



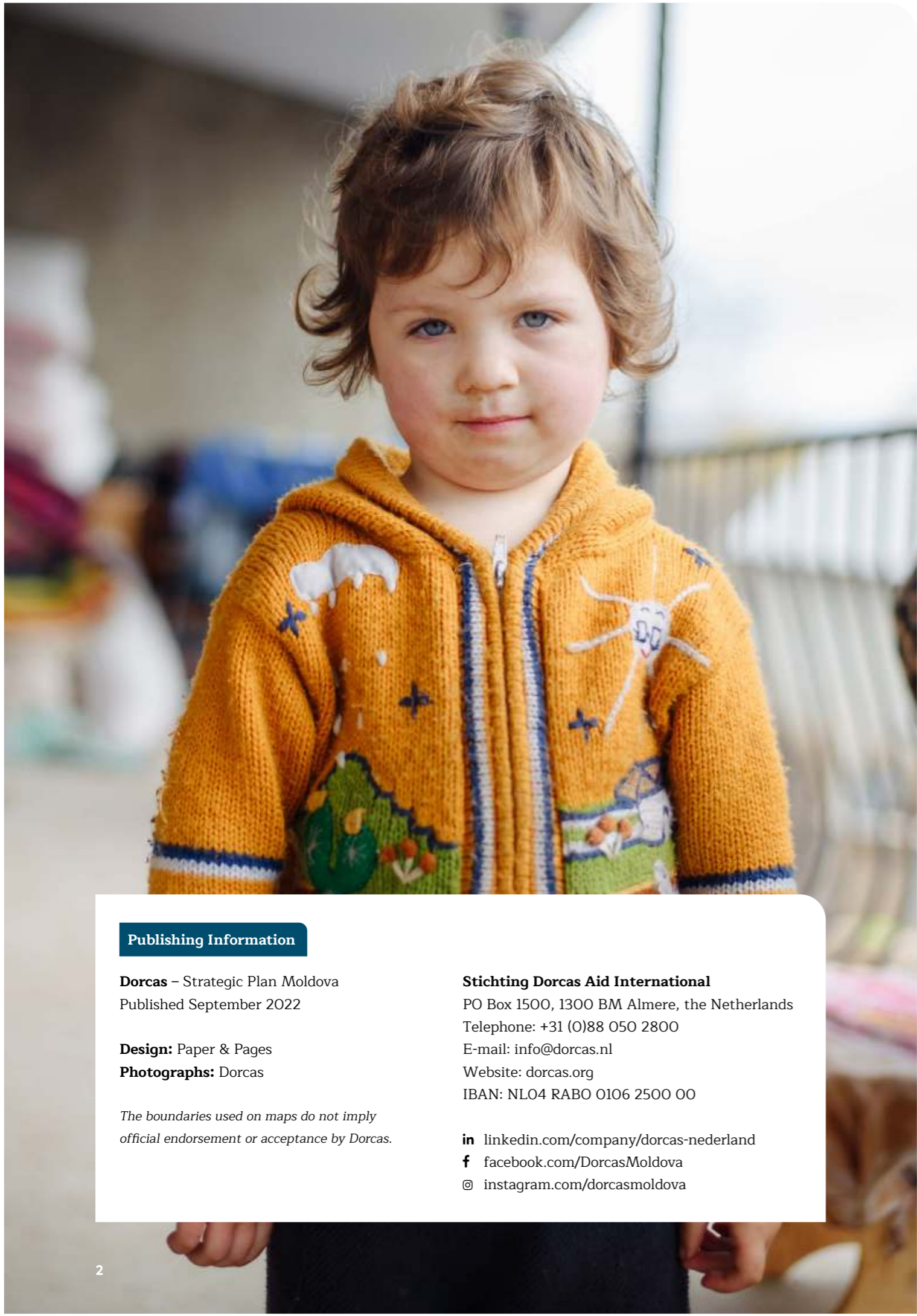
Dorcas Moldova

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Developing family and
community-based services that
protect the most vulnerable



Dorcas



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Our Identity

We fight poverty, exclusion and crisis. We empower marginalised people and communities to flourish. This is how we follow Jesus Christ.

What we believe

We believe in the value and God-given potential of every single person. We are called to demonstrate God's love for those in need. This is how we follow Jesus Christ.

What we see

We see a world where poverty, exclusion and crisis marginalise people. We also see the potential of these people and their communities to flourish despite their difficult circumstances.

What we do

We empower people who are marginalised to develop their talents. And we enable disadvantaged communities to flourish. We equip individuals and communities to promote and ensure participation of all.

We create hope and long-term perspectives in volatile and complex situations. We meet people's basic needs in times of crisis and increase their ability to overcome poverty

and exclusion. We persist despite frequent setbacks and invest in durable relationships to realise sustainable change.

We are part of a global movement of individuals and organisations working for a just and fair world. We recognise and appreciate everybody who supports our work. And we actively partner with others to create synergy and amplify our impact.

Theory of Change in short

Dorcas works towards change on three levels. We create opportunities for people to develop themselves further, and if necessary, we provide for their basic needs. We invest in resilient, self-organising communities that work together to solve their problems. Lastly, we contribute to a just society in which everyone has the opportunity to participate.



Dorcas Moldova desires justice for people and their communities so that they can flourish. We strive for lasting change for those who live in poverty, are excluded, or are caught in a crisis.

Dorcas Moldova

History

Dorcas Moldova started operations in 2003. We are a Christian organisation that works for the poor with a particular focus on community-based care for older people, child protection and support for poor families. In the strategic period 2018-2021, we mainly profiled ourselves as an organisation behind local safety nets for vulnerable older people. By 2021, our partner network had already reached out to 1,300 older persons in need of support, mobilised 200 local persons to support older people in need and advocated for the protection of the aged in more than 15 districts across northern and central Moldova.

In addition to this, we have actively developed programme components that are part of inclusive local development: Community development has become a stronger aspect of our projects and we have become more active as a training and facilitator organisation. In 2006, we started the first agricultural entrepreneurship projects and business schools in our projects, including microcredits. In 2018-2020 our local partners worked with over 300 low-income families and coached them to find new sources of income. In 2020, we piloted our first rural entrepreneurship development projects that were linked with local development plans. In the current strategic planning period (2022-2025) we will continue to combine social and economic development approaches in our programmes.



Context

Moldova is still a poor country with a largely rural population. Geopolitical influences and the weakness of democratic and justice institutions cause societal risks. Labour migration still continues to be massive. Child poverty and the number of children growing up without their parents is high. Ageing is a strong trend in rural settlements. The youth have poor perspectives, especially in rural areas. Rural communities largely depend on social benefits and a few agricultural firms for income, and many older adults live in financial insecurity and social isolation. The COVID-19 pandemic has further increased their vulnerability. A positive development is the growth in civil initiatives and self-organisation evidenced by emerging interest-based associations, professional associations, and informal, spontaneous charitable actions enabled by social media. For Dorcas Moldova, this is an encouraging development that can support our local programmes.

Many international development institutions are active in the country. Amongst other things, they influence national policy and strategies for development. Unfortunately, these policies are poorly implemented on a local level. Dorcas Moldova has an added value here because it sees an opportunity to connect with local stakeholders and administrations in our community-based development programmes and to build bottom-up practices that align with the greater social and economic development policies.

Dorcas Moldova wants to be seen as a strong partner in local development. We already have a firm foundation in grass-roots level work through our local partner organisations. People-centred work, integrity and the combination of social and economic empowerment characterise our programmes. We seek to realise change through strengthening community-based support networks for our target groups as well as creating opportunities for self-development, economic empowerment and participation. With this approach, we contribute to the vision of viable and flourishing communities in Moldova.

Strategic Ambitions

For over forty years, Dorcas has reached out to people in need. We have learned how to contribute to the desired impact so that people and communities flourish. For the Strategic Period 2022-2025, we will focus on people who are marginalised, develop coherent and community-based programmes, achieve more scale by engaging and collaborating with thousands of individuals, partners, networks, and other agencies, and increase our agility. These main policy choices are worked out in six concrete ambitions for our Country Offices.



- We will increase our focus on **including people who are marginalised and socially excluded**.
- We will improve **the cohesion and integration of our community-based programmes**, monitor these more accurately and learn from those outcomes. We will also expand our influence on authorities and policymakers.
- We will **increase the scale and effectiveness of our work** through constructive partnerships that tackle today's complex challenges.
- We will **mobilise resources and engage communities** by increasing the number of foundations, groups and individuals who support our work.
- We will strengthen the position of our country offices, as well as the role of Dorcas as an **agile catalyst for change and a ConnActor** of various stakeholders.
- We will bolster and align our **regional strategies, cross-country learning and cooperation**.

How Dorcas Moldova will work out these strategic ambitions is now described.



Include People who are Marginalised and Socially Excluded

Dorcas Moldova continues to focus on rural communities in central and northern Moldova, where we will seek to expand our long-term presence and give vulnerable people a voice. Our priority target groups are older persons, vulnerable families and children in underserved rural communities. In this strategy period, we will also increase our focus on youth unemployment. Older persons are still among the most vulnerable people in Moldova. We help to develop community-based support networks for them. In addition, we want to include older adults in local development processes and promote all aspects of the nationally endorsed Active Ageing Agenda.

We continue to help our local partners develop their support for families of children at risk and young people without parental support. We are establishing networks of assistance that can work in a family-centred and person-centred way and support parenting and the development of children and young people. Dorcas Moldova also wants participants to actively use opportunities for their further social and economic empowerment. This holistic approach will be supported by locally planned programmes that include different components, such as child sponsorship, Flourish, youth employability and inclusive entrepreneurship projects. Participants from the target groups will be able to participate according to their needs and interests.



Realise Coherent and Community-based Programmes

Dorcas Moldova is first and foremost a connector, project partner and capacity-building organisation for local stakeholders interested in inclusive social and economic local development. Strong local ownership of partner organisations, community-based organisations and individual local participants/beneficiaries is a key principle.

In community-based development, Dorcas Moldova has three modes of working: Firstly, we help interested local partners to develop their services for our primary target groups. Dorcas Moldova has training modules and master trainers who can offer our local implementing partners tested programme tools and expertise in the themes of active ageing, parenting support, economic empowerment of disadvantaged groups, and certain organisational development topics. We want to inspire community-based and faith-based organisations to be more active in community development and multistakeholder programmes.

Secondly, we initiate and facilitate community organisation processes. This includes advocacy and collaboration between grass-root organisations and local authorities. Thirdly, we promote economic inclusion and initiate inclusive entrepreneurship projects with local business partners and interest groups. On the national level, Dorcas Moldova organises or joins advocacy campaigns that support local actions. We also provide trainings and resource materials to interested parties in parenting skills, capacity-building topics for community-based organisations and other topics that we want to promote.



Increase the Scale and Effectiveness of our Work

We are open to exchanges and the development of partnerships that enrich and scale up our programmes and give a voice to our target groups. Besides continuing our involvement in national platforms and thematic networks, our goal is to ensure sufficient capacity of our local partnerships and develop complementary partnerships for integrated and inclusive community development programmes. We will also explore collaboration with local authorities and aim to strengthen local governance through advocacy and civil engagement to increase the impact and sustainability of our programmes. Our goal is that by 2025, several of our local programmes will significantly benefit from these new strategic partnerships through improved amended methodology, human resources and funding.



Mobilise Resources and Engage Communities

In 2021, we started training our local partners on local resource mobilisation for their social assistance programmes, and this funding model seems to be promising. Dorcas Moldova receives considerable support in the form of private donations in the Netherlands.



Become an Agile Catalyst and ConnActor

Dorcas Moldova has a committed and agile team. To reach our strategic goals, we will develop our way of working and look for partners to support us and our projects in specific technical and supporting roles. This will free resources for programme development and for setting up multi-sector projects with many partners and local stakeholders. We will continue to grow as an organisation of trainers and facilitators and support our local partner organisations to develop their roles as community-based actors.



Effect Regional Priorities, Cross-Country Learning and Cooperation

Dorcas Moldova collaborates in the Eastern Europe on developing stronger programmes in Social Empowerment and Protection and Inclusive Entrepreneurship. Joint campaigns and shared expertise help us to realise a stronger impact and acquire a more visible positioning.

Dorcas Country Offices in Eastern Europe share commonalities. These include intervention areas and the tools used. But also common programme development challenges, such as the transition from social support services to local development programmes, an analysis of social enterprise opportunities and developing sustainability strategies. In the past, the offices focussed on joint efforts in partner capacity building, and more recently, they have cooperated in organising the Blue Bucket Campaign (food collection) and regional learning on Community Safety Nets.

This foundation now provides a springboard to develop future regional or bilateral collaboration in programme development, lobbying and advocacy. Programme development efforts will focus on a stronger impact and Dorcas positioning in social empowerment and economic inclusion. That will be realised through sharing knowledge and experience, including exchange visits and best practices, and exploring the possibilities for joint research and a joint track record. Lobbying and advocacy efforts will enable Dorcas to become more active and visible in international groups and networks. Our corporate positioning as Dorcas in Eastern Europe must be strengthened to achieve that. This can be done through joint campaigns. International conferences on topics like human trafficking prevention can also be organised. That will require the development of relevant corporate identity materials with appropriate technical support from the International Office. Wherever possible, we will join relevant international networks.

Meet our Country Director



**Leila Sorbala -
Country Director Moldova**

'In Moldova, there are sadly many broken families. Moreover, the separation of children from their parents due to mass migration is increasing. Despite this upward trend, Dorcas is spearheading some positive changes. We focus on developing family and community-based services that extend a protective wing around those most vulnerable - and help parents and caregivers choose the right path.'



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