

A portrait of an elderly man with a friendly expression, wearing a dark blue cap and a blue textured sweater over a black polo shirt. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

Strategic Plan
Dorcas
Albania

Empowering communities for sustainable futures **2026-2030**

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This public version of the Dorcas Albania
Strategic Plan 2026-2030 is a concise version
of the internal document.

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Empowering Albania's future together

Dorcas Albania in 2030

By 2030, Dorcas Albania will be a recognised national and regional actor in sustainable development, operating across Northern, Southeastern, and Central Albania. We will be known for delivering community-driven, evidence-based and inclusive programmes that address poverty, unemployment, and climate vulnerability. With our considerable expertise in social empowerment, economic development, livelihoods,

agriculture and agritourism, youth employment, and climate adaptation, we will empower communities in vulnerable situations to break cycles of poverty and build self-sufficient, thriving futures. Our strong partnerships with government, civil society, and international donors will enable us to drive systemic change, enhance community resilience and create lasting economic opportunities for all Albanians to live with safety and dignity.

Foreword

As Albania moves towards EU accession, it faces significant challenges: youth emigration that depletes its workforce, an ageing population requiring stronger social protection, and growing vulnerabilities to climate change. These pressures are felt most acutely by those already marginalised – unemployed youth, Roma communities, older people, and families living in poverty.

For 30 years, Dorcas Albania earned trust and delivered tangible impact communities in Korça, Tropoja and Puka. Our integrated programmes in Community Development, Economic Development, Livelihoods and Food Security, and Protection demonstrate that sustainable change is possible when communities lead the process. This strategic plan for 2026-2030 builds on that foundation while responding to Albania's evolving needs.

Over the next five years, we will expand our geographic reach into Central Albania, scale up our flagship programmes in livelihoods, agriculture and agritourism, community development, and youth employment, and mainstream climate adaptation across all our work. We are committed

to increasing our implementation capacity, building deeper expertise in emerging areas, and diversifying our funding base to include EU institutions, UN agencies, and other international partners.

Central to our approach is localisation. We will strengthen staff capacity, establish an advisory board with diverse representation from Albanian society, and ensure that most of our programmes are directly implemented by Dorcas Albania by 2030. This positions us not merely as a funding channel but as a recognised actor with a proven track record and local presence. Through evidence-based programming, strategic partnerships, and community-driven solutions, we will support populations in vulnerable situations to build resilient livelihoods and achieve economic independence.

Our vision is clear: a stronger, more inclusive Albania where everyone can live with dignity, purpose and hope.

Xheni Prenda
Country Director
Dorcas Albania



What unifies and guides us

Our identity

Dorcas is a growing, dynamic and responsive organisation. Much has changed over the years, but our calling to support, our shared values, and our inspiration from Jesus have remained constant. This strong identity defines who we are and guides how we work, shaping an organisational culture rooted in compassion, collaboration, and commitment. As we enter the new strategic period leading up to 2030, consistently living out this identity across all levels and facets of our work is essential to deepen our impact and foster coherence between our offices and shops, enabling us to work together effectively as a united movement.

Our vision

We believe that every person is equal before God and has been given unique potential by Him. Yet we live in a broken world where people suffer due to poverty, exclusion, climate change and other crises. Still, we see the extraordinary resilience of people. We envision a world in which people unlock their potential and restore their dignity so that people and communities can flourish!

Our mission

We are called to stand up for people in need. We take action in the face of poverty, exclusion and crisis. We come alongside marginalised people and communities and together create opportunities for them to flourish. This is how we follow Jesus' example.

Our values

We are determined, ...

We act with conviction and do not give up. Where there is need, we take action and get things done. We go the extra mile to make a lasting impact.

...we act together, ...

We are a movement that pursues sustainable change. We work alongside people in need and join hands with everyone who shares our mission. Only together can we make a real difference.

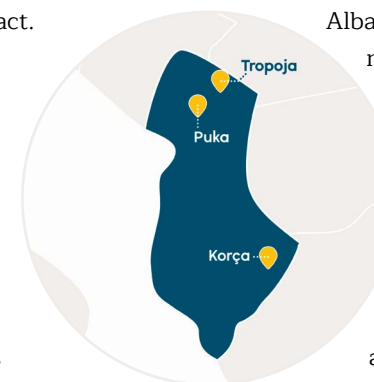
...out of love.

We are driven by compassion. We follow Jesus' example - out of love for our neighbour. We stand beside you - whoever you are.

Where we work

Dorcas Albania operates in three key regions. In Korça, Tropoja and Puka, we have built strategic partnerships and delivered integrated programmes with significant impact. These programmes demonstrate the critical role of community engagement in ensuring sustainable outcomes. We provide capacity building for partners

while fostering local ownership and long-term impact. As part of the 2026-2030 strategy, Dorcas Albania will expand operations into Central Albania, specifically Tirana municipality, leveraging existing expertise and networks to reach new communities that require support in social empowerment, economic development and climate adaptation.





Challenges and opportunities

Economic challenges and poverty

Despite Albania's economic growth driven by tourism and rural development, unemployment and

poverty persist. There is a high demand for skilled labour and tailored employability programmes. Groups in vulnerable situations, such as

unemployed youth, unskilled workers, marginalised communities, and families in extreme poverty, require targeted programmes and interventions.

Climate change

Environmental sustainability is a growing concern. Albania faces vulnerabilities to climate change, deforestation and pollution. Climate risks threaten livelihoods, particularly in rural areas. Enhanced education, awareness programmes, disaster preparedness, and sustainable practices in agriculture and tourism are essential for building community resilience and economic opportunities.

Social barriers and people in vulnerable situations

Marginalised communities (including Roma), older people, and families living in extreme poverty face significant barriers. An ageing population increases demand for geriatric care and social protection services. Community-based support, social inclusion programmes, and protection initiatives are needed to address these challenges and ensure dignity for all.

Donor and funding landscape

Albania's EU integration process presents funding opportunities through pre-accession financial instruments and institutional donors. Strategic partnerships with these funders will support capacity building and structural

development aligned with EU priorities.

Technology

Digital transformation offers new opportunities for inclusion and innovation in Albania, yet rural communities and people in vulnerable situations still face limited access and skills. That hampers efforts to improve digital literacy, strengthen social empowerment and realise sustainable community development.

Youth emigration and demographic shifts

High youth emigration rates result in labour shortages and an ageing population. This demographic challenge increases pressure on social protection systems, care services for older people, and community-based support, while reducing the available workforce for economic development and creating sustainability concerns for rural communities.

EU accession and governance

Albania's pursuit of EU accession brings opportunities and challenges concerning governance, corruption and institutional reform. The National Strategy for Development and European Integration 2022-2030 focuses on sustainable economic development, green growth and social cohesion, creating frameworks for development programming and international collaboration.

03 | Our strategic ambitions and focus

Building impact and recognition

Strategic ambition

Dorcas Albania's 2026-2030 strategy centres on three core ambitions: achieving sustainable **growth** in programme delivery and reach, enhancing **quality** through evidence-based approaches and expertise

development, and strengthening our **position** as a recognised national and regional development actor delivering community-driven solutions that empower communities in vulnerable situations.



Grow

We will expand our reach to **double the number of project participants we serve by 2030.**

Our total income is expected to grow substantially, with external funding increasing to account for over half of our portfolio. We aim to **diversify funding sources from three to five different donors.** Staff capacity will shift towards programme implementation, ensuring resources directly benefit

the communities we support.

Quality

Quality improvement will be achieved through enhanced monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEAL) systems. We will conduct **multiple evaluations and impact studies,** develop a country-specific qualitative results framework, and standardise environmental impact assessments across most programmes.

Staff capacity in MEAL will increase, enabling internal evaluation processes and evidence-based programme adaptations that strengthen impact.

Position

Dorcas Albania will strengthen its brand recognition and engagement capacity by implementing a **country positioning strategy and communication plan.** We will develop a **strong online presence across multiple platforms,** establish relationships with local media, coordinate advocacy efforts with the international office on EU fundraising, and organise regional conferences. Ultimately, we aim to become a **recognised expert in climate adaptation and community-driven development.**

Strategic focus

1

Evidence and impact to have a compelling, evidence-based story

We will gain a better understanding of our impact by continuing to develop evidence-based programmes and building strong track records. We will develop a country-specific qualitative results framework aligned with the Dorcas results framework for social empowerment and local economic development, and standardise environmental impact assessments in most of our programmes.

2

Expertise and innovation to be relevant and strongly present

We will improve programme quality and impact by investing in the development of specialised technical expertise across our four themes. We will establish pools of external experts and employ thematic

Dorcas Albania can only achieve these ambitions if it excels in five interlinked key areas that form our strategic focus.

experts, while exchanging expertise with other countries in local economic development and climate programming.

3

Fund diversification to increase our donor base

We will increase the use of impact stories and evidence-based track records to become more attractive to funding agencies. We will develop an updated donor database and an annual funding opportunities list, and capacitate our fundraising team for proposal writing. By 2030, we will secure five different funding sources. We will also write winning proposals focused on social empowerment and local economic development.

4

Positioning to be well-known and attractive to supporters and networks

We will strengthen our partnerships and diversify our funding by clearly positioning Dorcas Albania as a leading partner in development cooperation. We will implement a country positioning strategy and communication plan, establish a strong online presence, strengthen relationships with local media, coordinate lobby efforts with the international office, and organise regional conferences.

5

Local power to increase local capacity

Dorcas Albania will invest in training staff and benefit from knowledge exchange between country offices through regional learning initiatives. We will improve our quality scan rating, establish a local consultative board by 2028, and transform it into a formalised decision-making structure by 2030. Staff composition will shift towards programme implementation, and we will enhance fundraising and proposal writing skills.



04 | Our approach

Four programmatic themes

How we do things

As a faith-based organisation, Dorcas Albania follows eight principles that enable us to help people and communities flourish:

- We focus on people who are most **marginalised** and believe in their potential.
- We facilitate the **flourishing and well-being** of individuals and communities.
- We implement community-based and **locally led** projects.
- We cooperate with local **community-based** organisations and strengthen their capacities.
- We realise sustained change through **long-term** commitments.
- We connect people and organisations around shared values for **partnerships** with impact.
- We seek to be **impartial** in who we hire, support, or partner with.
- We uphold a high level of **integrity** in all aspects of our work.

These principles guide all our programmes. Dorcas Albania will focus on four key programmatic themes as we work toward 2030.

Our four themes

Dorcas Albania will apply four programmatic themes to sharpen expertise, strengthen our track record, and define clear organisational positioning. By 2030, we aim to harmonise and standardise these programmes through a lens of inclusion and vulnerability, with community-based programming as our core approach.



Protection



Economic
Development



Livelihoods and
Food Security



Community
Development





Protection

We protect people vulnerable to poverty, exclusion, crisis and violence through integrated measures, targeted prevention and advocacy for systemic change.



Maliq's after-school centre provides care, education, protection, and a safe nurturing space

for 20 children from families in vulnerable situations. Through trainings for parents, teachers, and local professionals, Dorcas Albania also promotes holistic child protection and inclusion across gender, background, and ethnicity.



Livelihoods and Food Security

We support people in finding sustainable livelihoods, increasing resilience and contributing to community well-being, with particular attention to food security.



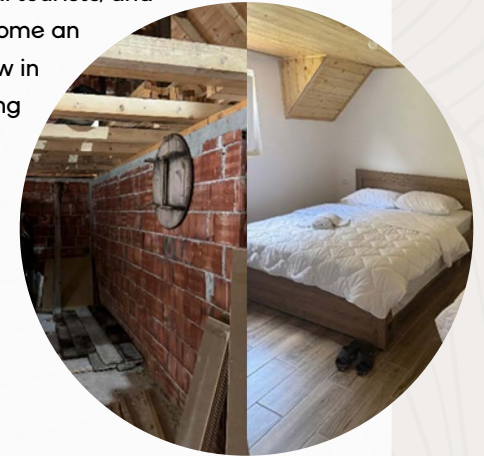
Mirela received training and financial support to build a larger and safer chicken coop, as well as guidance on how to connect with local markets and tourist guesthouses.

That enabled her to expand her poultry farm from a few dozen chickens to 300 hens and 200 country chicks. She now sells twice as many eggs as before and supplies some guesthouses in Valbona.



Economic Development

We empower people to improve their job skills, start small businesses, and connect to inclusive markets to secure income and reduce poverty.



Admira took the initiative and worked hard, with support from Dorcas Albania, to renovate her guesthouse. It now attracts more domestic and international tourists, and Admira has become an example to follow in Valbona's growing tourism sector.



Community Development

We partner with communities in vulnerable situations through collaborative, asset-based and conflict-sensitive approaches that enhance their capacity, resilience and quality of life.



Dorcas Albania has a growing community of volunteers united by care and action. Through a new online platform, they can connect, train, and collaborate with local partners to support people in vulnerable situations and bring hope to where it is needed most.

Looking after people and the environment



Albania

Our people

Dorcas Albania recognises that investing in staff development is essential for sustainability and organisational growth. By 2030, we will ensure excellent staff quality to run country operations with reduced dependence on the international office. We will invest in comprehensive training programmes and benefit from knowledge exchange between country offices through

regional learning initiatives.

We will optimise the staff structure by gradually increasing the number of programme implementation staff while maintaining or slightly reducing the number of support staff. This programme-focused staffing model ensures a larger budget share is directed toward direct impact for target groups. By 2030, we will have created a leaner, more impact-driven organisational

model that improves cost efficiency and ensures the better utilisation of human resources.

Our capacity

Dorcas Albania will strengthen institutional capacity to become more independent, self-sustaining, and autonomous by 2030. We will enhance in-country expertise by establishing pools of external experts in climate change, agritourism, social cohesion, education, and potentially digitalisation. By 2030, we will employ thematic experts in life skills, education, economic development, community development, impact investing, and climate adaptation.

Key capacity building will focus on advanced proposal writing and grant acquisition, including training in competitive grant proposals for EU, UN, and bilateral donors. Staff will develop expertise in logical framework approaches, theory of change, and results-based programming. We will enhance our understanding of donor priorities, thematic funding trends, and compliance with donor guidelines and financial regulations.

By 2030, we will implement most of our programmes directly, building a proven track record and local presence. This transformation will position Dorcas Albania as a recognised actor with strong operational capacity rather than merely a funding channel.

Our environment

Our strategic priorities align with the EU Green Agenda, as we integrate climate adaptation and resilience-building initiatives into all programmes. We will mainstream climate adaptation themes across social empowerment and local economic development work. Also, we will promote sustainable agriculture and eco-tourism development to create economic opportunities while preserving natural resources.

Dorcas Albania will enhance education and awareness programmes on climate risks and mitigation strategies to empower local communities. We will prioritise strengthening climate resilience in rural areas through local adaptation initiatives and disaster preparedness. By enhancing community knowledge and capacity in sustainable practices, we will contribute to Albania's transition towards a green and resilient economy while creating new economic opportunities for groups in vulnerable situations.

In 2026, we will conduct an assessment of the Albania country office carbon emissions in collaboration with the international office. By 2030, we will standardise environmental impact assessments in most programmes. We will develop expertise in climate programming and be recognised for climate adaptation and resilience efforts as part of development programming in Albania.



Driving change

Dorcas Albania will significantly strengthen its financial sustainability between 2026 and 2030 through strategic fund diversification and partnership development. Total income will grow substantially, with external funding increasing from current levels.

Strategic partnerships with government agencies, civil society organisations, international donors, and private sector actors will be central to this growth and strengthen our position as both a resource organisation and an implementing entity. These partnerships will also provide access to diverse funding streams while enabling knowledge transfer and capacity building.

Funding sources will diversify from three in 2026 to five by 2030. We will target EU grants and institutional funding through pre-accession financial instruments and regional development funds.

This diversification will reduce dependency on single funding streams while aligning with Albania's EU integration priorities.

Enhanced fundraising capacity will drive this growth. We will develop an updated donor database and identify annual funding opportunities. By 2030, we will have applied for numerous proposals and secured winning projects focused on social empowerment and local economic development.

Partnerships will also drive programmatic change. By developing two to three key strategic partnerships for mid- to long-term regional project implementation, we will leverage combined expertise, expand our geographic reach, and deliver a greater impact. Building a track record through smaller projects will position us for larger initiatives, while collaboration will ensure sustainable, community-driven solutions.

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exclusion and crises. We come alongside
marginalised people and communities and
jointly create opportunities for them to flourish.
This is how we follow Jesus' example.