



Alternative Planning Toward Context-Sensitive Planning Education for Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Palestine

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Introduction:

- ❑ Alternative planning for post-conflict reconstruction, particularly in sensitive regions like Palestine, requires a **tailored, context-sensitive approach** that addresses the unique political, social, and economic challenges in such areas.
- ❑ In post-conflict settings, planning education plays a critical role in enabling professionals to adopt **innovative, inclusive, and locally relevant strategies**.

How can urban planning education be adapted to **account for the unique social, political, and environmental challenges** of post-conflict reconstruction?

Adapting urban planning education to address the unique challenges of post-conflict reconstruction involves several key strategies:



Strategies	Contents
(1) Curriculum Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interdisciplinary Approach: Integrate courses on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and social justice into urban planning programs. ▪ Case Studies: Use real-world examples (successful and unsuccessful) from post-conflict cities.
(2) Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participatory Planning: Teach students the importance of involving local communities (via workshops, focus groups, & participatory mapping exercises) in the planning process. ▪ Fieldwork Opportunities: Encourage students to engage in fieldwork in post-conflict areas.
(3) Focus on Resilience and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interdisciplinary Approach: Integrate courses on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and social justice into urban planning programs. ▪ Case Studies: Use real-world examples (successful and unsuccessful) from post-conflict cities.

Strategies	Contents
<p>(4)</p> <p>Policy and Governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding Governance Structures: Educate students about the complexities of governance in post-conflict settings, including the role of local, national, and international actors in reconstruction efforts. ▪ Legal Frameworks: Provide knowledge on the legal and regulatory frameworks that govern urban planning in post-conflict scenarios, including land tenure issues and property rights.
<p>(5)</p> <p>Collaboration with NGOs and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnerships: Foster partnerships with NGOs, international organizations, and local governments involved in post-conflict reconstruction. This can provide students with insights into practical challenges and collaborative approaches to urban planning.
<p>(6)</p> <p>Technology and Innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Digital Tools: Incorporate training on the use of technology and data analytics in urban planning, which can help in assessing needs, monitoring progress, and engaging communities. ▪ Innovative Solutions: Encourage students to explore innovative urban planning solutions that leverage technology, such as smart city concepts, to address the unique challenges of post-conflict environments.

Strategies	Contents
<p>(7)</p> <p>Global Perspectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparative Analysis: Include comparative studies of urban planning practices in different post-conflict countries to highlight diverse approaches and outcomes. This can help students appreciate the global context of their work. ▪ Guest Lectures and Workshops: Invite practitioners and experts from various regions who have experience in post-conflict urban planning to share their insights and experiences with students.
<p>(8)</p> <p>Assessment and Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impact Assessment: Teach students how to conduct impact assessments of urban planning projects in post-conflict settings, focusing on social, economic, and environmental outcomes. ▪ Feedback Mechanisms: Implement systems for ongoing feedback from communities and stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of planning initiatives and adapt strategies accordingly.
<p>(9)</p> <p>Career Preparation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internships and Job Placement: Facilitate internships and job placements with organizations working in post-conflict reconstruction to provide students with practical experience and networking opportunities. ▪ Skill Development: Focus on developing skills that are particularly relevant to post-conflict contexts, such as negotiation, conflict resolution, and adaptive planning.

Strategies	Contents
<p>(10) Sustainability and Environmental Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainable Practices: Educate students on sustainable urban planning practices that can help mitigate environmental impacts and promote resilience against climate change. ▪ Green Infrastructure: Explore the role of green infrastructure in urban planning, including parks, green roofs, and sustainable drainage systems, which can enhance urban resilience and improve quality of life.
<p>(11) Economic Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Economic Revitalization: Discuss strategies for stimulating local economies in post-conflict areas, including support for small businesses, job creation, and the development of local markets. ▪ Investment Strategies: Teach students about attracting investment and funding for urban development projects, including public-private partnerships and international aid.
<p>(12) Conflict Sensitivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding Conflict Dynamics: Provide training on the dynamics of conflict and peacebuilding, helping students recognize how urban planning decisions can either exacerbate or alleviate tensions. ▪ Conflict-Sensitive Approaches: Encourage students to adopt conflict-sensitive approaches in their planning proposals, ensuring that initiatives do not inadvertently contribute to existing divisions.

Strategies	Contents
<p>(13) Monitoring and Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performance Metrics: Develop frameworks for measuring the success of urban planning initiatives in post-conflict settings, focusing on both qualitative and quantitative metrics. ▪ Adaptive Management: Teach students the importance of adaptive management practices that allow for flexibility and responsiveness to changing conditions and community needs.
<p>(14) Interdisciplinary Collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cross-Disciplinary Learning: Promote collaboration with other disciplines such as sociology, economics, and environmental science to provide a holistic understanding of urban planning in post-conflict contexts. ▪ Team Projects: Encourage students to work in interdisciplinary teams on real-world projects, fostering collaboration and diverse perspectives.
<p>(15) Policy Advocacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocacy Skills: Equip students with skills to advocate for policies that support equitable urban development and reconstruction efforts in post-conflict areas. ▪ Engagement with Policymakers: Facilitate opportunities for students to engage with policymakers and stakeholders to understand the policy-making process and influence urban planning decisions.

Results & Implications



- ❑ institutions can **cultivate a new generation of planners** who are not only skilled in technical aspects but also **equipped with the necessary tools to navigate the complexities of post-conflict reconstruction.**
- ❑ This holistic approach will ultimately contribute to more **resilient, inclusive, and sustainable urban environments.**

How can planning education be decolonized to **reflect the realities of post-conflict cities and the lived experiences of their inhabitants**, particularly in regions like Palestine?

- ❑ Decolonizing planning education to reflect the realities of post-conflict cities, such as those in Palestine, involves several key strategies that prioritize the lived experiences of inhabitants and challenge traditional paradigms.**

Here are some approaches to consider



Approaches	Explanation
(1) Incorporate Indigenous Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Integrate local knowledge systems and practices into the curriculum.▪ This includes understanding traditional land use, community governance, and cultural practices that shape urban spaces in post-conflict contexts.
(2) Engage with Local Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Foster partnerships with local communities and organizations to ensure that the voices of residents are central to the educational process.▪ This can involve community-based projects, participatory planning exercises, and internships with local NGOs.
(3) Critical Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Adopt a critical pedagogy approach that encourages students to question dominant narratives and power structures in urban planning.▪ This involves analyzing how colonial histories and contemporary policies impact urban development and community resilience.

Approaches	Explanation
<p>(4) Diverse Perspectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include a diverse range of perspectives in the curriculum, particularly those from marginalized groups. ▪ This can involve case studies from various post-conflict regions, emphasizing the unique challenges and solutions that different communities face.
<p>(5) Cultural Sensitivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teach students about the cultural and historical contexts of the regions they study. This includes understanding the significance of cultural heritage and the impact of conflict on identity and community cohesion.
<p>(6) Ethics & Social Justice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emphasize the ethical responsibilities of planners in post-conflict settings. ▪ Discuss issues of social justice, equity, and the importance of inclusive planning processes that address the needs of all community members.
<p>(7) Interdisciplinary Approaches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration with fields such as sociology, anthropology, and human rights studies. ▪ This can provide a more holistic understanding of the complexities of urban planning in post-conflict environments.

Approaches	Explanation
<p>(8) Global South Perspectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Center the experiences and theories from the Global South in planning education. ▪ This can help challenge Eurocentric models of planning and highlight alternative approaches that are more relevant to post-conflict contexts.
<p>(9) Reflective Practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage students to engage in reflective practice, considering their positionality and the implications of their planning decisions on local communities. ▪ This can foster a deeper understanding of the ethical dimensions of urban planning.
<p>(10) Advocacy & Activism:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equip students with skills to advocate for policies that support equitable urban development in post-conflict areas. ▪ This includes understanding the political landscape and engaging with policymakers to influence positive change.

Results & Implications



- ☐ **planning education can become more relevant and responsive to the realities of post-conflict cities,**
- ☐ **empowering students to contribute to more just and sustainable urban environments.**

Who are the **key stakeholders that should be part of international collaboration** to enhance the quality and effectiveness of planning education for post-conflict reconstruction?

Key stakeholders include:



- 1. Local Governments:** Engaging with municipal and regional authorities ensures that planning education aligns with local policies and needs.
- 2. Community Organizations:** Grassroots organizations and NGOs that represent the interests of local communities can provide valuable insights into the lived experiences and needs of residents.
- 3. Academic Institutions:** Universities and research centers, particularly those in conflict-affected regions, can contribute research, curriculum development, and training programs tailored to local contexts.
- 4. International Development Agencies:** Organizations like the United Nations, World Bank, and regional development banks can provide funding, expertise, and frameworks for effective planning education.
- 5. Professional Associations:** Groups such as the American Planning Association or the International Society of City and Regional Planners can help set standards and promote best practices in planning education.

- 6) Civil Society Groups:** Advocacy organizations focused on human rights, social justice, and environmental sustainability can ensure that planning education incorporates ethical considerations and community needs.
- 7) Private Sector:** Engaging with businesses and industry leaders can provide insights into economic development and the role of private investment in post-conflict reconstruction.
- 8) International Experts and Consultants:** Professionals with experience in post-conflict planning can offer guidance and share successful case studies from other regions.
- 9) Donor Agencies:** Bilateral and multilateral funding organizations can support initiatives aimed at improving planning education and capacity-building efforts.
- 10) Cultural Institutions:** Museums, heritage organizations, and cultural groups can help integrate local history and cultural identity into planning education.
- 11) Students and Young Professionals:** Involving current students and recent graduates can provide fresh perspectives and ensure that educational programs meet the needs of future planners.

Results & Implications



- ☐ **planning education can be more effectively tailored to address the complexities of post-conflict reconstruction and promote sustainable urban development.**

Role of Palestinian Universities (Case of An-Najah National University) in Alternative Planning Education

- ❑ An-Najah National University in Palestine has emerged as a key institution for advancing alternative planning education that addresses the unique socio-political and spatial challenges faced by Palestinian communities.**
- ❑ Its role in this context includes promoting innovative planning approaches, fostering a culture of resilience, and training future planners equipped to work in a contested urban environment.**
- ❑ An outline of the university's contributions include the followings:**

- 1) Developing Context-Sensitive Planning Curricula** (both in undergraduate level (BSc. In Urban Planning since 2011) & graduate level (MSc. in Urban & Regional Planning since 1997).
- 2) Promoting Participatory and Community-Led Planning** through implementing several projects via its relevant centers & units since 1998 (e.g. Center of Urban Planning & Risk Reduction Center, Urban & Regional Planning Unit) such as the preparation of physical, joint, & strategic plans.
- 3) Advancing Research and Knowledge on Palestinian Urbanism.**
- 4) Capacity-Building and Training for Resilience in Conflict Zones** (e.g. in Area C, that is totally under Israeli Occupation).
- 5) Collaborations and Networks with local & international institutions.**
- 6) Training Planners in Technological and Analytical Skills.**

- ❑ An-Najah National University plays a critical role in educating planners who are **not only technically proficient** but also **deeply aware of the social, political, and environmental contexts** that define Palestinian urban spaces.
- ❑ By focusing on alternative, community-centered, and resilient planning practices, the university **equips students to drive positive change in their communities** and to **advocate for planning that serves the needs and rights of Palestinians under complex conditions.**

Thanks for Your Attention