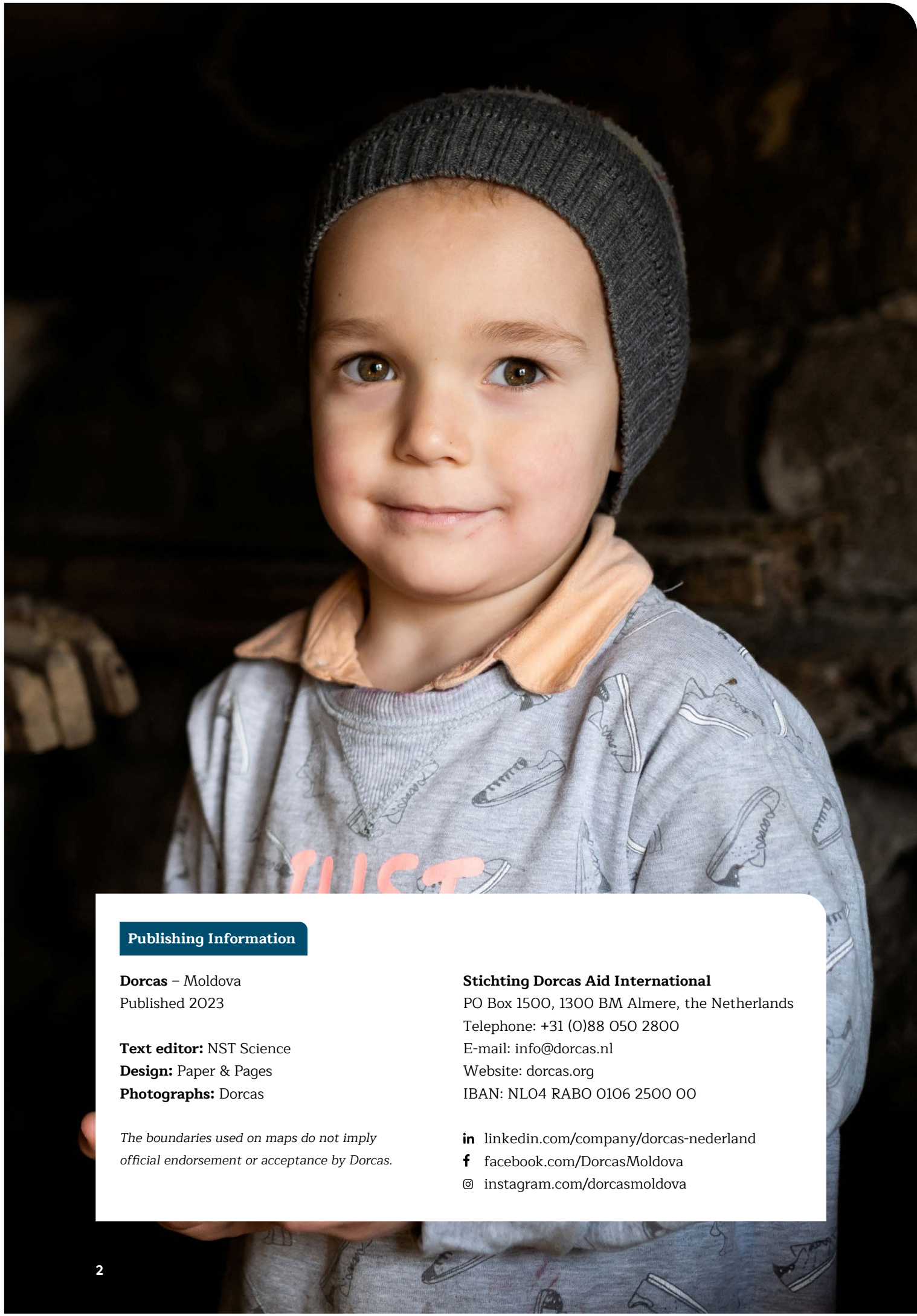


Dorcas *Moldova*

Alleviating poverty and
inspiring grassroots change



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We are Dorcas

Dorcas is a faith-based organisation that provides humanitarian assistance and facilitates development cooperation. We invest in sustainable change in the lives of people who are marginalised. In the event of poverty, exclusion or a crisis, we create opportunities for them to flourish.

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.

How we work

Accountable: We do what we say, work transparently and use resources wisely.

Compassionate: We see those in need and stand next to them.

Determined: We have an entrepreneurial spirit and do not give up.

Locally led: We work through local leadership, staff and partners.

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

Dorcas views poverty as a condition in which people cannot realise their intellectual, material, physical, social and spiritual needs and capacities. This kind of poverty is often related to exclusion mechanisms and barriers within society. We want to contribute to the protection, inclusion and resilience of people living in poverty, experiencing exclusion or caught in a crisis. Our Theory of Change recognises that transformation is needed at the individual, community and societal levels. We seek to realise a six-fold impact that results in flourishing people and communities.

Dorcas works towards change on three levels:

1. Individual

We create opportunities for people and, if necessary, we also provide for their basic needs.

2. Community

We invest in resilient, self-organising communities; we strengthen the position of certain groups, such as older people, people with disabilities and minority groups, and we encourage community members to support each other and stand up for themselves.

3. Society

We cooperate with local authorities and partners and motivate them to take their responsibilities. We tackle taboos by ensuring that everyone has a voice and that everyone is included.

The Dorcas Theory of Change is translated into programme concepts that create impact,

demonstrate our added value and inform the programmatic priorities set by each Country Office.

The three programme concepts are:

Humanitarian Assistance and Recovery

Humanitarian Assistance and Recovery focuses on saving people’s lives and preserving their dignity during disasters or crises. People’s immediate needs are met, communities are enabled to become resilient to shocks and governments are actively involved in contributing to safer and more peaceful communities.

Social Empowerment and Protection

Social Empowerment and Protection seeks to ensure that the poorest and most marginalised have access to basic services, like health and education, and are empowered in their social development. This is realised by organising and mobilising communities to solve their own problems and work on opportunities through asset-based community development processes.

Inclusive Entrepreneurship

Inclusive Entrepreneurship enables disadvantaged people and groups to acquire the attitudes, competences and skills they need to earn an income and build their dreams. This is realised by creating social and economic value through entrepreneurial livelihoods and applying it to self-employment, small businesses, member-based entities or social enterprises.



Dorcas in Moldova



Dorcas Moldova started operations in 2003. We are a Christian organisation that focuses on community-based care for older people, child protection and support for poor families. We have also developed programme components for Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Humanitarian Assistance and Recovery, and we train and support our local partners in community mobilisation and inclusive local development.

Our programmes are characterised by people-centred work and the combination of social and economic empowerment. On the local level, in districts across North and Central Moldova, we co-implement projects that aim to improve the protection and inclusion of vulnerable groups. We work towards this goal by strengthening community-based support networks for our target groups and creating new opportunities for self-development, economic

empowerment and participation. Commitment to community cohesion and the development of community assets are other profiling factors in all our programmes. Strong local ownership of our implementing partner organisations and individual local participants is a key precondition for their success. With this approach, we want to contribute to the vision of viable and flourishing communities in Moldova.



Creating safety nets for older people

The Community Safety Net (CSN) programme started as five smaller local projects named “Adopt a Granny”, which aimed to support older people in difficult situations (older people who struggle with loneliness, low income, poverty, illness etc.). In 2020, the projects were redesigned into a larger programme that aims to support older people on three levels:

- Individual level: direct material and informational support, social and interest-based activities.
- Community level: local involvement, large events, asset-based community development.
- Society level: local and national campaigns, active involvement in alliances and platforms for older people’s rights.

The CSN programme helps to restore and create circles of support, and it enables older people to be active members of their community.

As a part of the CSN programme, we continuously develop programme components for community mobilisation, advocacy and capacity building of community-based organisations. A crucial aspect of CSN is making communities aware of the exclusion of marginalised people and how local structures can be strengthened to support these people.

Our Local Resource Mobilisation training enables local organisations, communities and churches to explore and increase their opportunities and to develop an asset-based instead of needs-based way of thinking. Through this course, we seek to facilitate the growth of local ownership and reduce dependence on external financing.

CSN is our largest programme and currently reaches 1,365 vulnerable older persons with direct support. The programme is realised in fifteen districts across central and northern Moldova to strengthen local support networks and advocate the inclusion of older people.

Stronger communities that care for one another

The Blue Bucket Campaign is organised by Dorcas Country Offices in Albania, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine in cooperation with local partner organisations. We organise food collections in blue buckets and offer these buckets to marginalised people, such as older persons and families living in difficult circumstances in communities across Eastern Europe.

With this campaign, the Dorcas Country Offices and local partners raise awareness on what individuals and community actors can do for marginalised people in their community or country. The Blue Bucket Campaign initiative motivates the community to care for and protect its marginalised members, for example with community activities, neighbours that care, volunteering and practical support. The aim is to contribute to stronger communities that reach out to marginalised people.

Churches, NGOs, schools, the private sector, and others are asked to participate in this campaign and collect food. Many volunteers, also young members of the community, offer support in packing and distributing the blue buckets with food. These blue buckets are distributed in communities where Dorcas and partner organisations participate in the Community Safety Nets with specific attention for marginalised people.

Many people in Moldova live under difficult circumstances, especially those without financial stability, who suffer from an illness or simply lack ways to provide for their basic needs. They require additional support, and with this initiative, we can support 1,500 families with filled blue buckets.

Tackling rural poverty

Hincesti Integrated programme addresses the issues of rural poverty and weakening community assets by linking an Inclusive Entrepreneurship programme with Social Empowerment and Protection in five locations in the Hincesti region. Approaches used include a rural entrepreneurship programme, Asset-Based Community Development, Community Safety Nets development and a family support programme for vulnerable families. A further component of advocacy/civil engagement and cooperation with local authorities will also be introduced, with the aim of improving civic participation and the inclusivity of basic and protection services.

The project is built on previous pilots in which Dorcas tested the approaches of Farmer Field School, Farmer Business School and Asset-Based Community Development in partnership with FARM (Federation of Agricultural Producers from Moldova). Farmers from the region had the opportunity to learn from experts during organised trainings and also from other experienced farmers who visited their farms. This enabled them to learn about good practices. Through the project, farmers also received assistance and guidance on how to apply for subsidies and funds available through various government and non-government programmes. Ecological agriculture was one of the important topics farmers were encouraged to embrace. The aspect of farmer collaboration was initially promoted at an informal level with plans to further develop those collaborations. The pilot projects showed the potential of these modules to empower youth, men and women and to contribute to social inclusion and gender equality in the selected villages.

Child protection

Our Future4Children programme is aimed at children and their parents or guardians. Key elements of Future4Children are life skills development, strengthening and capacitating families in parenting and income generation and building child protection platforms.

Children must have access to adequate education and opportunities to develop their self-esteem, discover their unique talents, be aware of their rights and acquire the right social and financial skills to proactively impact their future. At the same time, parents and guardians are made aware of children’s needs and given the tools to respond to these needs in a healthy, effective way. In parenting courses and in life skills training for children, we raise awareness for the protection of children in families. Furthermore, wherever possible, we strengthen intergenerational relationships by connecting participants of Future4Children with participants in our Community Safety Nets programme.

The wider community ensures that the rights of children are protected, openly addresses harmful practices and acts appropriately in the case of (suspected) violations. On a societal level, organisations work together to promote the protection of children’s rights through awareness and advocacy.

Response to the crisis in Ukraine

Since 24 February 2022, the conflict in Ukraine has resulted in civilian casualties, the destruction of infrastructure in Ukraine and forced mass displacements to neighbouring countries, including Moldova. More than 790,000 Ukrainians crossed the border to Moldova, and more than a year later, 117,000 individual refugees from Ukraine were still registered in the Republic of Moldova. This influx of refugees places a considerable strain on the Moldovan government and population.

In March 2022, Dorcas Moldova started to implement three Humanitarian Assistance and Recovery projects. These provided an emergency rapid response to refugees staying in Moldova through a multisectoral approach to providing Shelter, Food Security and Livelihood and Protection services, including Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) for adults and children. During the first phase of the project, the main goal was to ensure refugees had a safe place to stay and their basic needs were covered. In the second phase, the MHPSS component was added for both adults and children.

Dorcas Moldova coordinated and monitored the response and its experienced local partners implemented the activities, supported by experts in humanitarian assistance and mental health and psychosocial support. About 41 employees from twelve partner organisations were trained in how to work with people affected by the conflict (emotionally affected people). In the third phase of the project, the aim was to work towards development while still providing food and non-food item support. We sought to build the capacity of refugees so they could sustain their own livelihood and be less dependent on assistance. This included livelihood trainings and support to start income-generating activities.

Sustainable Development Goals: Leave no one behind

Our programmes in Moldova are directly linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, most notably:

1NO POVERTY

2ZERO HUNGER

3GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4QUALITY EDUCATION

5GENDER EQUALITY

6CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

16PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

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Impact Story

‘The support I receive has changed my life! And I wish the same for others. That is why I also volunteer for Dorcas’, says 73-year-old granny Nina from Moldova. Through the Adopt a Granny project of Dorcas, she and her husband regularly receive food parcels.

Nina lives in Hirtop, a village in southern Moldova. With her small pension, she and her husband cannot possibly make ends meet. So they are really grateful for the food parcels and other support they receive through the Adopt a Granny project. But Nina is not a passive recipient. She also rolls up her sleeves to support this project as a volunteer.

‘Above all, I am grateful to God. He takes care of us in this way.’

About eight years ago, Nina was included in the Adopt a Granny project because of the circumstances she and her husband were living in. ‘We only have a small household, but it is difficult to make ends meet on the pension we get. So we are really thankful when we receive a box of food, a warm blanket or wood for the stove. That allows

us to put aside some money for things we couldn’t possibly have bought otherwise. And by the way, I don’t keep everything for myself. I regularly give something away to one of my neighbours. We live in a poor village where many people are struggling, so we need to help each other.’

‘I am very grateful to Dorcas for the support my husband and I receive. Above all, I am grateful to God. He takes care of us in this way. Therefore, I want to express my gratitude by offering attention, hospitality and practical support to other older people in the project. I also help distribute the food parcels and other items and regularly join the Dorcas staff when they visit project participants. It is fantastic to see the same joy in the eyes of my fellow villagers that I feel when I receive my food parcel again. I hope many more people can receive support.’

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Dorcas in Eastern Europe

Dorcas is active in Albania and the former “Soviet Block” countries of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine. Besides the impact of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine, the region is confronted by the longstanding issues of widespread corruption, high rural poverty, the rural-urban divide in welfare, a lack of care for older people, and marginalisation of certain social groups – especially Roma and people with disabilities. Unfortunately, these problems persist due to weak governance and justice systems, poor social cohesion, failing employment policies, and various human rights issues. However, on a positive note, a gradual strengthening of organised civil society is taking place.



Our work

In Eastern Europe, Dorcas focuses on the programme concepts Social Empowerment & Protection and Inclusive Entrepreneurship. We implement these through a bottom-up approach informed by research, data and the Country Offices’ experience. Our programmes are mainly realised in local systems by building resilient communities with community safety nets and advocating for a just system. Dorcas is committed to developing a strong regional profile in Eastern Europe based on cross-border programming, learning and exchange, and the joint development of resources and partnerships.

Partners in Moldova

Our Programme Partners:

- A.O. El-Sadai - Chisinau
- Asociatia de Binefacere ‘Elim-Moldova’ - Singerei
- EBC “Light to the World” - Rezina
- Christian Foundation Titus - Telenesti
- EBC “Emanuel” - Balti
- Hope to Children – Floresti
- Baptist Euroasiatic Mission- Vatici
- EBC “Golgota” - Basarabasca
- A.O. “Next Step”- Hincesti
- A.O. “The Lord’s Army”- Chisinau
- Keystone Moldova
- Federation of Agricultural Producers from Moldova (FARM)
- Institute for Rural Initiatives (iRi)
- The Salvation Army - Moldova

Our Strategic Partners and Donors:

- Draagt Elkanders Lasten
- EO Metterdaad
- Kom over en Help
- CPOE (Christian Platform for Eastern Europe)

Partner with us!

I am Leila Sorbala, Country Director of Dorcas Moldova. I enjoy working with both (inter)national and local partners. Are you interested in a possible collaboration or wondering what contribution your organisation could make? Then please get in touch with me so that together we can explore the opportunities for a partnership.

Do you have any other questions about Dorcas’ work in Moldova or would you like more information about a specific topic? Then please visit our website or contact us.

Partner with us! Together we can realise lasting changes in the lives of people in need.



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