some rented properties. This activity has transitioned over time into minor repairs and upgrades of sub-standard units. - The selection of beneficiaries was described as very targeted and effective in identifying the most vulnerable families. The down side was the intensity of the process which required many field visits and verification.
		R22: Clarify objectives and improve coordination with other actors to increase awareness, limit duplication of assistance and ensure activities are complementary to others. R23: Earlier pre-positioning of funding for winterization would be beneficial, to allow agencies to plan and implement in timely manner.

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[29] The top ranked NFIs were provided by an agency who carried out large NFI distributions across Gaza after the cease-fire, and carried out a detailed PDM study to understand the impact of their response.

TEMPORARY SHELTER	TSCA (200 USD to 250 USD/ month) Modality: cash.	- TSCA was perceived as an appropriate modality to respond to temporary shelter needs in the early stages of the response. It was disbursed as unconditional cash grants on a monthly basis for families with severe damage and totally destroyed houses. It provided flexibility and dignity to beneficiaries to use the monthly cash assistance to best fulfil their changing needs.
		- A sample monitoring of TSCA carried out in January 2016, identified:
		    ○ top 3 expenses were food, rent and other expenses (transportation, university / school and health)
		    ○ 82% found it difficult to find rental units, due to the housing shortage and the average time to find a property is between 1 to 5 months
		    ○ 66% reported rental units inadequate for living
		    ○ 66% reported having moved between 1 to 4 times
		    ○ 26% report having used the cash to start repairing and reconstructing their damaged house.
		- There were concerns around duplication of assistance with repairs, since 26% of families receiving TSCA reported having started repairs, might have also received repair assistance. Duplication with families receiving caravans was quickly resolved in coordination with the MoPWH.
		- Beneficiary selection which was based on levels of damage rather than on needs, "there was only prioritisation of TSCA when there was shortage of funds, and the prioritisation was based on protection criteria" and "the policy was as long as the family has not received a durable solution they are entitled to TSCA".
		- Funding remained one of the main challenges to provide TSCA and most TSCA disbursement were delayed (refer to pages 16 and 17).
		- In 2016, some donors suspended their support to TSCA as they did not perceive it was still serving transitional shelter needs, and that the use of this cash assistance had extended beyond initial objectives, resulting in compensation scheme rather than a humanitarian response to temporary shelter needs. It is important to note that TSCA provided over 2 years exceeds the cost of major repairs and some severe repairs.

		R24: Clarify the objectives of TSCA, develop beneficiary criteria based on damage and socio-economic criteria, and provide assistance on a 1-year timeframe building towards long-term solutions. R25: Ensure coordination across sector between different actors to limit duplication and allow for smooth transition across phases.
	Caravans & Transitional Shelter (wooden) Modalities: In-kind, cash, contractor	- In-kind caravans were not perceived as an appropriate modality in this context, and the lack of agreed standards resulted in different quality caravans which resulted in tensions between caravan dwellers. Some caravans were provided on the site of damaged houses, others formed TDS. These were owned by the MoPWH and returned to the MoPWH when the TDS were dismantled. The main challenge was the quality of the construction which did not provide sufficient thermal comfort, over heated in the summer, and vice versa in the winter. - The "wooden caravans" or transitional shelter were well received by the affected population. They were always provided on the site of damaged houses. They were built to higher standard than Sphere Standards and provide better thermal comfort to heat exposure and winter cold. The challenges discussed were due to weak coordination or agreement with the MoPWH around the ownership of the structure and to transportability. The also faced challenges with material restriction when timber was added to the list of restricted materials. - The cost of the contractor was perceived as very high and beneficiaries recommended a self-help approach for future responses. - Overall the caravans were perceived as providing better living conditions than the collective centres, but the cash assistance was preferred over the caravans. A survey from the MoPWH identified that 90% of caravan dwellers preferred receiving TSCA rather than staying in the caravans 12 months after the conflict. However, providing TSCA for all those displaced might not have been a solution in the early days of the response due to the shortage of housing units in Gaza.
		R26: Avoid caravans' response and prioritise a cash response if appropriate. R27: In the event of a caravan response, due to the number of IDPs combined with a shortage of housing units to rent, ensure an agreed policy is in place, develop appropriate design and minimum technical standards considering thermal comfort, minimum living space, privacy, and site planning and provide detailed specifications and BoQ. R28: Promote the self-help approach for the design and construction of the caravans, providing technical guidance and support whilst ensuring value for money. "Working through beneficiaries worked better than through contractors".
	Finishing-off unfinished units	This assistance type was developed in the DNA, and aimed at finishing unfinished units in exchange of 1-year free rent. Unfortunately, this was never rolled out or funded. UNRWA piloted 10 units successfully, but never managed to raise further funding to roll out this temporary assistance at a larger scale. NRC supported 69 families with this assistance but faced many challenges in the selection of beneficiaries, mainly due to their preferences to receive TSCA.

DURABLE SHELTER	Minor & Major repairs Modality: cash. Severe repairs & Total reconstruction Modalities: cash and technical support	- Repairs were carried out through a self-help approach of conditional cash grants disbursed in instalments combined with monitoring and technical support for some minor and major damage but mainly for severe and total damage. Durable solutions such as repairs of minor, major or severe damage provided the most value for money for humanitarian donors, especially when targeting severe and total damage as it reduced the displacement caseload, built resilience, and reduced aid dependency. - All key informants confirmed that cash for repairs was better used when provided with conditions and disbursed in instalments, especially for larger sums of cash. It incentivised beneficiary investment in carrying out full repairs, it provided agencies with further control on how the money was spent, and ensured progress and quality in the reconstruction. - The cash provided families with an incentive to invest in the reconstruction and improved Gaza's housing stock. This self-help approach has resulted in better quality reconstruction than when using contractors. Agencies noted that many families, who had the means, were contributing with own funds and investing in the repairs and reconstruction process. - The concerns of no agreed minimum standard of living meant that housing repairs were only focused on repairing damage and did not include simultaneously up-grading to minimum standard, such as ensuring families had access to WASH facilities, and that there were partitions between the living and sleeping space with gender sensitive design.
		R29: Prioritise cash as soon as possible, and larger amounts of cash with technical support. This enables a faster recovery, as many families increase the assistance provided with personal investment to move out of temporary shelter into durable solutions. R30: Provide technical assistance in the early days of the assistance so families know where and how to invest the cash provided and make informed strategic decisions. R31: Providing cash to building committees, to families with different levels of damage helps reducing tensions among neighbours, and ensures that communal areas are also repaired, stairs, hall, etc (see page 22).
	Upgrades of sub-standards units. Modalities: cash and technical support	- The protracted nature of context of Gaza has resulted in a deterioration of the housing stock. Upgrades of sub-standard units consist of ensuring that affected families are living in decent housing. - There are no agreed sectoral standards for Gaza, thus agencies have set their standards such as minimum access to running water, washing basin, WC, minimum protection consideration with partition between living and sleeping, door on WC, etc. - Upgrades have been combined with TSCA and repairs, and have ensured that families either renting or carrying out housing repairs are living in an appropriate, safe and adequate housing structure.
		R32: Develop and agree on minimum standard of living and allow for upgrades of sub-standard units to be combined with repairs.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

In July and August 2014, Gaza witnessed one of the most destructive conflicts since 1967, which resulted in an unprecedented scale of destruction, devastation and displacement. Significant damage to housing and infrastructure, combined with nine years of blockade and three major escalations of hostilities, caused large-scale destruction to Gaza's economy and productive assets. Contingency plans were in place but humanitarian actors had not anticipated this scale of emergency.

During the past two years, donors and humanitarian actors have made significant efforts to provide humanitarian shelter assistance to the affected population in Gaza. Most actors recognised that the framework for providing assistance improved compared to previous responses and since August 2014. The timeliness in providing emergency shelter assistance; the coordinated and fast pace of the damage assessment; the acknowledgement of the need to prioritise the displaced population; the impact of recognising HLP issues; and the need to consider cross-cutting issues, are some of the areas which were highlighted as key improvements and best practices.

Although key informants and workshop participants recognised improvements, a number of challenges and recommendations were identified and may be explained as follows:

- **Contextual challenges** such as restriction on movement and import of construction materials and lack of funding formed some of the major blockages of this response.

- **Coordination** was identified as a key progress but also an area which still required improvement. Shelter actors were recommended to make use of the SAG as an independent humanitarian platform to improve coordination between actors and with government, to build stronger links with other coordination groups, other clusters including the IDP working group and build consensus among actors whilst defining agreed humanitarian shelter response strategy, policies and standards.

- **Damage assessment** was identified as one of the main strengths of the response, workshop participants and key informants identified recommendations including reviewing the methodology and assessment form; it was strongly recommended to include socio-economic questions and appraisal on living conditions. Agreeing on geographical distribution of teams was suggested to improve the effectiveness and speed of the assessment.

- **Information gaps**, data coordination and data sharing remained a key blockage identified by most workshop participants and key informants. The lack of information on the impact of the humanitarian assistance to date, including the rate of self-recovery, resulted in an unclear perception of the humanitarian efforts and residual needs. As a result, it was suggested to carry out a comprehensive primary data collection of a significant sample of affected families to inform next year's HRP.

- **Shelter response challenges** included implementation delays and gaps, slow transition between temporary to durable solutions, lack of monitoring and lack of strategic prioritisation of vulnerable groups. It was suggested that humanitarian shelter actors should work through the Shelter Cluster SAG to develop an agreed response strategy based on needs rather than coverage and advocate to donors jointly to respond to a realistic caseload.

- **Shelter policies and standards** were reviewed and a number of gaps were identified. Some were missing, some were outdated, others remained in draft or provided broad guidance which left a lot of room for interpretation. Overall most of these standards were difficult to find, and were not always available online. The evaluation concluded with the need to create, review and finalise all policies and standards, and adopt a wide dissemination strategy to ensure a harmonised response and enable actors to adhere to agreed technical standards.

- **Various shelter modalities** were used and overall cash assistance was described and perceived as the most effective and valued modality. The evaluation recommendation promoted the use of cash for emergency, temporary and durable shelter assistance, when the conditions for the use of cash are adequate. This includes

ensuring functioning markets, establishing systematic post-distribution monitoring, and ensuring qualitative standards can be met. It was also recommended that the impact of cash assistance in this response should be verified through a household level assessment.

Through a thorough desktop review, a number of key informant interviews, a 1-day workshop and an online survey this evaluation report endeavoured to identify best practices and lessons learned from the shelter response in Gaza since 2014. The report concludes with a number of recommendation which have been summarised, prioritised and ranked, and they are ordered below from the highest to the lowest key priority.

Priority recommendations 1 – Data collection & data sharing
1. R6: Review the detailed damage assessment process and form; agree on terminologies; use a geographical distribution of teams to collect data; and include socio-economic questions and appraisal on living conditions.
2. R2: Set up a Technical Working Group (TWIG) or organise a workshop to develop and agree on data coordination, data sharing and analysis strategy for a unified database of needs assessment data.

Priority recommendations 2 – Shelter Strategy
3. R11: Humanitarian shelter actors through the Shelter Cluster SAG should develop an agreed response strategy based on needs rather than coverage and advocate to donors jointly to respond to a realistic caseload.

Priority recommendations 3 – Guidelines and Standards
4. R15: Develop guidelines for assistance types which currently do not have inter-agency agreed standards, in consultation with the SAG and other experts whilst ensuring buy-in. For example, develop a set minimum standard of living, to enable aid actors to provide assistance based on living standards rather than only on damage.
5. R14: Edit, detail, update and refine the existing technical standards, in consultation with the SAG and other experts, whilst ensuring buy-in.
6. R17: Promote the use of cash modality for emergency, temporary and durable shelter assistance, when the conditions for the use of cash are adequate.

Priority recommendations 4 – Shelter Coordination
7. R3: Carry out comprehensive primary data collection, to deepen the understanding on what has been done so far, to understand the impact of humanitarian assistance, levels of self-recovery, current level of living conditions and remaining vulnerabilities. (Phase 2 of this evaluation)
8. R1: Use the Shelter Cluster SAG as an independent humanitarian platform to improve coordination and build consensus amongst actors whilst defining an agreed humanitarian shelter response strategy.

Priority recommendations 5 – Communication
9. R13: Improve dissemination of policies and standards across the sector, to ensure that all actors engaged in shelter response have access to the latest versions of endorsed guidelines, policies and standards.
10. R18: Establish stronger communication with communities, develop programmes which promote community cohesion to reduce community tensions, implement feedback mechanisms and referral systems and act upon them.

Priority recommendations 6 – Advocacy
11. R10: The humanitarian community should continue advocating for resolving the restriction on movement and material import.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 – LIST OF ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

R1: Use the Shelter Cluster SAG as an independent humanitarian platform to improve coordination and build consensus amongst actors whilst defining an agreed humanitarian shelter response strategy. Identify the appropriate coordination platform which focuses on development and reconstruction issues, allowing for an appropriate coordination between both entities.

R2: Set up a Technical Working Group (TWIG) or organise a workshop to develop and agree on data coordination, data sharing and analysis strategy. The unified data sharing system would have to be designed and implemented in coordination with all Shelter Cluster actors, members and observes. The appropriate entities should be identified and capacitated to legitimately host and manage the data and such a system would need adequate resources for an effective management and monitoring. The TWIG or workshop should develop and agree on SOPs for information hosting and management, information sharing and access, and data analysis. This system should also include a monitoring system to enable an integrated feedback mechanism to ensure accountability. Seeking advice from the Global Shelter Cluster information management team could be beneficial to the learning process. The IDP working group might also be an interesting source of knowledge in terms of their data management of the IDP registration and tracking system. This system may include:

- Registration systems
- Cross checking of beneficiaries lists
- IDP tracking

R3: Carry out comprehensive primary data collection under the cluster mandate, to deepen the understanding on what has been done so far, to understand the impact of humanitarian assistance, levels of self-recovery, current level of living conditions and remaining vulnerabilities. Statistically significant data could be collected from a representative sample of affected households in order to better understand the impact of the humanitarian assistance and the current level of recovery and self-recovery. This data should provide clarity on the remaining vulnerable caseload requiring shelter assistance and inform strategic humanitarian priorities for the government, humanitarian actors, and civil society.

R4: All humanitarian actors involved in emergency and recovery response, should deploy and recruit experienced staff to lead the emergency and recovery response. They should ensure that appropriate staff are in place to develop a qualitative, realistic and appropriate sectorial strategy, provide leadership, develop realistic programmes responding to the identified and agreed needs of the affected population, whilst providing the appropriate technical guidance and support to ensure good shelter programming. Providing capacity building opportunities and support to agencies providing shelter assistance should be considered.

R5: Enhance coordination with other sectors and working groups, ensuring a focal point on behalf of the sector is attending sectoral meetings and working groups discussions, and by creating stronger links between agencies working in the different sectors (sharing contact lists, meeting minutes and other relevant updates across sectors and working groups).

R6: During the contingency planning and/or prior to an assessment:

- Agree on a geographical distribution of teams for a future housing damage assessment.
- Review the methodology of the housing damage assessment tool:
  - Use rapid assessment, such as the MIRA, to estimate caseloads of damaged housing units and vulnerable families based on household sampling
  - Examine damage assessments with a community lens providing linkages with cross-cutting issues such as HLP, gender and Urban Displacement Out of Camp (UDOC).

o Use detailed assessment system to allow for the registration of beneficiary and identify the subsequent BoQs for repairs.
o Review the damage assessment forms adding socio-economic questions and appraisal of previous living conditions, building and housing conditions.

Agree on and communicate widely general terminologies, harmonising damage categories, household/family/housing units and definition of IDP.

R7: Move away from a supply based contingency plan to a scenario and needs based contingency plan.

R8: Consider rapid cash distribution to reduce the length of emergency shelter and move into temporary or durable shelter programming. Any shelter programme, including those using cash as a modality, should develop a clear strategic objective aligned with the sectoral strategy, with clear targeting, timely planning, systematic monitoring and exit strategies.

R9: Harmonise monitoring frameworks across agencies and promote systematic programme monitoring, to set-up feedback mechanisms to inform the response, provide accountability to affected population and allow for continuous learning.

R10: The humanitarian community should continue advocating for resolving the restriction on movement and material import.

R11: Humanitarian shelter actors through the Shelter Cluster SAG should develop an agreed response strategy based on needs rather than coverage and advocate to donors jointly to respond to a realistic caseload. The sectorial strategy should:

- Prioritise the provision of emergency assistance to the most vulnerable and most at risk, for example from cold winter weather (low temperatures and flooding) and extreme summer heat
- Ensure that most vulnerable families are prioritised, focusing on a combination of socio-economic vulnerabilities and levels of damage
- Formulate a strategy on the basis of need rather than on funding availability or coverage
- Identify a realistic caseload, rather than risking of spreading too thinly and compromising on quality
- Ensure adherence to agreed shelter sector strategy
- Ensure transparency and equity when requesting for funding
- Develop solid transition plans from appropriate temporary solutions to durable solutions.
- Promote systematic monitoring of assistance to learn from impact
- Address cross-cutting issues (gender, disabilities, HLP, etc.)

R12: Encourage donors to consider their funding commitments to allow agencies to plan appropriately and respond in a timely manner to humanitarian needs. Consider providing earmarked funding when strategic sectorial leadership is challenged to ensure humanitarian needs are addressed.

R13: Improve dissemination of policies and standards across the sector, to ensure that all actors engaged in shelter response have access to the latest versions of endorsed guidelines, policies and standards. Promote transparency by developing a technical index online and soft copies providing easy access to all existing documents.

R14: Edit, detail, update and refine the existing technical standards, in consultation with the SAG and other experts, whilst ensuring buy-in. Consider environmental issues, including elements of self-sufficiency, such as solar panels, rain water collection.

R15: Develop guidelines for assistance types which currently do not have inter-agency agreed standards, in consultation with the SAG and other experts whilst ensuring buy-in. For example, develop a set minimum standard of living, to enable aid actors to provide assistance based on living standards rather than only on damage.

R16: Discuss and identify ways of ensuring adherence with agreed shelter policies and standards through the SAG.

R17: Promote the use of cash modality for emergency, temporary and durable shelter assistance, when the conditions for the use of cash are adequate. This may include:

- Functioning markets and that the desired items are easily available
- Ensuring cash would allow from the adherence to minimum qualitative standards
- Ensuring all cash programme include post-distribution monitoring activities
- Ensuring desired impacts is fulfilled.
- Combining cash with technical assistance

R18: Establish stronger communication with communities, develop programmes which promote community cohesion to reduce community tensions, implement feedback mechanisms and referral systems and act upon them.

R19: Work in coordination with all emergency shelter agencies and MoSA to develop and agree on guidelines, policies, standards and processes. Review NFI kits content and make it relevant to distribution context. Agree on an emergency shelter timeframe encouraging appropriate temporary and durable support to quickly replace emergency shelter solutions.

R20: Advocate to the humanitarian coordination system and logistics actors for the faster operationalization of the logistics cluster following activation to facilitate procurement and transport of NFIs.

R21: Consider cash as the preferred modality for emergency shelter response when markets are active, items are available and movement is safe.

R22: Clarify objectives and improve coordination with other actors to increase awareness, limit duplication of assistance and ensure activities are complementary to others.

R23: Earlier pre-positioning of funding for winterization would be beneficial, to allow agencies to plan and implement in timely manner.

R24: Clarify the objectives of TSCA, develop beneficiary criteria based on damage and socio-economic criteria, and provide assistance on a 1-year timeframe building towards long-term solutions.

R25: Ensure coordination across sector between different actors to limit duplication and allow for smooth transition across phases.

R26: Avoid the use of caravans and prioritise a cash response if appropriate.

R27: In the event of a caravan response, due to the number of IDPs combined with a shortage of housing units to rent, ensure an agreed policy is in place, develop appropriate design and minimum technical standards considering thermal comfort, minimum living space, privacy, and site planning and provide detailed specifications and BoQ.

R28: Promote the self-help approach for the design and construction of the caravans, providing technical guidance and support whilst ensuring value for money. "Working through beneficiaries worked better than through contractors".

R29: Prioritise cash as soon as possible, and larger amounts of cash with technical support. This enables a faster recovery, as many families increase the assistance provided with personal investment to move out of temporary shelter into durable solutions.

R30: Provide technical assistance in the early days of the assistance so families know where and how to invest the cash provided and make informed strategic decisions.

R31: Providing cash to building committees, to families with different levels of damage helps reducing tensions among neighbours, and ensures that communal areas are also repaired, stairs, hall, etc (see page 22).

R32: Develop and agree on minimum standard of living and allow for upgrades of sub-standard units to be combined with repairs.

ANNEX 2 – WORKSHOP AGENDA

8.30 – 9.00	*REGISTRATION/COFFEE*

9.00 – 9.40
9:00 – 9:30
 	
9.30 – 9.40
	Session 1: Introductions & Opening remarks
	1.1 Welcome
	    1. Shelter Cluster Lead Agency
	    2. MOPWH
	    3. MOSA
	    4. UNDP
	    5. UNRWA
	1.2 Workshop purpose and structure – Workshop facilitator

	Session 1 and 3 participants only leave

9.40 – 11.00
9.40 – 10.00
 	
10.00 – 11.00
	Session 2a: Emergency shelter
	2.a.1 Presentations
	  - NFIs – UNRWA
	  - Sealing off materials and winterization/summarization – NRC
	2.a.2 Roundtable discussion
	  - Rotation 1: NFIs
	  - Rotation 2: Sealing off/winterization

11.00 – 11.20	*BREAK*

11.20 – 12.40
11.20 – 11.40
 	
11.40 – 12.40
	Session 2b: Temporary shelter
	2.b.1 Presentations
	  - Rent & reintegration packages – MOPWH
	  - Transitional shelter – CRS
	2.b.2 Roundtable discussion
	  - Rotation 1: Rental assistance/finishing unfinished buildings
	  - Rotation 2: Temporary shelter/caravans

12.40 – 14.00
12.40 – 13.00
 	
13.00 – 14.00
	Session 2c: Durable shelter
	2.c.1 Presentations
	  - Repairs: Minor/major/severe – UNDP
	  - Repairs/upgrading – SIF
	2.c.2 Roundtable discussion
	  - Rotation 1: Repairs
	  - Rotation 2: Upgrading

14:00 – 15.00	*LUNCH – Session 1 and 3 only participants return*

15.00 – 16.30
15.00 – 15.45
 	
15.45 – 16.30
	Session 3: Feedback & Conclusions
	3.1 Feedback and ranking of recommendations
	  - Feedback from roundtable discussions
	  - Ranking of recommendations and information gaps
	  - Conclusions
	3.2 Final remarks and next steps

ANNEX 3 – LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

	Organisation	Person	Role
1	ECHO	Suranga Mallawa Aldo Biondi	Technical Assistant Humanitarian Expert at DG ECHO (until end of August 2016) Regional Director for ECHO
2	MoPWH	Naji Sarhan	Deputy Minister for the MoPWH
3	Shelter Cluster Lead - NRC	Hanibal Abiy Worku	NRC Country Director Shelter Cluster Lead
4	Shelter Cluster Team	Fiona Kelling Iyad Abu Hamam	National Shelter Cluster Coordinator Gaza Shelter Cluster Coordinator
5	NRC (INGO)	Franziska Stehnken Ahmed Abu Muileq	Shelter/Wash Programme Development Manager Shelter Programme Coordinator
6	OCHA	Katleen Maes	Head of the Gaza Sub-office of OCHA
7	UNDP	Iman Husseini	Programme Specialist & Head of infrastructure at UNDP
8	UNRWA	Muin Moqat	Deputy Chief of infrastructure and camp improvement
9	Welfare Association	Mohammed Almoqayed	Senior Programme Manager
10	Anonymous	-	-

ANNEX 4 – SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

The Shelter Cluster Palestine with the support of REACH is conducting a lessons learned exercise to better understand the outcomes of the shelter response since the 2014 Gaza escalation. The aim is to review the successes, challenges and impact of the shelter response by gathering information from Shelter Cluster partners, representatives of the affected population and government representatives.

The process of this exercise includes:
- Desk top review
- Lessons learned Workshop (16th August 2016)
- Key informant interview (with 10 actors)
- Anonymous survey to collect final data and feedback on the workshop

This anonymous survey will allow REACH to collect final input on the lessons learned, as well as provide feedback on the workshop conducted on 16th August 2016 in Gaza City. Thank you for taking 10 minutes to complete this survey. For additional questions and clarification, please contact Caroline Dewast, REACH consultant, caroline.dewast@gmail.com

1. General Information

1.1 Do you work for:
☐ International NGO
☐ National NGO
☐ Red Cross Movement
☐ UN organisation
☐ Government
☐ Donor
☐ Other (specify)

1.2 The organisation you work for is:
☐ a Shelter Cluster member
☐ a Shelter Cluster observer
☐ a Shelter Cluster team
☐ Inter-Cluster Coordination (OCHA, other cluster member, other cluster lead)
☐ Other / I don't know

2. LESSONS LEARNED (additional information)

2.1 What worked well in Gaza's Shelter Response? What were the positive outcomes, the key achievements, and the best practices?

2.2 What else happened? How was the assistance used? Were there unintended outcomes? What were the challenges?

2.3 What could be improved? What would be the recommendations explaining how to address the issues?

2.4 Are their remaining gaps in information? What do we not know? What information are we unsure of and we would need to confirm? Are we missing information from the field?

2.5 Any additional comments or inputs you wish to share with REACH?

3. WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

3.1 Did you attend the workshop?

Yes ☐   No ☐ (if no this is the end of the survey)

3.2 To what extent do you agree that the recommendations listed below are priority recommendations?
1. Develop a unified registration and database system

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐   Strongly agree ☐
2. Advocate to donors for further funding

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐   Strongly agree ☐
3. Develop contingency plans

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐
4. Improved coordination between actors and with Government

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐
5. Establish complaint mechanism

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐
6. Set-up joint rapid assessment teams

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐
7. Set clear eligibility criteria for Government's temporary assistance (Cash assistance/TSCA or Caravans) and set more restrictions

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐
8. Unify shelter policy and clarify/develop minimum technical standards for shelter response, with associated costs of assistance based on damage assessment.

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐
9. Improve timeliness of the response and avoid delays in providing assistance.

Strongly disagree ☐   Somewhat disagree ☐   Neutral ☐   Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐

3.3 Overall was this a useful event to capture the lessons learned of the Gaza Shelter Response?

Very useful ☐   Somewhat useful ☐   Not useful ☐

Any comments?

3.2 Sessions 1 – Opening Remarks
3.2.1   How relevant was this session?

Very relevant ☐   Somewhat relevant ☐   Not relevant ☐

3.2.2   What did you like about session 1?

3.2.3   What would you have done differently in session 1?

3.3 Session 2 – Presentations and Round Table Discussions
3.3.1   How relevant were the presentations and round table discussions?

Very relevant ☐   Somewhat relevant ☐   Neutral ☐   Not very relevant ☐   Not relevant☐

    3.3.2   What did you like about the presentations?

    3.3.3   What would you recommend to improve the presentation sessions?

    3.3.4   What did you like about the round table discussions?

    3.3.5   What would you recommend to improve the round table discussions?

3.4 Session 3 – Feedback & Conclusions
    3.4.1   To what extent was the feedback structure useful?

Very relevant ☐   Somewhat relevant ☐   Neutral ☐   Not very relevant ☐   Not relevant☐

Any additional comments on the feedback sessions?

    3.4.2   To what extent was the ranking exercise useful?

Very relevant ☐   Somewhat relevant ☐   Neutral ☐   Not very relevant ☐   Not relevant☐

Any comments on the ranking exercise?

4.   Other
    3.1 Any other comments about the Lessons learned Workshop?

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