WAR ON GAZA
AND
JICA CHALLENGE

Smiles, Hope, and Love

The War didn’t stop the life
CONTENTS

Country Background___________________________ 2

War on Gaza _________________________________ 3

During the War on Gaza _______________________ 5

Right after the War on Gaza _________________ 7

One year after the War on Gaza _____________ 12

JICA Team Massages and Lessons Learned _____ 16
COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Palestine is one of the smallest territories in the Middle East, and most of its territory remains under Israeli occupation and control. Palestinian Authority territories (PA) comprise two separated areas; the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Gaza Strip is a narrow coastal strip of land along the Mediterranean Sea, in southern part of Palestine in the Middle East. The Gaza Strip has about 1.5 million residents in an area of just 365 km² with a length of about 41 Kilometers and a width ranging from 7-12 kilometers. The Strip is bordered on the south by Egypt, on the west by the Mediterranean Sea and in the north and east by Israel. It is divided into five districts; North, Gaza, Middle Area, Khanyounis and Rafah. The high population density of about 3,600 individuals per square kilometers continues to be one of the main problems facing Gaza Strip and hindering its development in the various fields of life.

Humanitarian Situation

The Gaza Strip has been facing a humanitarian crisis ever since April of 2006, when border closings and the lack of foreign aid caused a severe shortage of fuel, foods and medical care. Gazans suffered shortages of essential commodities and the rise in market prices has made it difficult for families to have an adequate, healthy and balanced diet.

The long-lasting effect of rising poverty and unemployment have gradually eroded households’ coping mechanisms and increased their dependency on aid. Over 80% of Palestinians are now depending on foreign aid while unemployment is close to 40%. Youth unemployment rate is about 48% while the labour force participation rates for women in oPt is only around 16.8%, it has historically been amongst the lowest in the world.
WAR ON GAZA

On Saturday 27th December 2008 at approximately 11:30 am, where every thing is normal and calm, children at schools, and people at their works, suddenly there was bombardment everywhere in Gaza, announcing the Israeli war on Gaza.

The Israeli Air Forces launched a large scale attack on the Gaza Strip called, “Operation Cast Lead”. The Israeli fighter planes, helicopters and drones bombed over 3,000 targets throughout the Gaza Strip. About 1,440 Palestinians were killed, while 5,380 injured, most of them were civilians and including a large number of women and children.

The air attacks were followed by a ground invasion of Gaza Strip. It continued for 22 days.

Attacks targeted dozens of houses and other civilian premises, such as civil police stations, schools, mosques, universities and government buildings and installations that are located in urban areas causing dozens of civilian casualties.
During the war and after, children were and remain the biggest victims of the war. Many children lost their family members, even both parents, relatives, friends in addition to destruction of their houses.

Children comprised more than 30% of the total who were killed during the war. Thousands were injured and a high percentage will suffer from permanent disability. The surviving children who survived the war are left to deal with the aftermath of war and its horrible legacy on their well being. It is reported that more than 90% of children in Gaza show symptoms of trauma. It will take many years for those children to overcome the daunting effects and trauma of the war.

The War on Gaza left a severe impact, on the Economical, Social, Humanitarian, and Environmental sectors in Gaza.

The available statistics pointed out that war has led to the following damages and losses:

- Total destruction of 14,000 homes
- Destruction of 50% of water network, and 55% of electricity networks
- 3,900 industrial facilities stopped work.
- Around 90,000 people lost their jobs, which raised the poverty rate to 79%.
- Partial damages to 68 Governmental institutions, 31 NGOs, 53 UN institutions
- Destruction of 2 primary health care centers
- Partial damages to 41 primary health care centers and 15 hospitals
- 29 ambulances were partially damaged.

Memory is impossible to forget, or even to stop thinking of those days on harsh winter and changed Gaza to center of hell.

Days, go heavy, gloomy, sad, and with much of pain, and again, new shelter (camps) were set up and remained in place until today.

Also the closure continues, the houses not rebuilt, the facilities still damaged.

JICA Gaza Office
DURING THE WAR ON GAZA

During the War, thousands of people left their houses, to become homeless and others whom loss or injury of their loved ones.

JICA staff lost some of their relatives, family members and friends. In addition, JICA staff homes were partially damaged. Spending the dark days and nights without electricity and severs shortage of water. The fear from next day; if we will be survived or not. The pain had been increased every moment.

Under the fire and air struck the psychological support by our JICA colleagues through the phone encouraged us to not give up. These calls gave us the hope and charge the power.

During the war and grave hours, hundred of causalities increased daily. This situation led JICA staff to do something trying to remove Gaza people tears. Hard & strong efforts of communication done by JICA team to find out the possibility of JICA action at that critical time.

JICA team decided to try negotiating & pushing the suppliers to reschedule the delivery dates of the medical equipment to Al-Shifa hospital.

As a result of the hard communication & negotiation with the related parties that succeed, the medical equipment was delivered and installed at the right time during the war, which supposed to deliver on the month of March which it was too late to receive it.

This JICA medical machine saves Gaza people souls & made difference from before.
We got this equipment in **a very critical time** during the war on Gaza; this machine is a modern technology and advanced technologies entered to Gaza Strip, which is the only equipment that is located in the central hospital, Shifa hospital. The machine has a big impact by stopping referring critical cases to treatment abroad, increasing the blood unit donation by maximizing the usage of one unit, treating severe cases of poisoning and transferring blood platelets, especially for patients with tumors.

The machine also has the ability to extract stem cells used in bone marrow transplantation for patients with blood diseases Cancer.

*On behalf of Gaza hospitals, I would like to present many thanks to Japan government and JICA for their support for the Palestinian people, especially under the difficult circumstances.*

*Ex-participant, Dr. Mohammed Dawood, Manager of Central Blood Bank, Shifa hospital*
RIGHT AFTER THE WAR ON GAZA

What Should We Do? Where we should go? How to move?

Right after the end of the war on Gaza, JICA staff and Alumni members conducted a big network of communication to gather members.

As a result, JICA staff and Alumni members agreed to move to the most affected area in Gaza. Which called Al-Zaytoun area of Samouni family. The stories and needs talk about its selves!!. It was horrible and unbelievable situation than expected.

JICA and Alumni were on the ground in the most Affected area in Gaza, Al-Zaytoun area of Samouni family
I can’t believe my eyes

I stood in front of my window that was closed in the days of the war on Gaza; I did not see Gaza, which I used to see since the early years of my life. Gaza was totally damaged as an earthquake hit it, I did not see the buildings the same as before. I did not meet all the people that knew over the years old, some were still under the rubble that crashed over the trees and littered dead birds. The size of the destruction of citizen’s homes, schools, streets was indescribable.

Before the war, I was seeing Gaza smiles and sun ray, the ray of hopes and optimism that will improve our hard life. But today I did not see Gaza as I see it at this moment of bloody tears shed on the events and horrors that faced Gaza strip. (JICA Gaza Office)
We met there a girl who lost her family.

Zainab AL Samouni said I lost my parents, three brothers, home, and hope. I faced difficulties to overcome this reality.

I have to return back to my school. But I lost my books & and my bag.

At that time JICA team catch my hand and put me up to continue my new beginning.

**JICA and Alumni Relief campaigns**

1- **Alumni Self Campaign**

Alumni Self initiative campaign has started, each member bring the surplus things from his home such as clothes, blankets, school bags, and so on.

This self initiative campaign encouraged all members of alumni to do some thing more. In addition to, raised up the soul spirit to extend the assistance to the Gaza people.

2- **JICA Relief Campaign**

JICA also takes the initiative to help people in Gaza, so, immediately after the war and self Alumni campaign, JICA launched a humanitarian relief project. *"From People of Japan to Children of Palestine"* which implemented by Alumni Association.

Alumni allocate groups to carry out the campaign, first group planned the main elements of the campaign, another group made need assessment of the target area, also, having some people to collect the goods from the market. And others for contacting all members to attend and help in the campaign. When they gathering in the site location all members start their role in organized manner as planned.

The campaign consists of distribution of humanitarian aid (Kits) and psychological treatment seminar to the affected people in all Gaza Strip. The kits included 694 Domestic Kits, 905 School Kits 550 Toys and games and 326 Environmental Kits.
Psychological treatment seminar which conducted by JICA ex-participants targeted women and children to assist them to overcome the war TRAUMA.

This treatment seminar made our relief project different from other donors and agencies which they supply people with foods and tents only.

By heart, JICA relief project was formulated. The foods were not our goal, but the added value was our concern.

The complementary and comprehensive ideas of the relief project led to success and distinguish it from other projects of donors and aid agencies.

* I doubted what I saw. There were full of smiles and twinkling eyes at the workshop for women from heavily attacked area. Participated women lost many of valuable things including family members. They tried to find something, may be hopes in future, bottling up their deep sorrow. They might never afford to stay in sad. JICA taught knowledge and skill for preventing the second damage of the war and for re-building normal livelihood. On the other hand, I was taught the toughness and capability of human being by women in Gaza.

Seiichi Koike, Chief Rep. JICA Palestine

---

Children of heavily attacked area are smiling after JICA team visit

Through the workshop of giving the women new hope
JICA CHALLENGE IN GAZA
Smiles, Hope, and Love

JICA and Alumni Relief campaigns
ONE YEAR AFTER THE WAR ON GAZA

Live again

After the war, every thing are changed, the priorities are also changed. The Gaza people need help, also the affected areas need intervention.

It is not the time of equipping labs or conducting studies, it is time to extend our activities directly to people. In the past we used to receive the project ideas from our partners, but now JICA staff should go to the affected areas and listen to people directly.

We live here

JICA Gaza staff lived the tragedy stories, hard situation, lost some of relative and friends and homes. This situation reflects on our daily work. We live here, so, our mind in Gaza office changed totally by focusing our projects and programs to affected people.

This made us invent and create new ways and various projects to be consistence with the difficulty of the situation and priorities necessary assistance.

We didn't satisfy stereotyped support, such as providing food, temporary shelter, and other essential humanitarian supplies to be survived.

We should be different; our projects should touch the people directly, return the smile to their faces, stand up again to continue life and to give them some hope.

So, our heart and mind were our methodology that we depended on to find the way to help Gaza people to overcome the hard situation

Many elements should be considered in the projects formulation, such as:

- To be productive projects
- To improve and increase the income
- To relay on themselves
- To cover entire Gaza Strip
- To have added value concept

By these elements, JICA office start to formulate new recovery projects to most affected areas and sectors. It will be the challenge of JICA projects in Gaza.
We decided to rebuild and not give up

We start again by holding several meetings between JICA team & local communities to have the brain storming of the priorities for Gaza people & their projects needs to meet the productivity project ideas.

From that meeting a lot of good ideas of projects have raised up, such as, agriculture sector, health sector, and unemployment high rate situation.

JICA team lunched big field visits in Gaza strip in the above-mentioned sectors sites. This visits aimed to observe the real situation in the ground, meeting the target groups of Gaza people in each sector, such as, hospitals in Gaza & Khan-Younis governorate. These visits include meeting the doctors, nurses, and other departments as the health sector. In addition to the agriculture sector in different area in Gaza strip.

The result of these field visits were six important follow up projects have been formulated which they are:

1) Supply of Livestock Support for Deprived Farmers.  
2) Chicken Eggs Farming in War affected areas in Jabalia  
3) Environmental & Fishing Equipment Support for Fishermen Cooperative  
4) Small-Scale Aquaculture in Irrigation Ponds.  
5) Vocational Training  
6) Supply of Medical Equipment to the Gaza hospitals
Projects Photos and Information

1- **Supply of Livestock Support for Deprived Farmers Project**

“JICA sheep” it is the name that the farmers called. 78 Farmers Received two pregnant Sheep, feeds, medical kit and training Course. Those farmer lost their land and home during the war on Gaza. Reproduction cycle of sheep contribute in improving the farmer’s life.

2- **Chicken Eggs Farming in War affected areas in Jabalia**

40 farmers were benefit from the project. Each set consist of 200 eggs chicken, cage, water tank feeds, and eggs cartons. The target group is the most affect farmers in the north area by the last war. Farmer’s life and income improved after the project and the eggs contributed in the food safety of Gaza people.

3- **Environmental & Fishing Equipment Support for Fishermen Cooperative**

Sea blockage led to fish shortage in Gaza and increase the suffering of fishermen. JICA Provided new fish nets and wire for fishing. A training course on fish recourse control was given to prevent the sea environment. Also, A First aid kit in each boat for any injury and save life in inside the sea due to Israeli navy patrol shooting toward fishermen.
4- **Small-Scale Aquaculture in Irrigation Ponds project**,

Through this project JICA disseminate new information and technology for 200 farmers. Each farmer received 385 fingerlings with its feeds and breeding equipment. This project offer production tool for many affected people. Also the project filled the gab of shortage of sea fish catch.

5- **Vocational Training**

The project consists of training 108 students on six vocations. They are carpentry, ironsmith, plumping, sawing, tiling and tinsmith (car body works). The students become skilled labor through the vocational training. This vocational project aimed to decrease the unemployment rate in Gaza Strip. Student’s job opportunity is better after the training. Repair and maintenance is the current field work in Gaza for many damaged houses and facilities that resulted from last war on Gaza.

6- **Supply of Medical Equipment to Gaza Hospitals**

The JICA medical project is the biggest project after the war on Gaza, many types of medical equipments are provided to Gaza hospitals. Huge amount of medicine and many kinds of medical equipments have been flowing into Gaza as donations from many organizations without necessary information of local situation since the war had occurred. As a result, these charities bear heavy burdens on medical facilities in Gaza. JICA equipments are selected by hearings from and discussions with doctors and medical staff in Gaza. These equipments are expected to satisfy real medical needs and contribute to secure life and good health of people in Gaza.
JICA TEAM MASSAGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

- Under the war and right after the war we should make effort to grasp real needs for people. Only the way to find real needs is to gather information from the direct voice of victims, escaping from stereotyped manner.

- Needs change every moment. Don’t hesitate to change project program in response to changing needs. Decision initiated by field level is essential and effective for tackling challenges, getting understanding from HQ.

- We should keep in mind to pursue possibility of JICA’s contributions for every field considering the distinctions of JICA in comparison with other donors and NGOs. At the same moment, it is important to make clear what JICA can and cannot to do in practical manner. As a result, the role of JICA and what JICA should do are inevitably crystallized.

- Networking and communication channels with local and international NGOs and donor agencies are essential as they make the work very straightforward. The implementation of the relief project through local communities and NGOs was effective directly after the war. On the other hand, JICA could not import necessary aid equipments without support of UN logistical cluster groups. The significance of our projects was understood by the groups and the equipments were prioritized.

- The hard situation on the ground in Gaza makes it necessary that JICA implement both development and recovery projects to help the people of Gaza re-gain their ability to live in dignity and increase their opportunities to earn their living and increase their self-reliance.

- JICA’s projects have many results under the current situation of Gaza. But we realize many of cooperation are stopgap measures for reconstruction of Gaza. We hope JICA can contribute the real rehabilitation and redevelopment of Gaza in near future after realization of fully termination of blockage.
THANK YOU