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Mitigating "K-Shaped Recovery" for Post-Liberated Syria: A Case Study

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Article Info

Abstract
Post-conflict reconstruction is fraught with the risk of uneven recovery, where aggregate growth masks deep and widening socio-economic divergence—a phenomenon described as a "K-Shaped Recovery." This paper proposes a novel, integrated framework to mitigate such divergent outcomes in post-liberation Syria. It synthesises two distinct but complementary methodologies: the Compram Method, a structured process for handling complex, multi-stakeholder societal problems, and Inspiration Economy Labs, designed to cleanse cognitive blockages and foster creative, purpose-driven innovation.

The paper argues that Syria's recovery presents a quintessential "wicked problem," characterised by entrenched conflicts, trauma, and competing actor interests. By first applying Inspiration Labs to rebuild hope, reframe narratives, and co-create a shared vision, and then employing the rigorous, negotiation-focused Compram Method to mediate resource allocation and policy design, Syria can navigate its reconstruction with both visionary energy and pragmatic conflict resolution. This integrated approach aims to transform the recovery trajectory from one of potential K-shaped bifurcation toward a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable path, offering a model for other post-conflict societies facing similar complex challenges.

1. Introduction

The conclusion of armed conflict does not guarantee a just or stable peace. Often, the transition to peace is jeopardised by economic recoveries that are profoundly uneven, where pre-existing inequalities are exacerbated rather than healed. This divergence, visualised as a "K-Shaped Economy," sees one segment of society—typically urban elites, skilled professionals, and connected investors—accelerate in wealth and opportunity (the upper arm of the 'K'), while another—comprising displaced populations, rural communities, and low-skilled workers—faces stagnation or further decline (the lower arm). For nations like Syria, emerging from over a decade of devastating conflict, the threat of such a fractured recovery is not merely an economic concern but a fundamental risk to long-term stability and social cohesion. Barakat and Zyck (2009) [2], Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2024) [13].

Conventional reconstruction models, often focused on macroeconomic indicators and physical infrastructure, are ill-equipped to address the deep-seated, "wicked" societal problems that characterise post-conflict environments. These problems are defined by multiple stakeholders with conflicting values, high emotional charge, systemic interconnectivity, and no clear technical solution. Therefore, a more nuanced, process-oriented approach is required.

This paper introduces an innovative framework that integrates two methodological paradigms to address this complexity. First, the Compram Method (Complex Problem Handling Method) provides a structured, six-phase protocol for facilitating negotiation and building legitimate agreements among adversarial stakeholders, explicitly accounting for power dynamics, emotions, and

systemic complexity. Second, the model of Inspiration Economy Labs offers a mechanism for psychological and cognitive "cleansing"—breaking cycles of trauma and fixed thinking to foster hope, creativity, and a shared purpose. DeTombe (2015) [15], Buheji (2016) [9].

The core thesis is that these approaches are not rivals but essential complements within a holistic recovery strategy. Inspiration Labs can initiate the process by healing trauma, rebuilding social trust, and co-creating an aspirational national vision. Subsequently, the Compram Method can structure the difficult negotiations necessary to translate that vision into equitable policies regarding land, resources, justice, and economic inclusion. Applied to the Syrian context, this integrated framework proposes a pathway to consciously engineer an inclusive recovery, mitigating the K-shaped divergence that could otherwise sow the seeds of future conflict. By doing so, this paper contributes to the fields of post-conflict studies, complex system management, and innovative economic development. DeTombe (2015) [15], Martinez *et al*. (2021) [19].
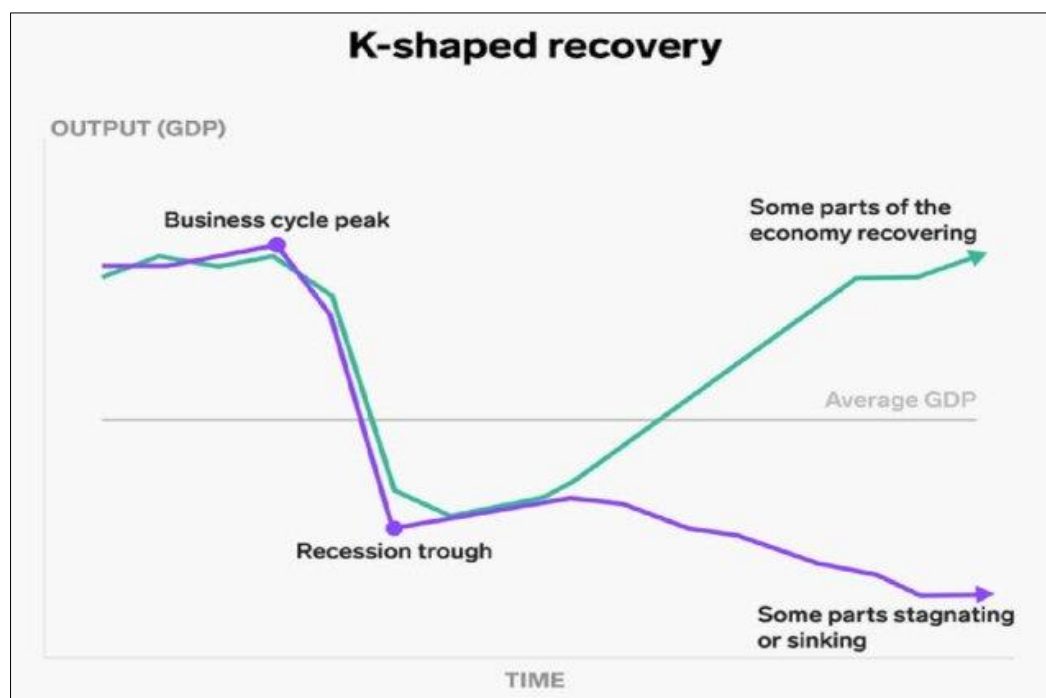
2. Literature Review
2.1. What is a K-Shaped Economy?
A K-Shaped Economy is a metaphorical description of a post-recession or post-crisis recovery where different segments of the economy diverge, following the two diverging arms of the letter "K." Barakat and Zyck (2009) [2].

As shown in Figure (1) the Upper Arm of the K-shaped Economy represents a segment of the population (typically asset owners, high-wage professionals, and large corporations) that experiences a strong recovery, with their wealth, income, and prospects growing rapidly, Buheji (2025b) [3]. The Lower Arm of the K-shaped represents another segment of the population (typically low-wage service workers, the unemployed, and small businesses) that experiences a continued decline or stagnation, falling further behind. Martinez *et al*. (2021) [19], Ferrer (2021) [17].

The key takeaway is that the average economic indicators (like GDP or stock market indices) can be misleading. They may show overall growth, but this mask a deep and widening divergence underneath. The "K" shape illustrates that the recovery is not uniform; it is deeply unequal and bifurcated.

Source: Kim, S; XU, M; David, Jeanne (2022) Highly Unusual Features of the 2020 U.S. Recession, Journal of Public Administration Finance and Law11(23):190-198.

Fig 1: K-Shaped Economic Recovery

2.2. Applying the Compram Method to handle Complex Societal Problems
Compram method is a comprehensive, structured approach designed to handle complex societal problems, particularly those involving deep-seated conflict, multiple stakeholders with opposing values, and high levels of uncertainty. Its name is an acronym for COMplex PRoblem hAndling Method (COMPRAM). It was developed primarily by Dutch systems scientist Dorien J. DeTombe in the 1990s, drawing from fields like systems theory, sociology, psychology, and policy analysis. DeTombe (2015) [15].

The core philosophy of Compram is that "wicked" societal problems (like climate change, large-scale healthcare reform, or ethnic conflict) cannot be solved by experts or a single

discipline alone, DeTombe (2015) [15]. These problems are characterised by multiple actors with different perspectives, interests, and power. Such a problem is more wicked when there is disagreement on both the definition of the problem and its solution. Usually, such problems have high interconnectivity with other problems (a "system of problems"), besides they would have deep emotional and value-laden components, Buheji (2025a) [3]. Therefore, the Compram Method focuses on guiding the process of handling such a problem, rather than providing a technical "solution." The comparm method is iterative and cyclical, but its core structure consists of six phases, each handled by a different team or "knowledge team." DeTombe (2001) [16]. Munawar and Symonds (2022) [20].

Phase 1: Problem Definition & System Analysis
A team of interdisciplinary experts (Team A) analyses the problem systemically. They create models to understand the causes, effects, actors, and boundaries of the problem. The output is a "Definition Report."

Phase 2: Analysing Actor Perspectives (i.e. Using Multidisciplinary Approach)
This is the heart of the method. Different "actor teams" (i.e. representing stakeholders like government, industry, NGOs, citizens) are formed separately. Each team analyses the problem from their own perspective. Each team might ask questions relevant to their interests, fears, and goals, or question the power they have, or visualise the solutions they prefer, besides what type of emotional and cognitive "blockages" they experience, Buheji, (2025c) [4]. Each team work in parallel, not together, to avoid early power struggles and allow for honest reflection. Then, they can be facilitated to explore their own viewpoints deeply.

Phase 3: Creating Future Scenarios
Based on the analyses from Phases 1 and 2, the expert team (A) and facilitators develop several possible future scenarios ("what-if" models). These helps explore the long-term consequences of different interventions.

Phase 4: Searching for Interventions & Solutions
Now, the different actor teams (or representatives) are brought together in a controlled, mediated setting. Using the scenarios and their own analyses, they negotiate and seek compromises ("Compram" = compromise + algorithm). The goal is to find interventions that are acceptable to most, or all, parties. DeTombe (2001) [16].

Phase 5: Supporting the Change
This phase focuses on implementation. A team designs a plan to support the agreed-upon interventions, considering how they could communicate the decisions to the public and other actors, or how to manage resistance and emotions, or what resources and legislative changes are needed.

Phase 6: Evaluation & Monitoring
After implementation, the outcomes are continuously monitored and evaluated. The problem-handling process itself is also reviewed. If necessary, the cycle returns to an earlier phase.

There are key features that distinguish compram such as the keeping stakeholders apart initially (Phase 2) is unique. It prevents early polarization and allows for deeper self-analysis. Unlike many technical systems methods, Compram explicitly addresses the emotional and power-political dimensions of problems. It provides a clear framework but is adaptable to the specific context of the problem. The outcome is not a "perfect solution," but a legitimate, agreed-upon way forward created through a transparent and inclusive process. DeTombe (2001) [16].
There are typical applications where compram can fit best, such as the large-scale environmental planning (e.g., river basin management, climate adaptation), public health crises and healthcare system reform, societal issues like integration, poverty reduction, or educational reform, and organisational change in large, complex institutions. Al-Muhannadi and Buheji (2024) [1], Buheji (2020) [6].

2.3. Analysis Using the Compram Framework for Complex Societal Problems
The K-Shaped Economy is a quintessential complex societal problem as defined by DeTombe. We can analyse this type of economy using the core components of the Compram method, Buheji (2023) [8]. For example, K-economy is seen not as a single, static event but as an ongoing process fuelled by feedback loops (e.g., wealth begets more wealth through investments), Martinez *et al.* (2021) [19]. Compram build bridges between many interconnected phenomena, such as: technology and automation, since it would disproportionately affect routine and low-skill jobs. Also, compram can help to build capital and high-skilled labour to make them more mobile and benefit them more. The approach can help tackle educational disparities, such as unequal access to quality education and high-demand skills (e.g., in tech) is unequal. If we see the public health challenges, there are now accelerating trends like remote work for knowledge workers while devastating service-sector jobs.
The society has built many actors with different goals. There are the upper arm of the society who are usually large corporations, investors, highly skilled professionals, their goal is capital appreciation and high income. While the lower arm of society includes low-wage workers, small business owners, gig economy workers. their goal is economic security and meeting basic needs. Therefore, the role of government is to balance economic growth, social stability, and political pressures. While the role of the central banks is to focus on macroeconomic stability (inflation, employment), but their tools can inadvertently widen inequality.
The goal is to create a large societal impact, where slower long-term growth is due to reduced aggregate demand from the lower arm. This means we need to manage the erosion of the social contract, decline of social mobility and the increased financial stress, mental health issues, and social polarisation.

2.4. The Three Basic Elements of the K-Shaped Economy
There are three elements in K-Shaped Economy that make a difference; knowledge, power, and emotions. Knowledge comes from white/blind spots where the long-term societal consequences of extreme divergence are not fully understood. There is often a lack of real-time, granular data on the economic well-being of the "lower arm." Martinez *et al.* (2021) [19]. In relevance to knowledge, K-shaped economy shows the contradictory data where the booming stock market (upper arm) coexists with high food bank usage and personal debt (lower arm), creating confusion in public discourse.
In relevance to power, k-shaped economy shows that the "upper arm" actors have significant power to influence policy (lobbying), shape narratives, and protect their interests, while the "lower arm" often has fragmented political power and less influence over economic policy. Thus, the problem owner (the government) may lack the political will or authority to implement radical redistributive policies due to the power of the upper arm. While in relevance to emotions, k-shaped economy studies the upper arm of society that may feel optimism, security, but also anxiety about social unrest or guilt. While the lower arm might feel frustration, resentment, economic anxiety, and a sense of being left behind. This fuels political polarisation and populism. Fonseca et. al. (2024) [18].

2.5. Applying the Compram Method to the K-Shaped Economy

Following the six steps of Compram would be crucial for handling this problem.

Using (Knowledge), a neutral team of economists, sociologists, technologists, and public health experts would be formed. Thus, we can use the seven-layer model, to first describe the problem in natural language: "A diverging economic recovery where gains are concentrated at the top while the bottom falls behind." Then, the second layer would define key concepts: "Asset-based wealth vs. wage-based income," "Financialization," "Digital divide." Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2024) [13], Ferrer (2021) [17].

The third layer is focused on hypothesised relations. "Low interest rates -> higher asset prices -> increased wealth for the top 10%." The fourth layers create models to visualise the causal relationships and simulate the long-term effects of different policies (e.g., universal basic income, wealth taxes, retraining programs).

To ensure proper power and interest, separate teams for different actors would be formed from the corporate, financial sectors, labour unions, low-income advocacy groups, policymakers and regulators. Each team defines the problem and their "handling space" from their perspective.

Representatives from the expert teams and actor teams meet. The goal is to find mutually acceptable interventions. For example, a corporate leader might accept certain tax reforms if they are paired with investments in infrastructure that benefit their business.

In order to mitigate the K-shaped economy, we need to anticipate societal reactions. Before implementing a policy like a wealth tax, the team would model and discuss potential reactions: capital flight, market volatility, or public support. This prevents wasting political capital on unworkable solutions.

The agreed-upon interventions are rolled out, and their effects are meticulously evaluated, not just on aggregate GDP, but specifically on closing the gap between the two arms of the "K."

2.6. The cleansing effect of Inspiration Labs

Inspiration Economy is a formalised socio-economic development model for crisis recovery and sustainable community building. It's grassroot approach turns inspiration into tangible economic activity and resilience. Buheji (2016) [9].

Inspiration Lab is a dedicated space, event, or process designed to break routine and deliberately stimulate new thinking. It often involves cross-pollination, bringing together people from different disciplines. The labs focus on experiential learning that brings in prototypes after bringing in solutions in unexpected ways and analysing wicked cases. Inspiration Labs works on psychological safety through encouraging risk-taking.

The lab acts as a mental and creative "reset," washing away the clutter that hinders innovation. The cleansing happens on several levels. It starts with the cleansing of cognitive fixedness, where the teams get stuck in "this is how we've always done it" thinking. Neural pathways become rigid. The lab introduces novel stimuli and constraints, forcing the brain to form new connections. It scrubs away mental shortcuts and outdated assumptions, leaving a "clean slate" for new patterns. Buheji (2016) [9].

The lab works on cleansing the debris that comes from bureaucracy, silos, political manoeuvring, and risk-averse cultures create static that drowns out good ideas. Since the lab is a temporary, protected space, hierarchies are often flattened. The focus is on "what if" rather than "why we can't." This washes away the procedural grime, allowing pure curiosity and collaboration to flow. Buheji and Ahmed (2019) [10].

In the Inspiration lab, the teams cannot jump to a plausible solution or anchor to an existing technology first; instead, they have to deeply explore the problem space through new lenses (e.g., "How would a musician approach this?" or "What if it had to be done for free?"), The lab cleanses the premature solution. It returns people to a state of question-asking and wonder. Buheji (2022) [7].

The daily grind leads to burnout, cynicism, and a depletion of creative energy; thus, cleansing of emotional fatigue is also part of the lab. The act of play, discovery, and learning in a low-pressure environment is intrinsically rewarding and energising. It cleanses away fatigue and renews a sense of possibility and optimism.

Many communities or organisations often spend time solving the wrong, poorly defined problem. Therefore, Inspiration Labs focus on cleansing the problem statement itself. Through reframing exercises and exposure to user needs in raw form, the lab helps strip away the speciality jargon and inherited perceptions to reveal the core, human problem at the heart of the matter. Thus, a mix of new inputs, healthy practices, and a supportive environment can be seen through the renewed clarity, energy, and flow of fresh ideas that emerge afterwards. The cleansing effect can then be observed when they return: communication is clearer, ideas are bolder, and the team is realigned on a refreshed, human-centred vision.

In summary, "The cleansing effect of Inspiration Labs" is the powerful, rejuvenating outcome of intentionally breaking from routine to explore, play, and think differently. It clears away the mental, emotional, and community blockages that stifle innovation, leaving a clearer path for genuine inspiration and breakthrough thinking. It's a compelling concept for any community seeking sustained creativity.

2.7. Comparing the Compram Method and the concept of Inspiration Economy Labs

Comparing Compram with Inspiration Labs is like comparing a formal surgical procedure with a holistic wellness retreat. Both aim for health and better outcomes, but their philosophies, structures, and applications are fundamentally different.

Table 1: Details a Comparison Between Compram and Inspiration Labs in Handling Complex Problems Dimensions

Dimension	Compram Method	Inspiration Economy/Labs
Core Purpose	To handle deep, complex societal conflicts by guiding structured negotiation among adversaries to reach implementable agreements.	To unlock creativity and innovation by cleansing mental blockages, fostering inspiration, and generating novel ideas.
Primary Metaphor	A diplomatic peace process of a complex system mediation.	A creative "detox" or an innovation gym.
Nature of Problem issues (e.g., climate policy, healthcare reform, etc).	laden, conflict-heavy societal "Wicked problems": Multi-actor, high-stakes, value	"Stuck problems" or innovation droughts: Lack of fresh ideas, siloed thinking, low energy, iterative (not breakthrough) progress within organizations or projects.
Key Process	Highly structured, 6-phase, facilitator-led protocol. Linear-iterative with strict separation of stakeholders in early phases.	Flexible, experience-driven, often immersive. Employs workshops, cross-pollination, play, and exposure to outliers. Less about strict phases, more about creating conditions for "aha!" moments.
Central Mechanism	Managed confrontation and negotiation. Uses systems analysis and controlled dialogue to reconcile conflicting interests and power dynamics.	Stimulation and psychological safety. Uses novelty, play, and reframing to bypass cognitive fixedness and fear of failure.
Role of Emotions	Explicitly analysed and managed as a source of conflict and blockage. Emotions are data points to be worked through in the negotiation.	Cultivated and harnessed as a source of energy. Aims to cleanse negative emotions (fatigue, cynicism) and spark positive ones (wonder, optimism).
Desired Output	A legitimate, agreed-upon action plan (often a compromise) supported by key stakeholders, ready for implementation.	Fresh perspectives, reframed problems, prototype ideas, and a rejuvenated team with renewed creative energy and alignment.
View of Conflict	Central and inevitable. The method is designed to navigate and resolve deep-seated conflict.	Often seen as a symptom of poor dynamics or fixed thinking. The lab aims to transcend conflict by elevating the group to a shared, inspired vision.
Time & Scale	Long-term and large-scale. Can take months or years, to address societal or organisational-wide systemic issues.	Short-term and project/team-scale. Often, a day-long offsite or a recurring workshop series is focused on a specific challenge or domain.
Ideal Facilitator	A neutral, expert process guide trained in systems thinking, mediation, and group psychology. A "Compram leader."	A creative catalyst or experience designer skilled in facilitation, design thinking, and creating engaging, provocative experiences.

3. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, framework-based research design to explore how the K-Shaped Economy can be mitigated in post-liberation Syria using the Compram Method and Inspiration Labs. The theoretical synthesis highlights the importance of K-shaped economy dynamics, the Compram Method for addressing complex societal problems, and Inspiration Labs for innovation and social healing, and then develops an integrated theoretical framework combining both approaches.

The author then adapts the Compram Method and Inspiration Labs framework to the Syrian post-conflict context. Key stakeholder groups (i.e., urban elites, rural communities, diaspora, NGOs, government) are identified to define core challenges such as resource allocation, trauma healing, and equitable policy design. Thus, the research set scenarios to simulate post-liberation recovery trajectories that can be developed as either inclusive recovery (equitable growth) or exclusive recovery scenarios (k-shaped divergence). Barakat and Zyck (2009) [2].

4. Application & Analysis
4.1. Synthesis of the Relation between the Two Main Approaches

Compram and Inspiration Lab are complementary tools in a broader toolkit for complex challenges, but they serve different parts of the problem lifecycle. Think of it this way, we can use an Inspiration Lab when you are stuck at the starting line or need a mid-jump boost. The team is cynical, ideas are stale, and you can't even see the problem clearly. The lab's "cleansing effect" provides the energy, clarity, and novel perspectives to begin the journey. But we need to use

the Compram Method when we deal with a thick, fraught journey with multiple conflicting parties. We need to have a clear, contentious problem (e.g., "How do we allocate scarce water resources between farmers, cities, and environmental needs?"). The inspiration lab might help in the beginning, but a more rigorous, conflict-facing structure like Compram can help navigate the legitimate agreement between all the parties in the conflict.

Compram is a conflict-resolution and consensus-building framework for societal-scale wicked problems. It is prescriptive, analytical, and negotiation-focused. Inspiration Labs is a creativity and innovation activation mindset for organisational or team-level breakthroughs. It is experiential, generative, and energy-focused. Compram is for when you have a war to settle. Inspiration Labs are for when you need a new, more inspiring world to imagine. The most sophisticated communities may need both—first to imagine boldly, and then to navigate the hard realities of implementing that vision in a complex world.

4.2. Syria as a K-Shaped Economy in the Making and Mitigation Possibilities

After liberation, Syria might face a divergent recovery trajectory where the upper arm of the society, as per the K-Shaped curve, represented by the urban elites, diaspora returnees, skilled professionals, and new investors, may rapidly rebuild wealth and access opportunities. While the lower arm of the society, as per the K-Shaped curve, which represents the continued displaced populations, rural communities, former combatants, and small-scale farmers, may face prolonged stagnation, unemployment, and further gradual marginalisation. Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2025)

[12].

Without intervening with the possible K-shaped economy curve, Syria's reconstruction could exacerbate existing inequalities, which sow seeds for another future conflict. In order to do this intervening, the author proposes a multi-phase approach. Which start with cleansing wartime trauma, fostering hope, and co-creating a shared national vision. This would include activities as cross-sectoral workshops with youth, women, artists, entrepreneurs, and civil society. This can be driven by a deep co-existence lab that does scenario-building exercises such as visualising "Syria 2040: Inclusive vs. Exclusive Recovery." Other activities might also include creative problem-framing, such as "How would we rebuild if we had no borders? No money? Only trust?" The outcome expected from such an exercise is a reframed national narrative centred on equity, innovation, and social cohesion. Next, deep-seated conflicts over resources, power, and policy need to be addressed. Here, the Compram Method —can be used for structuring the stakeholders' negotiations. There are key stakeholder teams that need to be included in this phase, such as the ex-freedom soldiers, the former regime affiliates who have no history of being directly engaged with the people's torture, urban and rural representatives, private sector, labour unions, international donors, local NGOs, besides other minority and opposition groups.

A comprehensive process should be used to separate analysis by each group to define their interests and fears. Negotiations on key issues as land ownership, resource allocation, transitional justice, and economic policy, should be facilitated. Then, the agreed-upon policies should be implemented and monitored with monitoring mechanisms.

A "Solidarity Reconstruction Zone" in a heavily damaged region, such as Aleppo, should be co-designed by local stakeholders using Compram. The zone can be funded through a mix of public, private, and diaspora investment. Then, monitored for both economic growth and social inclusion metrics. This would integrate the policy after being piloted and tested in equitable models.

4.3. Key Focus Areas for Equitable Development

Syria's post-liberation period presents both a risk of K-shaped divergence and an opportunity for systemic renewal. By combining the conflict-sensitive structure of Compram with the visionary energy of Inspiration Labs, Syria can navigate its complex recovery with both pragmatism and hope. This integrated approach may serve as a model for other post-conflict societies facing similar challenges. Barakat and Zyck (2009) [2].

The use of Compram can help in mediating between returning refugees, current occupants, and state claims, while Inspiration Labs can help in community-led spatial planning. The labs can prevent any K-shaped skills divides by investing, for example, in inclusive digital and vocational training, besides involving youth in co-designing education systems through labs.

Syria can also integrate psychosocial support schemes into its reconstruction programs and optimise them through the Inspiration Labs by community storytelling and collective healing. This would help reduce social tension, and bring in a clearer policy roadmap, with renewed public trust. More equitable resource distribution can be seen as a result of this effort, which would increase the local ownership of reconstruction. In the long run, this would bring sustainable and inclusive growth that would help reduce the risk of relapse into conflict.

5. Discussion and Conclusion
5.1. Proposed Framework for Conflict-Driven Complex Problems

Figure (1) proposes a potential sequence-based framework for dealing with conflicts driven complex problems. It suggests that when communities face a disruptive a complex problem, they might run an 'Inspiration Lab' for their strategy team to cleanse old assumptions, explore radical futures, and reframe the challenge in human-centric terms. This generates energy and new potential directions. It would realise that the chosen direction requires restructuring that will create conflict between divisions, unions, and management. Here, the 'Compram Approach' can be employed to handle that specific, resulting multi-stakeholder conflict, using its phases to analyse positions, negotiate trade-offs, and build a supported implementation plan.

The Compram Method is a structured, multi-phase, facilitator-led process that guides conflicting stakeholders from defining a complex societal problem, through analysing their own positions, to negotiating sustainable agreements, all while explicitly accounting for emotions, power, and system complexity. It's a methodology for managing the process of handling "wicked problems."

When a K-Shaped Economy shows after a conflict, it means that the complex interactions between people's real demand, policies, and market structures are not aligned. It is a wicked problem that can be "mitigated" through approaches as Inspiration Labs and the Compram method. They both work together to provide a rigorous, structured, and collaborative framework to move beyond simplistic analyses. Together, these two approaches develop more holistic and equitable strategies for managing this critical societal challenge. Without such a structured approach, the natural trajectory of a K-shaped recovery is towards greater social fragmentation and instability.

The importance of this joint approaches framework is that it would help in handling any possibilities of wrong handling of a complex community problem, especially after a conflict, for example, as mistaking average GDP growth for shared prosperity. Compram forces a deep definition of the problem as one of divergence, not just slow growth. The framework is explicit with diverse actors and experts, but we should ensure that a good communication model is applied to ensure everyone is always on the same page.
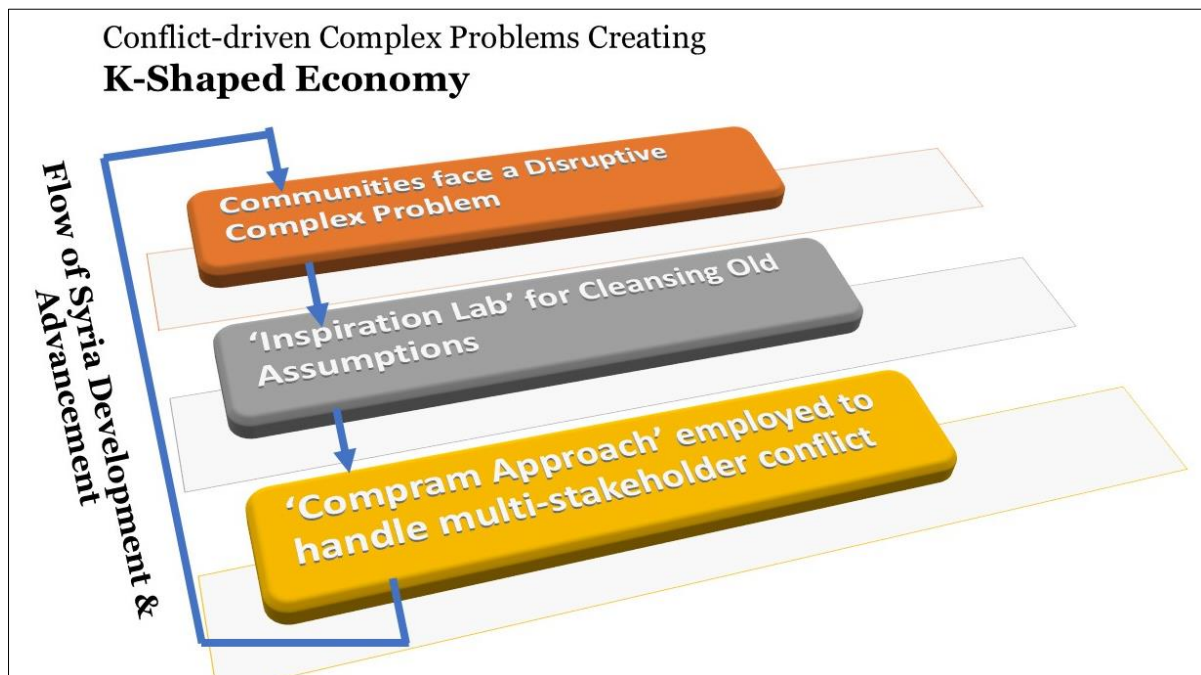
Fig 1:

5.2. Mitigating the Trap of K-Shaped Recovery in Liberated Syria

The spectre of a K-Shaped Recovery in post-liberation Syria is not a distant economic forecast but a pressing, immediate danger. The nation's profound physical destruction, deep social fractures, and traumatised population create a fertile ground for a recovery that benefits a connected few while leaving the majority behind. Such a divergent outcome would render aggregate growth figures meaningless, betray the sacrifices of the conflict, and ultimately lay the groundwork for renewed instability. This paper has argued that averting this fate requires moving beyond conventional, top-down reconstruction blueprints. Instead, Syria's recovery must be recognised and treated as a "wicked problem"—one demanding a process-oriented, psychologically astute, and inclusively negotiated approach.

The proposed integrated framework of Inspiration Economy Labs and the Compram Method offers a pragmatic yet visionary pathway.

5.3. Dealing with Syria Recovery Lifecycle

There are different phases of the recovery lifecycle that Syria have to face. In the cleansing and visioning phase, the Inspiration Labs can create a space of hope where the Inspiration Labs provide a "creative detox" for communities burdened by trauma and cynicism. By facilitating cross-sectoral dialogue, reframing problems, and co-creating aspirational narratives like "Syria 2040," these labs perform an essential function: they cleanse the cognitive and emotional blockages of war, rebuild a sense of shared agency, and establish a common horizon of inclusive prosperity. This phase generates the social energy and shared purpose necessary to embark on the difficult work of structural negotiation.

The second part of the recovery lifecycle is the structured negotiation and agreement phase where the Compram Method is used to build a shared vision to resolve conflicts over land, resources, power, and policy. Here, the rigorous, six-phase Compram Method becomes indispensable. By formally separating stakeholder analysis, mediating controlled negotiations, and explicitly addressing emotions and power imbalances, Compram provides the conflict-sensitive architecture to translate visionary goals into legitimate, implementable agreements. It ensures that the recovery process itself is an exercise in building a new social contract, not re-imposing old inequities.

The synthesis of these approaches—first inspiring a unified future, then structuring the complex bargaining to get there—is this paper's central contribution. It acknowledges that healing and deal-making are two sides of the same coin in post-conflict settings. Applying this framework to Syria suggests concrete starting points: national "Healing and Visioning" labs, followed by Compram-facilitated negotiations on critical flashpoints like property restitution, regional resource allocation, and inclusive economic policy, potentially piloted in a "Solidarity Reconstruction Zone."

Ultimately, the goal is to consciously engineer a "V-Shaped Recovery", one where the arms of the 'K' converge through deliberate policy and process rather than passively accepting a destructive divergence. This is not merely an academic exercise; it is a practical imperative for sustainable peace. The lessons extend beyond Syria's borders.

5.4. Implications of this Study

This paper delivers a new research line for post-conflicts and how they can mitigate a K-Shaped economy. For any society, similar to Syrai, which is emerging from deep conflict or systemic crisis, the integration of psychological renewal and structured multi-stakeholder negotiation may be the key to turning the end of violence into the beginning of a truly equitable and resilient future. The challenge for Syria, and the international community that seeks to support it, is to choose this more demanding, inclusive path—and in doing so, to rebuild not just cities, but a cohesive and just society.

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