# **GAZA LOGISTICS ASSESSMENT**

# November - December 2023

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# Introduction

HELP Logistics and JSI extended resources to partner with the Gaza Logistics Cluster to conduct an assessment of the Gaza Public Health Capacity for Warehousing and Logistics between November-December 2023, a period of extremely violent and destructive onslaught on the besieged enclave and significant damage to the health system. The objective was to rapidly assess the current warehouse and transportation capacity and key areas of improvement for supply flow and warehousing through coordination with logistics cluster partners. The assessment was led by World Food Programme (WFP) partners in-country in partnership with local and regional JSI and HELP Logistics support and coordination.

# Context

The primary aim of this assessment was to assist WFP in identifying the most suitable warehouses for storing the forthcoming aid destined for Gaza. Given the prevailing security situation and the imperative nature of humanitarian needs in Gaza, the team implemented a straightforward criterion to ensure efficiency and safety of team members. This involved conducting field visits leveraging the team's knowledge and established connections in the southern region of the Gaza Strip, including the major governorates of Khan Younis and Rafah.

In the face of ongoing challenges, it is crucial to recognize the stark reality of insufficient storage capacity for humanitarian actors operating in the Gaza Strip. The constrained storage facilities exacerbate the already complex situation, hindering the timely and effective delivery of aid to those in need. As we delve into the forthcoming assessment of the situation, it becomes imperative to address not only the immediate needs but also the structural issues that impede the storage and distribution of crucial resources. The examination of these limitations will serve as a foundation for developing a near sustainable solutions that can enhance the overall efficiency and impact of humanitarian efforts in Gaza Strip by improving the supply chain elements.

The humanitarian landscape in Gaza has historically been fraught with profound challenges, marked by constrained access to fundamental services, elevated unemployment rates, and the enduring repercussions of conflicts. Periodic escalations in the region have resulted in substantial civilian casualties and widespread infrastructure damage. The blockade imposed on Gaza further compounds these difficulties, severely limiting the movement of goods and people and exacerbating the already dire conditions. Humanitarian organizations encounter formidable obstacles in delivering aid, while the local populace contends with formidable barriers to accessing essential services such as healthcare, education, and clean water.

This grim reality in Gaza underscores the imperative for concerted international efforts to address the root causes of conflict and actively pursue a sustainable and equitable resolution for the region's inhabitants. As of October 2023, the prevailing situation in Gaza is characterized by the following realities; Civilians are being killed, Mass destruction of homes, Schools, hospitals, churches and mosques are being bombed, Fuel, food and water are running out, Increased risk of disease, People are being forced to consume water from unsafe sources, Dehydration and waterborne diseases are becoming increasingly likely, and medicine is in short supply.

Disturbingly, reports have already surfaced indicating instances of chickenpox, scabies, and diarrhea, attributable to unsanitary conditions and the consumption of unsafe water. Compounding this health crisis, civilians are gripped by fear and panic, with half the population receiving directives to vacate their homes, resulting in a staggering 1.5 million individuals displaced. Tragically, there is an acute lack of safe havens in Gaza, as the persistent siege imposed by Israel exacerbates the overall humanitarian situation.

# Methodology

**The methodology employed:**

In alignment with the WFP's collaborative approach, the methodology employed for this field study was meticulously tailored to the unique challenges posed by the situation in Gaza at the time. Field visits emerged as the most effective strategy leveraging local consultants’ extensive network within the local community and relevant committees, coupled with a profound understanding of the geographical nuances.

**Geographic coverage:**

In light of the prevailing conditions in the Gaza Strip, characterized by a pronounced geographical division between the North and South and a significant influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs), our decision to exclusively encompass locations within the southern region is a strategic response to the challenges at hand. The JSI team, demonstrating meticulous effort, conducted thorough on-site visits to assess potential warehouse sites in both Khan Younis and Rafah. The primary objective was to identify facilities that align seamlessly with the storage requirements for public health and humanitarian aid commodities under the purview of the World Food Programme (WFP).

**key indicators to determine potential warehouse locations:**

Recognizing the potential for quality warehousing conditions would be limited; the rapid assessment took into account key indicators to determine potential warehouse locations including mainly:

* Location and Accessibility:
  + Location/Proximity to humanitarian aid distribution points
  + Accessibility to transportation networks
  + Proximity to transportation hubs (highways).
  + Accessibility for trucks and other vehicles.
  + Availability of public transportation for employees.
* Building Conditions:
  + Space (square meters capacity for storage).
  + Infrastructural integrity (e.g. is it standing, level of external or internal damage).
  + Security.
  + Electrical/generator capacity.
* Infrastructure:
  + Quality of existing infrastructure (roads, utilities).
  + Availability of reliable power supply.
  + Adequate water and sewage facilities.
  + Telecommunication infrastructure.

In addition to the above major elements, the rapid assessment took into account other indicators to determine potential warehouse locations. This includes:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main-indicators (others)** | **Sub-indicators** | **Note** |
| Zoning and Regulatory Compliance | * + Zoning regulations and land use policies.   + Compliance with local building codes and safety standards.   + Environmental regulations and considerations. | While the JSI team acknowledges the formidable challenges posed by the current situation in the Gaza Strip in implementing these indicators, they have diligently applied them to the best extent possible. |
| Security and Safety | * + Crime rates in the area.   + Presence of security services.   + Natural disaster risks (flood, earthquake, etc.).   + Fire safety measures. |
| Space and Layout | * + Size and layout of available space.   + Flexibility for future expansion.   + Floor load capacity.   + Ceiling height. |
| Costs and Economic Factors | * + Real estate costs.   + Labor costs in the area.   + Tax incentives or breaks.   + Economic stability and growth in the region. |
| Technology and Automation | * + Availability of advanced technology for warehousing.   + Automation capabilities.   + Internet connectivity and digital infrastructure. |
| Environmental Considerations | * + Environmental sustainability practices.   + Availability of green technologies.   + Compliance with environmental standards. |
| Market Demand and Supply Chain | * + Proximity to target markets.   + Availability of skilled labor.   + Compatibility with the overall supply chain strategy. |
| Community and Workforce | * + Quality of the local workforce.   + Labor market conditions. |
| Competitive Landscape | * + Presence of competitors in the area.   + Industry clusters or business parks. |
| Logistics and Distribution Network | * + Integration with existing logistics networks.   + Efficient distribution routes. |

The team recognized that this would be one of the most difficult assessments every conducted given the difficulty of mobility and communications. The team established connection via WhatsApp and coordinated through JSI consultant in Cairo to facilitate findings and support communications.

# Summary of Findings

In concordance with the WFP and in accordance with the methodological approach tailored for this study, accounting for the unique challenges presented by the difficult context, and informed by the meticulous field visits, the ensuing findings are outlined below:

* Twenty-three locations were identified and subsequently visited in both governorates (Khan Younis and Rafah).
* Six total locations were identified as optimal choices
  + Four locations were identified as optimal choices in Khan Younis governorate (listed in the below table).
  + Four locations were identified as optimal choices in Rafah governorate (listed in the below table).
* The list below delineates the most favorable options for WFP, serving as a guide for selecting warehouses suitable for storing both food and non-food items.
* Minor repairs are required for the selected sites.
* Accessibility was emphasized accessibility as a crucial criterion.
* The estimated monthly rent rate for each of these locations is USD 5,000.

**Recommendations:**

in addition to applying the key indicators to determine potential warehouse locations, the recommended locations that shown in the selected locations table below were also found as best option as explained in the below table.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Governorate** | **Location** | **Owner** | **Telephone Number** | **What makes the place is the best?** |
| 1. Khan Younis | Bani Souhila | Alaa’a Magadma | 059 943-5540 | Along with the key indicators employed as well as the indicators applied to ALL (8) locations as shown below, the following facts were considered:   * By using a participatory and collaborative approach for gathering information, these locations were deemed the best given the ever-changing conditions on the ground. * Geographical distribution played a decisive factor in considering these selected places as the best. **In** **Rafah**, JSI team was able to select places based on neighborhoods distribution. * The largest capacity. * Locations are close to the large health facilities in the south including Abu Yousef Al Najar Hospital in Rafah, and Naser Complex in Khan Younis. * The facilities were built as stores for commercial businesses. * The facilities are not functioning now and therefor the best to be used as warehouse(s). |
| 1. Khan Younis | Bani Souhila | Mohammed Zorob | 059 501-0423 |
| 1. Khan Younis | Qezan Najar | Mohammed Zorob | 059 501-0423 |
| 1. Khan Younis | Sheikh Naser | Mohammed Agha | 056 710-0303 |
| 1. Rafah | Tel Al-Sultan near the Social Affairs Department | Hassan Salah | 056 855-5800 |
| 1. Rafah | Masbah District - Asal Al-Abadla and Asatal Station | Raed Mousa | 056 855-5800 |
| 1. Rafah | Zaara Hill - Next to the Al Shaar Block Factory | Mouhand Barakat | 056 855-5800 |
| 1. Rafah | Al-Shabora/Al-Shabora West | Sami Jarad | 056 855-5800 |

**Recommended/Selected Locations details**

**Applied indicators to ALL (8) locations:**

All highlighted boxes were found difficult to employee.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **Sub-indicator** | | | |
| Location & Accessibility | Location/Proximity to humanitarian aid distribution points | Accessibility to transportation networks | Proximity to transportation hubs | Accessibility for trucks and other vehicles & Availability of public transportation for employees |
| Building Conditions | Space (square meters capacity for storage) | Infrastructural integrity (e.g. is it standing, level of external or internal damage) | Security | Electrical/generator capacity |
| Infrastructure | Quality of existing infrastructure (roads, utilities) | Availability of reliable power supply | Adequate water and sewage facilities | Telecommunication infrastructure. |
| Zoning and Regulatory Compliance | Zoning regulations and land use policies | Compliance with local building codes and safety standards | Environmental regulations and considerations |  |
| Security & Safety | Crime rates in the area | Presence of security services | Natural disaster risks (flood, earthquake, etc.) | Fire safety measures |
| Space and Layout | Size & layout of available space | Flexibility for future expansion | Floor load capacity | Ceiling height |
| Costs and Economic Factors | Real estate costs | Labor costs in the area | Tax incentives or breaks | Economic stability and growth in the region |
| Technology and Automation | Availability of advanced technology for warehousing | Automation capabilities | Internet connectivity and digital infrastructure |  |
| Environmental Considerations | Environmental sustainability practices | Availability of green technologies | Compliance with environmental standards |  |
| Market Demand and Supply Chain | Proximity to target markets | Availability of skilled labor | Compatibility with the overall supply chain strategy |  |
| Community & Workforce | Quality of the local workforce | Labor market conditions |  |  |
| Competitive Landscape | Presence of competitors in the area | Industry clusters or business parks |  |  |
| Logistics and Distribution Network | Integration with existing logistics networks | Efficient distribution routes |  |  |

# Assessment Limitations

Despite the assessment being conducted during a period of ceasefire, several inherent limitations persist, presenting challenges to the process:

* Time constraints were a notable challenge.
* The ongoing security situation posed difficulties in executing a comprehensive assessment.
* Communication barriers added complexity to the data-gathering process.
* The volatile nature of the situation means that information can be subject to change at any given moment, requiring a dynamic and adaptive approach.