



**GLOBAL
SHELTER CLUSTER**

Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements

2030

GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER STRATEGY

DECEMBER 2024



“Life Saving and Life Enabling”



GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER COORDINATORS STATEMENT



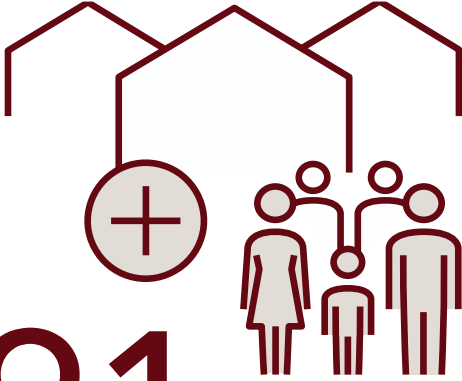
The idea that shelter is life-saving and life-enabling is essential to grasp the far-reaching impacts of shelter and settlements responses. Shelter is where families find safety, children study, meals are prepared and futures are rebuilt. By providing shelter, we not only offer protection from the elements, but we empower individuals and communities to nurture hope, promote health and restore their capacity to overcome adversity.

An increasing number of people need shelter and settlement solutions that support them to maintain their health, safety, dignity, livelihood, and community connections. Yet complex and constantly changing factors – geopolitical, environmental, social, scientific, economic, technological – create a rapidly changing framework within which to meet those needs. So, we need to be more prepared and flexible than ever





OUR CHANGING
WORLD DEMANDS
A NEW APPROACH



91 MILLION
PEOPLE NEEDED
SHELTER IN 2024

.....



+141%
IN SEVEN YEARS

More people than ever need safe and dignified shelter

- The 2030 Global Shelter Cluster Strategy responds to a year-on-year increase in humanitarian needs.
- According to the Global Humanitarian Overview 2024:
 - Approximately 300 million people required humanitarian support in 2024, up from 136 million in 2018 — an increase of over 120% in seven years.
 - 91 million people needed shelter assistance in 2024, compared to just under 38 million in 2018 — an increase of 141% over the same period.
- The increase in humanitarian needs is attributed to climate change, conflict, and macroeconomic conditions.

Climate change, conflict and macroeconomic pressure are driving a change in our strategy



+45%

2021 → 2022

.....

- Climate change is increasing the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, including droughts, floods, damaging storms, and heat waves.
- Internal displacement caused by climate change increased by 45% between 2021 and 2022, according to the Global Humanitarian Overview 2024.
- Rising displacement rates will drive a corresponding increase in the need for shelter support.
- The 2030 Global Shelter Cluster Strategy acknowledges these pressures and encourages innovative approaches to address them.

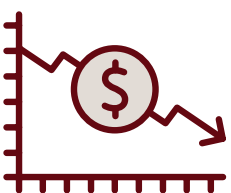
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**STATE-BASED
CONFLICTS IN
34 COUNTRIES**

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42

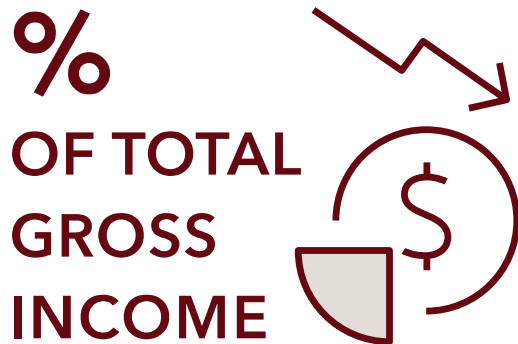


**USD TRILLION
SHORTFALL
IN FINANCE
REQUIRED TO
ACHIEVE GOALS**

- State-based conflicts are rising, with 59 conflicts in 34 countries recorded in 2023, the highest since 1946.
- Conflict drives increased need for shelter support through infrastructure damage, livelihood loss, and social disruption, and shifts responses toward urban areas.
- Macroeconomic conditions — slow growth, supply issues, and high interest rates — divert resources from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- There is a USD 4.2 trillion shortfall to achieve the SDGs, amid rising global inequality.
- These conditions reinforce the importance of prioritizing shelter and settlements responses.



**TOTAL AMOUNT
ODA SINCE 1960**



**0.37% IN 2023
(TARGET OF 0.7%)**

The funding framework related to humanitarian work is also changing

- Changes in aid and development financing require rethinking how resources are used.
- While the total ODA has increased annually since 1960, its proportion of gross national income fell to 0.37% in 2023, below the 0.7% target.
- Humanitarian funding needs have outpaced the growth in ODA allocations.
- ODA contributions are declining in some countries, and there is a shift towards loans instead of grants, increasing public debt.
- The 2030 Global Shelter Cluster Strategy calls for pursuing new funding sources and resource-sharing approaches.

The Strategy offers a way to navigate the changing humanitarian environment

- With 91 million people needing shelter in 2024 and numbers expected to rise, collective efforts grounded in humanitarian principles are more critical than ever.
- To continue supporting people affected by crises, we must rethink how we implement shelter responses.
- The 2030 Global Shelter Cluster Strategy provides the framework for this new approach.



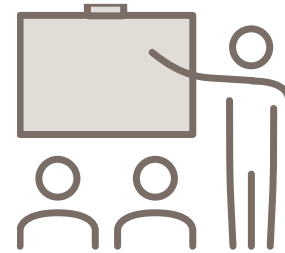
RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER

- The Global Shelter Cluster (GSC), established by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), ensures access to safe, dignified and appropriate shelters and settlements for people affected by disasters and conflict-induced displacement.
- The GSC facilitates collaboration among shelter and settlements actors to deliver timely and quality humanitarian assistance.
- GSC and Shelter Clusters work collectively with national response actors for effective and predictable responses.
- The GSC is a public platform co-led by UNHCR and IFRC:
 - IFRC convenes the Shelter Cluster in disaster contexts.
 - UNHCR leads the Shelter Cluster in conflict situations.
- Clusters are not activated in refugee settings, where the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) applies.

The GSC leads are accountable for system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, and for ensuring predictable and effective inter-agency responses. Specifically, leads are responsible for establishing broad partnership bases that engage in:



STANDARDS AND
POLICY-SETTING



BUILDING
RESPONSE CAPACITY



OPERATIONAL
SUPPORT

The GSC supports Shelter Clusters in meeting their *6 core functions*:

- | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | | <i>Supporting service delivery</i> | 3 | | <i>Planning and implementing Shelter Cluster strategies</i> | 5 | | <i>Building national capacity in preparedness and contingency planning</i> |
| 2 | | <i>Informing the Humanitarian Coordinator / Humanitarian Country Team's strategic decision making</i> | 4 | | <i>Monitoring and evaluating performance</i> | 6 | | <i>Supporting robust advocacy</i> |

STRATEGY 2030



GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER

Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements

Life Saving and Life Enabling

VISION

The Global Shelter Cluster envisions a world where all people affected by humanitarian crises have timely access to safe, dignified, and appropriate shelter and settlement solutions, in accordance with the humanitarian principles and the right to adequate housing.

EVIDENCE AND
INNOVATION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To achieve this vision, the Global Shelter Cluster partners will lead effective, efficient and accountable humanitarian shelter and settlement action to achieve extended impact and optimal reach.

COORDINATION
AND
COLLABORATION

ENABLERS

ACCOUNTABILITY
TO AFFECTED
PEOPLE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

EXTENDED IMPACT

- 1.1 *Promote integrated approaches to preparedness and response*
- 1.2 *Improve environmental impact*
- 1.3 *Enable safe, secure, accessible and protective living conditions*
- 1.4 *Plan for recovery and durable solutions from the start*

OPTIMAL REACH

- 2.1 *Prioritize and resource shelter and settlement responses*
- 2.2 *Improve targeting of the most vulnerable people*
- 2.3 *Increase coverage*

ENABLERS

LOCALIZATION

ADVOCACY

IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

STRENGTHENING
CAPACITY



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

EXTENDED IMPACT

1.1 *Promote integrated approaches to preparedness and response*

- Emphasize that shelter is a foundation for wider humanitarian outcomes
- Demonstrate the consequences of inaction
- Achieve a multi-sectoral approach through linked or joint programming
- Adopt a settlements approach

1.2 *Improve environmental impact*

- Prioritize environmental considerations in organizational strategies, policies and tools
- Strengthen capacity to deliver environmentally sustainable and climate-smart approaches
- Foster an integrated approach to environmental protection and climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Implement locally appropriate shelter solutions

1.3 *Enable safe, secure, accessible and protective living conditions*

- Promote the centrality of protection
- Mitigate protection risks, including gender-based violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse
- Be accountable for actions to promote inclusion, considering age, gender and disability
- Promote housing, land and property rights

1.4 *Plan for recovery and durable solutions from the start*

- Foster incremental recovery through long-term planning to increase community resilience
- Apply disaster-risk-reduction principles
- Support self-recovery and self-reliance to achieve locally appropriate solutions
- Adopt durable shelter solutions
- Transition international coordination mechanisms to local systems

OPTIMAL REACH

2.1 *Prioritize and resource shelter and settlement responses*

- Respond in a timely and appropriate manner
- Strengthen preparedness, contingency planning and anticipatory action
- Mobilize adequate resources
- Increase donor engagement

2.2 *Improve targeting of the most vulnerable people*

- Include marginalized populations
- Apply the shelter severity classification
- Advocate for humanitarian access to affected populations
- Use area-based coordination
- Consider urban, peri-urban and rural contexts

2.3 *Increase coverage*

- Optimize cost versus quality
- Increase multiplier effect
- Use cash and market systems

STRATEGIC
PRIORITIES



PILLARS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Strategy is based on two pillars

EXTENDED IMPACT

OPTIMAL REACH

Under each pillar, we've defined specific strategic priorities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



EXTENDED IMPACT

It's essential that we raise awareness of how shelter and settlements responses enable the achievement of other sector outcomes, extending the impact of our action beyond our own sector. We can do this by focusing on four strategic priorities:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.1

Promote integrated approaches to preparedness and response

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.2

Improve environmental impact

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.3

Enable safe, secure, accessible and protective living conditions

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.4

Plan for recovery and durable solutions from the start

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.1

Promote integrated approaches to preparedness and response

- Populations affected by crises have complex needs that cannot be met by isolated sectoral responses.
- Integrated approaches, involving multiple sectors and affected communities, are more effective in meeting interlinked and prioritized needs.
- Assessments must be done collaboratively with local and national actors, considering context, recovery, and sustainability aspirations.
- Shelter and settlements actors often collaborate with sectors like Protection, WASH, CCCM, Health and Nutrition, Food Security and Livelihoods, and Logistics.
- The Settlements Approach enhances local impact and provides a framework for more effective, targeted, and accountable responses.
- Implementing integrated approaches requires advocacy for integrated programming and resource mobilization.
- The GSC will promote integrated multi-sector responses at the global level and Shelter Clusters will advocate for the Settlements Approach at the country level.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.2

Improve environmental impact

- Considering the environment, including climate change, improves the effectiveness and long-term benefits of shelter and settlements responses.
- Ignoring environmental factors can cause carbon emissions, resource depletion, and environmental degradation.
- Shelter responses must anticipate, assess, mitigate, and improve environmental risks, using integrated and localized approaches.
- Environmental considerations should be embedded in all humanitarian decisions, alongside standards, donor requirements, and cost analysis.
- GSC and partners are encouraged to systematically integrate environmental and climate change considerations into strategies, policies, and tools.
- This approach reduces harm, supports self-recovery, and contributes to durable solutions for future generations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.3

Enable safe, secure, accessible and protective living conditions

- People needing humanitarian assistance face multiple risks: conflict, climate, and socio-economic vulnerability.
- Crises increase protection risks, including gender-based violence, exploitation, abuse, eviction, and exclusion.
- Providing safe, secure, and protected living conditions upholds the right to protection, security, and dignity.
- Responses should:
 - Uphold housing, land, and property rights with a gender, protection, and climate lens.
 - Apply conflict sensitivity and mitigate harm.
 - Engage affected populations at all stages.
 - Ensure equitable access considering age, gender, disability, and diversity.
 - Promote safe, accessible, and appropriate environments for shelter.
- Integrating protection principles improves the quality, relevance, and impact of shelter and settlements responses.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.4

Plan for recovery and durable solutions from the start

- Long-term thinking, priority needs understanding, and context-specific adaptation are essential for recovery, resilience, and durable solutions.
- Recovery starts immediately but needs systems thinking and early engagement of key actors.
- Most affected people self-recover; enabling environments and agency are critical.
- Shelter and settlements programming supports return, integration, relocation, and strengthens housing, land and property rights.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.4

Plan for recovery and durable solutions from the start

- Responses should:
 - Promote integrated, cross-sector approaches and urban planning principles.
 - Build resilience and apply conflict sensitivity and disaster-risk-reduction.
 - Empower local actors and governments to lead recovery.
 - Engage affected people, especially women and girls, in decision-making and leadership.
 - Respect and prioritize women's rights, including tenure rights.
 - Use incremental recovery methods, such as core housing and support self-recovery.
 - Advocate for adequate housing with data and evidence.
 - Design shelter solutions that support livelihoods and income generation.
 - Address climate change, environmental degradation, and sustainability.
 - Build back better, using local and international expertise.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



OPTIMAL REACH

Disasters, conflicts and unprecedented displacement impact more people each year, with available resources limiting humanitarian's capacity to respond. We can achieve optimal reach in those conditions by focusing on three strategic priorities:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.1

Prioritize and resource shelter and settlement responses

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.2

Improve targeting of the most vulnerable people

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.3

increase coverage

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.1

Prioritize and resource shelter and settlement responses

- Continued advocacy for prioritizing and resourcing shelter and settlement responses is critical.
- Timely disaster mitigation, robust contingency plans, and anticipatory action are essential to avoid delays and suffering.
- Effective coordination ensures aid reaches those in need promptly and efficiently.
- Timely allocation of sufficient resources (financial, human, material) is vital for impact.
- Aligning responses with available funding requires coordinated and integrated approaches, especially for neglected crises.
- Strong, transparent relationships with donors are crucial for sustained support.
- Partnerships based on data sharing, knowledge exchange, and joint advocacy are key to addressing current and future challenges.
- The GSC will continue to foster belonging and cooperation among partners.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.2

Improve targeting of the most vulnerable people

- Impact of crises varies by living conditions, location, and individual resilience.
- Understanding vulnerability helps identify who needs assistance most, including marginalized populations.
- Tools like the Shelter Severity Classification system support geographic prioritization and targeting based on age, disability, and gender vulnerabilities.
- Area-based coordination enhances humanitarian reach, dignity, and access advocacy.
- Better targeting improves accountability and transparency.
- Partnerships with local communities and stakeholders expand data quality and decision-making.
- Including affected populations' perspectives strengthens targeting and assistance.
- Detailed demographic and geographic knowledge refines strategies to better support vulnerable groups.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.3

Increase coverage

- Coverage is the percentage of targeted people who receive humanitarian support.
- Global needs have doubled in the past decade, but resources have not kept pace.
- Shelter Clusters must reach more people by improving efficiency, including through localization and accountability to affected people.
- Local solutions, markets, and cash-based assistance can enhance cost-efficiency, economic recovery, and multiplier effects like health and livelihoods.
- Durability must be factored into coverage strategies, balancing immediate needs and long-term benefits through incremental approaches.
- Coordination across humanitarian, development, government, and market actors boosts immediate and long-term capacity.
- Systems-thinking (e.g., supply chain analysis, private sector collaboration) helps scale responses effectively.
- The GSC will promote understanding of system interconnections to increase coverage.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



ENABLERS

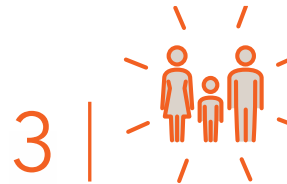
This Strategy recognizes four enablers as opportunities for partners to ignite the vision and achieve the strategic priorities:



1 | **COORDINATION & COLLABORATION**



2 | **LOCALIZATION**



3 | **ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED PEOPLE**



4 | **EVIDENCE & INNOVATION**

1 COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

- Coordination and collaboration are essential to meet the scale and complexity of humanitarian shelter and settlements needs.
- National and local governments strengthen effectiveness, compliance, and community engagement, fostering sustainability and resilience.
- Collaboration with development and peace actors links humanitarian work to long-term stability and development.
- Private sector provides technical and logistical support; civil society offers local knowledge and trust.
- Diverse partnerships enable culturally appropriate, context-specific, and more impactful responses.
- Holistic approaches, leveraging each actor's strengths, improve coverage, resource use, and effectiveness.

2 LOCALIZATION

- Localization recognizes the leadership role of local and national actors in humanitarian action, shifting power dynamics.
- Investing in localization promotes respect, equity, and more effective, efficient, and sustainable assistance.
- In Shelter Clusters, localization enhances coordination, participation, partnerships, and cluster transition.
- Key actions include supporting local financing (e.g., country-based pooled funds) and using local knowledge in strategies.
- The GSC remains committed to centering crisis-affected people, strengthening local decision-making, and building on governance structures.
- Localization is crucial for sustainable and impactful humanitarian efforts.

3 ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

- Accountability to Affected People (AAP) is a core commitment and function of the Shelter Cluster.
- Affected people must be at the center of responses, participating meaningfully in inclusive decision-making.
- Timely, relevant, and actionable information and feedback mechanisms are essential.
- The GSC must engage and partner with local and national organizations, including those representing diverse groups.
- Strengthening AAP improves targeting of vulnerable people and enables safe, secure, accessible, and protective living conditions.

4 EVIDENCE AND INNOVATION

- Evidence is essential to uphold humanitarian principles, improve programming quality, and strengthen budgets and strategies.
- The GSC will use and share evidence for planning, coordination, and decision-making, and address evidence gaps.
- Evidence-based approaches extend impact, improve targeting, and support integrated programming and durable solutions.
- Data on capacity, needs, and scale strengthens advocacy and optimizes reach.
- The GSC collects, manages, and analyzes data to answer operational and strategic questions and shares findings through varied formats (e.g., dashboards, HRP outputs, publications, research papers).

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

Advocacy and strengthening capacity are two effective modalities for GSC partners to attain the vision and objectives in the 2024-2030 Global Shelter Cluster Strategy.

ADVOCACY

- Advocacy is critical for promoting and safeguarding the right to adequate housing.
- Effective advocacy influences policies, mobilizes resources, and ensures shelter needs are prioritized.
- It raises awareness among policymakers, donors, and stakeholders, showcasing gaps and successful responses.
- Advocacy fosters collaboration and alignment across national, regional, and global levels.
- It should be based on evidence-based research, real-life stories, and continuous policy engagement.
- Public and private advocacy can attract funding, raise humanitarian standards, and ensure shelter rights are realized, especially in crises.

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY

- Strengthening global and regional surge capacity ensures timely and efficient shelter responses.
- Shelter actions must link short-term relief with longer-term development outcomes.
- The GSC will boost capacity through:
 - Enhanced training,
 - Localized capacity building, and
 - Robust partnerships.
- Humanitarian Shelter Coordination training will expand to include Programme Management and Information Management, with a focus on country and sub-national levels.
- Capacity strengthening and localization empower local actors to deliver sustainable, context-specific responses.
- Partnerships with the Global Support Team, Working Groups, Communities of Practice, and wider humanitarian and private sectors are vital.
- Knowledge exchange between Shelter Clusters and local actors will strengthen collective capacity.



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