

Background

The escalation of conflict in Gaza on 7 October 2023, resulted in shortages of electricity, food, water, and fuel supplies, as well as severely restricted access to the Gaza Strip. The humanitarian response continues to be limited in Gaza due to acute insecurity and access constraints. These constraints are set against the needs of over 2.3 million people¹ driven to internal displacement by the destruction of infrastructure, leading to a lack of access to clean water, adequate health care, and widespread food shortages. Due to the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis and corresponding access challenges to Gaza, humanitarian organisations face significant logistics challenges in delivering assistance at the scale of humanitarian needs, with insufficient number of crossing points for the entry of humanitarian goods into the Gaza Strip.

In response to these challenges, the Palestine Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) requested the activation of the Logistics Cluster, which was initiated on 16 October 2023.

To address some of the logistics constraints faced by relief organisations, the Palestine Logistics Cluster has adopted a regional operational and coordination approach, with presence across five locations: Gaza, Jerusalem, Cairo, Al Arish, and Amman, to ensure strong coordination, advocate for uninterrupted flow of assistance, and deliver effective support for partners engaged in the Palestine response and inside Gaza. The Logistics Cluster is also facilitating access to common services (storage and transport) and augmenting the logistics capacity of key relief actors through the provision of logistics assets and technical expertise to mitigate bottlenecks, avoid duplication of efforts, increase efficiency where possible, in support of the humanitarian community.

Operational Constraints

The humanitarian logistics community in Gaza is grappling with severe challenges that significantly impede the delivery of life-saving assistance. Key issues include:

- **Access constraints to Gaza**, including **limited entry points and restrictions on personnel and relief items**, are severely hindering the operations of humanitarian organisations. The restricted access to transshipment and scanning locations further impedes the humanitarian community's ability to monitor and effectively track transported cargo.
- **Movement restrictions and safe humanitarian access within Gaza** are severely impacted by military operations, security threats and incidents, complex deconfliction mechanism, convoluted convoy coordination processes and authorisations. Damaged infrastructure and overcrowding further complicate the delivery of aid. This not only delays aid but also results in financial losses and higher costs for aid organisations.
- **Severely low fuel supplies, coupled with a broader energy crisis**, are disrupting regular services, and greatly complicating humanitarian efforts. In such a volatile environment, these conditions render humanitarian operations inherently unpredictable and unreliable to the population in urgent need of aid.
- **Disruptions in power and telecommunications**: frequent electricity blackouts, mobile network disruptions, and the overall unstable energy supply in Gaza have significantly impacted communications, thereby affecting the ability of humanitarian partners to coordinate and safely undertake essential activities.
- **Regulatory and procedural challenges**, such as restrictions and limitations on relief items allowed into Gaza, insufficient land entry points, lengthy and multiple security screenings requirements, truck specifications, and multiple transshipments,

¹ [Flash Appeal – Occupied Palestinian Territory, April – December 2024](#)

have constrained operational fluidity and efficiency. Moreover, the lack of authorisation for closed reefer trucks, which are crucial for the transport and delivery of health and food items requiring temperature-sensitive transport, severely limits the ability to maintain the integrity of these critical supplies. The complexity linked to multiple customs clearance requirements and the absence of administrative facilitation of aid further exacerbate these issues, significantly impeding the timely delivery and distribution of essential relief supplies.

Logistics Gaps and Bottlenecks

The humanitarian logistics community is facing several challenges, translating into gaps and bottlenecks that continue to impede the delivery of life-saving assistance, these include:

- **Import transit and entry procedures:** Lack of clarity on import and transit procedures for incoming relief cargo, combined with the unpredictability of entry point openings availability are hindering humanitarian actors' ability to optimize their supply chain planning and scale up their operations efficiently.
- **Lack of real-time visibility** over cargo along the corridors and convoys inside Gaza hampers the ability of relief actors to monitor and undertake operations.
- **Resource Shortages:** Widespread shortages of primary resources, but also power, telecommunications and fuel are significantly impacting movement, markets, and ability to communicate, making assistance difficult to flow in and ensure delivery to affected populations.
- **Infrastructure limitations:** Limited availability of suitable and secure storage facilities for organisations has led to an inability to preposition, store, and distribute assistance effectively in Gaza. At critical crossing areas, there are extreme congestions with significant backlogs.
- **Transport difficulties:** Transport capacity in Gaza is limited by lack of fuel, deteriorated road infrastructure, and difficulties in obtaining spare parts.

Objectives and Planned Activities

Based on the current operational constraints and logistics gaps, and in line with the [2024 Flash Appeal](#), the Palestine Logistics Cluster aims to maintain a logistics coordination and information sharing platform, facilitate access to reliable common logistics services, and supplement the logistics capacity of key relief actors to enable a timely and uninterrupted supply of life-saving aid items to the affected population in Gaza.

This Concept of Operations aims to deliver on the following objectives:

1. **Coordination and Information Management:** Leveraging logistics knowledge and expertise of responding humanitarian organisations to jointly evaluate the operational situation and ensure coordinated humanitarian logistics response. Consolidating, analysing, and sharing relevant logistics information to promote continuity in operations, monitor changing needs for logistics support and continuously identify potential gaps and bottlenecks in operational capabilities of the humanitarian community and address them. Additionally, the Logistics Cluster will continually advocate for increased logistical access and facilitation of aid flow for partners' emergency response implementation.
2. **Common Services and Capacity Augmentation:** The Logistics Cluster will continue to facilitate the provision of key common logistics services to address identified gaps – such as cargo consolidation and storage, transportation, and cargo tracking.

This Concept of Operations is a live document, and the activities will be adapted and revised as the situation unfolds and further assessment results become available, including the possible provision of additional logistics common services as required by the humanitarian community.

Additionally, it will continue to support key relief actors by providing equipment, services, and technical expertise to augment the logistics capabilities for strengthened services and flow of assistance delivery in support to the humanitarian community.

The following services will be made available to the humanitarian community and may be reviewed based on the operational context, access and security constraints, availability of resources. The Logistics Cluster team jointly with its partners, continuously monitors the evolving operational context to assess partners' capacity and needs to adapt its set-up and services accordingly.

1. Coordination and Information Management

The following coordination and information management activities will be provided to mitigate duplication of efforts by humanitarian actors, maximise the use of available logistics assets/resources, and support operational decision-making:

- **Engaging Partners and Key Stakeholders** Coordination with authorities, Red Crescent Societies, inter-cluster group, National and International NGOs, UN Agencies and Programs and participation in key coordination forums to address issues on behalf of logistics partners and facilitate continuous operations. The Logistics Cluster is working closely with relevant authorities and humanitarian actors to develop and disseminate guidance for the efficient dispatch of humanitarian cargo into Gaza, including packaging and truck loading specifications.
- **Coordination:** Hold regular logistics meetings in Gaza, and at national level across Jerusalem, Cairo, and Amman, to strengthen overall coordination efforts amongst partners, discuss operational challenges and collaboration opportunities on common logistics to enhance the response. Liaise with relevant national authorities and organisations in Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel to gather up-to-date information on customs, border crossing points, and route accesses.
- **Operational Information Sharing:** Consolidate, analyse and share relevant information, operational overviews, standard operating procedures, fast-track processes for cargo, and other essential documents via a dedicated [operation webpage](#), instant messaging groups, and mailing lists.
- **Mapping and Capacity Assessments:** Regularly disseminate information on logistics gaps and capacities through the development of maps, updating information-sharing platforms (such as [LOGIE](#)) and by conducting Logistics Capacity Assessments (LCA).
- **Supply Chain Monitoring and Analysis:** Continuous monitoring and analysis of the status of entry points and corridors to Gaza, logistics provider and supplier's markets and disruptions ensuring that up-to-date information guides logistics planning and response efforts.

2. Logistics Augmentation and Common Services

The following range of activities and services are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of individual agencies or organisations. Instead, they are intended to augment national and partner capacities to increase efficiency, mitigate bottlenecks, avoid duplication of efforts. The services are designed to fill identified gaps in the humanitarian supply chain that limit the ability of the humanitarian community to meet the needs of the affected population.

Access permitting, the following activities and services may be provided at no cost to the user, or on a partial/full cost-recovery basis, depending on the availability of funds.

Gaza

- Augment the storage capacity of humanitarian organisations and enhance the warehousing capacity of transshipment hubs in Gaza through the provision of mobile storage units and handling equipment.
- Access and security permitting, support the steady management of transshipment activities at open crossing points into the Gaza Strip by providing dedicated staff and equipment to facilitate operations and visibility on cargo handling, truck loading, and onward transport within Gaza. Currently, the open land crossing points are Kerem Shalom-Karem Abu Salem, Erez West/Erez East² and Gate 96.
- Facilitate access to road transport services from open entry points into Gaza as follows:
 - Transport services from the Kerem Shalom - Karem Abu Salem transshipment point, to Logistics Cluster common warehouses in Deir Al Balah. As an alternative, and depending on capacity, transport services from the Kerem Shalom (Israeli side) transshipment point through the fenced road and onwards from Gate 96 to Logistics Cluster common warehouses in Deir Al Balah.
 - Transport services from the Erez West/Erez East transshipment point to an indicated warehouse facility in northern Gaza (north of Wadi Gaza only).
 - On a case-to-case basis, transport services from Kerem Shalom - Karem Abu Salem transshipment point to an indicated warehouse facility in southern Gaza or Middle Area (south of Wadi Gaza only).
- Facilitate access to common temporary storage facilities in Deir Al Balah.

Jordan

- Consolidate relief cargo in Amman for its pre-positioning to facilitate timely loading of trucks for inter-agency convoys from Jordan to Gaza.
- Facilitate access to cargo transportation services in “Back-to-Back” convoy modality³ from Amman to Gaza.
- Facilitate access to cargo transportation services in “Government to Government”⁴ (direct) convoy modality from Amman to Gaza.

Egypt:

- Augment the capacity of the Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) through the provision of:
 - Logistics equipment - including temporary warehousing, handling equipment, and temperature-controlled storage, to enhance storage capacity and consolidate cargo at ERC-managed logistics hubs in Al Arish and other locations as required.
 - Offer technical advisory support in logistics management.
 - Road transport capacity to facilitate the movement of cargo between Al Arish and Gaza.

² For the purpose of this Concept of Operations, both entry points (Erez West and Erez East) are considered indistinctly as the same Logistics Cluster common services will be provided depending on the accessibility and status of both entry points.

³ Back-to-back modality convoys are cross-loaded at different locations between Amman and Gaza.

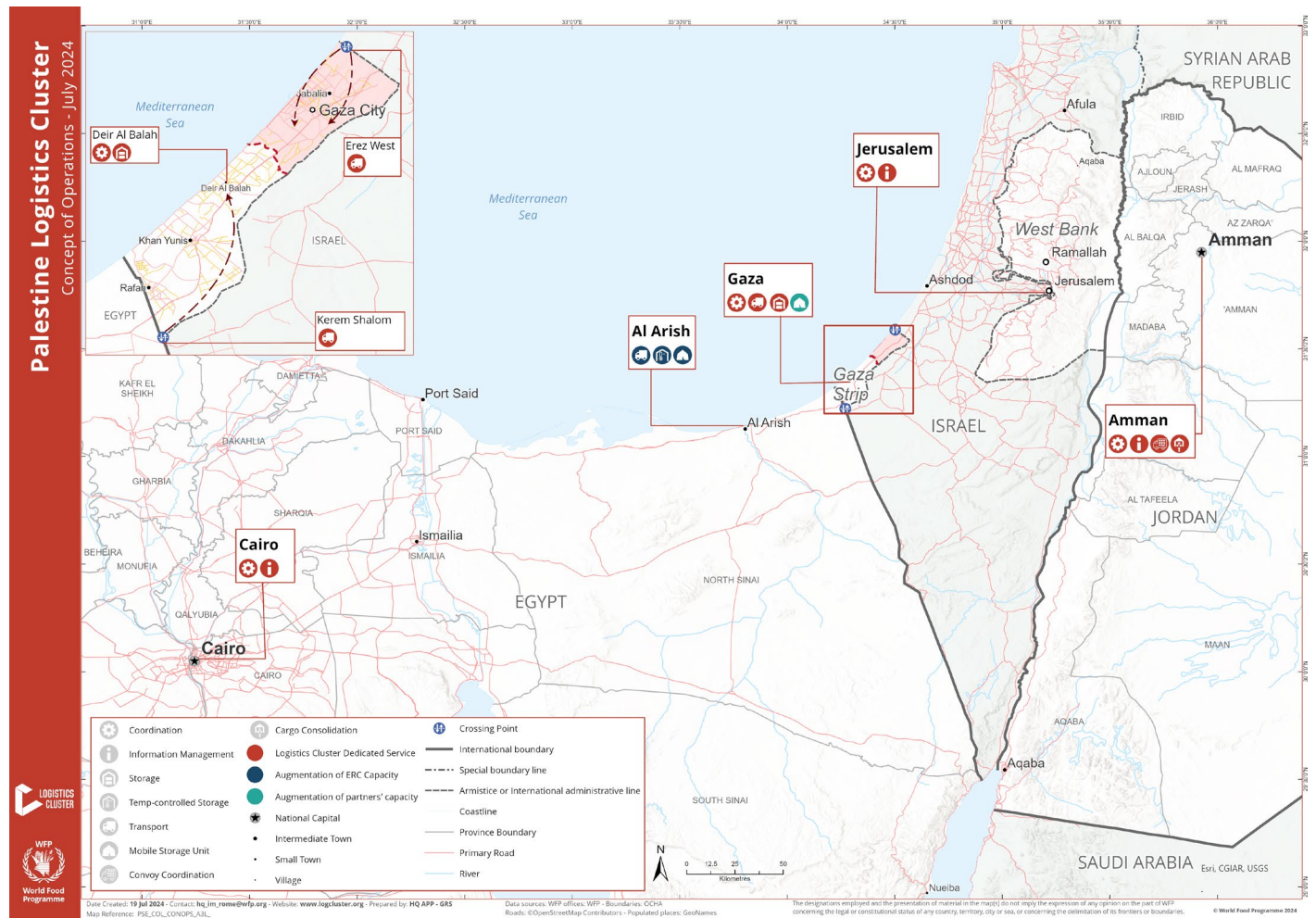
⁴ Government-to-Government convoy modality does not require cross-loading as trucks go directly from Amman to Gaza.

Concept of Operations, 31 July 2024

Palestine Logistics Cluster



Annex I ConOps Map



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