



JISMUN'25

**ECOSOC: POSTWAR
RECONSTRUCTION OF SYRIA**

Study Guide

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1. Letter from the Secretary-General

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to JISMUN 2025, Aljazari's first-ever MUN conference!

As your (very sleep deprived but incredibly excited) Secretary General, I'm proud to welcome you to something we built from scratch, with a lot of passion and probably too much caffeine.

Whether you're an experienced delegate or nervously holding your placard, this is your moment. Speak boldly, debate fiercely, and most importantly: have fun.

Let's make history.

With love and under-eye bags,

Salsabeel Hassan
Secretary-General

JISMUN 2025

2. Letter from the Under Secretary-General

Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to JISMUN 25! Your engagement in ECOSOC will address two pressing humanitarian concerns: Post-War Reconstruction of Syria and Child Protection in Emergency Education.

Syria's reconstruction requires coordinated international action to rebuild infrastructure, revitalize the economy, and heal social divisions while balancing immediate humanitarian needs with long-term development goals.

Your deliberations will contribute to the international community's approach to these challenges. We encourage you to develop evidence-based positions and approach negotiations with both principled conviction and pragmatic flexibility.

The most effective resolutions will balance ambitious vision with practical considerations, recognizing the constraints and opportunities that shape international cooperation.

As you prepare, we encourage you to thoroughly research your country's positions, relevant international frameworks, and the multidimensional aspects of each agenda item. Effective delegates will demonstrate: - Comprehensive understanding of their country's foreign policy - Familiarity with existing international mechanisms - Appreciation for diverse perspectives represented in ECOSOC - Ability to build consensus while maintaining principled positions

We look forward to witnessing your thoughtful debate and innovative solutions.

Eren Salih, Under-Secretary-General
Omar Al Adhami, Academic Assistant

3. Introduction to ECOSOC

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of six principal UN organs, established to coordinate international economic and social issues. With 54 members elected by the General Assembly, ECOSOC coordinates work across 14 specialized agencies, functional commissions, and regional commissions.

ECOSOC's mandate encompasses sustainable development, population, human rights, women's empowerment, and humanitarian response. It bridges policy and implementation, translating international agreements into programs while providing guidance to the UN system and member states.

Historical Background

ECOSOC originated with the UN's founding in 1945. Initially focused on economic development and technical assistance, its role evolved with global priorities:

- 1960s: Addressing global inequality through development initiatives
- 1970s-80s: Expanding to environmental concerns and women's status
- 1990s: Post-Cold War reforms and humanitarian coordination
- 2000s: Implementation of Millennium Development Goals
- Present: Central role in implementing the 2030 Agenda and 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Functions and Powers

ECOSOC exercises three primary functions:

- Policy Development: Formulating recommendations on international economic and social matters

- Stakeholder Engagement: Providing a platform for governments, civil society, businesses, and academia
- Implementation Review: Monitoring major UN conferences and summits

ECOSOC's formal powers include:

- Making studies and reports on international economic and social matters
- Recommending actions to promote human rights
- Preparing draft conventions for the General Assembly
- Coordinating specialized agencies through consultation
- Consulting with non-governmental organizations

ECOSOC conducts work through organizational segments:

- High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
- Integration, Humanitarian Affairs, and Operational Activities Segments
- Management Segment and specialized forums

The Council follows standard UN parliamentary practice, with decisions typically made by consensus, though voting may occur when necessary.

One of the six essential UN bodies, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), has the authority to make judgments on matters related to the economy, culture, society, and humanitarian concerns. On an inter-organizational level, ECOSOC works with the UN to coordinate the fifteen specialized agencies, which include:

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Maritime Organization (IMO)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- Universal Postal Union (UPU)
- World Bank Group (WBG)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

The committee itself consists of 54 member states, which rotate regularly. Unlike other committees, ECOSOC meets once a year for four weeks to debate urgent socioeconomic and humanitarian issues as well as the implementation and maintenance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A meeting with the finance ministers of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is conducted annually in addition to other partnerships because of the rise in aligned interests with these institutions.

Fundamentally, ECOSOC provides a platform for diplomatic discussions among all member nations on issues such as economic development, poverty alleviation, gender equality, climate action, and expanding access to necessities. With more than 1,600 NGOs having bilateral relationships with ECOSOC, NGO participation is also a key component of the organization. It gives member countries' central banks tools and guidelines to enable them to create policies that address prevailing social and economic problems

4. Agenda Item I: Post-War Reconstruction of Syria

4.1 Overview of the Syrian Conflict

The Syrian conflict represents one of the most complex humanitarian crises of the 21st century. What began as peaceful protests in 2011 rapidly escalated into a multifaceted civil war with significant regional and international dimensions.

For more than a decade, the Assad regime held onto power through strategic alliances, military strength, and control over state institutions. However, by 2024, the regime's political and economic foundations had weakened dramatically. Military losses, rising popular chaos, widespread hunger, and increasing separation from key institutions all harmed the regime's stability. International sanctions and decreased backing from long-standing allies worsened these difficulties. The political rise of Ahmad al-Sharaa, a key political figure linked with Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a party that had emerged as a dominating actor in Syria's northwestern provinces, marked an important turning point. Al-Sharaa had long been known as an advocate for localized governance, community-led development, and power transitions through negotiation. Though some international actors have viewed HTS with misunderstanding due to its previous affiliations, recent efforts to rebrand the group and separate it from extremist components have contributed to a broader rethinking of its political role.

With smart alliances, discussions, and growing public support in opposition-held areas, Ahmad al-Sharaa led a transitional strategy that resulted in the overthrow of the Assad leadership by December 2024. This political change was distinguished by a series of planned defections from the military and civil service, as well as agreements reached with various domestic and regional actors. In the aftermath, a transitional administration was established, with Al-Sharaa serving as temporary president and vowing to oversee national

stability and democratic transition activities until a larger government is constituted in early 2025.

★ **Historical Context and Evolution:**

The uprising emerged against a backdrop of political repression and economic stagnation. Initial demonstrations calling for democratic reforms met violent government crackdowns, catalyzing armed opposition formation.

Key phases:

2011–2012: Uprising and Militarization

- The Syrian uprising began in March 2011 as part of the broader Arab Spring.
- Initially peaceful demonstrations demanding political reform were met with violent repression by government forces.
- By 2012, widespread defections from the military led to the formation of armed opposition groups such as the Free Syrian Army (FSA), marking the militarization of the conflict.

2013–2014: Fragmentation and Extremist Emergence

- The conflict splintered along sectarian, ethnic, and ideological lines.
- Armed groups multiplied, including Islamist factions.
- The extremist group ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) rose to prominence, seizing large swaths of territory in eastern Syria, including Raqqa, which became its de facto capital.

2015–2017: International Intervention and Turning Point

- Russia intervened militarily in September 2015 in support of the Syrian government, drastically shifting the balance of power.

- This phase saw intensified air campaigns, recapture of strategic cities (Aleppo in 2016), and increased coordination between Syrian and Russian forces.
- The U.S.-led coalition, meanwhile, supported the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in their fight against ISIS in the northeast.

2018–2020: Collapse of ISIS and Shifting Alliances

- ISIS lost its last territorial stronghold (Baghouz) in March 2019 after years of attrition warfare.
- Tensions escalated between Turkish forces and Kurdish groups, leading to Turkish military incursions in northern Syria (e.g., Operation Peace Spring in October 2019).
- The conflict transitioned from large-scale warfare to more localized clashes and political maneuvering.

2021–2023: Stalemate and Political Gridlock

- Syria entered a “frozen conflict” stage: active fighting declined, but no comprehensive peace was achieved.
- Government forces controlled most urban centers, while the northeast and northwest remained outside state control.

The economic crisis deepened due to war, sanctions (especially the U.S. Caesar Act), COVID-19, and the global downturn.

2024–Present: Post-War Fragility and Reconstruction Debates

- Sporadic violence and instability persist, but the focus has shifted toward reconstruction, governance, and economic recovery.
- Disputes continue over the political future of Syria, territorial integration, and refugee repatriation.
- Ahmad al-Sharaa, leading an opposition-backed transitional initiative (HTS-aligned governance in northwest Syria), is gaining legitimacy in certain regions, triggering debate over new governance models and power-sharing with Damascus.

International aid and UN-led diplomacy are now centered on postwar rebuilding and preventing further regional destabilization.

★ **Current Territorial Control:**

Government-Controlled Areas (Approximately 78–80%) The Syrian transitional government now administers approximately 80% of the country's territory, including major urban centers and strategic regions:

- Damascus
- Aleppo
- Homs
- Hama
- Latakia
- Tartus
- Daraa
- Suwayda

These areas include critical infrastructure, economic hubs, and transportation networks. The government's grip has been strengthened by agreements with various factions and the incorporation of opposition groups into official institutions.

Turkish-Influenced Zones (Approximately 2–4%)

Turkey maintains influence over certain northern regions, primarily through support of opposition groups and military presence. Key areas include:

- Afrin
- Azaz
- Al-Bab
- Jarabulus

While these zones operate under local councils, they are heavily influenced by Turkish policies. Recent dialogues between Turkey and the Syrian transitional government have aimed at normalizing relations and addressing security concerns.

Kurdish-Administered Regions (Approximately 18–20%)

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES), led by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), has historically governed the northeast. In March 2025, a landmark agreement was reached between the transitional government and the SDF to integrate these regions into the national framework. Key aspects of the agreement include

- Integration of SDF forces into the national military.
- Recognition of Kurdish cultural and linguistic rights.
- Joint administration of border crossings and oil fields.

This accord has been pivotal in promoting national unity and addressing long-standing grievances. Key areas controlled by the Kurdish-administered forces include:

- Hasakah
- Eastern Deir ez-Zor
- Raqqa city
- Qamishli
- Kobani

Israeli-Occupied Areas (>1%)

Israel already controls the Golan Heights area in southern Syria. However, in the wake of the Assad regime's collapse, Israel has expanded its military presence in parts of southern Syria, particularly in the Quneitra Governorate. Israeli forces have conducted operations citing security threats and have called for the demilitarization of the region. The Syrian transitional government has condemned these actions and is seeking international support to address the situation.

★ **Scale of Destruction:**

The conflict's toll:

- Over 500,000 people killed and 2 million injured
- 6.7 million internally displaced persons
- 5.5 million refugees in neighboring countries
- Estimated \$400 billion in infrastructure damage
- 50% of healthcare facilities and 40% of schools were damaged or destroyed

This unprecedented destruction has fundamentally altered Syria's demographic, economic, and social landscape, creating immense challenges for reconstruction planning.

4.2 Humanitarian and Economic Challenges

The Syrian conflict has had terrible humanitarian and economic impacts, which are still affecting millions of Syrians today. The catastrophic destruction of infrastructure, loss of life, displacement, and pervasive poverty have all contributed to the difficulty of postwar rehabilitation. In this section, we will look at the primary humanitarian and economic concerns that Syria is facing, with an emphasis on the impact of the conflict on its population, the country's economy, and the difficulty in delivering basic services.

★ Humanitarian Challenges:

Displacement Crisis: 12.2 million people displaced (6.7 million internally, 5.5 million refugees). Many lack property documentation, complicating returns. Demographic changes present political sensitivities.

Food Insecurity: 12.4 million Syrians (60% of the population) are food insecure. Agricultural production declined by 40% due to infrastructure damage, water shortages, and equipment loss.

Healthcare System Collapse: Half of healthcare facilities are non-functional. 70% of healthcare workers lost to lives, were displaced, or emigration. Chronic disease management deteriorated while communicable diseases resurged.

Education Disruption: 2.4 million children out of school, 1.6 million at risk of dropping out. 40% shortage of classroom space with severe teacher shortages.

Protection Concerns: Vulnerable populations face gender-based violence, child recruitment, explosive hazards, and arbitrary detention. Mental health needs are extensive, with limited services.

Access to Humanitarian Aid: UN agencies struggle to provide humanitarian aid to some particular areas in Northern Syria.

★ Economic Challenges:

Collapse of the Syrian Economy: GDP contracted by 60% since 2010. The Syrian pound has lost more than 99% of its value against the US Dollar since 2011. Poverty rates exceed 90% in many areas. Infrastructure, factories, farms, and businesses have been destroyed, making recovery slow and expensive.

Currency Crisis and Inflation: The collapse of the Syrian pound, combined with restricted access to foreign currency, has led to hyperinflation across the country. As a result, prices for essential goods such as food, medicine, and basic household items have soared, pushing over 90% of Syrians below the poverty line, according to the UNDP (2024). In response to the deteriorating economic conditions, alternative currencies like the Turkish lira and US dollar have increasingly been adopted in areas outside of government control to stabilize transactions and maintain purchasing power.

Sanctions and Isolation from Global Markets: The Caesar Act and other Western

sanctions have placed severe restrictions on Syria's financial institutions, trade, and access to reconstruction financing. Although intended to pressure the Assad regime, these sanctions have also significantly reduced the country's ability to import essential goods such as food and medical supplies. They have discouraged international banks and investors from engaging with Syria, even in humanitarian sectors, and severely limited remittances, which once made up a large portion of national income. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), while the sanctions do not directly ban humanitarian aid, widespread over-compliance by companies and banks has resulted in more general economic hardship and reduced investment in Syria's recovery.

Infrastructure Destruction: Physical damage estimated at \$120 billion, with additional economic losses exceeding \$280 billion. The war has significantly impacted key industries, which include electricity, transportation, water supply, and telecommunications. The bombing of power plants, water treatment facilities, and roadways damaged the country's capacity to provide basic services. Syria's oil industry, once one of its main economic drivers, has been greatly affected by the conflict, with many oil fields now under the control of Kurdish forces or non-governmental factions. This has led to reduced production and a loss of significant revenue for the government.

Industrial Devastation: 40% of industrial facilities destroyed, 30% severely damaged. Many industrial zones were systematically looted. Syria currently lacks heavily in the industrial field and is in dire need of industrial presence in the country, along with safety measures.

Agricultural Damage: Irrigation systems serving 50% of agricultural land are damaged. Livestock populations declined by 45%. The loss of agricultural grounds, along with a lack of irrigation and farming equipment, has severely limited Syria's ability to produce food. The country, which historically exported grain and other agricultural products, is now experiencing extreme food insecurity, with over 12 million people suffering from chronic hunger. The long conflict has also made it impossible to access critical resources like water and fuel, resulting in crop failures and a drop in food production, leading to the country's need for international aid.

Human Capital Flight: Approximately 50% of professionals and skilled workers have left the country. One of the most devastating long-term economic consequences of the Syrian war has been a massive migration of educated and skilled individuals. Doctors, engineers, teachers, entrepreneurs, and university students have fled the country, with millions resettling in Europe, the Gulf states, and North America, where their expertise is readily absorbed by host economies. This loss of human capital has major implications for Syria's reconstruction efforts, resulting in a shortage of trained professionals in crucial sectors including education, healthcare, and public administration. The education system, in addition, confronts challenges in replacing experienced instructors and academics, threatening long-term human growth. Furthermore, the departure of many of Syria's most competent innovators and business leaders has resulted in a significant decrease in entrepreneurship and local economic leadership. The World Bank estimates that over 80% of Syrian university students and graduates have fled or been displaced. Rebuilding Syria's economy will require targeted efforts to incentivize return migration, attract expatriate investments, and provide opportunities for the remaining skilled population.

★ Postwar Reconstruction Challenges

Reconstruction: Syria faces significant obstacles due to the division of the country into various territorial zones controlled by different factions, including the government, Kurdish forces, and Turkish-backed groups however, in March of 2025, a landmark agreement was reached between Ahmad al-Sharaa's transitional government and the SDF to integrate all regions of Syria into the national framework.

Funding Requirements: Reconstruction costs are estimated between \$250-400 billion or even reaching up to \$500 billion, exceeding the current GDP of the country and the GDP before the war by several times.

Limited Domestic Resources: Government's fiscal capacity severely constrained, with annual budget of approximately \$5 billion (compared to \$16 billion pre-war).

International Constraints: Political considerations and sanctions complicate international financing. Western donors link reconstruction assistance to political transition.

Coordination Challenges: Fragmented territorial control complicates unified reconstruction planning.

4.3 Infrastructure and Public Services Rehabilitation

Rebuilding Syria's damaged infrastructure and restoring essential public services represent core priorities for post-war reconstruction. The damage to Syria's infrastructure and the collapse of public services have been two of the conflict's most apparent and long-lasting consequences. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), over 45% of Syria's infrastructure would be damaged or destroyed by 2024. Rehabilitating this infrastructure is critical not only for economic recovery but also for restoring state authority, ensuring fundamental human necessities, and creating a united society.

★ Critical Infrastructure Priorities:

Water and Sanitation Systems:

- 50% of water treatment plants, pumping stations, and sewage systems require rehabilitation
- 40-60% water loss in urban areas due to damaged networks
- Contaminated water sources are causing disease outbreaks
- Priority: Emergency rehabilitation of water treatment facilities and urban networks

Electricity Generation and Distribution:

- Generating capacity reduced by 70%, transmission networks extensively damaged
- 17 of 27 major power plants damaged or destroyed
- Transmission losses exceeding 60% in conflict-affected areas
- Priority: Restore baseload power generation and critical transmission infrastructure

Transportation Networks:

- 40% of the road network damaged, critical bridges destroyed
- The rail system is non-operational across most of the country
- Major airports requiring significant repairs
- Priority: Restore strategic corridors connecting population centers

Telecommunications:

- Mobile network coverage reduced by 40% nationwide
- Internet infrastructure severely compromised in contested areas
- Priority: Restore basic connectivity while modernizing infrastructure

★ **Public Services Restoration:**

Healthcare System:

- Prioritize reconstruction of primary healthcare facilities in underserved areas
- Rehabilitate district hospitals to restore secondary care
- Rebuild medical education institutions to address worker shortages
- Establish pharmaceutical production for essential medicines

Education Infrastructure:

- Prioritize rehabilitation in areas with a high returning population
- Develop temporary learning facilities during reconstruction
- Rebuild higher education institutions focused on reconstruction skills
- Integrate technology to expand educational access

Housing and Shelter:

- Approximately 1.7 million housing units damaged or destroyed
- Informal settlements expanded significantly during the conflict
- Property documentation issues are complicating reconstruction
- Approaches: Emergency shelter rehabilitation, owner-driven reconstruction, affordable housing programs

★ **Strategic Approaches:**

Phased Implementation:

Emergency Phase: Restore Critical Life-Supporting Infrastructure

Focus on immediate repair and functionality of essential services such as water, electricity, healthcare, and shelter.

Clear rubble, restore access roads, and establish emergency medical facilities.

Provide urgent humanitarian aid and ensure access to food, clean water, and sanitation.

Prioritize interventions that prevent further displacement or public health crises.

Stabilization Phase: Re-establish Basic System Functionality

Reconnect essential public services (health, education, utilities) at a basic operational level.

Rehabilitate critical public buildings such as schools, clinics, and administrative offices.

Establish basic law enforcement and civil governance structures.

Lay groundwork for short-term employment and cash-for-work programs to stimulate local economies.

Recovery Phase: Rebuild and Expand Infrastructure Networks

Upgrade temporary repairs into permanent, resilient infrastructure systems (roads, power grids, water networks).

Restore housing at scale, rebuild social services, and revive local markets.

Reinforce key sectors such as agriculture, transportation, and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Encourage local capacity building through training programs and technical support.

Development Phase: Modernize and Expand National Capacity

Invest in large-scale development projects, smart technologies, and sustainable infrastructure.

Expand renewable energy, improve regional connectivity, and integrate digital infrastructure.

Modernize institutions for service delivery, planning, and regulatory oversight.

Shift focus toward long-term economic growth, competitiveness, and innovation.

Area-Based Reconstruction:

Integrated Planning Within Defined Geographic Zones

Adopt a holistic approach by addressing all interconnected infrastructure needs—roads, water, energy, health, and education—within specific areas.

Use data-driven assessments to understand local needs and design tailored, place-based solutions.

Prioritize Areas with High Return Potential and Strategic Value

Target urban centers, key economic corridors, and areas with strong prospects for population return and economic activity.

Prioritize regions that can catalyze wider national recovery and serve as hubs for investment and trade.

Link Infrastructure Rehabilitation with Housing and Livelihoods

Coordinate the reconstruction of public infrastructure with housing and job creation efforts to foster sustainable reintegration.

Ensure reconstruction efforts support local economies, including agriculture, manufacturing, and services.

Involve local authorities and communities in planning and monitoring to ensure relevance and accountability.

Build Back Better Principles:

Integrate Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) into Design and Planning

Design infrastructure to withstand future natural hazards (e.g., earthquakes, floods, droughts).

Enforce updated building codes, land-use planning, and zoning laws to minimize future risks.

Develop early warning systems and emergency response infrastructure.

Promote Energy Efficiency and Environmental Sustainability

Prioritize green technologies and renewable energy sources (e.g., solar, wind) in reconstruction projects.

Use climate-resilient materials and minimize environmental impact through eco-friendly construction practices.

Protect natural resources (water, forests, soil) and restore damaged ecosystems.

Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Local Ownership

Train local governments and public institutions in infrastructure maintenance, budgeting, and monitoring.

Build systems for asset management, procurement transparency, and long-term service delivery.

Foster partnerships between public institutions, private actors, and civil society to support sustainability.

4.4 Social Reintegration and Reconciliation

Social reintegration and reconciliation are essential dimensions of Syria's reconstruction, addressing the conflict's profound impact on social unity. The Syrian conflict has resulted in significant societal fragmentation, displacement, and trauma. More than just physical reconstruction, Syria's post-war recovery necessitates extensive social reintegration efforts to heal societal division, restore trust in governance, and establish a unified national identity. Social reconciliation is especially important given the country's sectarian, ethnic, and regional differences, which have worsened during the war.

★ Social Fragmentation Challenges:

Sectarian and Ethnic Polarization: The conflict exacerbated sectarian and ethnic divisions, with communities mobilized along identity lines. Trust between different religious and ethnic groups has deteriorated significantly.

Displacement and Demographic Changes: Massive population displacement has altered Syria's demographic landscape, creating tensions between original residents and newcomers in many areas.

Militarization of Society: An estimated 300,000-400,000 Syrians participated in armed groups, creating challenges for demobilization and civilian reintegration.

Trauma and Psychological Impact: Over 60% of Syrians exhibit symptoms of psychological distress, with particularly high rates among children and youth.

★ Vulnerable Populations:

Returning Refugees and IDPs: Face reintegration challenges, including property disputes, limited economic opportunities, social tensions, and psychological adjustment difficulties.

Former Combatants: Require specialized support addressing limited economic alternatives, psychological adjustment, community acceptance, and security concerns.

Women and Girls: Face increased responsibilities as household heads, gender-based violence trauma, limited economic opportunities, and changed social roles.

Children and Youth: Require support addressing educational disruption, trauma-induced challenges, limited positive role models, and vulnerability to recruitment.

★ Reconciliation Approaches

Transitional Justice Mechanisms: Documentation of violations, victim recognition, accountability processes, and institutional reform, balanced with political realities.

Community-Based Reconciliation: Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, inter-community dialogue, joint reconstruction projects, and cultural initiatives promoting shared identity.

Social Cohesion Through Institutions: Rebuilding inclusive educational institutions, healthcare systems, public spaces, and civil service, representing Syria's diversity.

Psychosocial Support Integration: Community-based mental health services, school-based support programs, cultural healing initiatives, and traditional practices where appropriate.

★ Implementation Considerations

Balancing Local and National Processes: Complementary approaches at different levels: national frameworks, local community-specific initiatives, regional coordination, and international support.

Sequencing and Prioritization: Initial focus on humanitarian dimensions, gradual introduction of reconciliation elements, phased implementation of transitional justice, and long-term institutional transformation.

4.5 Role of International Organizations and NGOs

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) directs the UN's development agenda, particularly in fragile and post-conflict contexts such as Syria. ECOSOC provides policy guidance, coordinates inter-agency responses, and promotes collaboration among UN entities, Member States, NGOs, and other international players. On an inter-organizational level, ECOSOC also works with the UN to coordinate the fifteen specialized agencies, each with distinct mandates that contribute to various aspects of Syria's postwar reconstruction. These include:

★ ECOSOC Agencies:

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) supports agricultural recovery, food security, and rural development.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) assists in restoring and regulating civil aviation infrastructure.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) promotes rural resilience and food systems rehabilitation.

International Labour Organization (ILO) focuses on job creation, labor rights, and rebuilding labor markets.

International Maritime Organization (IMO) advises on maritime safety and logistics, particularly for coastal reconstruction.

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) aids in the restoration of cultural heritage and education systems.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) supports reindustrialization and sustainable development projects.

Universal Postal Union (UPU) helps restore communication and postal services.

World Bank Group (WBG) provides funding and technical assistance for economic stabilization and infrastructure.

World Health Organization (WHO) leads in health system rebuilding and disease prevention.

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) supports legal frameworks and the protection of intellectual property.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) offers macroeconomic stabilization advice and capacity building.

Several UN agencies operate actively in Syria and neighboring countries, playing both humanitarian and developmental roles. These include:

★ **United Nations Agencies:**

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):

- Restoring basic infrastructure and essential services
- Supporting livelihoods and economic recovery
- Strengthening local governance capacity
- Area-based approach integrating multiple sectors within specific locations

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

- Supporting voluntary, safe, and dignified refugee returns
- Addressing housing, land, and property documentation issues
- Rehabilitating community infrastructure in the return areas
- Presence in both Syria and refugee-hosting countries

UN Children's Fund (UNICEF):

- Rebuilding education infrastructure and systems
- Restoring water and sanitation facilities
- Providing child protection services
- Building back better approaches, enhancing service quality

World Health Organization (WHO):

- Rehabilitating damaged health facilities
- Strengthening disease surveillance systems
- Training health workers
- Coordinating health sector response

★ **Other International Financial Institutions**

Regional Development Banks:

Institutions like the Islamic Development Bank and the Arab Fund offer:

- Concessional financing for infrastructure projects
- Technical assistance for project preparation
- Private sector development support

Asian Development Bank (ADB):

- Promotes social and economic development in Asia through loans and grants.

★ **International NGOs**

Humanitarian NGOs:

Organizations like Mercy Corps, IRC, and NRC focus on:

- Emergency service provision in underserved areas
- Community-based rehabilitation projects
- Protection services for vulnerable populations

Development NGOs:

Organizations transitioning to reconstruction approaches include:

- CARE's neighborhood rehabilitation programs
- Save the Children's education system rebuilding

- Oxfam's water infrastructure rehabilitation

Technical Assistance Organizations:

Specialized organizations provide crucial expertise:

- UN-Habitat's urban planning and housing expertise
- ICRC's infrastructure rehabilitation experience
- IOM's displacement tracking systems

Syrian Civil Society Organizations:

Local organizations play increasingly important roles:

- Service delivery in many communities
- Community development and social cohesion initiatives
- Women's empowerment programs
- Psychosocial support services

★ **Coordination Challenges:**

- Political divisions affecting humanitarian access
- Competing priorities between humanitarian and reconstruction objectives
- Fragmented funding streams with different requirements
- Limited information sharing between organizations in different areas

International organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play critical roles in Syria's continuing reconstruction. As Syria moves from crisis to recovery, efficient coordination through ECOSOC and the specialized agencies it oversees will be critical to restoring lives, institutions, and hope for Syrians.

4.6 Case Studies and Best Practices

Examining post-conflict reconstruction experiences provides valuable insights for Syria's recovery. In analyzing Syria's post-war reconstruction, it is critical to consider comparable contexts in which reconstruction attempts have been conducted with varied degrees of success. These case studies not only highlight problems and hazards but also provide actual instances of international collaboration, institutional rebuilding, and beginning rehabilitation. These significant examples offer relevant insights:

★ **Post-Conflict Urban Reconstruction**

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Sarajevo

Key Approaches:

- Phased reconstruction prioritizing critical infrastructure
- Mixed financing combining international aid and private investment
- Cultural heritage preservation integrated with functional rebuilding
- Community participation in neighborhood rehabilitation

Transferable Lessons:

- Balancing rapid infrastructure rehabilitation with thoughtful planning
- Leveraging cultural heritage as a unifying element
- Establishing clear property rights frameworks
- Combining top-down planning with community-driven implementation

Iraq: Mosul

Key Approaches:

- UNESCO-led heritage reconstruction alongside basic infrastructure
- Cash-for-work programs employing residents
- Decentralized planning through neighborhood committees

Transferable Lessons:

- Importance of security stabilization before major reconstruction
- Value of early debris removal and explosive hazard clearance
- Need for realistic timeframes and expectations

★ Economic Recovery Approaches

Rwanda: Post-Genocide Revitalization

Key Approaches:

- Strong central planning with clear national priorities
- Significant investment in human capital development
- Agricultural modernization as a foundation for broader recovery

Transferable Lessons:

- Value of a clear national reconstruction vision
- Importance of rebuilding human capital alongside physical infrastructure
- Potential of the agricultural sector as an early recovery driver

Lebanon: Post-Civil War Reconstruction

Key Approaches:

- Private sector-led reconstruction through public-private partnerships
- Rapid rebuilding of downtown Beirut as a symbolic centerpiece
- Substantial international financing and diaspora investment

Transferable Lessons:

- Risks of reconstruction without political reconciliation
- Dangers of excessive debt financing
- Importance of equitable geographic distribution of benefits

★ Cross-Cutting Lessons for Syria

1. Context-Specific Approaches:

Successful reconstruction requires adaptation to local conditions rather than imported models. Syria's diverse regions may require different approaches based on local damage, social dynamics, and governance realities.

2. Realistic Timeframes:

Physical infrastructure can be rebuilt relatively quickly, but economic recovery takes longer, and social reconciliation may require generational timeframes.

3. Balancing Technical and Political Dimension:

Reconstruction is inherently political, not merely technical. Approaches that address political economy factors alongside technical challenges show greater sustainability.

4. Phased Implementation:

Successful reconstruction typically employs phased approaches that address immediate humanitarian needs while building foundations for longer-term recovery.

5. Local Ownership and Participation:

Reconstruction programs with meaningful local participation demonstrate greater sustainability and legitimacy than externally driven approaches.

4.7 Recommendations and Policy Solutions

Based on an analysis of Syria's reconstruction challenges and comparable contexts, this section presents strategic recommendations for effective post-war reconstruction.

★ Strategic Planning Frameworks:

Phased Reconstruction Approach:

Phase 1: Stabilization (1-2 years)

- Focus on essential infrastructure rehabilitation
- Address urgent humanitarian needs
- Establish basic security and governance
- Conduct comprehensive damage assessments

Phase 2: Recovery (2-5 years)

- Expand infrastructure rehabilitation
- Implement housing reconstruction programs
- Restore basic economic functions
- Strengthen local governance capacity

Phase 3: Development (5-10+ years)

- Transition to comprehensive economic development
- Address structural reforms
- Implement longer-term social reconciliation
- Rebuild advanced infrastructure

Area-Based Reconstruction:

- Integrate multiple sectors within defined geographic areas
- Prioritize areas with high return potential
- Engage local communities in planning
- Coordinate diverse actors within coherent frameworks

Decentralized Implementation:

- National-level strategic planning
- Governorate-level coordination
- Municipal and community-level implementation
- International support at appropriate levels

★ **Financing and Resource Mobilization**

Diversified Funding Mechanisms:

- International donor grants for humanitarian needs
- Concessional loans for infrastructure
- Private sector investment in productive sectors
- Diaspora financing through remittances
- Public-private partnerships for major infrastructure

Reconstruction Trust Fund:

- Independent governance with stakeholder representation
- Transparent allocation criteria
- Reduced transaction costs through pooled funding
- Coordinated monitoring systems

★ **Governance and Institutional Development**

Inclusive Governance Mechanisms:

- Community representation in planning bodies
- Transparent decision-making processes
- Independent monitoring of implementation
- Grievance mechanisms for affected populations

Local Governance Strengthening:

- Technical capacity building for municipal authorities
- Systems development for basic service delivery
- Participatory planning mechanisms
- Fiscal decentralization to support local implementation

Anti-Corruption Safeguards:

- Transparent procurement systems
- Digital tracking of reconstruction funds
- Community-based monitoring
- Accountability mechanisms for implementing agencies

★ **Cross-Cutting Considerations**

Conflict Sensitivity:

- Context analysis identifying potential tensions
- Do-no-harm principles in resource allocation
- Conflict mitigation strategies
- Regular monitoring of social impacts

Environmental Sustainability:

- Green building techniques
- Energy-efficient infrastructure design
- Environmental impact assessments
- Climate resilience in infrastructure rehabilitation

Gender-Responsive Reconstruction:

- Women's participation in planning
- Initiatives addressing women's economic empowerment
- Protection measures addressing gender-based violence

4.8 Questions to Consider

The following questions provide a framework for critical analysis and policy development regarding Syria's post-war reconstruction.

★ **Strategic Framework Questions**

1. How should reconstruction priorities be decided with limited resources?

-What factors should guide which areas are helped first?

-Which sectors (health, education, infrastructure) should get early funding?

-How can urgent humanitarian needs be balanced with long-term development?

-How can communities help set these priorities?

2. What kind of governance is needed for successful reconstruction?

-How should responsibilities be shared between central and local authorities?

-How can different groups and voices be included in decision-making?

-What systems can ensure transparency and reduce corruption?

-How should international actors work with national and local governments?

★ Financing and Implementation Questions

3. What are the best ways to finance reconstruction?

-What should be the balance between international grants and loans?

-How can private businesses be encouraged to invest?

-Should any conditions be attached to international funding?

-How can funds be distributed fairly across regions and communities?

4. How can reconstruction be both fast and high-quality?

-What quality standards should apply in different areas (e.g., housing vs. roads)?

-How can communities take part in the process without causing delays?

-How important is environmental sustainability in rebuilding?

-How can we make sure rebuilding helps prepare for future crises

★ Social Dimensions Questions

5. How should reconstruction support displaced people?

-What would make it safe for refugees to return home voluntarily?

-How should conflicts over housing or land be resolved?

-What support is needed for people to reintegrate into communities?

-How can we help those who choose not to return?

6. How can reconstruction support reconciliation and social healing?

-How should we balance justice and forgiveness for past abuses?

-How can rebuilding help reduce ethnic and sectarian tensions?

-What role should transitional justice (like truth commissions or trials) play?

-How can schools, culture, and history promote unity?

★ International Engagement Questions

7. How should international actors work together?

-What systems can improve coordination among donors and agencies?

-How should tasks be divided among global and local groups?

-What roles should neighboring countries and global powers take?

-How can donors avoid overlap and boost overall impact?

5. References

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