



International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation.

Building Syria's Self-Sufficiency A Home-Grown Approach

Mohamed Buheji ^{1*}, Emmanuel Mushimiyimana ²

¹ Founder- International Institute of Inspiration Economy, Bahrain

² Senior Lecturer- Socioeconomic Institute for Advanced Studies (SIAS), Rwanda

* Corresponding Author: **Mohamed Buheji**

Article Info

ISSN (online): 2582-7138

Volume: 06

Issue: 03

May-June 2025

Received: 10-04-2025

Accepted: 03-05-2025

Page No: 976-984

Abstract

This study examines Syria's potential for achieving self-sufficiency by assessing its human, physical, material, and natural resources following the protracted revolution and post-Assad regime transition. Using qualitative inquiry, document analysis, and exploratory research, the paper identifies key resources—including arable land, natural gas, and human capital that could drive economic independence.

Through benchmarking with the Rwandan homegrown solutions for the self-sufficiency journey, the study recommends parallel macroeconomic reforms, particularly in foreign trade diversification beyond agricultural products and calcium phosphates. Strategic development of manufacturing, oil, gas, and mining sectors is essential. At the microeconomic level, households require stable incomes, insurance, electricity, housing, and job opportunities, supported by diaspora engagement. Drawing lessons from post-conflict Rwanda, the paper emphasises home-grown solutions, resource optimisation, and resilience-building to reduce aid dependency. The paper outlines the priorities envisaged through a road map reflected in Tables for the possible self-sufficiency in Syria until the recovery and development phases.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJMRGE.2025.6.3.976-984>

Keywords: Self-sufficiency, Syria, Rwanda, Resource Management, Socioeconomic Development, Post-Conflict Recovery, Agriculture, Manufacturing, Export Diversification

1. Introduction

The good management of the resources of any country leads to its self-sufficiency. In the case of Syria, we explore both resource potentials and also capability of management given the facts on the ground. In this paper, we use qualitative inquiry to answer the following question: what are the capabilities of self-sufficiency of Syria, given the human, physical, material and natural resources the country unique?

The researchers use document analysis and an exploratory study to highlight self-sufficiency potentials and the use of these resources after protracted conflict and the end of the Assad Regime. The paper shows that Syria has potential resources such as arable land, gas, human capital, and is increasingly adopting ICT and other skills that can help in uplifting self-sufficiency. However, the country is very dependent on external resources. Import is three to four times higher than export, the agriculture and animal husbandry are highly affected, and services, including health, transport, electricity, energy, and housing, need boosters.

This paper recommends that reforms in all sectors should be implemented in parallel macroeconomically, especially in foreign trade, and the country should not depend only on agricultural products and calcium phosphates for exports. There are many other areas to be developed at the macroeconomic level, such as manufacturing, oil, gas, and other exploration of mining resources. At the micro level, the household should have income, insurance, electricity, shelter, jobs, develop farming, and try to have mutual help with family members living abroad – diaspora, for family stability.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Self-sufficiency as theory

Self-sufficiency is being in a situation where a household, in microeconomic terms, or a nation in macroeconomic terms, can survive without depending on others' production or simply a country with limited dependence. The countries of developing nations mostly depend on 60 to 45 per cent of their income from foreign aid or loans due to their deficit in the balance of trade and lack of enough domestic production. Tessler (2025) ^[36] mentioned that with free trade and globalisation, the world economy is facing some challenges that require a nation to think of and implement local production facilities in order to survive shocks, sanctions, or shortages of some products that are necessary for the survival of people. These range from health facilities, medicines, food and materials of security - weapons (Tessler, 2025) ^[36].

Self-sufficiency means that whatever economic activity the household or the nation does, the goal is not to depend on others to survive, even if the country boosts free trade. Therefore, global or regional free trade becomes a tool to build national survival (Mushimiyimana and Buheji, 2024) ^[32].

The challenges of household and nation are when they have been depending on aid for a long time, which brings in the concept of aid dependence, whereby people fail to materialise aid into local production that can sustain their life after it is over. The concept of aid dependence syndrome means that the recipient of aid actually fails to overcome the situation of always receiving and not working for their own survival or mobilising investment, which boosts local employment (Moyo, 2010) ^[27]. In addition to that, aid has been an alternative to many societies with low production, while donor countries were not eager to increase it or were giving it with tight conditions that sometimes conflict with local interests, including the survival of people or national security (Moyo, 2010) ^[27].

Aid was also not tangible enough to enslave the local economy and integrate the market. Some money remained in the coffers of states or was misused by recipient country leaders who sometimes transform it into their own money and so embezzle it. We have seen many cases in African countries in last decades where aid was used for private gain and the recipient people received little or nothing from it. However, where aid was used properly in case of Rwanda post genocide governance, it can boost the economy and reach vulnerable people and therefore be an ingredient of change. Besides, where aid was misused, it failed to boost the economy and to build capacity for resilience and self-sufficiency in the unforeseen situation or crisis in the future.

For Moyo (2010) ^[27], aid died in Africa in the sense that it did not fully fulfil the needs of the young African generation and offer them jobs. Moyo (2010) ^[27] argues that aid in some African countries became an addiction that they often resort to instead of looking for another mechanism to raise funds for investment. The example was Ethiopia – the country that received almost 3.5 billion USD from donor countries and institutions, including the World Bank, USA, and UK, and mostly the aid comprises 50 to 60 per cent of the total budget. However, in the year 2010s, 16% of the Ethiopian population received food aid, and they depended on millions of tons of wheat from abroad to survive each year. (The Oakland Institute 2013) ^[37]. Rwanda used to have about 60% of aid dependence in the last 16 years and now at least 48%, and recently developed a system where almost 80% of its budget

will come from its internal income.

Learning from Rwanda, we see that the country developed on self-reliance measures given the global challenges to nation building, including abrupt change of foreign policy of donor states, such as the European Union as an organisation and some EU countries as states. This induces interference of the donor into national matters of state sovereignty and interest, including security. In many statements, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda highlighted that he prefers trade than aid as the latter is too conditional, while markets are neutral (Kagame, 2015) ^[23].

The challenges that exist for families and nations to be self-sufficient are that (1) they may adopt conflicting policies and therefore fall into a conflict trap. Collier (2008) ^[15] argues that when a community fall into conflict, as they fight, they get poorer and as they are poor, they easily fall into the recruitment of rebellion and indeed fight again. He mentions that poverty induces conflict and conflict triggers poverty, again, what he calls the conflict trap and the poverty traps. His hypothesis is that the country can never develop until it decides to set up peace, distribute resources to people and develop the economy (Collier, 2008) ^[15].

Other difficulties have been (1) socio-economic marginalization, (2) misuse of resources or resource curse and extractive enclave economy (Auty, 1993, Mushimiyimana and Buheji, 2023) ^[32, 3], (3) some forms of neoliberal exploitation and too much cultural dependence (Ferguson, 2006) ^[16], (4) corruption and bad governance (Mathai, 2009), (5) dependence syndrome and greedy mindset of household members or some national level corrupt leaders (Moyo, 2010) ^[27].

To build self-sufficiency is to overcome these challenges and induce a resilience mindset from individual citizens to leaders of the nation, building proactiveness (Buheji, 2018a; Buheji, 2018b, Buheji, 2020; Buheji *et al.* 2020a; Buheji *et al.* 2020b; Mushimiyimana and Buheji, 2024, Bartle, 2012) ^[5, 11, 32]. Resilience economics is to accept the agility and suffering of today while building a foundation of tomorrow. Challenges are normal and poverty is real in the case of Syria, but building economic resilience means accepting the situation which is challenging, but building a reliable foundation that trigger self-sufficiency. These foundations are for instance, education, security, health services, justice, and jobs (Buheji and Mushimiyimana 2024) ^[32], but also economic bases such as modernising agriculture, bringing value chain for resources including mineral, oil resources, as well as industrialising. In the case of Syria and many other developing nations, the countries have no direct hand in the control of energy resources as regional, global actors partly or fully control them -see the case of USA influence in Eastern Syria. (Shaffer, 2025, Agnew, 2009) ^[35, 1].

To overcome resource curse especially in oil or mineral resource includes strategic use investment and arranging income sharing between investor and state (Mushimiyimana, 2017), and also using resource revenues for the betterment or wellbeing of society – distributing, disenclaving and building good governance and political and socioeconomic inclusion (Authy 1993, Ferguson, 2009, Mushimiyimana, 2019).

2.2 Self-Sufficiency as a socioeconomic approach

Self-sufficiency is a socio-economic approach by which a person or nation is economically and socially quite independent from other people or other nations (Mushimiyimana and Buheji, 2024) ^[32]. The Oxford

Advanced Learner's Dictionary of current English defines self-sufficiency as the ability to fulfil one's own needs, without help from others: for example, a country self-sufficient in grain such as maize, wheat and rice. Buheji *et al.* (2020) ^[11] highlighted that being self-sufficient is about obtaining, having, or producing the resources one needs through optimising the utilisation of these resources and potentials of what one owns or produces in quantities and quality, needed during peace or in crisis.

The concept has been growing rapidly after the failure of donor countries to induce development in many developing nations. Therefore, self-sufficiency has been equated with self-reliance as a mechanism to reduce dependence of nations on foreign aid. Self-sufficiency, generally in terms of economy and specifically in energy and food are booster of sovereignty capability and a determinant of future survival in unforeseeable situations, and in addition to food and energy, some add defence capabilities. Tessler (2025) ^[36] argues that sovereign capability includes defence, medical infrastructure and products that the country may have to survive during global challenges. He suggested the examples of building domestic medical and defence facilities, such as Moderna Technology Centre-Melbourne (MTC-M) in order to decrease foreign imports in vaccination after the COVID-19 experience in Australia.

Self-Sufficiency is not becoming autarchy, which is an economy based on a country's production and market alone. Self-sufficiency does not compromise international trade, free market economy, being recipient of aid but limit the overreliance on them given their shortcomings unreliability, and insufficiency to solve local problems including material and non-materials needs of citizens, economic crisis and shortage; as well as the unemployment and other market dysfunctions (Moyo, 2010, Tessler, 2025) ^[27, 36].

Syria has a domestic age dependence of 53.9 per cent in 2023 (Trading Economics, 2025) ^[38] and poverty, which affects 69 per cent of its population in 2022, whereby one in four was extremely poor in the same year (World Bank, 2025). The country's agricultural products were low and not sufficient, and food insecurity has been intense in the country (World bank, 2025). The country needs to boost its economic performance as dependence at the local level is high.

The Syrian economy is not only locally dependent but also internationally dependent. The country is highly dependent on agricultural products – olive oil and calcium phosphates for export. A population of 18, 604,031 estimated for 2021, the GDP per capita was estimated at \$6,000 USD and with chance to rise further due to the establishment of peace since 2024, after a long civil war. Moreover, Peace and unity are cornerstones for all processes of self-sufficiency. This gives hope for Syria. The philosophical mind of working, producing and selling goes hand in hand with the spirits of ease doing business, good service delivery and peace in mind and in environment as the study of post genocide Rwanda, against Tutsi, shows (Gatwa and Mbonyinkebe, 2022, Pp 30-31, Buheji and Mushimiyimana, 2025) ^[18, 10].

In this study, we focus on the economic aspect of self-sufficiency of Syria, as in the former article, we focused on post-conflict state building and unity of Syria after the fall of the Assad regime (see Buheji and Mushimiyimana, 2025) ^[10]. Therefore, the paper addresses the question on what can be done for Syria to build its self-sufficiency after the fall of the Assad regime.

2.3 Self-sufficiency and home-grown solutions

Homegrown solution is citizen-based resource mobilisation, both local and in diaspora, to produce and solve problems at local and from local or regional resources and skills. Homegrown solution has been one of the ways that countries used to gain momentum for activities and production, and also involves diaspora in different activities and services (Gacinya and Uwimbabazi, 2022, p. 153) ^[18].

Socioeconomic problems require homegrown solutions. These are, for instance, a lack of jobs, a lack of enough health service funds and infrastructure, a lack of enough water, and basic needs. In the home-grown solution approach, every country has to mobilise resources, especially from nationals living inside the territory or in diaspora, to contribute to finding solutions adequate to foreseen problems. For Buheji (2020) ^[8], socioeconomic problem identification and solving require studying what the society actually needs to overcome a threat, such as poverty, illiteracy and lack of water, and then transforming problems into solutions through setting up different activities.

In this framework, resources are not only money but also other ways, including the use of social and human capital as well as a knowledge-based economy. In this framework, Rwanda, for instance, after the genocide against Tutsi, managed to establish a home-grown solution, including finding out mechanism of ensuring health services funding by establishing "Mutuelle de Sante" and Community Health Worker (CHW) (Mujawase, 2019, p. 235) ^[28]. The health insurance scheme covers at least 90 per cent of the population and serves them from local to national reference hospitals.

People also through their population, can identify their need and address it by themselves through Umuganda. Local communities often have their say and they decide on what need to be done in their area during umuganda (community work) gatherings (Gatwa and Monyinkebe, 2019) ^[19].

The country used Umuganda – free public work, decentralised which happens once a month. to build enough schoolrooms, repair roads, etc. For instance, during COVID-19, thousands of classrooms were built to receive new pupils and decrease congestion. Iron sheets were provided through government support but schools were built by people themselves and funds and labour from the local people. Umuganda allows the government, through decentralized structures, to engage in civic education related to any government plan and to sensitize people to regard government needs as their own, moreover, the use of umuganda in public projects reduces costs through the use of free and joint labor (Gatwa and Mbonyinkebe, 2019, p 77) ^[19].

Homegrown solution occurs for self-sufficiency purposes or decreasing overdependence and is a concept that can be developed further in different areas of community development activities. It exists as an alternative to foreign solutions for the local community and a reliable one in different domain, including development of local industry or local initiatives for work, including developing carpentry through cooperatives (Buheji and Mushimiyimana, 2023, Mushimiyimana, 2022) ^[9, 31].

3. Methodology

In order to assess Syria's self-sufficiency capabilities, we used qualitative enquiries such as document analysis, observation and a home-grown approach developed in Rwanda post genocide era. The documents analysed are

annals of the Surian economy since the year 2020 to 2025. Others are press releases and media channels, and documents focusing on Syria, especially after the 2024 revolution.

The Observations collected since the end of the conflict in Syria in 2024, focused on the movement of the country in the way toward stability and sustainability of the socioeconomic situation. This paper came like proactive research to support the framing of policies that can consolidate that journey and inform about choices of self-sufficiency as a priority of state interest and community development strategies.

The research uses both the micro and macro levels of economic self-sufficiency of Syria. At the microeconomic level, we analyse the resilience and capability approach and the family level. At the macroeconomic level, we analyse country's production, its balance of trade, and its production.

4. Benchmarking possible home-grown self-sufficiency solutions in Syria

4.1 Exploring 'how can Syria develop self-sufficiency and home-grown solutions?'

Syria faces immense challenges after years of conflict, including economic sanctions, infrastructure damage, and displacement. To reduce dependence on foreign aid and rebuild sustainably, Syria must focus on local resources, innovation, and community-driven solutions.

To build a practical roadmap, we need to understand Syria's types of natural, physical and human assets that would complement the social asset that would build self-sufficiency.

4.1.1 Agriculture and food security

To revive the farming industry, Syria can rehabilitate damaged lands using low-tech methods like no-till farming. Promote drought-resistant crops (e.g., durum wheat, lentils, olives) and encourage urban farming through home gardening initiatives.

To complement these efforts Syria, need to reduce the food waste and establish local collection and storage centres for grains and vegetables. The country is also in need of developing the small-scale food processing (canning, drying) industry to extend shelf-life.

Renewable energy can be implemented to help shift to solar-

powered irrigation pumps instead of diesel. Besides, biogas systems to convert organic waste into fuel.

4.1.2 Boosting local small and medium industries

Syria is a haven for the traditional crafts industry. This can be further developed by developing more local artisans in textiles (Aleppo's fabrics), natural soap (laurel soap), and handmade glass (Damascus glass).

Part of demanding self-sufficiency in Syria is recycling and upcycling. This can be done by repurpose war debris into agricultural spare parts and furniture from scrap metal.

4.1.3 Other possible industries

The other self-sufficiency-based possible industries such as pharmaceutical medicines, like basic antibiotics and Oral rehydration salts (ORS).

Also, home solar systems and solar panel production using silica from sand can be differentiated. This can be supported by deploying small wind turbines in coastal and mountainous areas, besides building biogas digesters in rural areas for cooking fuel.

Syria can be rebuilt from within by leveraging local resources, grassroots innovation, and decentralized systems. The country can gradually reduce dependency on imports and foreign aid while fostering sustainable growth.

4.2 The microeconomic aspect of Syria's self-sufficiency

The microeconomic level of households in Syria is very low due to 13 years of war, and an earthquake that deteriorated the country's economy and left people unemployed. UNHCR (2023) ^[40] shows that 85% of people in Syria do not meet the basic needs, including food, shelter, etc. However, there is potential for a domestic self-sufficiency mechanism.

The following Table (1) shows these possibilities and predictions in 10 years ahead as per the required family sufficiency areas, in relevance to the recent or current situation. The authors propose potential home-grown solutions, benchmarking to Rwanda's three decades of experience. Table (1) also foresight what type of self-sufficiency can be developed over the next 10 to 15 years.

Table 1

Syria family sufficiency areas	Recent or Current Situation	Existing Strategic potentials for family self-sufficiency	Foresight in 10-15 Years
1- Housing / Shelter and Land Tenure	There is still problem of shelter, irregular housing, and problem of access to land tenure in different constituencies.	Making small houses for shelter of people who are poor or vulnerable. Reforming the Land Registry Office so that it reaches decentralised entities. Setting up harmonized and flexible institution and law to ease land and housing property common for the whole country as well as establishing establishment of property right in general for the whole territory and especially in Al-Haidariya neighbourhood, in Aleppo and Al-Qaboun neighbourhood in Damascus (Mahallesi and Caddasi, 2020) ^[26] .	Making sure that there are 100 per cent housing and shelter levels to accommodate people, including the vulnerable ones. Access to land tenure and titles countrywide using Geographical Information System (GIS) and Land Information System (LIS) to further reduce conflict (see Mushimiyimana, 2023) ^[30] .
2-Food	9 million of people have food insecurity, and 3 million severely food insecure (World Food Program, 2025)	Increase farming and adopting modern crop farming given the variety that are fertile in Syria, Develop agriculture, especially crop production and the food processing industry, from center to the local level.	Food security and alleviation of hunger and malnutrition countrywide, and develop food for welfare programs in communities, including setting up a school meal mechanism.

3-Education	7,000 schools were damaged, need of repair, some are being repaired as shown in the picture below. Education is stretched and underfunded, inconsistency in academic programs, and 2.4 million school dropout cases due to different issues (Qaddour, and Husain, 2022) ^[34] .	Need to set up coherent academic program, Continue repairs schools and building new ones, raising fund and community contribution to building schools. Encourage youth to rejoin schools while avoiding school drop out again	Establish enough school for kids and raise budget and allow both private and public school to raise their own funding in addition to national budget. Maintaining and upraising the good level of literacy rate. Increasing quality in vocational and technical schools.
4-Family Stability	Some families are disintegrated due to war and conflict; millions are still abroad, and others were relocated (Operation and Policy Centre and The Centre for Operational Analysis and Research, 2022) ^[13] .	Repatriation of refugees as key project, establishing secession clauses, creating a good relationship with the diaspora, and putting ways that families can communicate in distances, and ways of helping each other easily send money to each other and easily registering their property.	More family stability More security on the property, Strong and supportive diaspora. More stable families
5-Happiness	3.46 lower compared to global average which is 5.42	Increasing games and other home-grown happiness solutions and human security mechanisms. Decrease social inequality and alleviation of generalised poverty	To have reached a global average index of 5.42 or surpass it at 6.00 rate.
6-Justice	Long period of conflict, abuse and impunity triggered social injustices and culture of impunity	Setting locally and decentralized institution of justice grounded from integral person in society. Setting up reparations mechanism. Setting up of sharing information and truth on missing persons during conflict and remembering the victims. Building inclusive governance and development.	Setting a free and just society of Syria
7-Access to Clean Water and Washing Services	About 14.6 million of people do not have safe and clean water, while 7 million are in acute need of washing services (UNICEF, 2025) ^[41]	Increasing tools to access water in the towns and in the villages. Increasing water channels and increasing community awareness and technology to access water. water and waste water treatment technologies, wetlands construction and the use of treated waste water for irrigation. (UNICEF, 2025) ^[41]	Having solved the problem of access to clean water. Access to clean water for at least 98 % of the population. More WASH programs in schools (UNICEF 2025) ^[41] .
8-Security	The country is still facing insecurity in a few regions, risk of losing sovereignty to powerful neighbours		
9-Access to Health	Shortage of medical supplies, healthcare professionals, and funding (Generis Global, 2024). Disparities in the region on access to health care. (Generis Global; 2024).	Institutionalising and training of Local health workers and setting up local health workers. Setting up a vaccination facility mechanism, removing disparities in health care services across regions. Allowing more private sector groups or individuals to open their clinics to supplement the existing public ones. Efficiency and effectiveness in health insurance.	90% of coverage in the health insurance scheme. 10% other private or special insurance to add on 100% of ease of access to health and vaccination services.
10-Income, Production and Management	GDP per capita is 6,000 \$, The agricultural land is almost 28%, wheat and a few other commodities are bought with government subsidy, however, the corruption and managerial ethics of production and services in Syria have been generally very low.	Introducing an advanced system of performance management, control and anti-corruption measures. Supporting job creation and extending farming, industry and local production cooperative and private initiatives. Allowing foreign and local investment and redressing energy production and export	GDP per capita 15,000 \$ in 10 years.
11-Employment	Very low – actually in negative	Recovery of the economy should be prioritised with a public work payment scheme, and if possible, an unemployment	90% of employment

		subsidy, even at the local level, with local initiatives and international stakeholders	
12-Insurance	Internationally, the country is still ranked as an Extreme risk level (Hotspot, 2025) Kidnap ransom, crisis management, medical evacuation and transportation difficulties (Hotspot Cover, 2025) ^[22] . Nationally, there exists public health insurance And private health insurance for advanced medical care.	Both need to be developed, decentralised, funded, and service upgraded. Services should be improved, and insurance coverage for business, fire, and agriculture production could be implemented	Service improved.
13- Cattle and Domestic Animals	22 million head of Awassi Sheep, 1.5 million local and Shami goats, 27,000 camels, 6,000 buffalos, 27% of the agriculture economy, and 95% of home consumption, especially in rural areas, data are from the period near when the conflict erupted in 2011 (Aidaros, and Abdessalam, 2008) ^[2] . Decline in water buffalo numbers in the farms due to protracted violence that affected not only people but also animals. Example in North Western Syria (Clark, 2018) ^[14] .	Increasing the number of cattle using local and regional strategies to bring back and reproduce cattle and sheep. Making sure that a big number of farms and rural household have sheep, goats and buffalo again and in good numbers.	Having animal contribution of 50% of agriculture sector. Having the number of water buffalo increased.
14-Farming/ Food Crops	Farms spoilt Access to water has been problematic, and irrigation has been an issue.	Increase fertilising, irrigation and crop production sites for increasing the availability of seed to plant countrywide.	Restoring the irrigation system, dams and multiplying seeds and crops at least by 80 per cent yield sufficiency level
15-Power / Electricity and Access to the Internet	There is a high need for access to electricity in both household and public institutions. Shortage and cut-offs exist countrywide. 19.5 million connected cellular phones 9.01 million people connected with the internet, and 35.8 % of internet penetration in the early months of 2025. (Kemp, 2025) ^[24]	Need to increase access in both urban and rural areas. Thinking of urbanisation and semi-urbanisation to ease access of electricity and power. Continue mobilising public and private initiatives to increase the mobile system in the country, setting more services online and on phone, including e-services and mobile money.	80% access to electricity and energy. 70 % internet penetration and 85 % of the population from 15 years and above) owning cellular phones.

Source: authors, 2025

4.3 The macroeconomic aspect of Syria's self-sufficiency

Table (2) shows that the Syrian self-sufficiency is possible though difficult exercise. It shows the socioeconomic, agro-economic and other aspects of micro as well as macro economy and recommend the strategies to solve different problems. These recommendations is not a panacea to Syrian economic problem but part of the contribution to each sector and area mentioned in the table above.

More importantly, the country needs highly micro and macroeconomic reestablishment and progress after protracted revolution (Buheji and Mushimiymanana, 2025, Turkmani *et al* 2022) ^[10]. The analysis made here was to engineer and awaken economic change that leads to self-sufficiency. The deficit we see in the balance of trade can

only be filled by boosting production, education, ICT, industrialisation, regional integration and economic liberalisation, so that Syria reaches overseas markets in return and boosts even other sectors such as manufacturing, boosting gas and energy, tourism and the infrastructure sector.

The opportunity of stability and removal of economic sanctions by most of the donors, such as the European Union and individual countries, will facilitate building internal economic resilience. If the country continues what it started with after the revolution, i.e. to abolish corruption, mismanagement, while rising distribution, and production awareness, certainly Syria will be self-sufficient in the coming years.

Table 2

Macroeconomic indicators	Recent or current situation	Plan or Strategies for Self-Sufficiency	Foresight in 10-15 Years
1-Export	Mostly dominated by agricultural products except Calcium Phosphates. \$53.6 Million in 2023 (OEC, 2025)	Increase the scope, products and manufacturing industry. Not relying only on agricultural products for exports. Increase the scope of the market. Reworking on gas and energy exports. Continue supporting export products such as olive oil, calcium phosphates, cotton, but also diversifying with energy and manufacturing products	Reaching overseas markets, not necessarily neighbouring countries alone.
2-Import	Import is still high compared to export. \$178 Million in 2023. (OEC, 2025)	Maintaining imports for people's welfare while increasing resilience for new production and new markets	Decreasing dependence on imports at least making a balance of trade less negative
3-Balance of Trade	\$ -124.4 Million (deficit)	Decreasing dependence on imports, trying to produce more locally and regionally with the help of regional integration and Foreign Direct Investments.	Significantly decrease the deficit in the balance of trade.

Source: Authors, but data from different cited sources as indicated above.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Syria is dependent in all sectors of the micro- and macro-level of the economy. The paper highlights that Syria has the potential of resources such as arable land, gas, ICT development, and human capital that help in uplifting self-sufficiency at both macro and micro economic levels. There is a need to boost employment, develop investment in farming, infrastructure, electricity, and energy, alleviate household levels of poverty and deprivation in housing, land and income.

Since the country is very dependent, especially due to protracted conflict, imports are much higher than exports, actually three to four times higher. In ten years, this should be corrected by boosting production, manufacturing and agriculture technology. In ten years, activities should be created to decrease the deficit in the balance of trade. This includes more diversification in exports, not relying only on agricultural products and calcium phosphates.

At the macroeconomic level, many other areas need development, such as manufacturing, oil and gas in the Eastern part of Syria and exploration in other parts. Talking with regional and global powers for the ease of exploitation of gas and oil energy, like the USA and other regional powers (Shaffer, 2025; Agnew, 2009) ^[35, 1]. At the micro level, households should have income, jobs, develop farming, and try to have mutual help and network with family members living abroad – diaspora, for family stability.

The economic sanction is being lifted by many donors like the USA gradually, besides the EU and individual states and organisations; thus, it is an opportunity to use well as aid and funds will to uplift the economy of the country and trigger more economic independence if Syria manage it well and avoids corruption.

Syria's journey toward self-sufficiency is not merely an economic imperative but a foundational pillar for sovereignty, resilience, and post-conflict recovery. This study demonstrates that while the country faces significant challenges—including import dependency, degraded infrastructure, and fragmented institutions—its latent potential in agriculture, energy, human capital, and localised industries offers a viable roadmap for autonomy.

6. References

1. Agnew JA. Sovereignty and Globalisation. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; 2009.
2. Aidaros H, Abdessalam F. Tool for the evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services [Internet]. Paris: World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE); 2008 Jul [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.woah.org/app/uploads/2021/03/finalreport-syria.pdf>
3. Auty RM. Sustaining Development in Mineral Economies: The Resource Curse Thesis. London: Routledge; 1993.
4. Bartle P. The Dependence Syndrome; When community members lack attitudes of self-reliance, what needs to be changed? [Internet]. Vancouver: Community Empowerment Collective; 2012 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://cec.vcn.bc.ca/cmp/modules/pd-dep.htm>
5. Buheji M. Understanding the Power of Resilience Economy: An Inter-Disciplinary Perspective to Change the World Attitude to Socioeconomic Crisis. Bloomington: AuthorHouse; 2018.
6. Buheji M. Role of Empathetic Engineering in Building a More Resilient Green Economy. Case Study on Creating Resilient Self-Sufficient Food Security Programs in Middle East. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*. 2018;5(3):148-157.
7. Buheji M. Reviewing How 'Creating Resilient Economies' Can Help Developing Countries in Uncertain Times. *American Journal of Economics*. 2019;9(5):259-263.
8. Buheji M. Visualizing Resilient Communities. Bloomington: AuthorHouse; 2020.
9. Buheji M, Mushimiyimana E. Optimising Socioeconomic Resilience Strategies- Case Study of Rwanda. *International Journal of Social Sciences Research and Development*. 2023;5(2):94-113.
10. Buheji M, Mushimiyimana E. Re-Engineering Coexistence in Syria- A Comparative Study. *International Journal of Advanced and Multidisciplinary Social Science*. 2025;10(1):1-11.
11. Buheji M, Vovk Korže A, Eidan S, Abdulkareem T, Perepelkin N, Mavric B, *et al*. Global Self-Sufficiency

- Network-A Collaborative Approach for Addressing Post-COVID-19 Challenges. *Business and Economic Research*. 2020;10(3):1-22.
12. Buheji M, Vovk Korže A, Eidan S, Abdulkareem T, Perepelkin N, Mavric B, *et al.* Optimising Pandemic Response through Self-Sufficiency - A Review Paper. *American Journal of Economics*. 2020;10(5):277-283.
 13. Center for Operational Analysis and Research, Operation and Policy Center. Left Behind: Family Separation and Its Impacts in Three Damascus Neighbourhoods [Internet]. 2022 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://coar-global.org/2022/01/26/left-behind-family-separation-and-its-impacts-in-three-damascus-neighbourhoods/>
 14. Clark J. Where they no longer roam: Syria's disappearing water buffalo. *Middle East Eye* [Internet]. 2018 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/features/where-they-no-longer-roam-syrias-disappearing-water-buffalo>
 15. Collier P. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2008.
 16. Ferguson J. *The Global Shadow: Africa in Neoliberal World Order*. Durham: Duke University Press; 2006.
 17. Gadd CJ, Smith CG. Economy of Syria. In: *Encyclopædia Britannica* [Internet]. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica; 2025 Mar 18 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Syria/Economy>
 18. Gacinya J, Uwimbabazi P. Rwanda Day Scheme: a Strategy of National Building. In: Gatwa T, Mbonyinkebe D, editors. *Home Grown Initiatives and Nation Building in Africa*. Berlin: Lit Verlag; 2022. p. 151-164.
 19. Gatwa T, Mbonyinkebe D. *Home Grown Solutions: A Legacy to Generations in Africa*. Yaoundé: Éditions CLÉ; 2019.
 20. Generis Global. An Overview of the Healthcare System in Syria [Internet]. 2024 Nov 29 [cited 2025 May 22]. Available from: <https://generisonline.com/an-overview-of-the-healthcare-system-in-syria/>
 21. Harrison G. Developmentalism: The Normative and Transformative within Capitalism. In: *Critical Frontiers Of Theory, Research, And Policy In International Development Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2020.
 22. Hotspot Cover. Syria Country Report: Country Risk Level: Extreme [Internet]. 2025 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://hotspotcover.com/safety/country-reports/syria-insurance>
 23. Kagame P. Aid is political, Markets are neutral-President Kagame Capital Markets Conference [Internet]. YouTube; 2015 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qh26sXNj7eY>
 24. Kemp S. Digital 2025: Syria [Internet]. *DataReportal*; 2025 Mar 3 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-syria>
 25. Maathai W. *The Challenge for Africa*. New York: Pantheon; 2009.
 26. Mahallesi PHE, Caddesi C. Syrian Regime Institutions for Real Estate Development and how they Operate [Internet]. Istanbul: The Day After; 2020 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://tda-sy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Syrian-Regime-Institutions-for-Real-Estate-Development-and-how-they-Operate-ENG-1.pdf>
 27. Moyo D. *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2010.
 28. Mujawase F. Role of Community health Workers. In: Gatwa T, Mbonyinkebe D, editors. *Home Grown Initiatives and Nation Building in Africa; the Dynamic of Social and Cultural Heritages in Rwanda*. Berlin: Lit Verlag; 2019.
 29. Mushimiyimana E. *Divergent Interests of Actors in the Great Lakes Region: A Threat to Peace and Development in the Eastern DRC and in the whole Region, A Systemic Approach* [dissertation]. Antwerp: University of Antwerp; 2011.
 30. Mushimiyimana E. GIS use and Land Conflict in Rwanda: Case of Gasabo District. *Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies*. 2023;5(1). Available from: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/jacaps/vol5/iss1/7>
 31. Mushimiyimana E, Mulinda KC, Ya-bititi G. Management for Change: Case of Agakinjoro Wood, Metal, and Plastic Processing Cooperative in Kigali. In: Gatwa T, Mbonyinkebe D, editors. *Home Grown Initiatives and Nation Building in Africa; the Dynamic of Social and Cultural Heritages in Rwanda*. Berlin: Lit Verlag; 2022.
 32. Mushimiyimana E, Buheji M. Rwanda's Self Sufficiency Journey - Analysis of Achievements, Challenges, and Way-Forward in The Context of Sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal of Management*. 2024;15(1):43-66.
 33. Observatory of Economic Complexity. Syria [Internet]. 2025 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/syr>
 34. Qaddour K, Husain S. Syria's Education Crisis: A Sustainable Approach after 11 years of Crisis [Internet]. Washington: Middle East Institute; 2022 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/2022-03/Syria%E2%80%99s%20Education%20crisis%20-%20A%20Sustainable%20Approach%20After%2011%20years%20of%20Conflict_1.pdf
 35. Shaffer B. Syria's energy sector and its impact on stability and regional developments [Internet]. Washington: Atlantic Council; 2025 Jan 17 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/syrias-energy-sector-and-its-impact-on-stability-and-regional-developments/>
 36. Tessler A. Sovereign Capabilities: Self Sufficiency is a new priority [Internet]. Oxford: Oxford Economics; 2025 Mar 11 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.oxfordeconomics.com/resource/sovereign-capabilities-self-sufficiency-is-a-new-priority/>
 37. The Oakland Institute. *Development Aid to Ethiopia: Overlooking Violence, Marginalization, and Political Repression* [Internet]. Oakland: The Oakland Institute; 2013 Jul 17 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: https://www.oaklandinstitute.org/sites/oaklandinstitute.org/files/OI_Brief_Development_Aid_Ethiopia.pdf
 38. Trading Economics. Syria Age Dependency Ratio (% of Working – age Population) – 2025 Data 2026 Forecast 1960 – 2023 Historical [Internet]. 2025 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://tradingeconomics.com/syria/age-dependency-ratio>

- <https://tradingeconomics.com/syria/age-dependency-ratio-percent-of-working-age-population-wb-data.html>
39. Turkmani R, Mehchy Z, Gharibah M. Building Resilience in Syria Assessing fragilities and strengthening positive coping mechanisms [Internet]. Edinburgh: Peace and Conflict Resolution Platform; 2022 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://peacerep.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Resilience-Syria-2022.pdf>
 40. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Factsheet Syria: Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion [Internet]. Geneva: UNHCR; 2023 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/UNHCR%20Syria%20Factsheet%20-%20Livelihoods.pdf>
 41. United Nations Children's Fund. Syria Arab Republic: Water, sanitation and hygiene Safe water, toilets and good hygiene keep children alive and healthy [Internet]. New York: UNICEF; 2025 [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.unicef.org/syria/water-sanitation-and-hygiene>
 42. World Food Programme. Syria [Internet]. Rome: WFP; [cited 2025 May 27]. Available from: <https://www.wfp.org/emergencies/syria-emergency>