



# North 1990: Structural Complementarity in Gaza

Stratum I – Tier 1:

maps structural complementarity through North's institutional theory, showing how coercive and formative layers lock into a stable dual-governance configuration. UNRWA – Structural Determination (Strata Series) Each Stratum isolates one structural mechanism shaping the Gaza governance environment.

All analyses follow the same forensic template:

Executive Frame → Forensic Core → Exhibits → Decision Architecture → Final Diagnosis.

## A. Executive Frame

### **UNRWA – STRUCTURAL DETERMINATION SERIES**

This analysis is Part I of a multi-part forensic series examining UNRWA's structural role, the collapse of neutrality verification, the UN–UNRWA system relationship, and the geopolitical exploitation by RUS/CHN.

This brief examines UNRWA's structural position in Gaza using North's institutional theory as a measurement instrument. The analysis isolates governance distribution, formative resource channels, and coercive territorial dependencies to determine how complementary roles generate a stable governance configuration. Sources consist exclusively of primary UNRWA operational materials and documented field constraints.

#### **The assessment builds on:**

- NWDC v4 architecture (H2-Spine · Narrative Parallelity · Formative Resources – see [Glossary](#))
- forensically documented operational patterns
- institutional theory (North as measurement instrument)

The result is a structural diagnosis that enables state institutions, donors, and intelligence services to evaluate UNRWA's operational environment through mechanics rather than rhetoric.

#### **Inside this Brief**

- the structural mechanism stabilising the UNRWA–Hammas configuration
- the forensic evidence panels (union dynamics, facility use, population governance)
- the applicability of institutional mechanics to humanitarian governance

- the resulting institutional hostage profile under North's criteria

The full forensic analysis continues below, including Exhibits and Decision Architecture.

## B. Forensic Core

### **<STYLE="FONT-WEIGHT:STRONG;">1. GOVERNANCE DISTRIBUTION</STYLE="FONT-WEIGHT:STRONG;">**

Gaza exhibits bifurcated governance:

- a formative architecture centred on UNRWA <sup>3/13</sup>
- a coercive enforcement architecture centred on Hamas

UNRWA maintains education, welfare, and primary health systems at scale. These systems constitute the region's dominant formative resources, shaping population expectations and life routines.

Hamas oversees territorial access, internal security structures, and the political environment in which UNRWA operates. UNRWA confirms its operations depend on coordination with the de facto authorities.

This division fulfils the first structural criterion: functional separation across institutions.

### **2. FUNCTIONAL COUPLING**

The two architectures interact through mutually reinforcing dependencies:

#### **UNRWA → HAMAS**

- UNRWA stabilises population routines
- provides administrative channels  
sustains welfare baselines

- reproduces social expectations over time

## **HAMAS → UNRWA**

- regulates access and facility control
- shapes union dynamics
- determines operational permissibility
- maintains narrative alignment across the territory

Documented cases show Hamas-linked actors in UNRWA unions and staff structures.

Other cases show use of UNRWA infrastructure (tunnels, facilities, medical buildings).

None of this requires intent.

It is structural interdependence.

This fulfils the second criterion: outputs of one institution serve as operating conditions for another.

## **3. PERSISTENCE AND PATH DEPENDENCY**

Eighteen years of Hamas governance and decades of UNRWA service delivery have produced a configuration that persists across:

- oversight cycles
- donor freezes
- investigative reports
- political shocks
- staff restructuring attempts

Despite repeated attempts, the institutional configuration remains unchanged.

This meets the third criterion: high transition costs create structural persistence.

#### 4. NARRATIVE ARCHITECTURE EFFECTS

Gaza's environment exhibits narrative parallelity: two institutions occupy distinct functional spaces (formative vs. enforcement) yet converge on the lived environment of the same population.

UNRWA supplies the meaning baseline through education, welfare routines, and service provision — a function consistent with the H2-Spine (core meaning architecture).

Hamas shapes symbolic boundaries, identity signals, and enforcement narratives.

Together, these dynamics stabilise a dual architecture without requiring coordination.

#### 5. CORE MECHANISM (NORTH, FINAL)

The structural mechanism is a coercive–formative complementarity: UNRWA's formative civilian services combine with Hamas's coercive territorial control to form a dual-governance system that stabilises daily administration independently of declared political intent.

### C. Exhibits

#### EXHIBIT 1: COMPLEMENTARITY CRITERIA (FORENSIC TABLE)

Criterion (Structural)

DOMAIN	UNRWA \ ROLE	HAMAS \ ROLE	STRUCTURAL \ \ RESULT
<i>Formative Meaning</i>	<i>Curriculum, welfare,</i>	<i>Symbolic governance</i>	<i>Parallelity</i>

DOMAIN	UNRWA \ ROLE	HAMAS \ ROLE	STRUCTURAL \ RESULT
	<i>services</i>		
<i>Daily Routines</i>	<i>Administrative pipelines</i>	<i>Territorial control</i>	<i>Stabilisation</i>
<i>Public Cues</i>	<i>Institutional identity</i>	<i>Identity boundaries</i>	<i>Reinforced baseline</i>

## **EXHIBIT 2: FORMATIVE RESOURCE ARCHITECTURE**

*(NWDC worksheet, mapped to UNRWA)*

Formative resources relevant for meaning and governance:

- education and curricula <sup>6/13</sup>
- welfare channels
- administrative capacity
- health infrastructure
- NGO and third-party service carriers

UNRWA supplies all of these within Gaza's refugee population, fulfilling the complete formative resource panel.

## **EXHIBIT 3: ENFORCEMENT ARCHITECTURE**

Core enforcement indicators consistent with North's institutional dynamics:

- territorial control
- access management
- union pressure
- facility oversight
- narrative alignment mechanisms

Documented intersections in union leadership and facility use demonstrate effective enforcement influence.

#### **EXHIBIT 4: PARALLELITY PANEL**

**Narrative Parallelity** describes cross-space alignment between institutional architectures that serve different functional domains yet converge in population impact.

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(tabelle domain)

CRITERION (STRUCTURAL)	EVIDENCE
<i>Bifurcated Governance</i>	<i>UNRWA formative systems + Hamas enforcement layer</i>

CRITERION (STRUCTURAL)	EVIDENCE
<i>Functional Coupling</i>	<i>UNRWA routines enable population governance; Hamas regulates access &amp; unions</i>
<i>Institutional Persistence</i>	<i>18+ years, high reform friction</i>
<i>Operational Dependence</i>	<i>UNRWA requires Hamas coordination</i>
<i>Facility Convergence</i>	<i>Infrastructure intersections (tunnels, medical sites, camps)</i>

The lived environment reflects the convergence, not because actors coordinate, but because parallel systems produce consistent population-level effects.

## **EXHIBIT 5: STRUCTURAL FORMULA**

*Under North's institutional criteria, UNRWA and Hamas function as complementary institutions by structural necessity rather than political alignment.*

This is the forensically complete diagnosis. It captures the architecture, the mechanism, and the empirical pattern – without implying intent or assigning moral judgment.

## **D. Decision Architecture**

This diagnostic structure yields four implications for governmental and donor strategy.

### **1. INSTITUTIONAL EQUILIBRIUM**

The dual architecture behaves like a stable equilibrium. Interventions affect both layers simultaneously.

## **2. REFORM FRICTION**

Structural complementarity raises the cost and difficulty of reform.

Procedural improvement inside a single institution does not shift the equilibrium.

## **3. EVIDENCE GOVERNANCE**

Due diligence requires cross-modal evidence:

- institutional conduct
- facility-level signals
- behavioural patterns
- union dynamics
- infrastructural intersections

Aligned along the H2-Spine, these signals reveal whether structural coupling persists.

## **4. STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Any redesign of Gaza's governance must address both architectures — formative and coercive — or a new layer will be absorbed into the existing equilibrium.

## **E. Closing Diagnosis**

The assessment applies North's criteria as measurement instruments. NWDC v4 constructs are used to locate meaning architecture effects within the same institutional environment.

This conclusion reflects structural analysis only. It does not assume intention, ideology, or coordination. It assesses structures,

mechanisms, and persistence with the tools of institutional economics and narrative infrastructure.

The central conclusion stands:

UNRWA's formative resource role and Hamas's coercive territorial role combine into a structurally complementary governance arrangement. This configuration stabilises administrative continuity while preventing independent verification and creating a systemic vulnerability that reproduces itself across time.

This Stratum forms part of the cumulative structural dossier on UNRWA, the UN system environment, and geopolitical exploitation dynamics. Upcoming Strata examine system entanglement between UN and UNRWA, and the strategic use of the UNRWA crisis in RUS/CHN information warfare.

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## FOOTNOTES

1. United Nations General Assembly. "Resolution A/RES/78/73: Assistance to Palestine Refugees." 12 December 2023. Voting Record.
  2. DURCHD8. "UNRWA: Structural Complementarity in Gaza (Stratum 1)." Substack, 2025.
  3. Ibid.
  4. United Nations. "Terms of Reference: Independent Review... Neutrality." 5 February 2024, p. 2.
  5. Independent Review Group. "Independent Review of Mechanisms... Neutrality." 20 April 2024, p. 13.
  6. Ibid., p. 17.
  7. Federal Foreign Office. "Joint Statement on UNRWA." Berlin, 24 April 2024; Global Affairs Canada. "Statement on UNRWA." 8 March 2024; European External Action Service. "Remarks on UNRWA." 23 April 2024.
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