



TURKEY'S RECONSTRUCTION MODEL IN SYRIA

MURAT ASLAN

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FOREWORD

Turkey conducts its diplomatic and military activities in northern Syria in pursuit of the four goals it has publically declared. These four goals are: to maintain Turkey's border security, to eradicate terrorist organizations, to establish a secure environment for the return of Syrians who have fled their country, and to maintain sustainability of life in regions where security is ensured. In this context, Turkey resolutely conducted Operations Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch, and, as a result of the diplomacy traffic, has pioneered the reconstruction efforts and its implementation for a civil life in Idlib. With this determination, Turkey removed terrorist organizations from an area stretching from Manbij to Idlib, right along its borders, promoted trust and self reliance among the Syrians, and set the ground for the return of displaced or migrated Syrians to a safe environment.

The reconstruction efforts initiated in parallel with these military operations have expedited the return to a road map both towards urgent humanitarian assistance and long-term stability, on one hand, and, on the other, set an example to the other regions in the north of Syria. The sustainability of an environment of trust and the efforts for reconstruction, which have brought to the fore the motivation for normalization, have the characteristic of lifeblood and reflect the regional population's desire for self-sustained existence. All in all, owing to Turkey's reconstruction efforts, it seems that not only military operations but also the activities setting the ground for civilian life and prioritizing prosperity have brought about more lasting results.

Based on the perspective highlighted above, this report examines the contribution of Turkey by means of reconstruction activities to regional peace in the lands controlled by the Free Syrian Army where Syrians live in safety after the diplomatic and military initiatives. The report also scrutinizes a conceptual road map with respect to Turkey's efforts in an attempt to set an example for other regions where conflicts continue. The efforts of reconstruction are conducted via any kind of facilities mobilized by both central state institutions and local administrations. These efforts set a precedent and enrich the concepts included in the academic literature. Lastly, this report emphasizes the indispensable role of humanitarian values for conflict resolution in stark contrast to the concepts and practices that bring to the fore the harshness of international politics.

Professor Burhanettin Duran
SETA General Coordinator

INTRODUCTION*

Today, civilians along with combatants are affected more than ever by the acceleration of violence and the speed of conflicts. In present-day conflicts, actors and factors become complicated, and, in particular, universal values intended for the protection of civilians are pushed to the “background.” In this regard, civilian populations in conflict regions, such as Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq and, finally, Syria, have been left to the mercy of combatant forces. They have been forced to migrate or have had no choice but to emigrate, and they have been subjected to inhuman treatment. Women and children, in particular, have been aggrieved. Those who wish to live in their motherlands have been deprived of basic needs and necessities.

As the drama of humanity, caused by conflicts, continues in the region; the apathy towards crisis regions has increased, the concerns about displaced people being isolated in their own lands have intensified, and humanitarian aid has remained limited due to economic concerns of the able countries. In this regard, developed countries have adopted a policy of containment of the social implications of conflicts in the areas of conflict and have failed in “humanitarian interaction,” which perhaps could be considered among the positive aspects of globalization.

Thus, developed countries have put into practice a policy to “contain” the aggrieved and unprotected civilians in the areas of conflict or in countries neighboring the conflicts. Among themselves, they have experienced disagreements over “keeping migrants out of their own territories.”

* The author is thankful to Gaziantep Governorate, Gaziantep Municipalities, Kızılay, TİKA, AFAD and Hasan Kalyoncu University for their collaborative support.

Besides anti-migration protests, “civilian casualties” have been considered as “collateral damage” and, thus, have been normalized. Developed countries have remained silent on the instruments and methods of “conventional” violence, such as the use of barrel bombs and the destruction of civilian settlements, and have accepted methods that they do not intend to “normalize and traditionalize” such as the use of chemical weapons.

By their humanitarian indifference, the nation-states of our times draw attention to their poor performance in preventing conflicts and managing their consequences.

Besides the states’ indifference and failure, city ruins in war-torn locations across the world remind us of the violence targeting civilian settlements and infrastructure facilities. Migration and displacement have become permanent, efforts for normalization are blocked, while realistic and achievable work to solve the root causes of problems remains limited due to material damage and the aforementioned social and political distortions. To put it differently, human and social tragedies have multiplied and as a result of social, political, administrative and military irregularities the “institutionalization of instability” has prevailed.

In addition to the irregularities experienced during conflicts, the joint efforts of states and non-state actors after the conflicts have not been able to reach the desirable level to resolve humanitarian, social, and infrastructure problems. In other words, civilians are left alone in poverty and devastation as soon as the conflicts end, and only a handful of actors reach out to devastated regions. The post-conflict environment (characterized by the need for urgent humanitarian aid, social, political, military, economic, cultural help, and infrastructure development, etc.) runs the risk of reigniting the crisis and conflict. In such an environment, the “reconstruction efforts” of few actors who have a ‘sense of responsibility’ have gained importance. On the other hand, the success of the limited activities that are carried out for ‘institutionalization’ after the conflict directly affects the permanence of peace and the building of ‘a sustainable stability’. In this context, today’s conflicts do not have any winners. Considering that a real victory is won not through conflict but also by conquering hearts that the significance of reconstruction efforts can be understood. However, considering the changing nature of conflicts and the efforts made after the end of the conflicts, it becomes clear that states and non-state actors keep their reconstruction and normalization efforts within the scope of their own priorities. Nonetheless, only a few actors, with no thought of personal gain or expectations, support reconstruction attempts.

The aforementioned developments that have occurred in conflicts around the world and the reconstruction efforts during/after these conflicts take place again and again in Syria where there exist plenty of actors and factors. In any case Syrians have been victimized since 2011 due to the issues related to the displacement or immigration, the damaged infrastructure, and the failure of the state to deliver public services. Devastation and lack of basic needs multiply security problems, and lead to the migration of civilians to regions/countries that can provide basic needs and increased safety. The worse is, however, that the conflicting parties and the Syrian regime impede the return of Syrian migrants.

A comparison of this picture and Turkey's policy in Syria reveals that Turkey follows a strategy with two dimensions in Syria. The perception of safety is one leg of Turkish strategy and the other is lasting stability through reconstruction. In this context, Turkey has adopted an active policy in the region since August 2016. Accordingly, Turkey, together with local and legitimate opposition groups, conducted military operations in an effort to eliminate risks and threats against its future in Syria at the source, to ensure border security, build a safer living space for Syrians, and establish the conditions for the safe return of refugees.

Reconstruction efforts have been launched synchronously with months-long military operations and have continued after the operations. Along with the Armed Forces, all state institutions, avid civil society organizations, and a number of international organizations have been engaged in these efforts in coordination as part of a comprehensive engagement/operation concept. Concurrently, governor offices and municipalities in the neighboring provinces of Turkey, institutions and foundations with activities on a national level, and also civil society organizations, have been mobilized.

The objective of this report is to scrutinize the effectiveness of the reconstruction efforts as part of Turkey's security-oriented active policies in the light of the developments in Syria. The first section of this study discusses the concept of reconstruction. In light of literature and practice, the report discusses the factors that deserve attention as part of the framework of "reconstruction" during and after the conflict. Regarding the generally accepted reconstruction process, this report emphasizes a reconstruction model that can contribute to literature and can be used as a reference in the examination of Turkey's reconstruction efforts in Syria. In the second section, Turkey is considered as a model and Syria as a case. The section discusses Turkey's security priorities, the rationale behind its attempts to maintain security in Syria, and reveals the background of its reconstruction ef-

forts. The third section takes up the reconstruction efforts in Syria, especially in Al Bab, Jarablus, and Afrin, in the framework of the abovementioned model. Thus, the “morale and rationale” behind Turkey’s military operations in northern Syria and the reconstruction efforts made concurrently with a special focus on locals are thoroughly investigated.

In this study, Turkey’s reconstruction activities in Syria are displayed by numerical data, expressed in concrete terms, and analyzed through miscellaneous variations of reconstruction. Regarding feedback from these activities, research on Syrians’ perception of Turkey’s reconstruction endeavors was conducted in northern Syria and the findings of this research are presented in the fourth section.

The report is based on literature and the open-source scanning of relevant studies; information obtained through Turkish and Syrian institutions, organizations, and NGOs; and interviews are conducted to ascertain perceptions on Syria, terrorist organizations, and non-state actors. In the conclusion, emphasis is given to the essential contribution of reconstruction to lasting peace despite the difficulties of such efforts.

THE CONCEPT OF RECONSTRUCTION: SUSTAINABILITY OF POST-CONFLICT SECURITY

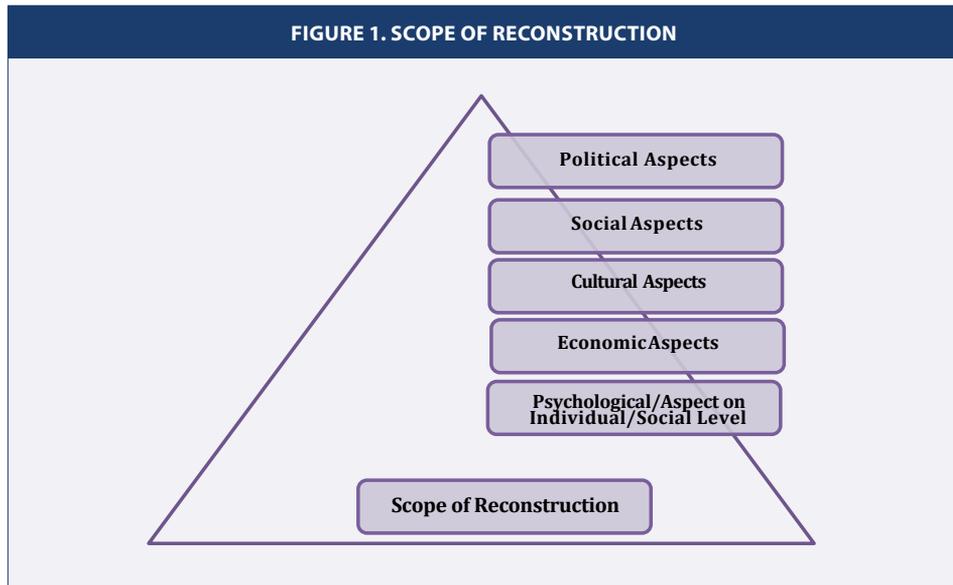
SCOPE OF RECONSTRUCTION

During and after conflicts, “[m]ultifaceted solutions, promoting good governance and better allocation of scarce sources are required for multifaceted problems.”¹ Considering the animosities involving different social or religious units such as ethnicity, tribes, clans, religious sects, and religious cults, solving the aforementioned problems in a way that addresses all the dynamics and pleases all actors to some extent does not seem easy. The inclusion in the agenda of attempts to establish national and common spirit in areas where ethnic or sectarian conflicts are experienced, such as in Afghanistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina, increases the complexity of the process. After all, the objective of reconstruction is not only humanitarian assistance and construction of infrastructure - it also includes dynamics such as political, social, cultural, economic, military, and psychological aspects, on both individual and social levels, as depicted in Figure 1.²

In the shadow of these dynamics, in “failed” states, an individual loses trust and loyalty in the state not only due to conflicts but also due to the state’s inability to perform public functions and services. In this context, the state actors become

1. James Earnest, “Post-Conflict Reconstruction: The Complexity and Challenges of Planning and Implementing Infrastructure Projects in Kosovo”, Unpublished Dissertain Thesis (Curtin University: Perth, 2011), p. 1.

2. Ibid.



indistinct and obscure, and individual and social suffering caused by the conflict prevent expectations from turning into hope. This “gap” triggering differentiation and dissociation in society leads to challenging the *raison d'être* of the failed state, challenges reconciliation among adversaries, while chronic problems in society may hinder the will to live together. Thus, internal conflicts setting the stage in “failed” states or the spread of internal conflicts have become prevalent. Social fault lines deepen after the conflict as the “point of no return” stems from damaged infrastructure, a shattered social balance, combatants returning to the operation theater, and the proliferation of weapons.

In addition to the aforementioned devastation, foreign political-military interventions may have motivations such as desire for more influence and protection of interests and therefore, may seek to maintain the fragile structure so as to lead to border changes. As seen in the interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and most recently in Syria, the separatist seeds of international competition are transferred to the locality under the pretext of “fight against global terrorism, stability, and liberalization” by taking advantage of the social fault lines. Military interventions turn into political ones if the desired dependency is achieved through interventions.

For instance, Earnest pointed out³ the U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Joseph Lieberman by their statements delinetaing the prosperity of Iraqi and Afghani societies, which depends only on their alliance with the U.S. In the context of “al-

3. Earnest, “Post-Conflict Reconstruction”, p. 2.

liances,” the U.S. brought the Northern Alliance to the fore in Afghanistan, Kurdish groups in Iraq, and recently a terrorist organization in Syria. These alliances affected dynamics during the conflict period and deepened differences in the region during and after the conflict. Privileged in the eye of the U.S., these entities were not affected by the aforementioned devastation brought about by conflicts. Rather they caused demographic changes to the detriment of other ethnic groups in territories under their control and expanded their sphere of influence in an expansionist spirit. These entities were given priority in the amelioration of living conditions with the improvement of infrastructure and the contribution of guardian states. Ultimately, the aggrieved communities suffered more devastation as a result of neglect, aggression, and attempts at ethnic cleansing.

Another component that faces subversion in regions under heavy conflict is the necessary norms that maintain social order are no longer valid and effective. The erosion of the administrative and social structure, where even traditions are paused, can cause norms to lose their value over time. For this reason, structural problems occur due to the chaos stemming from the lack of norms in building social order, and following the collapse of order in bureaucracy, the terrorist organizations and crime networks take control.

Hence, the annihilated service and production sectors in such regions prevent the establishment of a “self-sustaining” structure in main domains such as politics, economy, and security due to the lack of norms and bureaucracy. This, in turn, necessitates “external support” in the form of security and foreign assistance. For example, NATO’s self-exclusion from the creation of a secure environment after the fall of the Gaddafi regime can be used as a proper example of an explanation for the continued chaos in Libya. As a result, providing security and basic services in crisis regions are achieved either by a strong leadership and reconciliation in crisis regions, or by persuasion or coercion with external support.⁴

When the scope of the conceptual debate and the dimensions are assessed in the perspectives of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and now Syria, It will not be an exaggeration to say that the planning and execution of reconstruction projects have fallen short due to change, ambiguity and uncertainty.⁵ In the end, the problems still witnessed in the conflict zones in ques-

4. Alan J. Kuperman, “Lessons from Libya: How Not to Intervene”, September 2013, <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/lessons-libya-how-not-intervene>, (Retrieved on December 12, 2018).

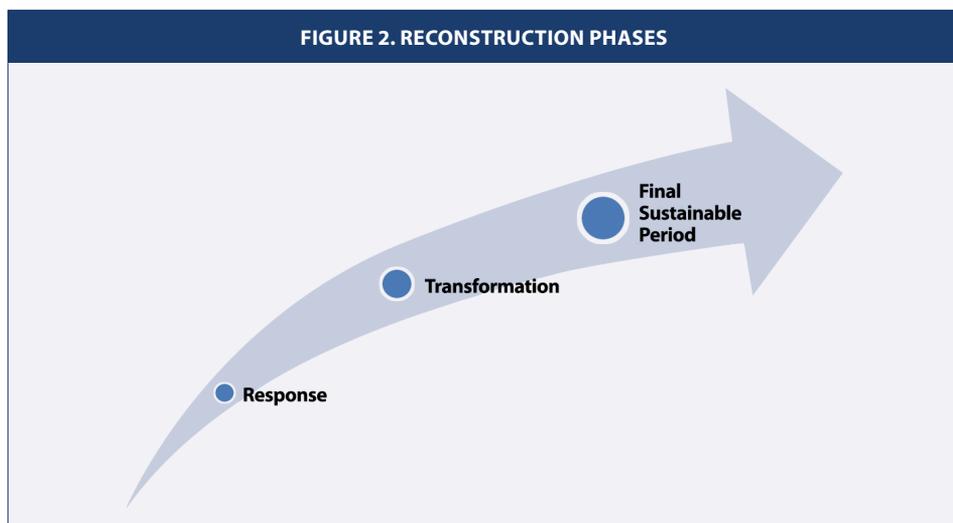
5. Earnest, “Post-Conflict Reconstruction”, p. 37.

tion deem it necessary that debates are reopened on cases that have been experienced. . While the analysis of the implemented reconstruction period will shape efforts in future phases, it will add to the scope and methods of the reconstruction efforts Turkey is carrying out in Syria.

THE RECONSTRUCTION PROCESS

When speaking broadly about reconstruction in post-conflict zones, three stages are present. In this context, referencing research conducted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Naraghi and Anderlini classify phases of post-conflict reconstruction efforts, as depicted in Figure 2, in which input such as radicalism, ethnic dissociation, organized crime gangs, and foreign intervention affect the environment, as follows:

- • Response involving military intervention, emergency humanitarian aid, and a guarantee to provide basic security for the aid services.
- • The transformation or transition in which the society becomes self-sufficient through the increased economic development, infrastructure, and governance capacity for the society to become self-sufficient.
- • The final phase or period where normalisation to prevent the resurgence of the conflict becomes the forefront, the consolidation of the recovery efforts are sustainable and self-sufficient..⁶



6. S. Naraghi, J.E. Anderlini, "Post-Conflict Reconstruction", (eds) International Alert and Women Waging Peace, *Inclusive Security, Sustainable Peace: A Toolkit for Advocacy and Action* (London: The Initiative for Inclusive Security: 2007), p. 51.

These phases in question are not only about preventing the resurgence of the conflict but are characteristic of the natural flow that exists for the fulfillment of social needs, such as a security environment, governance capacity and capability of providing service, infrastructure and the establishment of a financial and economic system, justice, and prosperity. In reality, these phases can be characterized as immediate measures taken in the short term, the establishment of a system and structure in the mid-term, and the permanent stability of the society standing on its own by using its own resources in the long term.

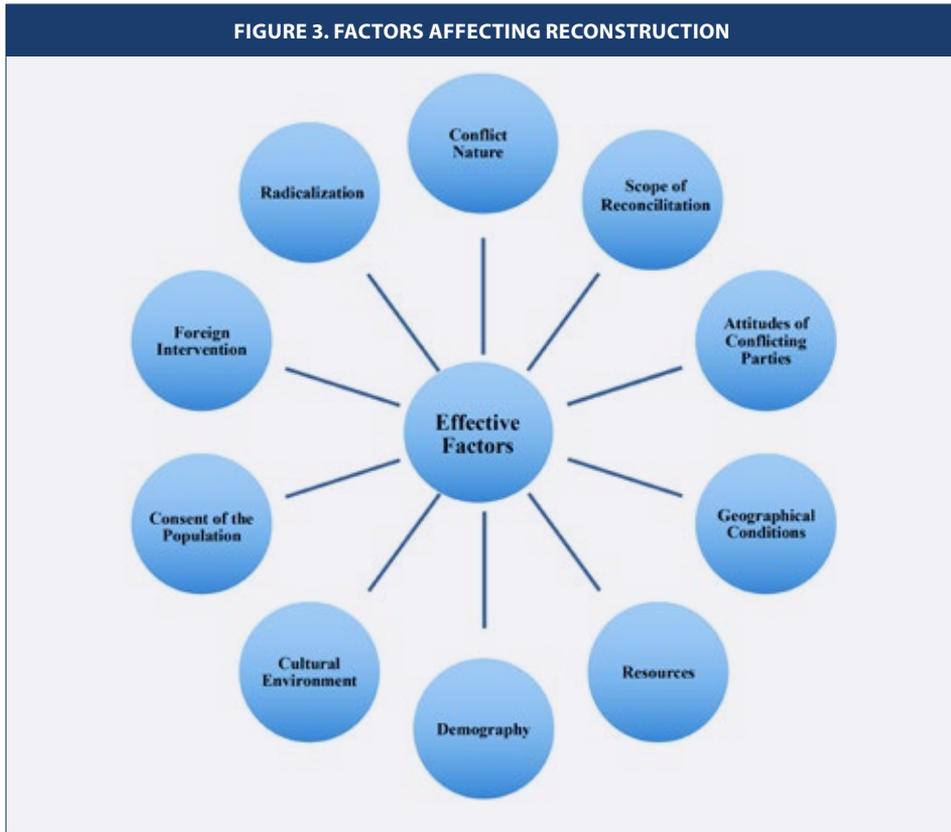
MATTERS AFFECTING THE RECONSTRUCTION PROCESS

If the environment of conflict is considered to be based on conflict and hostility, the general dynamics that can affect post-conflict reconstruction as a rule manifest negatively.⁷ Therefore, reconstruction efforts should be reinforced through confidence-building measures and efforts to maintain reconciliation. First, the establishment of parallel and supporting sustainable security services is necessary. The writers are of the opinion that considering the examples of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, decisive factors that can affect reconstruction are: the nature of conflict (which may involve the international community's intervention in a conflict), the scope of reconciliation that ends the conflict, the attitudes of the conflicting actors towards reconstruction attempts, geographical conditions, accessible sources, demographic structure, the culture and consent of the population, foreign intervention, and radical groups. (Figure 3)

Generally speaking, the nature of the conflict, the international community's manner of involvement, and the scope of the reconciliation tools that end the conflict affect the military activities that are carried out for confidence-building. Reconciliation documents that grant extraordinary authority, such as the Dayton Agreement, have granted international actors broad authority in confidence-building and reconciliation efforts over the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.⁸ That being said, the same does not apply to Afghanistan where reconciliation was reached through the Bonn Agreement. As the international mission exhibited a two-headed outlook, the Coalition and NATO, the opposing parties rejected the

7. Nassrine Azimi, "Challenges of Post-conflict Reconstruction: What Have We Learned in the Past Decade?", *Lecture Notes*, <https://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/heiwa/cons/Azimi/03.pdf>, (Retrieved on December 14, 2018).

8. Gül Seda Acet and Fazlı Doğan, "11 Eylül Olayları Sonrası ABD-Afganistan İlişkileri: İstiladan İşbirliğine", *Selçuk Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Sosyal Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol.17, Issue: 33, (2017).



Bonn Agreement. On the other hand, in the Bosnia-Herzegovina case, Bosnian Serbs perceived the international community as an entity involved in the issue in favor of the Bosnians, and as such did not welcome its' input. As a result, the reconstruction efforts of some countries, such as Turkey, were performed in a limited fashion in the Serbian-dense regions.⁹

Afghanistan, which has been experiencing foreign occupation, conflicts, and massacres for more than 30 years, depends on reconstruction endeavors but due to the prejudice that increased in time against the presence of “Americans” and the objection of dissidents, activities in this direction remain limited to regions where authority is established.

In Syria, the proxy wars waged by many actors have led to a stalemate in ethic and humanitarian solutions such as the protection of civilians from the impacts of conflicts - let alone reaching conciliation. The actors involved have only been interested in winning the conflict – with no interest whatsoever in reconstruction.

9. Ahmet “Yıldız, Türkiye'nin Balkanlarda Etkin Bir Politika İzlemesinin Avrupa Birliği ile Olan İlişkilere Etkileri”, Unpublished Master Thesis, *Edirne Trakya Üniversitesi*, Edirne (2006).

Hence, other than the humanitarian aids and reconstruction activities initiated by Turkey, it would be naively optimistic to talk about a reconciliation that will lead to an environment favorable to the reconstruction in Syria.

As seen in the dissidents from the example in Afghanistan, the attitudes of conflict actors can, on the one hand, prevent reconstruction and, on the other, set the course of reconstruction in an undesirable direction due to sensitive balances that need to be given attention.¹⁰ In this framework, post-conflict reconstruction efforts help locals in some regions reach a certain level of capacity but increase security risks in regions that are deprived of service and development. Such a dispersion as explained here is clearly seen in Syria.

As the conflict conditions continue, reconstruction efforts in the regions under the control of Turkey and the Free Syrian Army (FSA) come to the fore, but in the regions controlled by Russia, Iran, the Bashar al Assad regime, or the activities carried out by the U.S., seem to be military operations rather than reconstruction efforts.

As such, different levels of reconstruction efforts in various regions can affect the course of the conflict differently. As people in the regions under intense military operations tend to migrate, regions in which reconstruction efforts are at desirable levels receive migration. As a matter of fact, Idlib, Al Bab, Azaz, and recently Afrin have become centers of attraction in Syria, and the reason may be that Turkey conducts more effective reconstruction activities than other actors.

Aside from the dynamics stemming from the actors, geographical conditions and accessible resources determine the cost, scope, and intensity of reconstruction efforts. Geographical hardship has not become an issue in the reconstruction efforts in Iraq, where a reconstruction program dependent on U.S. resources has been followed. On the other hand, the geography in Afghanistan obstructed access to all corner of the country and resources are obtained through the “assistance” of conferences of states.¹¹

Despite limited donations, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) formed in city centers of Afghanistan in particular played an important role in the reconstruction of their own regions with the help of the states they depended on.¹² However, the program, due to the limited budget provided by the states that

10. Observations I made in Afghanistan revealed that effective reconstruction in Taliban-controlled regions failed, while the claims of ethnic discrimination were voiced by Taliban in different regions populated by different ethnic groups.

11. UNAMA, <https://unama.unmissions.org/geneva-conference-afghanistan>, (Retrieved on December 14, 2018).

12. Oskari Eronen, “PRT Models in Afghanistan Approaches to Civil-Military Integration”, CMC Finland Civilian Crisis Management Studies, Vol. 1/5, (2008).

founded PRTs remained limited to city centers and reaching out to rural areas could not be achieved equally in each region.¹³

In the Syrian case, no geographical difficulty has been experienced, but the expansion of conflict areas has made it difficult to meet urgent needs. Only the resources that are allocated and international organizations coordinated by Turkey have partially managed to be used in the reconstruction efforts. Thus, on the one hand, the limited resources, and the unwillingness of actors except Turkey have paved the way for the adverse discourses of radical opponents. On the other hand, the negative impacts of the order being founded - in fact, the disorder - have been felt by the civilians.

Along with the geographical conditions, the demographic structure, and the culture and consent of the conflict-aggrieved people affect the perception of the reconstructions “being carried out equally and justly” and the measurement of results following the reconstruction works. Considering that conflicts usually occur in multicultural regions and between at least two sides, the execution of reconstruction by paying regard to delicate balances is set as a condition. Since the impartiality and consent of the sides come to the fore particularly during the peacekeeping operation periods, the reconstruction activities should be carried out in the scope of a peacekeeping mission.

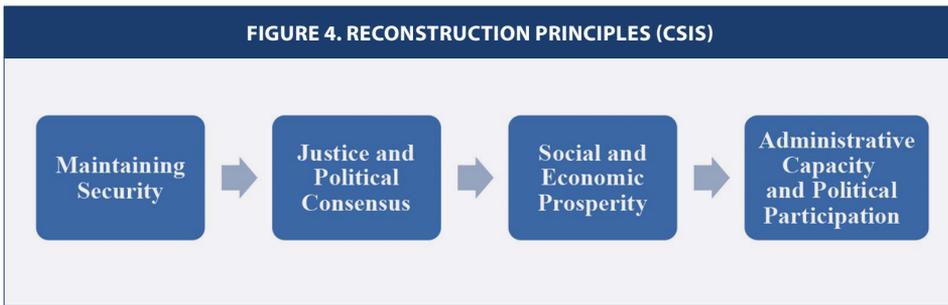
Generally, factors in question that have an impact on reconstruction efforts push to the fore different dynamics in different regions. In some conflict areas, differences make the resistance of opposition apparent and in others, the external dynamics. After all, the reconstruction endeavor should be planned in accordance with the idiosyncrasies of the post-conflict environment. Yet, under any circumstances, the dynamics that dominate reconstruction efforts determine the effectiveness of reconstruction.

RECONSTRUCTION PRINCIPLES

Azimi highlights four elements in relation to the reconstruction process. In this context, the principles may be summarized as security, the rule of law, good governance, economic opportunities for a lasting peace environment, and stable transition from conflict to peace. The principles make their presence felt as preconditions.¹⁴

13. Ibid, p. 12.

14. N De Rham-Azimi, *Challenges of Post-conflict Reconstruction: What We Have Learned in the Past Decade?*, (United Nations Institute for Training and Research, Toyohogaku: 2004).



The CSIS, too, correspondingly, has made a similar determination in line with the principles Azimi has asserted. In this context, the CSIS, in principle, adopted the elements of providing security, the establishment of justice and a political reconciliation environment, improving social conditions and economic welfare, and administrative capacity and political participation.¹⁵ (Figure 4)

As part of the establishment and institutionalization of security by means of the improvement of the perception of social security, the aims are to build trust for the order under construction and prevent the negative impact of conflicting parties on the reconstruction activities. Furthermore, in line with the establishment of a security capacity, the ultimate goal of reconstruction is for local elements to gain responsibility and capability to provide security for a sustainable social life. Organized gangs flourishing in a conflict environment and increasing crime rates may cast a shadow on reconstruction efforts and, as such, the establishment of security is fundamental and is understood as a priority principle.

It is important that locals give credit to the establishment of justice and the setting for political reconciliation and that they support reconstruction activities. Efforts to provide justice and order through law enforcement forces may be evaluated in the scope of the sustainability of reconciliation and preventing resistance against reconstruction efforts. Improvement of social conditions and economic welfare allow the formation of a self-sufficient social structure after the reconciliation efforts.

Furthermore, these two principles gain importance in preventing the recruitment activities of the opposition and positively affecting the perception of an individual and of society as a whole. In this framework, a running business life, and the free movement of economy and goods, people and services inside the

15. Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Afghan War in 2013: Meeting the Challenges of Transition*, (Washington D.C: Center For Strategic & International Studies, 2013).

country/region are the criteria for the success of reconstruction. Aid activities for social grassroots can be performed directly and uninterruptedly by preventing a chaotic environment, e.g. preventing corruption and a black market which create social desperation.

Getting organized and having representation, in other words administrative capacity and political participation, are requisite processes. Power sharing among different sections of society and either the organized or unorganized struggle of different ethnic structures necessitate 'balanced' reconstruction efforts. In this regard, considering the demographic structure and internal dynamics of society, the strategy of setting up a 'balance' can prevent potential problems such as determining the necessary administrative capacity, the fair distribution of resources and services, and preventing counteractions and discourses.

The principles that affect the character of reconstruction, stated by both Azimi and the CSIS, may be used as a reference in the analysis of the Turkish reconstruction efforts in the Al Bab, Jarablus, Afrin, and Idlib provinces of Syria. However, it will be more accurate to interpret Turkey's reconstruction endeavors through its own conditions and capacity. In fact, Turkey has adopted a more detailed model instead of the four-phase process state above. Rather than military-oriented reconstruction, as was the case in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, or Iraq, a "comprehensive" model comes into existence with the involvement of NGOs and state institutions. Hence, in addition to the above mentioned principles that have the characteristics of a road map, Turkish reconstruction efforts emerge as a new model of the reconstruction process.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RECONSTRUCTION MODEL IMPLEMENTED BY TURKEY

Although the restructuring activities undertaken by multinational military structures or international organizations made possible the unity of efforts for a common purpose, the effects of the dynamics encountered could negatively influence the structuring activities. For instance, coordination problems under the roof of international organizations became apparent in the examples of Bosnia and Afghanistan in which international organizations played dominant roles or different states assumed responsibility in different sectors.¹⁶

16. World Bank, Three Views, https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/4588/deor_11_2_36.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, (Retrieved on December 16, 2018).

As a matter of fact, countries pursuing a reconstruction process suitable to doctrines and making clear “nationalist” preferences while setting priorities cast a shadow on multinational engagement. Similarly, the activities and control of non-governmental organizations appear problematic. As seen in the Afghanistan example, NGOs are subject to criticism for allocating their sources to their own personnel or to a certain section of society.¹⁷

On the other hand, a positive reconstruction atmosphere is experienced in Turkey’s own reconstruction initiatives in northern Syria, as a result of repercussions of the aforementioned dynamics and of the actors’ positive approach. For this reason, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that compared to Turkey’s initiatives in Syria, the different interests and motivations of multinational actors or actors of different countries who are engaged in reconstruction and relevant works may cause a breakdown and polarization in society.

For the reconstruction process, terrorists or dissident elements, competing social strata, and the post-conflict environment can be considered as “reconstruction barriers.” Gender equality and fair representation issues among administrative staff are also frequently encountered as a “cultural barrier” for reconstruction.

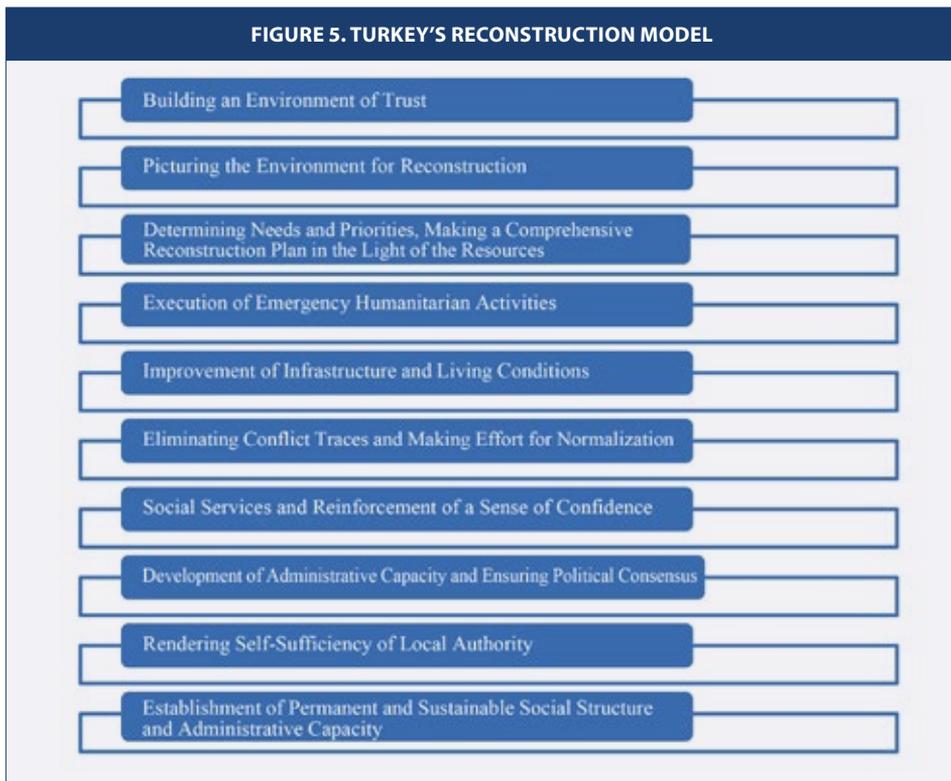
In order for the model in question not to be affected by the aforementioned obstacles, it is important to keep “strategic channels” open and follow a transparent reconstruction process. Negative obstacles affecting the reconstruction may result in different models for the reconstruction processes. Thus, standardization in process management has not yet been set for reconstruction efforts. Besides, different fields of work can be at the forefront depending on the reasons for the conflict and the needs of the post-conflict society. However, considering the reconstruction models, it may be said that certain generalized steps exist. In this regard, a possible reconstruction process may be described as follows:

- Ensuring an environment of trust
- Picturing the environment for reconstruction (determination of actors and dynamics)
- Determining the needs and priorities, and making a comprehensive reconstruction plan in light of the resources
- Carrying out emergency humanitarian activities
- Developing the infrastructure and improving living conditions

17. Ibid.

- Deleting traces of conflict and making efforts for normalization
- Establishing social services and reinforcing the sense of confidence of the local community
- Developing administrative capacity and ensuring political consensus
- Ensuring self-sufficiency of the local authority
- Establishing a permanent and sustainable social structure and administrative capacity

When compared to Turkish efforts, the aforementioned logical integrity was not seen in the post-conflict reconstruction works in countries such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. Furthermore, considering the ongoing extremism and instabilities in these crisis regions, it is debatable how successful the reconstruction activities have been. After all, regardless of the scope of the model, for the society addressed, which is the focus of this study, the determining inputs are the geography of activities and resources, the interest of the international community - or lack thereof -, and the attitudes of actors who may possibly resist the efforts for reconstruction. In this respect, it will be beneficial to examine the steps of the aforementioned “expanded” model. (Figure 5)



Building an Environment of Trust

The establishment of a trust environment that also requires military power is a prerequisite for all activities. Especially in the early stages of the post-conflict period, military elements pioneer reconstruction activities because of security concerns. In this context, “civil-military cooperation” (SAIB-CIMIC), known as military-oriented activities, in reconstruction efforts may soundly orchestrate functions, such as ensuring coordination, needs analysis, the measurement of effectiveness, and the execution of activities -particularly the activities for emergency humanitarian assistance- at proper places and at the right time. In parallel with the development of the trust environment, the activities of the SAIB-CIMIC relinquish their place to the structuring elements that are known as “civil affairs,” where civil experts come to the forefront. However, as can be seen in the next sections, when conducting reconstruction activities in northern Syria Turkey directly launched “civil affairs” initiatives, while the SAIB-CIMIC activities remained limited.

Picturing the Environment for Reconstruction

“Picturing” can be summarized as the determination of actors and dynamics in the regions subject to reconstruction efforts; its purpose is, in short, to determine all factors that may affect reconstruction. In this framework, the following should be examined in detail in the region where the activity will be carried out: demographic structure, opinion leaders, armed groups, opposing elements, events occurring in light of the historical process, geographic and meteorological conditions, and all other dynamics. This process requires intelligence activities to be reconstruction-oriented rather than security-oriented. In this context, the personnel involved in reconstruction works should establish a database on the region where they perform their duties, and structuring attempts should be carried out after the analysis of the data in question.

Determining the Needs and Priorities, and Making a Comprehensive Reconstruction Plan in Light of the Resources

As a result of picturing the reconstruction, it is necessary to identify and prioritize the needs of the inhabitants of the area under reconstruction and to plan activities. Considering that limited resources are available, a reconstruction plan based on an analysis of the needs and priorities is needed for the reconstruction plan. This plan will ensure timely access of the right number

of people to the assistance they need and, eventually, the establishment of an atmosphere of trust. For this reason, central planning and coordination of the SAIB-CIMIC and civil affairs activities should be carried out by a coordination center. Indeed, Turkey commissioned its governorates neighboring the border to provide such coordination at local level.

Execution of Emergency Humanitarian Activities

Giving priority to the immediate needs of the rapid response after the conflict will prevent civilian grievances. In the case of Afghanistan, the excavation of water wells and the sheltering needs of the displaced and returning refugees were priorities. In the case of Bosnia, sheltering and food were in urgent need. In Syria, the Disaster and Emergency Management of Turkey (AFAD), the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC, or *Kızılay* in Turkish), and the civilian and local administrations of Turkish provinces neighboring Syria have undertaken emergency humanitarian aid, as can be seen in the next section.

Improvement of Infrastructure and Living Conditions

Infrastructure projects such as sewage systems, setting up electric and water supply systems, and education-health services that require a large budget and time necessitate the allocation of resources, middle- and long-term infrastructure investment, and construction activities. The engineering elements of military units are engaged in these activities which are carried out by civil formations or private firms. In fact, the Turkish municipalities neighboring Syria mobilized Caterpillars to conduct constructions. With the participation of the local workforce, infrastructure activities turn into economic activities, improve living conditions, and allow locals to benefit from resources flowing into the region.

Eliminating Traces of Conflict and Making Efforts for Normalization

The elimination of traces remaining from the conflict is generally perceived in line with urban aesthetics but, in fact, includes social support activities as well. Activities such as psychological support to those who have suffered trauma, eliminating minor animosities, and achieving integration contribute to the dissolution of the social traces of conflicts. For this reason, it has become necessary to assign social services employees and experts in different professional areas, such as psychiatrists, to reconstruction activities after the traces of conflict have been identified and diagnosed.

Establishment of Social Services and Reinforcement of the Local Community's Sense of Confidence

Municipality services include zoning, establishing womens' houses, kindergartens, and running rehabilitation centers, providing assistance to the needy, and distributing food. The protection of refugees and internally displaced persons, and ensuring that they maintain their lives through financial assistance are priority issues that occupy a large part of reconstruction.

Development of Administrative Capacity and Ensuring Political Consensus

Ensuring social reconciliation includes the participation and reconciliation of local people in the establishment of local government, the fulfillment of basic services by local government, and the development of capacity in the context of fighting corruption and crime. In order for reconstruction activities to be terminated, a transparent and accountable local government should be established within the scope of confidence-building measures for a sustainable and lasting peace environment. In addition, political activities, such as holding elections, and the management of the transition period for self-government, are challenging milestones in the construction of a democratic society.

Rendering Self-Sufficiency of Local Authority

After the establishment of local government, rendering self-sufficiency of local authority includes the activities for the procurement of necessary resources, allocating vehicles, exploring activities that can generate income, and the local authority undertaking responsibility with autonomous capacity. By allocating resources and vehicles via its provinces bordering with Syria, Turkey has increased the capacity of local administrations. With the contributions of the Syrian Stability Committee, the capacity of local administrations has improved and measures have been taken for the self-sufficiency of settlements.

Establishment of Permanent and Sustainable Social Structure and Administrative Capacity

After achieving self-sufficiency, the local community adopts a self-sufficient character with the desire to live together in peace and espouses democratic culture. The establishment of permanent and sustainable social structure and administrative capacity means guiding the local community to establish its own peaceful future.

In this context, the local community should be expected to make its own decisions and implement these decisions within the framework of the constituted local law. As a matter of fact, in the region under the control of Turkey and the Free Syrian Army, local people elect their own administrators, form councils by consensus, and make administrative decisions. Besides the discussed model, there are other factors that urged Turkey to hold military operations in Syria and perform reconstruction activities that in turn affected the reconstruction process in northern Syria and its possible consequences. Before examining Turkey's reconstruction efforts in Syria, Turkey's security strategy in Syria should be known as an input.

TURKEY'S SECURITY STRATEGY IN SYRIA

The following played a role in Turkey's military intervention and reconstruction endeavors in Syria:

- Conducting Operation Euphrates Shield (OES) in the Al Bab sector, and Operation Olive Branch (OOB) in Afrin, in northern Syria.
- Installing observation points in Idlib in coordination with Russia and Iran as part of the Astana Process.
- Attempts to implement the road map drawn for Manbij following diplomatic talks with the U.S.A.
- Diplomatic activities and military pressure, at times, in order to form a safe zone in the east of the Euphrates River.

Turkey's reconstruction efforts based on the abovementioned grounds should be scrutinized in the context of its security concerns. In this regard, all of Turkey's initiatives from the beginning of the Syrian crisis should be reviewed in terms of a consistency test for Turkey, and finally, the diplomatic and military steps already taken by Turkey should be analyzed.

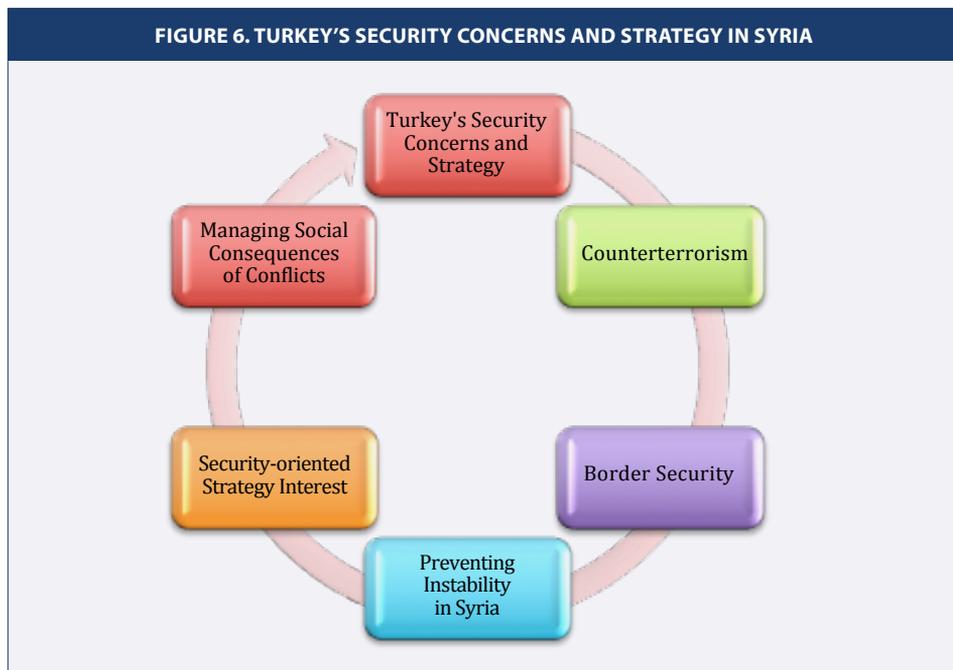
Thus, it is possible to understand Turkey's reason for placing great importance on its reconstruction activities in Syria. In fact, due to its security concerns, Turkey took military and diplomatic actions. But at the same time, Turkey carried out reconstruction efforts as its primary activity after the military operations. These efforts may be qualified as "part of Turkey's soft power," whereby, on the one

hand, the country took steps with a lasting impact in order to prevent humanitarian tragedy, and, on the other, together with other actors and based on the “win-win” principle, reduced the security concerns of all segments of society.

Turkey's security concerns in Syria and its security strategy built on these concerns may be categorized under five main headings (Figure 6):

- Fight against terrorism
- Border security
- Prevention of instability and its consequences in the north of Syria
- Protection of its long-term, security-oriented strategic interests due to the presence of other states in Syria
- Management of the social consequences of conflicts

Turkey, for many years, faced the threat of different terrorist organizations, including the PKK, and 40,000 Turkish citizens have died as a result of terrorism. Due to the indifference or lack of capacity of neighboring countries, the PKK, without making any distinction between civilians and military members, escalated attacks on Turkey. As the PKK, sheltered by Turkey's neighboring countries, has expanded as a result of the clashes in Iraq and Syria, political/military gaps, and the support of Europe and the U.S.A., it has gained unimaginable capabilities thanks to the regional and global political/military developments. In its ever-ex-



panding structure, the PKK formed the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK) as a roof organization and operates with different names such as the PKK in Turkey, the Kurdistan Democratic Solution Party (PÇDK) in Iraq, the Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK) in Iran, and the Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Syria.

While struggling with the threat of separatist terrorists, Turkey has exercised its right to self-defense in Iraq and Syria in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter and launched military operations against the PKK terrorist organization and conducted hot pursuits. However, the conflicts and instability that broke out in Syria in 2011 gave the PKK opportunities for legitimacy under the name of the PYD.¹⁸ In line with the PKK's increasing capacity, the following incidents that occurred in Turkey most likely took place with external support:

- The FETÖ plots on December 17 and 25, 2013, which targeted the government of Turkey.
- The aftermath of a Russian plane being hit by Turkish fighter jets on November 24, 2015, and the assassination of Russian Ambassador to Ankara Andrey Karlov on December 19, 2016 which led to a confrontation between Russia and Turkey.
- The escalation of terrorist acts in certain Turkish provinces and towns in 2015.
- The attacks, such as the July 15, 2016 coup attempt, overtly aimed at the transformation of Turkey and keeping it out of the Middle East region.

In this context, the U.S. set a turning point by first supporting the Free Syrian Army in the Syrian crisis, and then choosing the PKK/PYD and attempting to open a PKK/PYD corridor in the south of Turkey. Considering the aforementioned incidents and developments in Syria, Turkey started to take measures, which it regarded as vital to survivability, against the developments.¹⁹ On the one hand, Turkey developed measures against the threat of domestic terrorism and, on the other, the country deemed necessary to engage in cross-border intervention and, thus, launched Operation Euphrates Shield on August 24, 2016.²⁰

With Operation Euphrates Shield, Turkey took center stage in the fight against DAESH, and aimed at the following three objectives:

18. İbrahim Kerman, Ertan Efegil, "Terör Örgütü Pkk/Pyd'nin Suriye'de İzlediği İç Savaş Stratejisinin Değerlendirilmesi", *Ankasam Uluslararası Kriz Ve Siyaset Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (2017).

19. Nihat Ali Özcan, "Putin ve Suriye Sorunu", *Tepav*, <https://www.tepav.org.tr/tr/blog/s/6058>, (Retrieved on December 12, 2017).

20. "Genelkurmay Başkanlığı'ndan 'Fırat Kalkanı Harekati' Açıklaması", *İhlas Haber Ajansı*, August 26, 2016.

- To remove terrorist entities in the south of Turkey's borders that can affect the country and to create a safe zone.
- To prevent the formation by the PKK of a field along its border controlled via the PKK/YPG/PYD with the aim of reaching the Mediterranean.²¹
- Once security is established, to ensure the return of Syrians, who migrated from the region to Turkey, to their homelands.

Turkey assumed control in Al Bab after Operation Euphrates Shield and paved the way together with Russia and Iran for the Astana Process. As the country most impacted by the consequences of the clashes, Turkey has managed to acquire a new position for itself in Syria. Contrarily, the U.S.-led coalition provided arms, and vehicle and equipment support to the PKK/PYD; attempted to rename the PKK as the "Syrian Democratic Forces"; provided military training to thousands of insurgents ; and set the ground for promoting the legitimacy of the PKK and for providing them with land.

In other words, the PKK/PYD wanted to establish a de facto state.²² As a preventative measure against the PKK's desire, Turkey organized the FSA after Operation Euphrates Shield and launched Operation Olive Branch (OOB) on January 20, 2018 in Afrin. With Operation Olive Branch against the PKK, which was organizing cantons next to the Syrian-Turkish border, Turkey aimed to eliminate the terrorist threat, neutralize the terrorists in Syria, ensure border security, and form a safe zone for Syrian civilians.²³ Turkey met its objectives with the successful completion of the OOB.

Following these two major operations, Turkey, on the one hand, in compliance with the Astana Process, installed observation points in the de-escalation zone in Idlib, and on the other, initiated talks with the United States to root out the PKK from Manbij. Previously, the U.S. had left the control of Manbij to the PKK/PYD. As a matter of fact, the U.S.A. promised to withdraw from Manbij after the fight against DAESH, but has been dragging out the evacuation of Manbij for a long time.

As a result of a long marathon of negotiations between the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the U.S. State Department and according to a road map

21. Murat Yeşiltaş, Merve Seren, Necdet Özçelik, *Fırat Kalkamı Harekatı: Harekatın İcrası, İstikrarın Tesisi ve Alınan Dersler*, (SETA Rapor, 2017).

22. Loqman Radpey, "Kurdish Regional Self-Rule Administration in Syria: A New Model of Statehood and Its Status in International Law Compared to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq", *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 17, Issue 3, September 2016, pp. 468-488.

23. "Başbakan Yıldırım: 'Zeytin Dalı Harekatı'nın Amacı, Bölgenin Teröristlerden Temizlenmesi'", *Hürriyet Gazetesi*, January 21, 2018.

the parties agreed on, Turkey has launched the necessary initiatives to eventually return the town of Manbij to its owners, the Syrians.²⁴ In addition, diplomatic negotiations were initiated for the clearance of the region occupied by the PKK in the east of the Euphrates River, and at the same time, an agreement for ceasefire in Idlib was signed under the auspices of Turkey, the Russian Federation, and Iran. Turkey continued intense diplomatic and military engagements in the field following the two military operations. Ultimately, the U.S. administration appears to have chosen to collaborate with Turkey and will (eventually) withdraw from Syria.

Although Turkey's leitmotif in diplomatic and military engagements is counterterrorism and border security, the country also aims at the prevention of instability and its relevant consequences in northern Syria. Thus, through the established security zone, Turkey has managed to remain outside of the conflict in Syria. Turkey has taken steps to protect its security interests in the face of the "order" that other state actors try to build in Syria by direct or indirect intervention. Simply put, from a realistic point of view, Turkey has focused on shaping stability in Syria by adopting a "self-help" policy.

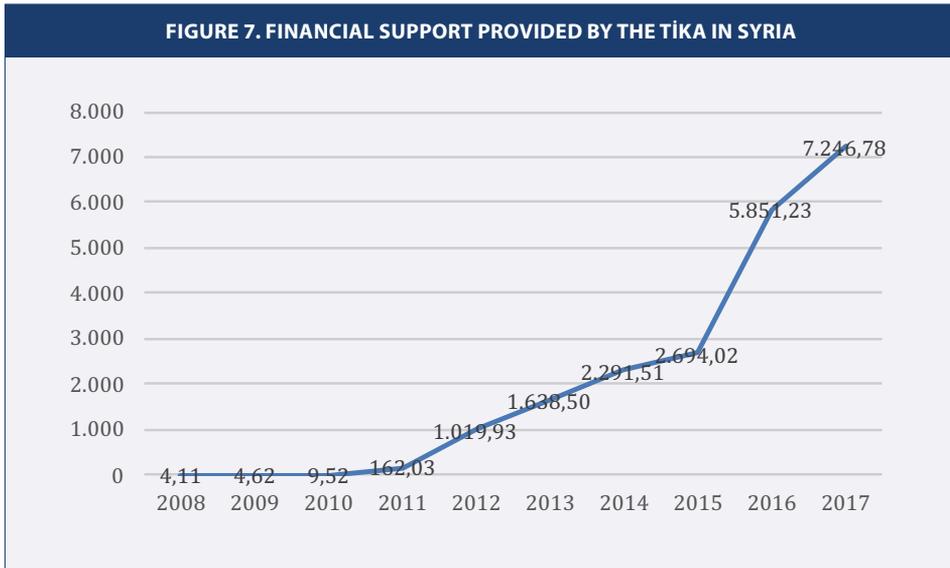
As part of this policy, one of the aims of the abovementioned military operations and the diplomatic initiatives is to manage the social consequences of the conflicts. In the wake of the crisis that broke out in Syria in 2011, Turkey has been exposed to the influx of refugees as a result of its "open-door policy" and has become one of the most popular countries hosting Syrian refugees. According to data by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are approximately 6 million Syrian refugees worldwide, 3,607,653 of whom reside within the borders of Turkey.²⁵

Although the flow of refugees has fluctuated during the crisis, it has continuously increased over the years. The exodus after the start of the Syrian crisis has necessitated a focus on humanitarian aid and on sheltering refugees. The subsequent process was shaped by the integration of refugees into socioeconomic life and the development of policies that prioritize institutionalization.

In the end, the integration of Syrian immigrants into the society and daily life in Turkey has been achieved through the allocated resources. The cost that Turkey

24. "Erdoğan: Münbiç'te Amerika'da Vardığımız Anlaşmayı Adım Adım Hayata Geçiriyoruz", *Hürriyet Gazetesi*, June 18, 2018.

25. UNHCR, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria#_ga=2.9195637.1958257594.1544473660-1351710641.1544473660, (Retrieved on November 29, 2018).



had to bear is about \$33 billion.²⁶ Considering the data provided by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), the financial support provided for the reconstruction of Syria by the TİKA alone in 2011-2017 clearly reveals the hefty (yet necessary) cost for Turkey. (Figure 7)²⁷

Due to the cost that Turkey has had to bear, the recent policies have brought to the fore the approaches for the return of Syrians under Temporary Protection Status. Under this framework, reverse migration, as one of the targets of the OES and OOB, was clearly emphasized in the statements released by the Turkish Presidency. The statements underlined²⁸ that military operations would be continued until the region was cleared from terrorist organizations and until the safe return to their homes of about 3.5 million Syrians. Following the above-mentioned military operations, approximately 310,000 Syrians returned to their country voluntarily.²⁹

It is food for thought that the return of Syrians remains limited to the security zone formed by Turkey. In this respect, the return of Syrians living outside

26. Turkish Interior Ministry, “*Bakanımız Sn. Soylu, Küresel Göç Mutabakatı Hükümetlerarası Konferansı'na Katıldı*”, <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/bakan-soylu-kuresel-goc-mutabakati-hukumetlerarası-konferansına-katildi>, (Retrieved on December 10, 2018).

27. TİKA, “Readout” on the relevant research (Ankara: TİKA, 2018).

28. The Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, “*Güvenlik Toplantısına İlişkin Basın Açıklaması*”, <https://www.tccb.gov.tr/cumhurbaskanligi-sozculugunden/1695/89188/guvenlik-toplantısına-iliskin-basin-aciklamasi>, (Retrieved on: January 23, 2018).

29. Spokesperson of Turkish Presidency İbrahim Kalın’s announcement, dated February 15, 2019, in his social media account, <https://twitter.com/ikalın1/status/1096506901670645763>, (Retrieved on: February 16, 2019).

their homeland to their country faces significant obstacles with the property law put into effect by the Assad regime. In the face of Turkey's efforts to build a safe zone for civilians, both the Syrian regime and the PKK/PYD attempt to lead demographic changes in the areas under their dominion. In conjunction with this, activities of pressuring “unwanted” ethnic groups, disposing or replacing official records, emphasizing their own ideologies in the field of education, and recruiting children by force have increased in number. In a nutshell, a new kind of ethnic cleansing has been initiated.³⁰ Against the dangerous consequences of demographic changes, Turkey has intensified reconstruction works in northern Syria, both during and after the military operations, in order to:

- Establish a safe zone along its borders
- Support the moderate opposition that has gained legitimacy in the Geneva talks
- Take measures against demographic cleansing by encouraging the return of Syrian migrants
- Concentrate on reconstruction efforts in order to ensure the permanency of the presence of Syrians already inhabiting their own lands and of the returnees to the safe zone

The efficacious and continuing return of Syrians to the regions Turkey has cleared of terrorism and war by conducting the OES and OOB military operations indicates that these operations were right to the point.³¹ In the wake of detrimental incidents to its security, Turkey, as of 2013, launched military operations both in Turkey and Syria in order to find a lasting solution for its security concerns. The reconstruction works following these military operations paved the way for the reverse migration to Al Bab, Azez, Afrin, and Idlib, all of which are under the control of Turkey.

The utmost attention paid by Turkey during the military operations in order to not harm the civilian population and prevent damage to cities set the stage for the start of reverse migration. The reconstruction efforts created permanent settlements and, thus, turned these areas into centers of attraction. The consent and welfare of the local community are essential in reconstruction. With this in mind, the reconstruction works performed in the scope of the reconstruction model mentioned in the

30. Buğra Sarı, Murat Tınas, *İnsanlığa ve Demokrasiye Terör Tehdidi: PKK Örneği* (Ankara: Uluslararası Terörizm ve Güvenlik Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2018).

31. Ibid.

previous section, have gained the support and sympathy of the civilian population when compared to similar attempts that have failed in other conflict zones.

Turkey's reconstruction strategy, as can be understood through the models mentioned in the previous section, has, on the one hand, responded to Turkey's security concerns and, on the other, has addressed the needs of inhabitants in the region. In the next section, Turkey's concrete actions with regard to the aforementioned reconstruction model will be analyzed, and the broad spectra of these in-depth and broad-ranging attempts will be emphasized.

TURKEY'S COMPREHENSIVE RECONSTRUCTION STRATEGY IN NORTHERN SYRIA

It is noted in the speeches by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, that Turkey's reconstruction strategy in northern Syria is based on two cornerstones. As stated in the preceding section, the first is the neutralization of the terrorist networks and, as a result of security concerns, ensuring border security. However, the second cornerstone is based on the human dimension of the crisis. In other words, a new reconstruction strategy has been built by intertwining ethical values with pragmatic objectives.

In this framework, as measures are taken by military operations regarding the first cornerstone, the efforts for reconstruction solidify the results of this effort while sustainable steps are taken in the human and ethical dimensions. Assessment of this strategy within the stated scope will provide a systematic analysis and give an idea of the effectiveness of reconstruction in areas secured by Turkey in northern Syria.

Therefore, in this section, Turkey's reconstruction activities are evaluated within the scope of the model described previously. Meanwhile it should be kept in mind that Turkey is not engaged in a nation-building project, but in accordance with the Tahrir and Soci agreements is ethically bound to exercise reconstruction efforts respecting the unity and indivisibility of Syria based on the agreed strategy by the parties.

ENSURING CONFIDENCE BUILDING

It is a fact that Turkey's diplomatic initiatives and military operations constitute a turning point in confidence building. After this accomplishment, the security measures have been furthered along different dynamics. Under the umbrella of the Free Syrian Army (FSA), local forces formed by the region's people have taken responsibility for establishing security.

Meanwhile, the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) have supported these local elements and refrained from interfering in the region's internal dynamics. Besides, the government of the Syrian National Coalition - to which the FSA is connected - has established its authority in the north of Syria, which has had a positive impact on Turkey's reconstruction efforts. As an example of this, one may cite the success achieved in El Bab and Afrin in the operations against terrorist and criminal groups operating under the command of the PKK.³²

Furthermore, except for a limited number of attacks by terrorist groups, no security incidents have taken place in Al Bab and Azaz since 2016 while the aid and service activities have been performed without any hindrance. These indicate that security, as a precondition, has been established and ensured in the region. Thus, following the military operations, activities for a manageable and sustainable security have taken precedence.

THE PICTURE OF THE ROAD TOWARDS RECONSTRUCTION

Turkey has accomplished the reconstruction efforts in northern Syria by co-operating with local elements. The intelligence elements and the national security forces have conducted field surveys, which could have an impact on the reconstruction efforts, in coordination with the governance of neighboring provinces (of Turkey).

This way, a picture of the security environment has emerged and the risks on the aid and reconstruction activities have been assessed. In addition, local elements have engaged in collecting demographic data and information, and in directing the efforts of the central organizations, as well as keeping records of the returning refugees using local surveys and data gathering for statistical purposes.³³

32. "Afrin ve Bab'da Çetelere Operasyon", Anadolu Ajansı, November 20, 2018.

33. For statistics on local people and effective reconstruction, the Syrian Stability Committee, an affiliation of the Syrian National Agreement Government, collected data through questionnaires and interviews. Detailed information was obtained about the activities of the Stability Committee during an interview on December 19, 2018.

The surveys to ascertain the needs by Syrian civil society networks, the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC), and the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) have benefited the analyses for aid and relief operations.

This picture has also benefited the efforts of the neighboring municipalities in Turkey in ascertaining the scope of their contributions to the reconstruction. In summary, the cooperation of Turkey's governance entities with the local administrations established in the north of Syria has prepared the background of the reconstruction targets.

PLANNING THE COMPREHENSIVE RECONSTRUCTION IN VIEW OF THE ASCERTAINED NEEDS AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES

It is noted that the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), coordinating with the local administrations and (Turkish) governorships, has been the primary factor or influence in regards to the needs analyses and the established priorities. The AFAD has taken the responsibility of establishing priorities, allocating resources, and coordinating the reconstruction activities of the municipalities and the governorships.³⁴ In the meantime, the AFAD has also directed civil society organizations, such as the TRC and the foundations which are not under the authority of the governorships, in the field in Syria. In short, the needs of the local entities in Syria have been met via the AFAD's central resource planning and allocation efforts in coordination with Turkey's central administration, and its governance and civilian units. The TRC has also played a major role, similar to that of the AFAD. All the coordination and assessments have been made by utilizing the data and information obtained directly from the field.

EXECUTION OF EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN AID EFFORTS

Due to the Syrian regime's years-long negligence of and non service to Northern Syria, the homecoming of the refugees and the displaced population has necessitated that the humanitarian aid be administered in a systematic manner. Due to these efforts needing to be performed within Syria, the local civilian networks and the Turkish entities have played a major role in carrying them out.

34. Coordination between the Kızılay Foundation and the AFAD has revealed the AFAD's coordination contributed to the planning of the assistance centers.

As a result of the huge refugee wave, Turkey announced and adopted an open-door policy in order to ensure the safety of the civilian population.³⁵

The Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in association with the AFAD and the TRC, initiated a “Syrian Crisis Humanitarian Aid Operation”³⁶ on April 29, 2011, upon the arrival of the first wave of refugees.³⁷ Firstly, it was decided that it was necessary to form refugee camps to meet the needs of the incomers, and that their urgent needs would be provided for.

Within this frame, the TRC and the bordering municipalities provided shelter and food immediately. Once the returns started to increase, the TRC and the AFAD prioritized the shelter and food needs in Syria. The objective was to manage the returns and migration effectively. After the military operations, the activities regarding the administration of the camps were moved to the secured areas – safe zones – within Syria.

Table 1 shows the number of returnees as of August 2018. The figures pertain to the people who were temporarily hosted in refugee camps, and who were directed to the main shelter areas.

Number of Syrians in Temporary Sheltering Centers	174,256
Number of Iraqis in Temporary Sheltering Centers	4,709
Total Number of Temporary Sheltering Centers	178,965

Coordinated by the AFAD, the TRC has distributed the humanitarian aid and donations from national and international institutions and individuals in the provinces of Hatay, Kilis, Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, and Mardin at 14 stations along the Syrian border. This operation still continues as requested by Syrians in cooperation with the governances and the TRC field offices in Syria, and the Migration and Refugee Services Administration. As shown in Figure 8, the TRC distributes humanitarian aid not only in northern Syria but over a vast domain.³⁹

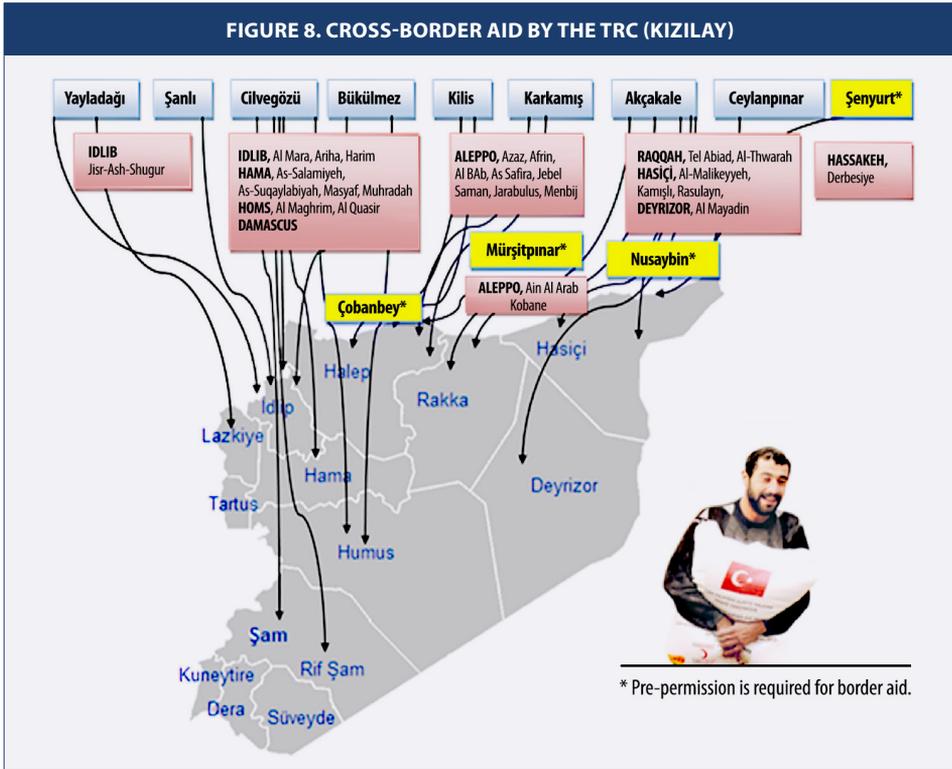
35. KIZILAY. (2018). *Suriye Rapor/ Sınır Hattı ve İç saha*. Ankara: KIZILAY.

36. TİKA. (2018). *Türkiye'nin Suriye Raporu*. Ankara: TİKA.

37. KIZILAY. (2018). *Suriye Rapor/ Sınır Hattı ve İç Saha*. Ankara: KIZILAY.

38. TİKA, 2018, p. 1; AFAD, 2018a, p. 1

39. KIZILAY. (2018). *Suriye Rapor/ Sınır Hattı ve İç Saha*. Ankara: KIZILAY.

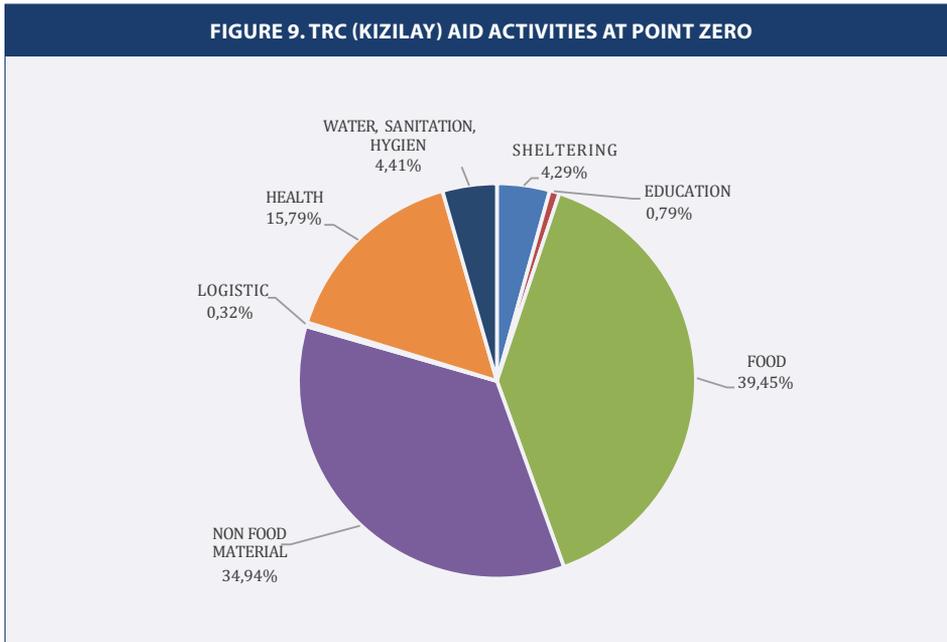


The TRC transports the aid, in conjunction with the oversight of the International Observation Staff, according to the lists provided by the governances, to the population along the Turkish border within Syria. From August 2, 2012 to August 31, 2018, a total of 2,550,913,786.65 TL and a total of 740,379,757 kg/count/lit of materials have been transported to Syria via the 14 distribution centers along the border. Food forms the bulk of the humanitarian aid, followed by hygiene products, and shelter provisions. Out of these 14 distribution centers, 59% of the aid is provided by Turkish donors, while 41% is provided by foreign donors.⁴⁰ Figures 9 and 10 show the aid and activities provided by the TRC.⁴¹

During and after the military operations, a noteworthy increase in humanitarian aid to northern Syria was observed. For example, in Jarabulus, several bread distribution booths were set up, and 3,000 bread packages were distributed daily, each containing 10 loaves of bread. (Figure 11) In order to meet the need for water, the municipality of Gaziantep has provided the infrastructure and drilled

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.



3 caisson wells.⁴² Similarly, during the Operation Euphrates Shield, Şahinbey Municipality provided food, clothing in Jarablus.⁴³

Thus, the needs of the Syrians in the conflict zones have been met and focus has been given to the long-term development of the infrastructure in these areas via the coordinated works of the governances, municipalities, the AFAD and the TRC, and NGOs.

42. Şahinbey Belediyesi, “Suriye Sunumu”, October 2018. Prepared and submitted by Şahinbey Municipality for research.

43. Ibid.

FIGURE 11. BREAD DISTRIBUTION KIOSK IN JARABLUS



DEVELOPING THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS

The infrastructure, already inadequate due to the negligence of the regime, has been continuously destroyed by the civil war since 2011. The ruined sewer systems, hospitals, and schools, which will be needed for civilized living after the conflicts are over, have set Turkey in motion. This is why the governorships and municipalities of the border provinces invested in infrastructure in coordination with the AFAD and the TİKA.

The projects are for the expansion of facilities for humanitarian aid, permanent housing, building of orphanages, and the repair of demolished schools.⁴⁴ To create the required space for these projects, efforts have begun to remove the rubble from war zones -first in Jarablus and then in other areas. Subsequently, roads have been built, among others, in Azaz using 305 tones of asphalt.⁴⁵

The Gaziantep Governorship has removed 600 tons of rubble from a 3,000 m² area, laid 12,000 m² of cobblestone, and 2,700 m² of hot asphalt. Environmental

44. KIZILAY. (2018). *Suriye Rapor/ Sınır Hattı ve İç saha*. Ankara: KIZILAY.

45. Gaziantep Governorship. (October, 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Türkiye: Gaziantep Governorship.

FIGURE 12. PAVING WORKS IN AZAZ



arrangements around the established field hospital have included the use of cobblestone and improving the quality of service⁴⁶ in order to give people not only a sense of being taken care of health wise but also that a functioning administration is being put in place for them.

As seen, the governorships and metropolitan municipalities neighboring Al Bab and Azaz in the border regions have not only allocated human and transportation resources but have also set up coordination stations for these efforts.

It is very important to provide quick and easy access to essential services such as those of health. Turkey provides free health and pharmaceutical services to all Syrians in the country. A total of 953,466 surgical operations have been performed; 25,919,750 walk-in treatments; and 1,143,393 hospitalizations have been provided. All of these services have been free of charge, all expenses have been met by the Turkish government.

Psychological guidance and mentor have been offered to make progress toward the prevention of gender discrimination and provide women's health services,. Women psychotherapists and PDR staff within the Migration Office provide education and mentorship, especially to young women, regarding early/juvenile marriages, polygamy, and conflict syndromes via the Women's Committees formed at the Shelter Centers.⁴⁷

46. Gaziantep Municipality. (2018). *Suriyeli Göçmenler, Fırat Kalkanı Harekâtı Kapsamında Yapılan İnsani Yardım Faaliyetleri*. Gaziantep, Türkiye: Gaziantep Municipality.

47. KIZILAY. (2018). *Suriye Rapor/ Sınır Hattı ve İç saha*. Ankara: KIZILAY.

In order to unite health services and emergency operations with the people on the other side of the border, the TRC established a field hospital at a cost of 420,000 TL in February 2015, which has since been destroyed by the attacks of the Syrian Regime forces. Upon the request of the Idlib Health Council connected to the Syrian Transitional Government, the TRC established another field hospital in the region at a cost of 2,230,600 TL.⁴⁸ These services have been provided solely by the resources of the TRC.

Another example of Turkey's infrastructure-building effort in the region is the Jarablus Hospital opened in September 2016. On average, the hospital can serve 1,400 patients per day. As of August 2018, 600,000 cases have been handled, 96,500 of which were emergency treatments while 6,350 surgical operations and 5,020 natal deliveries were performed. A dialysis center has been established and patients who need continuous care are accommodated on site. Meanwhile, Proximity Health Centers have been established where people can be treated without further burdening the hospital. (Figure 13) For example, 8 Health Centers have been built in Jarablus, where 10 physician practitioners, 11 nurses, 6 midwives, 9 medical secretaries, and 12 health service personnel are employed, serving 200 patients daily.

Furthermore, pharmacies have been licensed and the distribution of medication and drugs has been organized prioritizing the people and preventing abuse of these aids and facilities by members of terrorist groups. Oral Health and Dental

FIGURE 13. A PROXIMITY HEALTH CENTER IN SERVICE



48. Ibid.

Clinics have been established as well. In all these, Syrian personnel have been employed (226 in total in 19 branches), along with 11 Turkish personnel bringing the number to 237.⁴⁹ These health facilities and the medical material provide a major contribution to the well-being of the people in the region. Motorized teams visit every village in the region to survey for cutaneous leishmaniasis (Aleppo boil/oriental sore) cases, providing diagnostics, and disease control. Daily activities at the camps and shelters are conducted for water chlorination, trash and waste collection, and disinfection of common areas.⁵⁰ These efforts have helped prevent epidemics.

One of the most serious problems of the migrated and refugee Syrians has been either the halt or the indefinite postponement of the education of their children. Therefore, one of Turkey's priorities has been to provide education to Syrian children. At the AFAD Shelters, 80,742 children have been placed in schools. In coordination with the Ministry of Education, 508,846 children have been given the opportunity to attend school and resumed their education. In addition, 222,869 Syrians have been given vocational education and have been certified at the AFAD centers in areas such as foreign languages, computer sciences, and carpet weaving.⁵¹ Within the scope of the project "Schools of Goodness," in September 2016, the TRC and the governorships joined hands to fulfil the needs of educational entities and provide for their repair and maintenance, and undertook all expenses to that end, including their operation for a full year covering the expenses of all students.⁵²

In addition to the above educational activities, vocational schools and education have been prioritized. For example, in Jarablus city center and its surrounding villages a vocational college, 4 high schools, 12 middle schools, 98 elementary schools, and an educational center have been opened. The Jarablus Vocational College, under the auspices of the Gaziantep University, started its mission on October 1, 2018. The college has 5 departments in Patient Care, First and Emergency Aid, Office Management, Divinity, and Private Security. For admission, 294 applications sat the Foreign Student Test on September 3, 2018.⁵³

At the time of a survey in December 2018, 144 students were registered at the vocational college served by 13 faculty members. In regard to secondary educa-

49. Gaziantep Governorship. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Governorship.

50. Ibid.

51. AFAD. (2018a). *Geçici Barınma Merkezleri Raporu*. Ankara: AFAD.

52. KIZILAY. (2018). *Suriye Rapor/ Sınır Hattı ve İç saha*. Ankara: KIZILAY.

53. Gaziantep Governorship. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Governorship.

tion, the Ahmet Selim Mulla High School, which had been used by DAESH as a prison, was renovated in 43 days to begin serving as an education institution.⁵⁴ Accessible Living Centers for handicapped children have been built within the scope of social services. The Public Education Center includes a kindergarten, four courses in computer, Turkish-language, hairdressing, sewing -embroidery courses. Forty-four teachers from Turkey have been commissioned to teach Turkish in 60 schools for students and in 6 centers for adults. Table 2 shows the variety of the schools and the number of enrollees in Jarablus.⁵⁵

TABLE 2. STATUS OF SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS IN JARABLUS				
JARABLUS	Number of Schools	Girls	Boys	TOTAL
Kindergarten	6 classrooms	143	155	298
Primary School	98	12,431	13,049	25,480
Secondary School	12	710	1,010	1,720
High School	4	125	125	250
TOTAL	114	13,409	14,339	27,748

The salaries of 1,187 teachers and 143 personnel are paid by the Turkish Maarif Foundation.⁵⁶

ERASING TRACES OF CONFLICT AND EFFORTS TOWARDS NORMALIZATION

This project was started with the aim of moving towards the direction of peace and security for the civilian population, working to remove the traces of conflict started employing Syrians, helping them earn an income, and zoning works were launched in the settlement areas. Especially with the efforts of the Turkish municipalities that are in close proximity to the Syrian border, graffiti was painted over, bullet marks were plastered, and debris was removed. (Figure 14) While the construction machinery and materials provided by the municipalities serve to improve the region, efforts have been made, particularly for Syrian children, to obliterate the bad memories of conflict and change their daily normal.

54. Gaziantep Municipality. (2018). *Suriyeli Göçmenler, Fırat Kalkanı Harekâtı Kapsamında Yapılan İnsani Yardım Faaliyetleri*. Gaziantep, Türkiye: Gaziantep Büyükşehir Municipality.

55. Gaziantep Governorship. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Governorship.

56. Gaziantep Governorship. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality.

FIGURE 14. REMOVING TRACES OF CONFLICT



traces of conflict, measures to improve municipal services were taken and areas of responsibility were assigned to metropolitan and district municipalities in the regions close to the Turkish-Syrian border. In this direction, Syrians are provided numerous municipal services such as road construction, infrastructure works, and construction of parks and fire services outside the borders of the Republic of Turkey. For example, importance has been given to landscaping by planting

Writings, slogans, and symbols written by DAESH on walls and various parts of the district as psychological warfare were cleaned using materials sent by the metropolitan municipalities near the border. The aim was to remove the marks, symbols, or debris that stood as reminders of DAESH to the people of the region.⁵⁷

In addition to removing the traces of conflict, measures to improve municipal services were taken and areas of responsibility were assigned to metropolitan and district municipalities in the regions close to the Turkish-Syrian border. In this direction, Syrians are provided numerous municipal services such as road construction, infrastructure works, and construction of parks and fire services outside the borders of the Republic of Turkey. For example, importance has been given to landscaping by planting trees and creating green fields

by germination. By means of building a good life in a prosperous town, reverse migration has been encouraged and the morale of locals has been boosted. In order to ensure and maintain cleaning services, waste-collection vehicles were allocated under the leadership of the municipalities, and dumpsters were placed at various points. (Figure 15)

FIGURE 15. SAMPLE OF DISTRIBUTED DUMPSTERS



57. Gaziantep Municipality. (2018). *Suriyeli Göçmenler, Fırat Kalkınım Harekâtı Kapsamında Yapılan İnsani Yardım Faaliyetleri*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality.

FIGURE 16. ALLOCATED FIRE TRUCK



For instance, a waste collection vehicle was allocated to Jerablus by Turkey's Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality and 40 dumpsters were distributed to locations in the district. To support children and keep terrorist organizations away from them, areas for children's parks have been established and several playgrounds have been installed in parks.

As part of municipal services, a firefighting facility has been provided to the region. Fire trucks were allocated to the districts for both firefighting and irrigation needs. (Figure 16)

After Turkey provided security in northern Syria, a water problem was observed in the region. The investigation revealed that the caisson wells and elevation centers on the riverbank of the Euphrates had been bombed and destroyed by the Coalition Forces since DAESH had occupied them as fighting positions. As such, works were conducted to meet the drinking water need of locals in the areas cleared of the terrorist organization. Since the system is dependent on electrical energy and the electricity grid was destroyed, first, generators with 500 KW capacity were placed in the regions with water wells to enable their operation; in this manner, the energy needs of the wells were met.

Thus, caisson wells were put into operation in order to meet the urgent water demand. In addition, water supply points were created and locals were able to obtain water from them. (Figure 17)

Apart from opening wells, with the support of the Syrian workers who previously worked in plumbing, water supply networks were established in district centers and more water was supplied to the network through a chlorination process. With the supply of water to the grid, a chlorine system was installed in the elevation center where the caisson wells on the Euphrates' river bank were installed and the system operates in a healthy manner.⁵⁸

An importance was also placed on neighborhood and street identification, and naming in order to strengthen the administrative structure. For instance, with care to protect the social texture, work on street name signs and house numbering in 172 streets in 7 neighborhoods of Jarablus were carried out by Gaziantep Governorship.⁵⁹ (Figure 18) Thus, besides basic services and the minimum conditions required for life in society, a layout facility

is provided to reinforce the feeling of trust. However, any renaming that would damage the city's structure was avoided and original region names were used throughout.

FIGURE 17. ACTIVATING WATER WELLS



FIGURE 18. NAMING AND NUMBERING NEIGHBORHOODS AND STREETS



58. Gaziantep Municipality. (2018). *Suriyeli Göçmenler, Fırat Kalkanı Harekatı Kapsamında Yapılan İnsani Yardım Faaliyetleri*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality.

59. Gaziantep Valiliği. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND REINFORCEMENT OF THE SENSE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

In order to aid the normalization of life, emphasis was put on social facilities such as the women's/youth centers, which were unknown to Syrians before the war, and playgrounds. (Figure 19) Social service centers for civilian gatherings, which



contribute to personal development by offering a space for the discussion of current problems, have become local points of attraction in northern Syria. In addition, social services for the needy and orphans offer adaptation programs; these services were founded and run by Turkish public institutions. For instance, Youth Centers were established in Jarablus and selected Youth Leaders were sent

to train in Turkey. Thus, attempts have been made to nurture and raise trained manpower. Youth centers have become both training and motivation centers for the young. In addition, sports areas were built for youngsters. 5 playgrounds and basketball courts were completed in Jarablus and sport equipment was distributed to schools.⁶⁰ (Figure 20) As part of the Youth Program, 7,500 toys, 347 soccer balls, 100 volleyball balls, and 24 basketball balls were distributed.⁶¹



60. Gaziantep Municipality. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality.

61. Şahinbey Municipality. (October 2018). *Suriye Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Şahinbey, Turkey: Şahinbey Municipality.

Particular emphasis is put on the support and care of children and young people. To this end, efforts for family reunification have been accelerated and members of separated families are being united. The Orphanage House project has been launched for children who are separated from their families and for those who need care. Construction of 188 houses and social reinforcement areas were completed in two different places. The landscaping of orphanages and the psychological rehabilitation of orphans have been prioritized. In this framework, psychological support, and social and cultural contributions and aid for 600 orphans and motherless children are continuing.

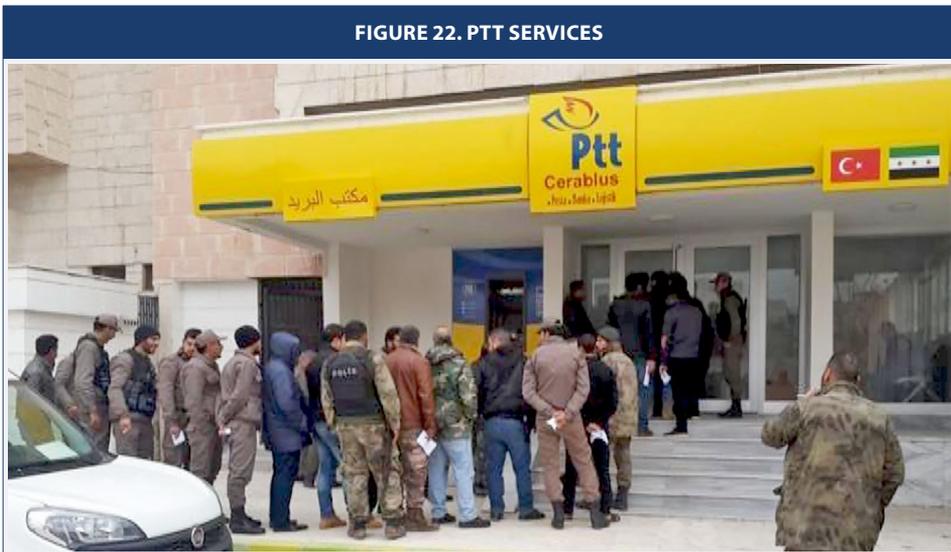
FIGURE 21 STATUS OF ORPHANAGES IN THE IDLIB REGION			
No	Camp Name	Population	Tent-Shelter Units
1	Alriyah Elmursele Orphanage	507	50
2	Taybe Orphanage	585	134
3	Beyan ve Müşrif Orphanage	619	127
4	Hamat El Amman Orphanage	580	116
5	El Faruk Ömer Orphanage	275	135
6	Zemzem Orphanage	359	97
7	Bardaklı Orphanage	112	94
8	Menebiul Hayr	213	50
9	El Takva Orphanage	280	52
10	El Emel Orphanage	129	88
11	Selam Orphanage	154	30
12	Wadi Elazib	183	35
13	Ummuhatun Muminin	340	85
14	Bedilha Orphanage	119	36
15	El Jabal Orphanage	525	105
	TOTAL	4,980	1,234

The Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay) has also initiated an orphanage project. By opening orphanages, the TRC has undertaken the protection, guardianship, and education of orphans in areas controlled by Turkey and the FSA. These orphanages provide clothing, accommodation, food, psychological support, normalization, and education. In this context, Figure 21 numbers

the orphanages opened exclusively in Idlib and the numbers of orphans there as of August 2018.⁶² Along with orphans, a program for disabled Syrians was also initiated. In this direction, family visits and field surveys for disabled people are made and their needs are identified. Prostheses were provided to 65 disabled and additional prosthetic needs are still being monitored. Furthermore, governorates, municipalities, and particularly the TRC founded soup kitchens to provide daily services for free. Hot meals are served to 8,000 people daily. As part of efforts of social assistance, Gaziantep Governorship and Kızılay provide financial aid as well. Families of martyrs are given shopping cards for Social Markets for up to 250 Turkish Liras.⁶³

Moreover, the AFAD works on exploring new areas for possible population mobility projects, i.e. future (re)placement of future refugees. Beds, blankets, hygiene sets, clothing, and food are regularly provided to refugees. The flour procured by again by the AFAD is prepared into bread in the furnaces and delivered to the needy. In the meantime, salaries of 2,200 local employees, from health and education to law enforcement and security personnel, are paid through the Turkish Post (PTT). The PTT also offers cargo services, postal services, and banking services. (Figure 22)

Mufti Buildings have been opened to meet the worship needs of the locals. Maintenance and repair work of the mosques are handled by the district centers and villages. Ten mosques were repaired, and one mosque was rebuilt.⁶⁴ (Figure 23)



62. KIZILAY. (2018). *Suriye Rapor/ Sınır Hattı ve İç saha*. Ankara: KIZILAY.

63. Gaziantep Municipality. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality.

64. Gaziantep Municipality. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality.

FIGURE 23. RECONSTRUCTED MOSQUE



IMPROVEMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY AND ENSURING POLITICAL RECONCILIATION

It is a fact that Syria does not have a state authority and was left to terrorist organizations for many years. In the north of this war-torn country, now the people have a chance to form their own local assemblies via consensus. This is a significant step forward in the north of Syria. Facilities that were built so that local governments can exercise their right to self-government via administrative structures include justice, law enforcement, and municipal services. Thus, while conflicts in Northern Syria continue, stability has been established. The ultimate aim is the creation of regions that do not allow the presence of any terrorist organization.

Construction of administrative capacity primarily begins with the individual. In this regard, by giving priority to identity cards, the infiltration of terrorist organizations into the region was prevented and access to aid was regulated. However, the overriding or destruction of official information and documents by DAESH or the PKK has fueled disagreements and made official procedures impossible, necessitating processes of fact finding. Therefore, it was decided that a census would be conducted. In central villages and refugee camps, the cen-

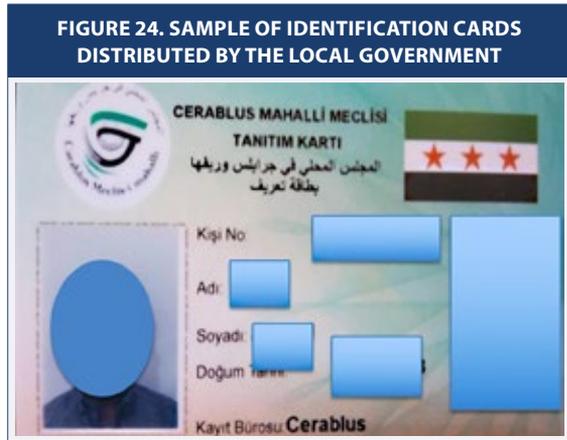
sus was completed by August 2018; and statistical analyses were made according to gender, education, and birthplace. A digital database, the Population Registration System, was installed in order to create new population records. The aim of the Population Registration System is to keep records of gun and driving licenses, marriages, and divorces.

As of July 2018, identity cards have been distributed. As of the end of October 2018, 7,500 identity cards were issued.⁶⁵ (Figure 24)

Most of the necessary registries, documents, information, and maps in the Land Registry and Cadastral Works have not been reached. Information and documents related to the property system have been identified, and information and documents have been archived digitally. Also, site identification, mapping, measurements, and planning are conducted for the local community and to meet humanitarian needs. Measurements for secure power lines and road-paving are taken, and drawings are prepared.⁶⁶ Thus, the principles of justice in terms of planned urbanization and property rights are prioritized.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

In order for local authorities to gain administrative capacity, measures are taken to train a specialized labor force such as police, health professionals, and justice personnel. To create resources, a local economy has been formed with the



65. Gaziantep Municipality. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality

66. Ibid.

FIGURE 26. LOCAL COURTHOUSE



support of Turkey. The Turkish market has been opened to local producers and Turkish products are shipped to the region. As a result, locals are given the opportunity to earn incomes and meet their needs at very attractive prices. By the same token, cooperatives are promoted to support local economic competency. (Figure 25) Agricultural products grown in the region, which has rich potential for agriculture, are purchased at market prices which encourages producers .

Efforts involving justice services are as important as economic activities. For instance, the court organization in Jarablus was established in February 2017. The new courthouse and prison were put into operation upon the completion of the restoration works. (Figure 26) The local legal system is implemented in the courts. In each court, 3 judges and 1 public prosecutor serve as of 2018.

A budgetary program and practice have been initiated to establish financial discipline with regard to the income and expenses of the district's local councils. A local council serves the regional population by utilizing its own resources. (Figure 27) The customs directorate's method of operation has been decided, coordination has been achieved, and planning has been made. Payments and records are made and kept electronically at border crossings. In addition, municipal police directorates were established, and the enforcement duties of local municipalities were initiated. The existing workplaces were counted and controlled by the municipal police. The Occupational Regulatory Bylaws were written, a tax tariff was prepared, and business licenses were issued for workplaces.⁶⁷

67. Gaziantep Municipality. (October 2018). *Cerablus Sunumu*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Gaziantep Municipality.

FIGURE 27. LOCAL ASSEMBLY BUILDING



ESTABLISHING A LASTING AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Organization and bureaucracy have already been established in the regions of Al Bab and Afrin, where societal autonomous decision-making processes continue to develop under the Syrian National Reconciliation government. As seen in Turkey's reconstruction initiatives mentioned in the above sections, these regions have become centers of attraction. Syrians in the east of the Euphrates River and in Manbij are drawn in interest to these centers. At this point, it can be put forward that the reconstruction efforts to promote social cohesion encourage different ethnic groups in Syria to live together.

Under the Temporary Protection Status, Syrians currently living in Turkey meet the variety of their needs through state channels. However, this is not the case for those who remain in the war zone. In order to overcome this plight, Turkey provides vocational and capital assistance to the region's population via military operations. For this purpose, structuring activities in Syria are carried out by Syrian manpower, and the marketing of the region's products in Turkey is prioritized. The local government continues its efforts in all areas in order to establish a self-contained, lasting, and sustainable structure in northern Syria, while Turkey provides assistance in support of economic activities to the local government in a planned manner. In this regard, the permanent development of economic activities has been achieved by establishing agricultural offices, inventory, and planned development. (Figure 28)

FIGURE 28. OFFICE WITH AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS



In the finished measurements and counts, for example, in Jarablus 410,000 hectares of arable land were explored, and barley was planted in 310,000 decares, wheat in 30,000 decares, chickpeas in 15,000 decares, sesame in 7,000 decares, and potatoes in 3,000 decares. In the region, 7,000 farmers were given 150 tons of fertilizer, 7,200 tons of seedlings, and 3,200 tons of agricultural pesticides. The Agricultural Credit Cooperative in 2017 purchased 545,560 kg of lentils, 53,000 kg

of chickpeas, and in 2018, 59,000 kg of lentils and 175,000 kg of potatoes.

In order to support animal farming in the region, 7,200 egg-laying hens, 52 tons of poultry feed, 100 hives with bees, and 100 empty hives were distributed. Vaccination has also been provided to prevent diseases such as foot-and-mouth and plague.⁶⁸ Thus, locals can attain both livelihood and reach sustainable resources.

As a general assessment, it may be said that Syrians have begun to perform many basic services such as health, education, justice and security, municipal services, and banking services, while order in community life has been reintroduced. The AFAD, the TİKA, the Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay), and non-governmental organizations continue to provide all types of assistance to the regions where there is next to no access to basic needs. These institutions are trying to maintain continuity by building the necessary infrastructure to meet many of the needs of locals. Hence, the reconstruction process is carried out in Syria through persistence and sustainability. All the works mentioned in this section indicate assistance and aid that Turkey has provided to the Syrians both in Turkish territory and, beyond its borders, in Syria. The next section will provide an analysis of how these efforts are regarded by Syrians and their views about the offered aid.

68. Gaziantep Governorship. (October 2018). *Jarablus Presentation*. Gaziantep, Turkey: Governorship of Gaziantep.

OUTCOMES OF THE RECONSTRUCTION IN THE REGION

The most concrete indicator of the success of the reconstruction process is the beginning of civilian return to Syria. Research on the argument that Turkey's reconstruction efforts after the OES and OOB operations in Syria resulted in reverse migration reveals that the reconstruction efforts are effective in ensuring security. In this context, interviews regarding the return of Syrians to Syria were conducted with people living in different regions of northern Syria.

All of the interviewees were men who work in a paid job. The age range of the participants varied between 25 and 35 years. The participants lived in Syria before the conflict; specifically, they lived in Aleppo, Afrin, Azez, and Jarablus during the war, but migrated to Turkey due to the clashes. Along with this, the opportunity to voluntarily enter and exit to/from Jarablus, Afrin, and Azaz after the OOB, and take the region's pulse is present. In the interviews, the participants shared their positive reflections about security and reconstruction and conveyed the similar expectations of the refugees in other regions of Turkey. Syrians consider Turkey's reconstruction activities very tempting as along with the termination of clashes, where it can be said that the efforts have set a suitable ground for permanent peace and may have encouraged reverse migration.

Considering the interviews regarding Afrin, it is possible to say that the security problem partially continues due to terrorist elements, that infrastructure has been established, schools have started providing education, health services are provided, population records are kept in a digital environment, and identity cards have been distributed. Also, it should be noted that employment opportunities in Afrin have increased and social life has been revived. However, the interviews

revealed that the security concerns have not been eliminated yet due to the activities of the PKK/PYD terrorist organization cells in Afrin, thus negative attempts against the reconstruction are made by the terrorists. The general opinion of the interviewees is that the PKK/PYD, which still maintains its presence in the Tel Rifaat region, has adversely affected the reconstruction efforts through propaganda. Conversely, the participants reflected that the success of the reconstruction efforts in Jarablus and Al Bab is directly affected by the environment of trust that has been successfully created in these towns. This is why it can be claimed that the establishment of a safe environment, as the initial condition and the activity of the first phase in this model, has directed the reconstruction efforts.

The findings obtained from interviews in Azaz and Jarablus have very similar content. In general, it can be said that security is fully established in the cities, infrastructure is regulated, schools are active, health services are provided, population records are made in a digital environment, identity distribution has increased, employment opportunities are on the rise, and social life is being revived.

Although improvement in health services is visible, critical and serious medical responses are still done in Turkey. Typically, the Arab ethnicities express their satisfaction with Turkey's presence in Syria, saying that Turkey's image among Arabs is always positive. The regions where Turkey is held in high esteem are popular for reverse migration. It is also often mentioned that Syrians who live in other regions, where there is no security, try to reach the aforementioned areas.

In addition to the interviews, in a meeting with the Syrian Stability Committee, affiliated with the Syrian National Agreement Government, positive impressions about Turkey's reconstruction efforts in the north of Syria were also expressed. The committee, which receives international assistance, stated that the reconstruction efforts of Turkey:

- Turned the region into a center of attraction.
- Revived the economy.
- Following the efforts to establish local administrations, Arab tribes felt empowered to tackle administrative tasks/empowered to contribute to administration at large.
- Tribes in the regions provided with security came together and restored their trust in Turkey.
- In meetings held in Turkey to gather Arab tribes, intentions were declared, for instance, regarding the liberalization of Manbij as well.
- In parallel with the reconstruction efforts, social consensus is easier to achieve.

CONCLUSION

By looking at Turkey's implementation in northern Syria, reconstruction activities have the ability to transform the consequences of conflicts into sustainable peace and tranquility. Against this backdrop, the systematic and holistic implementation of reconstruction within a framework positively affects the major causes or consequences of conflict, such as radicalism and terrorism prevention. At the same time, it creates opportunities for reverse migration and attracts people residing in other conflict areas. In this respect, in the case of Syria, Turkey:

- Directed all state institutions and non-governmental organizations towards reconstruction with central planning and on-site execution;
- Based central planning and reconstruction on a holistic model;
- Directly conferred responsibility to governorships and local administrations in terms of on-site execution;
- Took measures for the uninterrupted flow of infrastructure investments and service into its neighboring regions;
- Considering the model determined by this study, aimed at permanent, self-sufficient, and sustainable development via emergency humanitarian aid; and
- Within the territorial integrity of Syria and in accordance with Syrian laws, the capacities of local governments were increased in all areas required by social life such as justice, education, health, and development.

Considering the rarity of public order incidents and terrorist acts, and the increase in reverse immigration in the regions Turkey has reconstructed in northern Syria, the strategy followed by Turkey has yielded positive results. Although the discourses of the terrorist organizations and of the Assad regime claim differently, such allegations are far from the reality of the people of the region. In a Syria that longs for peace, in the regions where Turkey still provides security and reconstruction activities, locals carry out the requirements of daily life such as political, sociocultural, and judicial activities. This stands as proof against the aforementioned claims. After all, Turkey has managed to complete the reconstruction with its own national capabilities and has fulfilled its humanitarian and moral responsibility - non-existing in Western cultures - on the grounds of brotherhood.

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TURKEY'S RECONSTRUCTION MODEL IN SYRIA

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Although in literature the process of reconstruction consists of three phases, considering Turkey's reconstruction efforts in Syria, the reconstruction process may actually be explained in ten phases. Turkey's security priorities and the need to manage the consequences of the conflicts in Syria with a permanent and sustainable strategy have necessitated that Turkey adopt a pragmatic approach in the execution of its reconstruction efforts. In this regard, Turkey aims:

- To provide emergency services needed by the civilian population,
- To eliminate infrastructure failures and make these regions habitable,
- To ensure institutionalization at "local" level through the self-administration of local people, and
- To ensure the self-sufficiency of the locals.

At the moment, Syria stands as a current example of a country torn apart by war and Turkey, in the course of the conflicts in Syria, has provided a new model for reconstruction initiatives based on its successful efforts in northern Syria.

