

Introduction

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This special issue of *Plurimondi* contains the proceedings of the Gaza Seminar held in July 16 2025 in the Polytechnic University of Bari. It provides a complete report of the solidaristic work made in 2025 by an international group of experts, made of university professors and technical representatives of public institutions, with the aim of supporting the 2024 Gaza Phoenix strategic plan through preparation of some major projects of reconstruction and redevelopment. The major projects selected by the authors of GPsp (fundamentally pieces of the civil society of Gaza with their friendship and estimation relations with some persons from Palestinian universities, in our case Birzeit Univ. Ramallah) for the post-war time deal with water and energy provision, reconstruction of housing and social services with special attention to schools and hospitals, transportation, organization and planning, agriculture, traditional and innovative knowledge-based economy, protection of the environment, with the obvious corollary of a project for removing the enormous quantities of rubble created by the Israeli bombs.

The idea of preparing some detailed implementation projects came from the group of experts assembled by the Polytechnic University of Bari when some authors of GPsp having occasionally met in Nablus persons from the academic and family circles of PUoB demanded help to them for pushing forward GPsp with the explicit

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recommmendation of keeping the projects in strict adherence with the aspirations and indications of the local civil society.

During the work, notwithstanding some attempts of ceasefire, Gaza registered the death of almost 70,000 deaths or more (50% women and children) on a population of 2 million, the complete destruction of its physical structure, water and energy equipments included, and a persistent situation of siege which caused the end of all the essential means of survival of the population. With the arrival of the winter 2025-2026 the further worsening of this terrible situation can be easily predicted. Lubna Masarwa, a journalist based in Jerusalem, wrote in the last few days that 125,000 out of 135,000 tents have been destroyed by the increasingly bad metereological conditions (Internazionale no. 1645 Dec. 19, 2026, p. 33).

In this tragic scene, the Rafah corridor Egypt-Palestine remains closed. We hope that the projects in solidaristic preparation, which span from water and energy to housing and planning and knowledge, from economy to policies and agriculture and law, and from moral to ethical behaviors in the human community of Gaza in its war tragedy and give practical and spiritual life to the following pages of Plurimondi will be directly implemented by the local communities and that Gaza will soon come back to its long and important historical heritage. To be in tune with the starting encounters and the premises, the projects in preparation for donation are scalable in time, implementable by local agents and by local means and materials, environmentally sustainable, targeted to host the entire population of Gaza, friendly for their and referable to a sociotechnical culture and tradition.

Even if the work is heavy we feel ourselves highly honored for the moral and technical gifts that we are receiving from Gaza.

The central section of this issue includes brief scientific papers elaborated by each author from their presentations delivered during the Seminar. It opens with the Gaza Phoenix Recovery Framework itself, presented by Salem, Kittana and Gola as a locally led, interdisciplinary alternative to donor-driven reconstruction models, placing dignity, social cohesion, and local agency at the core of recovery. Then Abis and Barbone follow, who frame the reconstruction of Gaza's water and sanitation systems through a phased and operational approach that moves from emergency response to long-term resilience, emphasizing public health, environmental protection, and the rebuilding of local technical capacity. La Scala proposes solar microgrids as a scalable humanitarian response to Gaza's intertwined electricity and water crises, highlighting decentralized renewable energy systems as a foundation for resilience, autonomy, and rapid recovery. Subsequently, Mossa and De Padova contribute a study on sustainable seawater desalination in environmentally sensitive contexts, presenting modelling and monitoring approaches that reconcile freshwater production with the protection of marine ecosystems. In Ficarelli's and Neglia's paper, a culturally sensitive framework is developed for recovering Gaza's urban and cultural landscape, emphasizing heritage, memory, and identity as indispensable components of social healing and sustainable rebuilding. The next paper by Leone situates green infrastructure, ecosystem services, and nature-based solutions as key planning tools for post-crisis urban resilience, integrating environmental, social, and spatial dimensions of reconstruction. Then Giuffrida, Viscio, Binetti and Ottomanelli advance a short-term, low-cost mobility strategy designed to rapidly restore accessibility while remaining compatible with long-term spatial visions, prioritizing inclusion, flexibility, and sustainability. Barbanente and Khakee address the profound uncertainties

shaping Gaza's recovery by proposing a scenario-based, participatory methodology capable of transforming political, social, and economic instability into strategic guidance for the implementation of the Gaza Phoenix Recovery Framework. The paper by Borri and Scandale explores Gaza's reconstruction as a cognitive and cultural process, arguing that an endogenous, knowledge-based development model—rooted in tradition, youth, education, and human capital—is essential for building a resilient and autonomous future. Then Kubursi and De Lucia critically examine the distinction between reconstruction and redevelopment, arguing that Gaza's future depends on reclaiming sovereignty, policy space, and endogenous development capacities rather than reproducing pre-existing structural dependencies.¹¹ The devastation of Gaza's agricultural sector is analysed by Melozzi and Di Terlizzi, who outline a two-phase recovery strategy aimed at restoring livelihoods, food security, and long-term sustainability through locally adapted and water-efficient practices.¹² Finally, Sater et al. situate the ongoing destruction of Gaza within the framework of international criminal law, calling for recognition, prevention, accountability, and responsibility as ethical imperatives for the international community; this contribution is published courtesy of Times of Malta.

The volume concludes with a section of institutional and/or political remarks delivered during the Seminar, which frame the scientific contributions within a broader ethical, civic, and cultural horizon. These interventions reaffirm the shared responsibility of academic institutions, public bodies, and civil society in confronting destruction, safeguarding human dignity, and sustaining a collective commitment to peace, justice, and reconstruction.