

Dorcas

Syria



Country profile



Dorcas

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Quality assurance and accountability

As part of Dorcas, Dorcas Syria follows
organisation-wide quality, accountability,
and integrity standards. These include
Dorcas' CHS certification, adherence to the
Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and
Accountability, the Do No Harm principle,
Accountability to Affected Populations, and

accessible feedback and complaints mechanisms
for communities, partners, and staff. Dorcas Syria's
programming is further guided by the Dorcas
Integrity Framework, Code of Conduct, and a
strong emphasis on evidence-based programming,
MEAL, inclusion, conflict sensitivity, and locally led
implementation.

Work restores dignity

"When I held the tools again, it
felt like I could start over, because
I could work and provide for my
children."

Sleiman Mohamad Darwish
Project: Syria Joint Response 2025



Who is Dorcas?

Dorcas is a faith-based organisation working in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa. We have worked in Syria since 2014. Dorcas supports communities facing poverty, exclusion and crisis. We support them to unlock their potential and restore their dignity. We work with partners to build sustainable livelihoods, strengthen community structures and improve access to services. Our mission is rooted in compassion and action. We follow Jesus' example by standing with those who are left behind.

Discover more in the We are Dorcas brochure.



Dorcas Syria at a glance

Who we are

Dorcas Syria supports communities affected by conflict, displacement and economic collapse. We operate community centres in Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Deir E Zor and Homs (through a partner), providing protection, psychosocial support, mental health services, vocational training and livelihood opportunities. We also deliver emergency assistance, including food, non-food items, medical and shelter support. Our approach is community-driven and locally rooted. We work closely with Syrian civil society, local authorities and international partners. Our long-term presence and trusted relationships enable us to deliver impact in highly complex environments. By 2030, we aim to serve over 100,000 people annually.

Our expertise

We work across four themes: Crisis Response, Protection, Livelihoods and Food Security, and Community Development. Our programmes apply community-based and locally led approaches, integrating mental health, psychosocial support, protection, vocational training and early recovery. Our work is delivered by national teams supported by growing technical expertise in protection, mental health, livelihoods and climate adaptation.

Our geographic focus and reach

Where we work: Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Deir E Zor, Homs, Tartous and As-Suweida.

Regional priorities

Aleppo: Strengthen recovery and social cohesion for conflict-affected and displaced communities through

integrated protection, mental health support, education recovery, and livelihoods assistance.

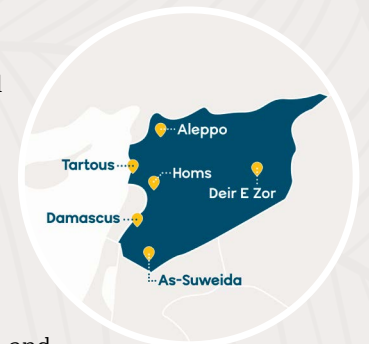
Rural Damascus: Improve access to protection, education, and mental health and psychosocial support for households in vulnerable situations, especially returnees, while strengthening recovery, resilience, and peaceful reintegration in displacement-affected communities.

Deir Ezzor: Reach hard-to-access and underserved communities with basic humanitarian assistance, psychosocial support, and early recovery interventions that reduce vulnerability and protection risks.

Homs: Support families in vulnerable situations to rebuild stability and dignity through MHPSS, community-based protection, and livelihoods-linked recovery in areas affected by prolonged displacement.

Tartous: Respond to acute and emerging crises by meeting immediate humanitarian needs while strengthening local capacities for preparedness, protection, and recovery.

As-Suwayda: Provide timely emergency support and protection-oriented assistance to crisis-affected populations, with a focus on mental wellbeing and community resilience.



Current reach





Dorcas vision for Syria

By 2030, we envision a Syria where:

- Communities across priority governorates rebuild their lives with safety, dignity and renewed hope.
- Local partners lead recovery efforts through strengthened capacity and national registration.
- People in vulnerable situations access protection, mental health support and livelihood opportunities.

How Dorcas contributes to this vision

Dorcas Syria strengthens community resilience through humanitarian response and early recovery. We operate community centres that provide protection, psychosocial support, mental health services, vocational training and livelihood opportunities. We deliver emergency assistance to displaced persons, returnees and conflict-affected families. Our balanced partnership model empowers Syrian civil society while maintaining international connections. We invest in technical expertise in protection, mental health, livelihoods and climate adaptation. By 2030, we will conduct six evaluations annually, expand local partner implementation to 50 per cent and achieve national registration as Tabitha Syria. Through evidence-based programming and community-driven approaches, we support communities in their transition from crisis to recovery.

The challenges we address with our partners

- Economic collapse and poverty**
Over 80 per cent of Syrians struggle to meet basic needs due to inflation, unemployment and destroyed infrastructure.
 - Protection risks and human rights violations**
Women, girls, minorities, ex-detainees and displaced people face severe protection risks and require urgent mental health support.
 - Climate and environmental degradation**
Water shortages, soil degradation and damaged infrastructure threaten food security and livelihoods.
- Over 6.8 million Syrians** are internally displaced and more than 16 million require humanitarian assistance.

Our strategic ambition

Dorcas Syria aims to reach 100,000 people annually in response to evolving humanitarian needs. The organisation also seeks to enhance programme quality and technical expertise, diversify its funding base, and position itself as a reliable partner in protection, mental health and livelihoods.

How Dorcas makes a difference in Syria

Dorcas Syria works through four programmatic themes that advance our 2030 vision. All programmes integrate gender equality, inclusion, climate sensitivity and community ownership.



Crisis Response

What we do We respond to acute and protracted crises through lifesaving assistance and recovery support.

Impact example During sectarian violence in Sweida in July 2025, Amina lost her husband and fled with her children. Dorcas delivered food parcels to families like hers, ensuring safety and dignity.

Contribution to vision Provides lifesaving support and stabilises families in crisis.

Key metric In 2025, 144,114 people were reached.



Protection

What we do We protect people vulnerable to poverty, exclusion, crisis and violence.

Impact example After years of conflict, Samer struggled with depression and broken relationships within his family. Through specialised case management and counselling at a Dorcas community centre, he rebuilt trust and started to restore the relationship with his children.

Contribution to vision Strengthens safety, dignity and emotional well-being.

Key metric In 2025, 15,982 people were reached.



Image for illustrative purposes only.

Impact story Youssef

Rebuilding confidence through learning

Youssef (name changed) is an 11-year-old Syrian boy living with his family in a return area in Rural Damascus. After years of displacement, he returned hoping to resume school and regain a sense of normality. He is the second of three children and attends a nearby public school. During the 2024-2025 school year, Youssef attended regularly, but his academic performance declined. He struggled with reading and basic numeracy. Homework became a source of stress, he avoided participating in class, and often left assignments unfinished.

These challenges took a toll on his confidence and wellbeing. His mother recalled: "He used to say, 'I'm not smart. I will fail again.' Even when he tried, he felt embarrassed. We didn't know how to help him." Youssef's father works irregularly, leaving the family with limited income. Private tutoring was unaffordable, and his learning gaps widened, raising the risk of disengagement.

In early 2025, the family heard about the Dorcas community centre. Following an assessment, Youssef

joined its education programme, receiving remedial classes and structured homework support. An education facilitator noted: "At first, Youssef avoided reading aloud and gave up after a single mistake. We focused on small steps and celebrating progress. Within a few weeks, he began participating much more actively." He also took part in psychosocial activities. His mother shared: "Now he comes home and tells his siblings what he learned. He is calmer, and he believes he can improve." By the end of the school term, Youssef showed steady progress, improved confidence, and reduced reliance on support.





Livelihoods and Food Security

What we do We support people to find sustainable livelihoods and improve food security.

Impact example In Aleppo, widow Huda struggled to support her children. Through the Dorcas food voucher programme, she purchased essential items, ensuring healthy meals and restoring dignity.

Contribution to vision Improves household resilience and economic stability.

Key metric In 2025: 80 people were reached.



Community Development

What we do We strengthen community resilience through collaborative, asset-based and conflict-sensitive approaches.

Impact example Amina joined Dorcas' craft workshops in Aleppo, learning weaving and mosaic making. She gained self-confidence, her stress decreased, and she began selling crafts to generate income.

Contribution to vision Enhances community cohesion, skills and resilience.

Key metric In 2025, 16 local organisations received capacity strengthening.



Our track record and capacity

Our contribution to Syria's development (2020–2025)

Dorcas Syria supported displaced persons, returnees and conflict-affected families through protection, mental health, livelihoods and crisis response. Community centres provided safe spaces, psychosocial support and livelihood opportunities, contributing to recovery and resilience.

People and communities



Programme quality

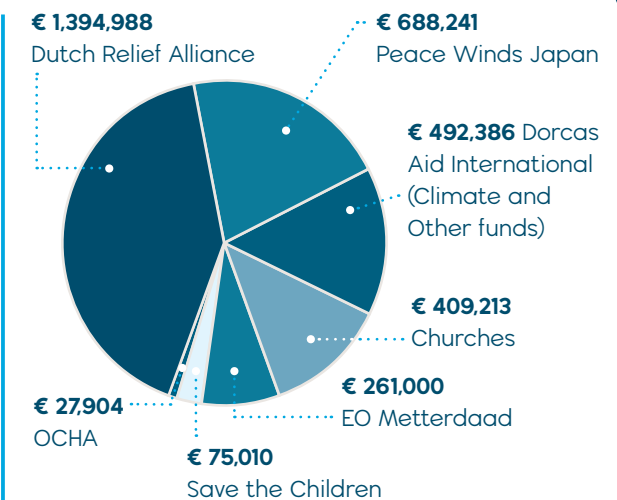
An independent evaluation of the Syria Joint Response consortium found the programme to be relevant, effective, and responsive to community needs, highlighting the quality of community-based programming and strong accountability mechanisms. The evaluation confirmed positive results in protection, livelihoods, and emergency response interventions delivered through local partners. Recommendations focused primarily on strengthening collaboration and knowledge sharing among consortium members and further investing in the capacity and leadership of local partners, reinforcing Dorcas' commitment to localisation and continuous improvement.

Financial capacity

Annual income: € 3,348,742.15
Largest project implemented: € 1,517,988 (SJR)
Programme expenditure: 100 per cent

Funding partners include:
Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA), Peace Winds Japan, Dorcas Aid International (Climate and Other Funds) and Save the Children.

Programme portfolio (2026):
Total programme budget: € 3,713,835



Looking ahead (2026–2030)

Dorcas Syria will expand its reach, strengthen local leadership, diversify funding and deepen expertise in protection, mental health, livelihoods and climate adaptation.



Dorcas has maintained a long-term presence in Syria, adapting work through different phases of crisis while staying closely connected to communities. Our strength lies in working through trusted local relationships and community-based approaches that are practical, respectful, and responsive to people's realities. At the same time, Dorcas Syria is committed to evidence-based programming, continuous learning, and accountability, so that support can adapt over time in response to feedback, changing needs, and the wider context.



Join our vision

Why partnerships matter

Dorcas Syria works with local, national and international partners, including civil society organisations, UN agencies, coordination platforms, faith-based actors and community groups. Our partnerships are built on trust, shared values and long-term commitment. Together, we create opportunities for communities to flourish.

What partners say

“Through the Dorcas community centre and our dispensary, we are strengthening protection services and helping vulnerable families access support with dignity.”

Pastor Ibrahim Nseir
Presbyterian Church (Aleppo)

“Dorcas supported our primary healthcare centre with medication and medical supplies, helping us continue serving vulnerable older people, many of whom live alone and suffer from chronic diseases.”

Elias Farah
Focal point, Orthodox Youth Movement (OYM), Aleppo

“Through the partnership with Dorcas, our centre strengthened its support to families through food vouchers, psychosocial support, staff training, and a fund that allowed us to implement education and remedial learning activities for children.”

Fr Hugo Alaniz
Our Lady of Annunciation Church and Center for Social Assistance and Development (OLACC), Aleppo



Network memberships

Active participation in:

- Damascus INGO Forum
- Sector working groups: Protection, Health, Food Security
- Different governmental ministries



Partnership principles

- Shared values and mutual respect
- Complementary strengths
- Transparent communication
- Long-term commitment
- Local leadership
- Joint learning and adaptation

An invitation from our director

Syrians are rebuilding amid profound hardship, and our vision is clear: by 2030 Dorcas Syria will be a trusted leader in humanitarian response and early recovery, helping communities live with safety, dignity, and renewed hope. We do this through community centres that protect people at risk, strengthen mental health and wellbeing, restore livelihoods, and support resilience to future shocks. But no organisation can achieve this alone. Partnerships with Syrian civil society, faith and community leaders, UN agencies, donors, and private supporters allow us to reach farther, respond faster, and build locally owned solutions that last. I invite you to explore collaboration with us whether through funding, technical exchange, joint programming, or advocacy. Let’s connect and shape pathways to recovery. Together, we can realise our vision for Syria.

Najla Chahda
Country Director Dorcas Syria



Contact us

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We take action in the face of poverty,
exclusion and crises. We come alongside
marginalised people and communities and
jointly create opportunities for them to flourish.