

Tailoring for Fracture: Applying PMBOK® 8th Edition's Tailoring Framework to Project Management in Post-War Peacebuilding Contexts: The Case of Syria ¹

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Abstract

This paper develops a practitioner-academic framework for applying the tailoring logic of PMBOK® 8th Edition to project management in post-war peacebuilding contexts, using Syria's post-2024 political transition as its primary analytical case. Drawing on close textual analysis of PMBOK® 8's Tailoring Chapter and seven performance domains, comparative case analysis of post-conflict reconstruction in Lebanon and Bosnia, and a decade of direct field engagement in Syria across engineering, project management, and peacebuilding roles, the paper identifies two systemic conditions that fundamentally alter the project management environment in post-regime-collapse contexts: loyalty-based institutional staffing, which creates a gap between formal authority and operational competence (the 'authority-competence gap'); and parallel governance structures, in which informal authority networks compete with formal governmental decision-making (the 'dual-track authority problem'). The paper develops domain-by-domain tailoring guidance across all seven PMBOK® 8 performance domains, proposes a five-component value realisation framework that reconceptualises 'delivering value' for fractured community contexts, and introduces a politically-anchored iterative tailoring cycle triggered by governance, legislative, security, and demographic events rather than calendar intervals. The paper addresses a gap in the project management literature: the absence of a systematic framework for applying PMBOK® 8's tailoring architecture to post-regime-collapse governance environments.

Keywords: *PMBOK® 8, tailoring, post-war project management, peacebuilding, Syria reconstruction, parallel governance, loyalty-based staffing, value delivery, social cohesion, post-conflict governance*

1. Introduction

The Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK®) 8th Edition, published by the Project Management Institute in 2025, represents a fundamental philosophical reorientation in how the field conceptualises its own practice. Rather than prescribing processes, it establishes principles

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and performance domains within which practitioners are expected to exercise professional judgement, calibrating their approach to the specific conditions of each project environment. The centrepiece of this reorientation is the standalone Tailoring Chapter — new in the 8th edition — which formalises an iterative four-step adaptation cycle and positions tailoring as a core professional competence rather than a deviation from standard practice (PMI, 2025).

Project management in post-war peacebuilding contexts has historically occupied an uncomfortable position between two professional communities: project management practitioners who bring rigorous frameworks but limited conflict-sensitivity, and peacebuilding practitioners who understand communal dynamics and political economy but rarely engage with systematic tools of project governance. This paper argues that PMBOK® 8's tailoring architecture, properly adapted, can bridge that gap — offering peacebuilding-oriented reconstruction a level of project governance discipline the field has often lacked, while remaining genuinely responsive to the social, political, and institutional conditions that make post-war environments categorically different from standard project settings.

This paper contends that PMBOK® 8's tailoring architecture, precisely because of its emphasis on environmental adaptation and value delivery rather than process compliance, offers the most professionally sound available framework for managing reconstruction projects in Syria's post-2024 transition period. In Syria, the conditions that tailoring must address are not simply difficult versions of familiar challenges. They are categorically distinct: social cohesion is fractured along communal lines; political loyalties within the emerging state apparatus shape every institutional interaction; governance structures are opaque and contested; parallel authority networks operate alongside and frequently above formal governmental channels; and institutional appointments reflect political allegiance rather than professional merit. The two most structurally significant of these conditions are a post-revolutionary bureaucracy staffed primarily on the basis of political loyalty rather than professional competence, and a parallel governance landscape in which informal authority networks operate alongside, and frequently in competition with, formal governmental structures.

Syria is not simply a post-conflict reconstruction context. It is a post-regime-collapse context — a distinction with profound implications for project management. When a regime collapses rather than negotiating an end to conflict, the institutional knowledge embedded in its bureaucratic apparatus does not transition to a successor government; it dissolves. What remains are structures without reliable processes, titles without reliable authority, and formal systems whose relationship to actual decision-making power is opaque, contested, and subject to rapid change.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 reviews relevant literature at the intersection of project management theory, post-conflict governance, and tailoring practice. Section 3 analyses Syria's current governance environment through the two systemic conditions identified above. Section 4 develops domain-by-domain tailoring guidance across PMBOK® 8's seven performance domains. Section 5 addresses the reconceptualisation of value delivery for fractured community

contexts. Section 6 proposes a politically-anchored iterative tailoring cycle. Section 7 draws comparative lessons from Nahr el-Bared in Lebanon and Mostar in Bosnia. Section 8 presents conclusions and recommendations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Project Management in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts

The project management literature on conflict and post-conflict contexts is relatively sparse but growing. Ika and Donnelly (2017) identify the humanitarian project environment as characterised by extreme stakeholder complexity, high uncertainty, compressed timelines, and performance metrics that frequently diverge from donor expectations. Ahsan and Gunawan (2010) document the gap between conventional project management frameworks and the operational realities of development projects in fragile states, noting that standard tools for scope, schedule, and cost management perform poorly when baseline data is unreliable and authority structures are unclear.

More recent contributions have begun to engage with the specific challenges of post-conflict reconstruction as distinct from humanitarian response. Barakat and Zyck (2009) argue that reconstruction projects frequently fail not because of technical shortcomings but because of insufficient attention to political economy — the distribution of power, resources, and legitimacy among competing actors. This insight anticipates PMBOK® 8's emphasis on stakeholder engagement and value delivery, but the literature has not yet systematically connected post-conflict political economy analysis to PMBOK®'s tailoring framework.

2.2 Tailoring in PMBOK® 8: Theoretical Foundations

PMBOK® 8's Tailoring Chapter represents the most explicit statement in PMI's published guidance of the principle that there is no universally applicable project management method. The four-step iterative cycle — understand the environment, select an initial approach, tailor for the organisation, implement ongoing adaptation — draws on contingency theory in organisation studies (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967) and complexity theory as applied to project management (Snowden and Boone, 2007). The chapter's emphasis on iterative rather than once-and-done tailoring is particularly significant for volatile environments where political and security conditions change faster than project plans can formally adapt.

Within each of the seven performance domains, PMBOK® 8 embeds tailoring guidance that prompts practitioners to interrogate their assumptions about authority, stakeholder identity, value definition, and delivery approach. This domain-level tailoring guidance has received limited scholarly attention, and its application to post-conflict contexts has not been systematically explored.

2.3 Loyalty-Based Staffing and Institutional Competence Gaps

The phenomenon of post-revolutionary governments staffing institutions on the basis of political loyalty rather than professional competence is well-documented in the transitional governance literature. Fukuyama (2011) traces the tension between political control and bureaucratic autonomy across multiple historical cases, arguing that states which sacrifice bureaucratic competence to achieve political loyalty invariably pay a long-term governance penalty. Brinkerhoff (2007) documents this dynamic specifically in fragile state reconstruction contexts, noting that the pressure to reward loyal actors creates a systematic bias against merit-based appointment that is extremely difficult to reverse once institutionalised.

In the project management context, loyalty-based staffing creates what this paper terms an ‘authority-competence gap’: the official counterpart holds the authority to approve, endorse, or obstruct a project but may lack the professional competence to evaluate it. This gap generates specific risks that standard stakeholder management frameworks are not designed to address.

2.4 Parallel Governance and Project Decision-Making

Parallel governance — the coexistence of formal governmental authority with informal or competing authority structures — is a defining feature of post-conflict and fragile-state environments. Menkhaus (2006) documents the phenomenon in Somalia, showing how informal governance structures that emerged during state collapse developed institutional logics that persisted and competed with formal governmental authority long after reconstruction efforts began. Mac Ginty (2011) extends this analysis to argue that ‘hybrid governance’ is not a transitional pathology but a stable equilibrium in many post-conflict settings.

For project managers, parallel governance creates what this paper terms a ‘dual-track authority problem’: formal approval channels and real decision-making power are located in different places, and projects that navigate only one-track risk failure from the other. This problem is acute in Syria, where the gap between formal governmental authority and informal community or factional authority is wide, variable across geography, and rapidly evolving.

3. Syria’s Post-2024 Governance Environment: Two Systemic Conditions

3.1 The Collapse of Institutional Memory

The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 produced a governance transition unlike those typically modelled in the transitional justice or post-conflict reconstruction literature. The institutional consequences, however, are not uniform across the state apparatus — and conflating them produces misdiagnosis with direct implications for project management.

For two institutions — the military and the security services — the transition produced something close to complete dissolution. The new governing authority chose to disband rather than reform both structures, creating a genuine institutional vacuum: not merely disrupted processes or

uncertain authority, but the effective absence of functioning organisations. Rebuilding these institutions is proceeding largely from zero, with predictable consequences for project environments that depend on security guarantees or coordination with state enforcement capacity.

For the remainder of the state apparatus — the service ministries, regulatory bodies, and administrative structures — the picture is different but no less challenging. These institutions survived the transition physically intact. What they did not survive intact was their human capital. Fourteen years of conflict, economic collapse, and sanctions produced a sustained brain drain of exactly the kind of experienced technical and administrative cadres on which effective public management depends. Those who remained faced deteriorating conditions, endemic corruption, and progressive capture by regime loyalists whose interest was the extraction of rents rather than the delivery of services. Institutional memory exists — in the bodies responsible for electricity, water, health, education, and civil registration, there are still officials who understand how the systems nominally work. But that memory is entombed beneath layers of accumulated bureaucratic dysfunction, paper-heavy legacy processes from which digitisation has largely been absent, and informal practices that replaced formal procedure as the operative reality of Syrian public administration.

Syria's failure to undertake meaningful digital transformation over the preceding two decades compounds this problem directly for project managers. Permitting, registration, land records, procurement approvals, and payment systems remain overwhelmingly paper-based, dependent on physical signatures and manual workflows that are slow under normal conditions and nearly dysfunctional under the pressures of a transition. Every formal process that a project must navigate — site authorisation, contractor registration, budget disbursement — carries not only the uncertainty of contested authority but the friction of obsolete administrative infrastructure that no amount of project management sophistication can fully compensate for.

Comparable cases illuminate the contours of this challenge. Iraq post-2003 illustrates the consequences of deliberate institutional demolition: the de-Baathification process removed experienced civil servants wholesale, producing a governance vacuum that reconstruction projects were wholly unprepared to navigate (Dodge, 2005). Libya post-2011 demonstrates what happens when state structures are too weak even to provide credible interlocutors for reconstruction actors (Pack and Cook, 2015). Syria's situation sits between these poles: the state apparatus exists and retains partial functionality, but its human capital has been depleted, its processes have calcified, and its authority structures distorted by fourteen years of conflict and regime capture. Project managers must therefore approach Syrian governmental institutions neither as functioning bureaucracies nor as complete voids, but as partially operational systems navigable only by practitioners who understand both their formal structure and their actual operating reality.

3.2 Loyalty-Based Staffing: The Authority-Competence Gap

The new Syrian government faces an irresolvable short-term tension: it must reward the networks that brought it to power, many of whom have limited or no experience of civilian public administration, while simultaneously building the institutional competence required to govern a complex, multi-sectoral state. The resolution of this tension, in practice, has tilted heavily toward loyalty. Ministerial appointments, senior civil service positions, and project oversight roles have disproportionately been filled by individuals whose primary qualification is their relationship to the revolutionary movement rather than their professional background.

The project management implications are direct and serious. An official counterpart who lacks the technical capacity to evaluate a project plan will not admit this openly — to do so would undermine their authority. Instead, the authority-competence gap manifests in predictable but disruptive ways: approval processes that stall without explanation; requests for modifications that reflect political rather than technical concerns; formal endorsement of plans that the counterpart cannot meaningfully review; and occasional obstruction of technically sound proposals that threaten the interests of loyalty networks the counterpart is protecting.

An official counterpart who lacks the technical capacity to evaluate a project plan will not admit this openly. The authority-competence gap manifests instead in approvals that stall, modifications that reflect politics not technique, and formal endorsements of plans the counterpart cannot meaningfully review.

This does not mean that project managers should bypass government counterparts or treat their authority as merely nominal. Doing so would undermine both the project and the broader effort to build legitimate governance institutions. It means that project managers must develop strategies for supporting the competence of their counterparts — through capacity-building provisions embedded in project design, through the use of technical advisers whose role is to support government decision-making rather than substitute for it, and through stakeholder engagement processes that build shared understanding of project objectives across both the formal counterpart and their informal networks.

A further structural condition compounds the authority-competence gap: a three-tier salary disparity within Syria's public institutions that is generating significant internal tension and is directly relevant to project managers who must work through governmental systems. Prior to the fall of the Assad regime, public sector salaries had been reduced by inflation to a level equivalent to approximately \$18–30 per month — a figure sustained only by widespread informal extraction and corruption (Enab Baladi, 2025). Following the transition, the new governing authority raised public sector minimum wages substantially, reaching an average of approximately \$105–\$150 per month by early 2026 — a significant nominal improvement, though still well below the estimated minimum monthly cost of living for a Syrian family of five, which the Kassioun Index placed at approximately \$500–\$600 per month (Syrian Future Movement, 2026; Enab Baladi, 2025). The

gap between salary and subsistence remains wide enough that corruption, informal income supplementation, and rent-seeking behaviour remain structurally embedded in public administration — not as individual moral failures but as rational responses to an impossible fiscal position.

Against this baseline, two further salary tiers create acute internal inequity. Staff brought in from northern Syria — the administrative and security cadres associated with the ruling coalition's Idlib-based predecessor governance structures — receive salaries reported at no less than \$1,000 per month, with additional travel and relocation allowances for those deployed to Damascus (Enab Baladi, 2026). A third tier comprises those appointed after December 2024: Syrian experts who returned from abroad following the transition, and individuals inserted into institutional roles through loyalty networks and personal connections to the new authority. The result is a workforce stratified not by qualification or seniority but by political origin and timing of appointment — a structure that undermines institutional cohesion, produces resentment between salary tiers, and creates incentive structures that are difficult for project managers to predict or manage.

3.3 Parallel Governance: The Dual-Track Authority Problem

Across much of Syria, the formal governmental authority that project managers must engage is accompanied — and in some areas effectively superseded — by informal authority structures that operate with real decision-making power. Four categories are particularly significant for project managers.

First, armed group representatives who retain territorial influence in areas where state authority is nominally but not practically consolidated. The new government's relationship with these actors varies by geography and by the specific group's proximity to the ruling coalition; project managers cannot assume that formal state authority maps onto operational control on the ground.

Second, revolutionary-background political and media figures — activists, opposition journalists, and political brokers who acquired influence during the conflict through their networks, public platforms, or access to external support. These actors retain significant capacity to shape public narratives, mobilise community responses, and influence the political calculus of formal decision-makers. A project that attracts their criticism, or fails to secure their tacit support, faces reputational risks that formal governmental approval cannot neutralise.

Third, business diaspora networks and regime-friendly executives — Syrian businesspeople and investors, many operating from Gulf states, Turkey, or Europe, who have cultivated relationships with the new governing authority and occupy an informal advisory and financial role that formal institutional structures do not capture. These networks can accelerate or obstruct project implementation through their access to senior officials, their control over supply chains, and their capacity to direct private investment toward or away from specific areas and initiatives.

Fourth, the geo-economic-political weight of allied states, principally Qatar and Saudi Arabia, whose financial commitments to Syria's reconstruction carry informal influence over governmental priorities, sectoral focus, and the allocation of contracts and opportunities. This influence operates not through formal governance structures but through political relationships between these states and the Syrian governing authority, shaping the environment in which projects are approved, implemented, and evaluated in ways that project documentation rarely reflects.

The dual-track authority problem this creates is not merely a coordination challenge. It is a legitimacy challenge. A project that secures formal government approval but lacks community buy-in from the informal authority structure will face implementation resistance that no amount of formal paperwork can resolve. A project that builds genuine community consensus but cannot navigate the formal approval process will be unable to access government systems for registration, permitting, and payment. And a project that is seen as aligned with one authority structure at the expense of the other will be read, in Syria's highly sensitised political environment, as taking a side.

4. Domain-Level Tailoring: A Syria-Specific Framework

The following section develops tailoring guidance for each of PMBOK® 8's seven performance domains, incorporating the systemic conditions identified above. The tailoring guidance is presented as specific departures from standard practice, each grounded in the Syrian context.

4.1 Stakeholder Domain

Standard stakeholder management assumes that relevant stakeholders can be identified from project documentation, organisational charts, and community consultation. In Syria, this assumption fails on multiple levels. Displaced populations who are not physically present at the project site may hold the most significant legal or emotional claims to it. Government officials whose names appear on approval letters may not be the individuals who actually decide whether the project proceeds. The tailoring requirement: extend stakeholder identification to include absent and informal stakeholders, and explicitly map the gap between formal authority and real authority for every key actor. This requires a two-layer stakeholder register — one documenting formal roles and one documenting actual influence — with explicit strategies for managing the tensions between them.

4.2 Governance Domain

Standard project governance assumes that authority structures can be read from organisational documentation. In Syria's post-2024 environment, this assumption is systematically unreliable. The tailoring requirement: document real authority structures rather than nominal ones. This means identifying, for every key decision, who must formally approve it, who must informally endorse it, whose opposition can block it even without formal authority, and what the escalation

pathway is when formal and informal authorities conflict. Project governance plans must also incorporate explicit provisions for managing the authority-competence gap: mechanisms for supporting counterpart capacity without substituting for counterpart authority.

4.3 Team Domain

The tailoring requirement for the Team Domain in Syria is perhaps the most frequently overlooked in standard practice. Project teams operating in Syria are not simply managing a challenging project — they are themselves often survivors or participants in the conflict whose consequences the project is attempting to address. Secondary trauma risk, communal sensitivity in team composition, and the political implications of who is hired and from which community are not peripheral HR considerations. They are primary project risks that must be managed with the same rigour as technical and financial risks.

4.4 Planning Domain

The tailoring requirement for the Planning Domain is to make planning assumptions explicit and subject to formal review at defined intervals. In Syria, where baseline data is unreliable or absent, every project plan rests on assumptions about population, property rights, institutional capacity, and political stability that carry exceptional uncertainty. These assumptions must be documented, challenged, and revisited regularly — not as a bureaucratic exercise but as a substantive risk management practice.

4.5 Development Approach and Life Cycle Domain

Iterative and adaptive approaches are not merely preferable in Syria — they are necessary. The tailoring requirement: anchor the iteration cycle to political milestones rather than calendar intervals. A ministerial reshuffle, a governance decree, a property law amendment, or a significant security change may render a previously well-tailored project plan dangerously misaligned with its operating context. The project life cycle must therefore include defined political review points at which tailoring decisions are revisited.

4.6 Delivery Domain

The tailoring requirement for the Delivery Domain is the most theoretically significant: a Syria-specific reconceptualisation of what ‘value’ means. This is addressed in detail in Section 5.

4.7 Measurement Domain

Standard measurement frameworks — earned value, schedule performance index, cost performance index — are necessary but insufficient in Syria. The most important outcomes of Syrian reconstruction projects are social outcomes: community trust, reduced inter-communal tension, sustainable return of displaced populations, and reduction in the political grievances that fuel renewed conflict. The tailoring requirement: embed social outcome indicators — drawn from peacebuilding programme evaluation practice — as formal, weighted success criteria alongside conventional project performance metrics.

5. Reconceptualising Value Delivery in Fractured Communities

PMBOK® 8 places value delivery at the centre of its conceptual architecture. Every project exists to deliver value to its stakeholders and to the broader systems in which it operates. But the framework's treatment of value, while flexible, remains implicitly oriented toward contexts in which there is a shared baseline understanding of what value means and a functional institutional mechanism for assessing whether it has been delivered.

In fractured communities — in which social trust has been destroyed, in which different groups hold fundamentally incompatible narratives of the conflict and its causes, and in which the question of who counts as a legitimate member of the community is itself politically contested — this baseline is absent. Value is not a shared concept. It is a contested one.

This paper proposes a five-component value realisation framework for Syrian reconstruction projects, designed to supplement rather than replace conventional project performance metrics:

Component 1 — Technical Delivery: Did the project deliver its physical outputs on time, within budget, and to specification? Necessary but insufficient as a standalone measure of success.

Component 2 — Inclusion and Access: Did the project's benefits reach all intended beneficiaries, including displaced and marginalised populations? Did it avoid replicating or deepening existing patterns of exclusion?

Component 3 — Conflict Risk Reduction: Did the project reduce, maintain, or increase the risk of localised conflict in its operating area? This requires prospective conflict analysis before project design and retrospective conflict impact assessment after delivery.

Component 4 — Social Cohesion: Did the project strengthen or weaken inter-communal relationships in its operating area? Did it create shared infrastructure, processes, or outcomes that gave different communities a stake in each other's wellbeing?

Component 5 — Institutional Trust: Did the project strengthen or weaken community trust in the institutions responsible for sustaining its outcomes? A project that delivers its outputs while generating community resentment of its sponsor organisation has, in the most meaningful sense, failed.

6. A Politically-Anchored Iterative Tailoring Cycle for Syria

PMBOK® 8's Tailoring Chapter envisions an iterative adaptation cycle in which tailoring decisions are revisited as the project progresses and conditions change. This paper argues that in Syria, the trigger for tailoring review cannot be calendar-based. It must be event-based, anchored to the political and security milestones that actually determine whether the project's tailoring decisions remain valid.

The proposed politically-anchored tailoring cycle for Syria identifies four categories of trigger event that should initiate a formal tailoring review: governance transitions (changes in ministerial or senior official appointments that alter the authority-competence profile of the government counterpart); legislative changes (property law amendments, decrees affecting land use or reconstruction permits, changes in procurement regulation); security condition changes (shifts in the control of territory or population that alter the stakeholder landscape or access conditions); and community composition changes (significant movements of population — returns, displacements, or new settlements — that alter the beneficiary profile and the balance of community interests).

At each trigger event, the tailoring review examines four questions: Have the authority structures that govern project decision-making changed? Have the stakeholder map and the balance of interests among key actors changed? Have the value priorities of the beneficiary community changed? And are the project's social outcome indicators still measuring the right things?

7. Comparative Cases: Lessons from Lebanon and Bosnia

7.1 Nahr el-Bared, Lebanon (2007–2017)

The reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared — a Palestinian refugee camp near Tripoli destroyed in conflict between the Lebanese Army and Fatah al-Islam — is the most directly comparable large-scale reconstruction case to Syria's current context. The project, managed by UNRWA with World Bank financing, took a decade rather than the projected three years to complete. Post-project analysis identified stakeholder exclusion as the primary driver of delay: community protest actions, triggered by perceptions that the reconstruction design did not reflect community priorities, halted construction on multiple occasions (Ramadan, 2010). The parallel governance dynamic — UNRWA as formal project authority, the NBRC as community governance structure, and the Lebanese state as a largely absent but politically significant actor — was never formally mapped or managed. The lesson for Syria: the dual-track authority problem must be addressed in project design, not managed reactively during implementation.

7.2 Mostar, Bosnia (1993–2004)

The reconstruction of Mostar's Stari Most — the sixteenth-century bridge destroyed by Croat forces in 1993 — offers the most important lesson on value reconceptualisation. The project's scope was defined to include not merely the physical reconstruction of the bridge but the reconstruction of a shared symbolic space for Bosniaks and Croats. Joint oversight committees that included representatives of both communities were established before construction began. UNESCO's subsequent World Heritage listing transformed the project's value proposition from infrastructure restoration to reconciliation asset. The lesson for Syria: the Delivery Domain's value definition must be established collaboratively with the full range of stakeholders before scope definition begins, not extracted from technical requirements.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

This paper has argued that PMBOK® 8's tailoring framework offers the most professionally sound available foundation for managing projects in post-war peacebuilding contexts — and specifically in Syria's post-2024 transition environment. Its iterative tailoring architecture provides the governance discipline that peacebuilding-oriented reconstruction has often lacked. But realising that potential demands a systematic tailoring analysis that addresses two conditions the framework itself does not model: loyalty-based institutional staffing and parallel governance structures.

The paper's principal contributions are three. First, it introduces the concepts of the authority-competence gap and the dual-track authority problem as analytically precise descriptions of governance conditions that project managers in post-war peacebuilding contexts routinely encounter but rarely have theoretical tools to address. Second, it develops domain-level tailoring guidance across all seven PMBOK® 8 performance domains, grounded in Syria's specific peacebuilding and transitional governance context. Third, it proposes a five-component value realisation framework and a politically-anchored iterative tailoring cycle that together address the framework's most significant limitations for post-war application — illustrated by two directly comparable reconstruction cases, Nahr el-Bared in Lebanon and Mostar in Bosnia.

The practical recommendations for project managers working in Syria are clear: map governance before mapping scope; maintain dual-track stakeholder engagement; embed social outcome measurement in project design rather than appending it at evaluation; support counterpart competence without substituting for counterpart authority; and institutionalise tailoring review as an event-triggered governance mechanism rather than a calendar-based administrative exercise.

Syria is, at this moment, one of the most demanding tests of project management's capacity to operate in conditions of profound political complexity and communal fracture. Whether reconstruction, as a practice, contributes to peacebuilding or inadvertently deepens division depends on the quality of the project governance choices made now — and on whether the project management profession develops the frameworks its practitioners need to make those choices well.

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