

Technical Note on

Sealing-off repairs on damaged buildings

First phase ceasefire scenario interventions

Given the scale of shelter needs across Gaza and the limited resources available, repair of damaged dwellings should prioritize closing the thermal envelope of essential habitable spaces (core spaces¹) in accordance with family size and, where feasible, restoring basic household water and sanitation services. The Shelter Cluster does not recommend high-cost permanent repairs at this stage, as most of the population lacks access to even the most basic shelter assistance, such as tents or tarpaulins. An equivalent level of assistance should be ensured for similar needs across different affected population groups to avoid exacerbating social tensions and undermining the credibility of Shelter Cluster partners. The “do no harm” principle, maximizing assistance coverage, and delivering assistance based on needs must guide all interventions. The [vulnerability criteria](#) of the Shelter Cluster in Gaza should drive the selection of beneficiaries.

Currently, **in-kind** assistance is the only recommended modality due to several factors, including:

- The lack of liquidity in Gaza,
- Excessive financial fees (exceeding 30%),
- The absence of a functional market,
- The risk of encouraging looting and the creation of black markets for materials taken from damaged buildings, and
- The inability to ensure that cash assistance is used for repairs, given the cross-sectoral needs of the most vulnerable populations, where shelter may not necessarily be the most urgent priority.

The distribution of emergency shelter materials, such as Sealing-Off Kits and Emergency Shelter Kits², along with technical support when feasible, is the most effective approach for sealing-off or winterization repairs. Due to ongoing military operations and limited humanitarian access in Gaza, conducting damage assessments in safe conditions remains a significant challenge. The presence of EOs and debris and the recurrence of damage to previously assessed areas make it difficult to have a map of “cleared to work” buildings.

In addition to emergency shelter materials, organizations should distribute Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials containing key messages on:

- Safety awareness,
- Risk reduction when occupying minor or moderately damaged dwellings, and
- Proper use of Sealing-Off Kits for emergency shelter repairs³

Priority should be given to families who have returned to their damaged homes but are unable to carry out rapid emergency repairs independently. For further information on emergency assistance packages and response modalities, please refer to [Module 1](#) developed by the TSA Technical Working Group.

¹ **core living space:** The minimum recommended space per person is 5.5 sq. m. of covered space including circulation, kitchen, bathroom and toilet facilities. That results in a minimum of 33 m2 per family of 6 persons. The primary focus should be on identifying the minimum repairs needed for the essential parts of the housing unit and the restitution of the thermal envelope.

² [Shelter Cluster Emergency Assistance Packages](#)

³ [EIC: Return to partially damaged buildings: sealing off and safety awareness messages](#)