


Chapter 7

Integrating Governance and Policy With Supply Chains in Politically Fragile Environments: The Case of the Gaza War as an Analytical Model

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the intersection of governance, policy, and supply chain management in politically fragile environments, using Gaza as a case study. Findings reveal that humanitarian supply chain failures stem not only from technical inefficiencies but also from fragmented authority, political restrictions, and infrastructural collapse. The absence of integrated governance mechanisms exacerbates delays, inequitable distribution, and politicization of aid. Adaptive strategies—such as community-based networks, hybrid aid-education programs, digital coordination tools, and portfolio-based logistics—demonstrate practical ways to enhance resilience. The study highlights the necessity of embedding governance and policy frameworks within logistical planning, emphasizing transparency, coordination, and inclusivity. Lessons from Gaza provide broader implications for strengthening humanitarian supply chains in fragile contexts across the MENA region, illustrating that sustainable, resilient logistics require the fusion of technical solutions with institutional and political integration.

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INTRODUCTION

Supply chains are the lifelines of societies, ensuring the flow of essential goods and services such as food, medicine, fuel, and shelter materials. In stable contexts, supply chain management primarily focuses on efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability. However, in conflict-affected and politically fragile environments, these chains face severe disruptions due to insecurity, infrastructural collapse, and fragmented governance. In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), where protracted conflicts and fragile state institutions are prevalent (Kivimäki, 2021), the question of how governance and policy frameworks can be integrated with supply chain management is both urgent and understudied. Effective governance in such settings goes beyond technical logistics; it requires inclusive coordination, transparent decision-making, and policies that align humanitarian imperatives with political realities (Awashreh, 2018).

The war on Gaza, particularly since October 2023, starkly illustrates these challenges. Extended blockades, systematic destruction of infrastructure, restrictions on humanitarian aid, and the absence of an effective governance framework to coordinate international, regional, and local actors have led to severe supply chain failures. The case of Gaza exemplifies how the lack of integration between governance and supply chain management results in catastrophic humanitarian consequences (United Nations Office, 2025). This chapter seeks to analyze the intersection of governance, policy, and supply chain management in politically fragile environments, using Gaza as a case study. It aims to bridge a critical research gap by exploring how governance mechanisms and policy frameworks can mitigate—or exacerbate—the fragility of supply chains in conflict zones.

Despite extensive literature on global supply chain management and disaster logistics, a significant research gap remains regarding how governance and policy integration shape supply chain resilience in conflict-affected contexts (Volkdal, 2024). In Gaza, this problem is evident in the absence of a comprehensive governance framework that effectively coordinates the efforts of multiple stakeholders, including international organizations such as the United Nations and humanitarian NGOs, regional actors such as Arab states and neighboring countries, and local entities such as civil society groups and municipal authorities (United Nations, 2025). The lack of coordination leads to consequences including delays in aid delivery, overly complex logistics procedures, duplication of efforts among actors, and increased losses of critical supplies.

Thus, the core research problem lies in the misalignment between political and governance structures and the logistical and technical mechanisms of supply chain management in fragile environments. This misalignment undermines the ability to save lives, respond effectively to emergencies, and build long-term resilience.

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