



Damaan Humanitarian Organization

Strategic Plan

2018

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the following people for their contribution to the preparation of this strategic plan:

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- Mr. Mohammad Kanfash. Director and Programs Officer, Damaan Humanitarian Organization, Netherlands.

1. Introduction and Organization Profile

1.1 Organization

Damaan Humanitarian Organization is a Dutch registered non-governmental organization working in the besieged areas in Syria. It is registered with Syrian Interim Government under license number 10006 and the Dutch Chamber of Commerce under 67513026.

In 2017, Damaan Humanitarian Organization was officially registered as a “Public Benefit Organization – [ANBI](#), in Dutch” with the Dutch Local Authorities. The new legal status entail taxes exemption for our donors and supports.

In the Netherlands, the board of directors consists of 3 members; all are volunteer and receive no salaries or reimbursement for their work, activities carried on behalf of Damaan Humanitarian Organization.

The Organization operates different projects in Syria from four different locations including a main office, two medical centers and three communal kitchens. The organizations further support 4 schools, as well as various projects such as drilling and maintaining water wells, 7 in total, and self-reliance agriculture projects. To carry the various activities, Damaan Humanitarian Organization employees 17 full-time staff members, and 9 doctors on patient-visit basis . The team consists of:

- 1 Medical Manager
- 9 Doctors
- 1 Executive Officer
- 1 Financial Officer

- 3 Clerical Assistants
- 1 Accountant
- 5 Nurses
- 2 Support staff
- 2 Technicians
- 1 Driver

Damaan Humanitarian Organization fosters an environment of Gender Equality and our team is highly qualified and motivated.

1.2 History

Damaan Humanitarian Organization started as a group of activists with professional backgrounds from the UN, ICRC and medical professions in 2011, and later developed to become an established NGO in the besieged areas in Syria. In 2016, the organization was registered in the Netherlands and in 2017, it was officially declared a Public Benefit Organization – ANBI.

1.3 Vision

We envision a Syria where Syrians are no longer in need but productive and on their feet again to build a prosperous future for their country and the future generations. A country where human rights are respected and all people are equal and enjoy access to education, health, water and food.

We work to foster sustainable development and humanitarian response. We each contribute uniquely in advancing our mission, whether by working in different sectors or by supporting the overall goal of the organization.

By offering our help and projects in Health, Education, Humanitarian Response and Water, we contribute to solving some of the leading problems facing the Syrians – helping to find local solutions to challenges and sowing the seeds of lasting change. We recognize the importance of Education, Health Services, Clean Water and Humanitarian Response in alleviating the hardship of the war. We aim for inclusive development, systemic change, local ownership, and contextualized solutions.

1.4 Mission

Our mission is to make a lasting difference in the lives of Syrians and to help rebuilding the country in the future. Thus,

- We work with Syrians to change the current reality through sustainable development and humanitarian projects / programs.
- We work with Syrians to enforce and rebuild the vital sectors of health, education, as well as water, food / nutrition.
- We work with Syrians to build and support civil societies and their roles in the development of communities and promotion of human rights and democracy.

1.5 Values

Excellence

We strive for efficiency, effectiveness, and meaningful results across our work. We continually seek to improve our operations and increase our impact. We take pride in our work and our accomplishments.

Integrity

We are honest and transparent, accountable for our efforts, and maintain a consistently high moral standard.

We are ethical in all that we do. We are fair with colleagues, partners, and those we serve, building relationships of trust.

Respect

We demonstrate respect for one another, our partners, and the people we serve in the affected areas. We recognize and acknowledge the strength that comes from diversity. We value all people equally and treat others as we would like to be treated. We consistently demonstrate professionalism and respect in our communications and in our behavior.

Empowerment

We seek to ensure that all voices are heard. We strive to strengthen the voices of the marginalized and vulnerable. We value every team member and seek to ensure everyone can fulfill their potential.

Inclusion

We value our differences and draw strength from diversity. We support programs that engage people across the affected areas. We value every member of our team, learn from their experience, and foster their active engagement. We advance equality, foster equal opportunity and address inequality within our organization and in our work.

Commitment to learning

We seek to improve ourselves and our work continually through reflection and evaluation. We design and assess programs with an eye towards constant improvement. We recognize that professional development is fundamental to team satisfaction and success.

1.6 Current approach

The team of Damaan Humanitarian Organization believes in a participatory-community-based approach and thus our beneficiaries are an integral part of our assessment, planning and implementation process. Our programs are designed in association with our beneficiaries as well as the Local Municipal Councils.

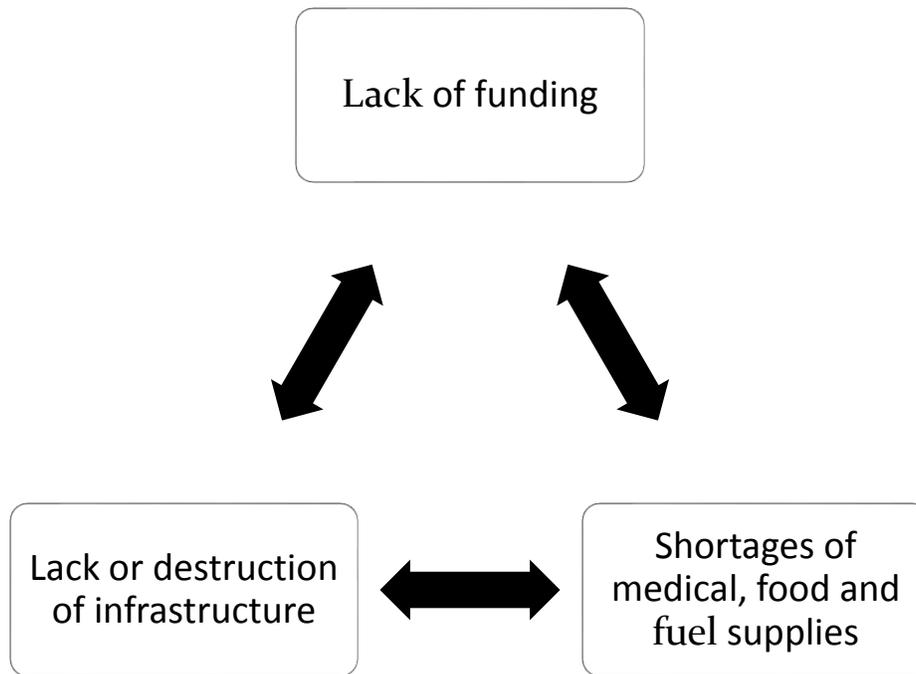
By sharing their specialist expertise in Health, Education, Humanitarian response and Clean Water, our team of over 26 professionals and specialist from different background and expertise works to solve some of the most urgent development and humanitarian challenges facing the besieged areas in Syria today.

During our work we strive to uphold transparency and accountability and thus have developed procedures and guidelines for all critical processes to ensure we meet and exceed the expectations of our partners in relation to project management, monitoring, performance management and quality assurance.

We further aspire to uphold the principles of good governance and thus our operations are assessed and evaluated by an independent Supervisory Board consisting of members from different but complementary backgrounds, including the interim Syrian government, and Local Municipal Councils. The board offers Damaan Humanitarian Organization senior expertise in auditing, finance, governance, project management, social affairs and sustainability.

1.7 Current challenges

Our operation faces various challenges and a great deal of our efforts are focused on overcoming obstacles and tailoring solutions. Operating under siege and bombardment has been further made difficult due to:



2. Context

2.1 Environment

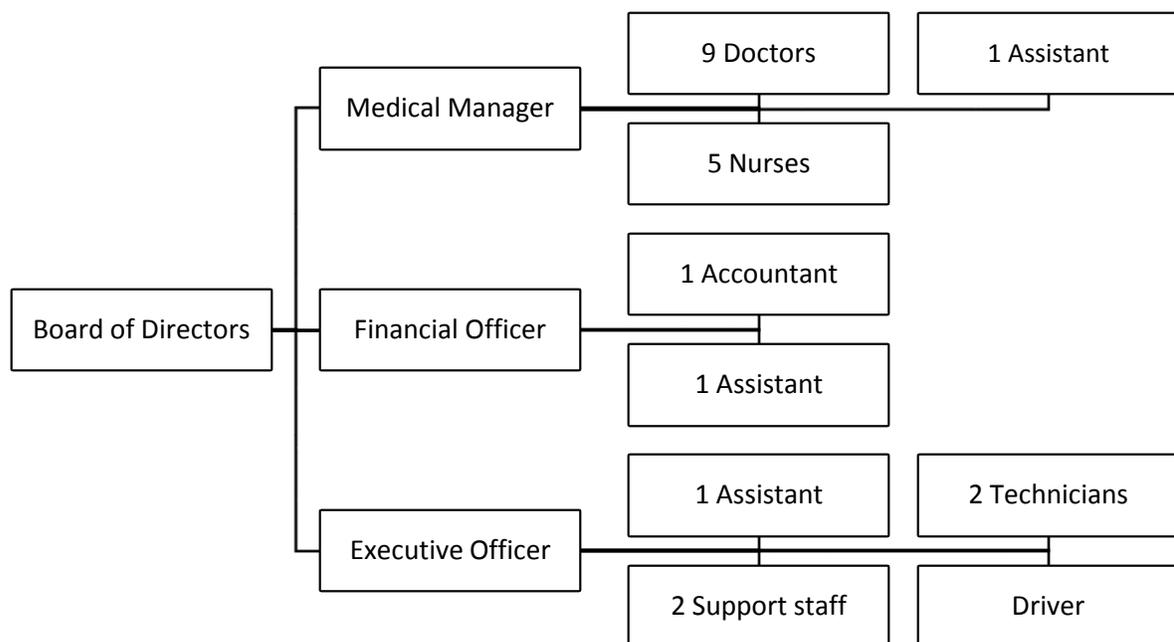
As the Syrian conflict has entered its seventh year, many areas are still under siege where hundreds of thousands of girls, boys, women and men face severe difficulties and live a semi-impossible life. Life under siege has been further worsened by daily bombardment and lack of services, assistance and infrastructure. The siege has fundamentally altered aspects of Syrian society and has had severe effects on local populations. Life is characterized by internal and external displacement, extreme poverty, dependency on external assistance and aid as well as uncertainty.

Damaan Humanitarian Organization operates in the besieged areas and its team strives to respond to the needs of the local populations while maintaining impartiality and great sense of commitment and responsibility.

2.2 Resources

Damaan Humanitarian Organization operates a variety of projects in Syria from four locations including a main-office, a ten-clinic Medical Center, an Oxygen Chamber Medical Center and three communal kitchen. Our work is further extended to cover four schools, as well as different projects such as drilling and maintaining water wells, 7 in total, in addition to self-reliance agriculture projects.

To carry the various activities, Damaan Humanitarian Organization employees 23 paid staff members. The team consists of:



3. Plan

3.1 Objectives

Goal 1: Improvement of Medical and Health Sector

The Medical and Health sectors have been among the most hit and badly affected during the conflict due to the continuous targeting of medical professionals and destruction of facilities. At the moment, hundreds of thousands of young children, elderly and civilians are left without any proper medical care and / or treatment.

- Objective one: Increase access to necessary medical service
- Objective two: Improve quality of medical services provided to beneficiaries

Goal 2: Improve access to Children and Adolescent Education

Schools and learning facilities have had a great share of destruction due to bombardment and killing / arrest of teachers. This has led to massive drop out of schools for children and adolescent endangering their future perspective and exposing them to radicalization and recruitment to armed groups given lack of alternatives.

- Objective one: Increase numbers of children and adolescent attending schools

Goal 3: Girls and Women Empowerment and Illiteracy Elimination

Girls and women have been hugely affected during the conflict and are in precarious disadvantaged position rendering them at risk of gender and sexual abuse. Given insecurity, poverty and changing societal relations, thousands of girls at different ages have dropped out of school and sought employment in horrific conditions, where the risk of abuse are extremely high. Lack of education for girls will negatively affect future generations of Syrian children.

- Objective one: increase number of literate girls and women.
- Objective two: strengthen women through promoting self-reliance initiatives.

Goal 4: Humanitarian Response Plan Strengthened

The majority of the population in the besieged areas are depended on aid provided by non-governmental organization due to the ban imposed on the food entries as well as the soaring unemployment, which has led to extreme poverty. Malnourishment among children was until recently pervasive and the level of food provided to civilians is still not adequate. The Humanitarian Response Plan is an initiative by a consortium of NGOs to respond to the needs of the local population.

- Objective one: Provide food to people in need and increase number of beneficiaries of the kitchen

Goal 5: Clean Water Access increased and improved

Due to the severe destruction of infrastructure as well as the imposed cuts on the besieged areas, the local population have been totally dependent on locally drilled water

wells; however, the quality of the water is not always good and the current number of pumps / wells are not sufficient.

- Objective one: Access to water increased
- Objective two: Enhance quality of infrastructure and water

3.2 Key indicators

Goals	Objectives	Indicators	Budget
Improvement of Medical and Health Sector	Increase access to necessary medical service	60,000 patients receive treatment in medical centers	1 € per patient = 60000 €
Improve access to Children and Adolescent Education	Increase numbers of children and adolescent attending schools	6 schools / 3000 students sponsored in collaboration with Education Councils	9000 € per school = 54000 €
Girls and Women Empowerment and Illiteracy Elimination	Increase number of literate girls and women	Organize 4 illiteracy elimination courses	2000 € per course = 8000 €
	strengthen women through promoting self-reliance initiatives	150 girls and women attend workshop and receive training	200 € per training session
Humanitarian Response Plan Strengthened	Provide food to people in need and increase number of beneficiaries of the kitchen	Provide 125,000 meals for 500,000 persons. Provide 50,000 food packages.	2 € per meal = 250,000 € 25 per food package = 125,000
Clean Water Access increased and improved	Access to water increased	Increase number of wells drilled by Damaan to 10.	2000 € per well
	Enhance quality of infrastructure and water	24 maintenance rounds conducted.	100 € per round = 2400 €

3.3 Target groups

Damaan Humanitarian Organization works with local communities within the besieged areas in Syria to relieve the hardships of daily life and to foster development and sustainability. We ensure the voice of our beneficiaries; boys, girls, women and elderly, are heard and integrated into our operations. Damaan Humanitarian Organization further

promotes the wellbeing of disadvantaged children and women internally displaced persons.

3.4 Target areas

Damaan Humanitarian Organization operates in the besieged areas in Syria with an emphasis on the besieged Eastern-Ghouta in the countryside of Damascus. Eastern-Ghouta consists of tens of towns and cities in the countryside of Damascus. By early 2013, most of these towns and cities came under total lockdown and siege. The conflict, which has been going on since 2011, and siege have fundamentally altered aspects of the Syrian society in Eastern Ghouta and have had severe effects on its people, especially children, girls and women. Residents of the besieged Eastern-Ghouta suffer from internal displacement, extreme poverty, lack of services, destruction of infrastructure and daily bombardment.

3.5 Strategic approach

The overall goal of Damaan Humanitarian Organization is alleviate hardships faced by the local populations of besieged areas in Syria as well as internally displaced persons in addition to promoting development and sustainability. In our quest to fulfil our mission, our team will seek the assistance of private donors, corporations and foundations.

Our team will work on forming partnership with foundations and corporations that share our mission and concerns and we will seek to benefit from their social responsibility initiatives. Approaching private donors will be an integral part of our plan.

We, in Damaan Humanitarian Organization, understand the importance of being a safe pair of hands for the funds and initiatives entrusted to us by our many donors and partners. Thus, we are committed to transparency and accountability in our work and have procedures and guidelines in place for all critical processes to ensure we meet and exceed the expectations of our partners in relation to project management, monitoring, performance management and quality assurance.

Audit & Risk Management

The quality of the work of Damaan Humanitarian Organization, including internal processes and services to our beneficiaries, is ensured by thorough auditing and evaluation. Our financial statements are audited monthly, quarterly and annually by an

independent external professional auditor in Syria. In the Netherlands, our work is audited by [MKB Administraties](#).

Quality assurance

Everything Damaan Humanitarian Organization does is focused on achieving development and humanitarian results in the most efficient, effective and sustainable way possible. To ensure this, Damaan Humanitarian Organization makes planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning a key part of its work. We have constant analysis, reflection and improvement of our practice – enabling successful tailoring of solutions to local problems and contexts and full transparency for our donors and partners.

Corrective & preventive action

Damaan Humanitarian Organization implements a range of policies to ensure staff and organizational initiatives meet the highest levels of ethical conduct.

Damaan Humanitarian Organization maintains a strict policy of zero tolerance to theft, fraud and misuse of resources as well as sexual harassment and abuse of staff or beneficiaries. We consider it the responsibility of all Damaan Humanitarian Organization staff members to be aware of the potential for fraud, and to report any reasonably suspected fraud.

Damaan Humanitarian Organization supports the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and implements a Child Protection Policy to ensure children are safeguarded from abuse, discrimination and harm of any kind in the implementation of Damaan Humanitarian Organization activities.

3.6 Programmes activities

Health Sector

Despite the attestation of the World Health Organization that access to the highest attainable standard of health is a fundamental right of every human being and that all humans have the right to timely, acceptable, and affordable health care of appropriate quality, hundreds of thousands of Syrians in Syria are deprived of this basic human right.

Syrians, especially those displaced and besieged, have missed on their right of health care for a variety of reasons such as the targeting and destruction of medical facilities and infrastructure such as hospitals, medical centers and private clinics as well as the killing and arrest of medical

professional and doctors. Another main reason is the lack of funds for projects despite the fact that those affected are among the most disadvantaged persons in the country.

We, in Damaan Humanitarian Organization, work to alleviate these reasons with a goal of building a better and healthier future for Syrians. We believe that a healthier population is a foundation for vibrant and productive communities, stronger economies and safer and build country. Together we strive to provide the best possible medical care where it is much needed for the people who need it the most.

Damaan Humanitarian Organization is at the center of work in public health in some of the most disadvantaged areas in Syria; gathering the best practitioners, defining solutions and mobilizing resources to positively impact Syrians life. The Organization works in close collaboration with other organizations and medical council in Syria to promote the health condition of Syrians.

In Damaan Humanitarian Organization, we apply the universal Human-Rights based approach when we engage our recipients of services and thus make sure that our services are:

- Non-discriminatory: we welcome and respect all people regardless of their race, sex, language, religion political or other opinions as well as their status, health status and economic and social situation.
- Available: our facilities and services are open and available for everyone at all times.
- Accessible: we are happy when approached and welcome everyone. Funds and money is no issue when approaching Damaan. Our services are free of charge.
- Qualitative: we strive to provide the best quality possible with the help of a capable and professional medical team.

Education

Although getting an education is a human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it's a right that millions of children are missing out especially in Syria's besieged areas.

Children of Syria; especially those in the besieged areas, have missed on their right for Education for many reasons such as; but not limited to, displacement; damage to and destruction of schools and other infrastructure; teachers being displaced, arrested or killed; lack of fund for education projects; and lack of books and education materials. Those children out of school are at an increased danger of abuse, exploitation and recruitment into various groups.

In Damaan Humanitarian Organization we believe that Education is a key to a better future for Syria and Syrians. We are ardent believers that with education comes peace and prosperity. Thus, we have placed supporting education high on our priority list and given it special focus and attention.

Our programs prioritize basic and secondary education / training, while we also strive to assist the institutions of higher education in the besieged areas. Damaan Humanitarian Organization has programs to rehabilitate schools, provide new classrooms, hygiene facilities, books and study materials. We also provide and equip schools and institutions with access to computers and online books and studies. A pioneer program is also in place to eliminate illiteracy in the besieged areas that target out-of-school girls and other disadvantaged girls and women.

Our approach

We see future world leaders, great thinkers and human beings not victims

While other NGOs and organizations seem to look at children as victims, we in Damaan Humanitarian Organization; and in compliance with the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees, see them as partners with rights and further as future leaders and builders of Syria and the world. Thus, and based on our view, we tailor and adjust our programs to establish partnerships with the children and those responsible for their education.

We are a part of the community and we stay when it's most affected

Despite the danger of being in a besieged area and in a war zone, our team is always on the ground and we associate our fate with the fate of the local population. We stay as long as they stay and we provide our service as long as we have children and partners.

We focus on quality, not quantity

We strive to help as many girls and boys as possible but we make sure that this does not come at the cost of quality. We strive to tailor the best programs in cooperation with the local councils and education professionals.

In Damaan Humanitarian Organization we do not count how many books we have given or how many schools we have renovated but rather on the impact they will make. Thus, we do not judge our success based on numbers, but rather on the impact they have now and in the future.

We do not give a fish only! We teach people how to catch one

Damaan Humanitarian Organization does not only support education programs, but also works with the local councils to build and renovate schools and other education infrastructure in the besieged areas so the benefit can last and prevail for years to come.

We also find sustainable solutions for books and other learning materials such as printing and recycling.

Our only aim is the Children of Syria

Humanitarian and Development work in a war zone is a risky and dangerous business. Yet we believe that we should remain as long as the children and other beneficiaries remain. We strive to protect our work and to provide the best to the children and thus we maintain neutrality and impartiality as a protection measure for our partners, beneficiaries and staff. The trust and acceptance by the local community is what keeps our staff safe and lets us deliver our work.

We are a non-political, impartial organization.

We build partnership and share our success and responsibility with the targeted communities

Our projects are all rooted in their local communities and they involve and employ local professionals and are coordinated through the local councils and the Syrian interim government.

Our staff outside the affected areas are also in constant contact with representative of different local initiatives, representative and councils.

We are there because we believe; not for fame; not for the money; only because we believe that our children are our future.

We respect our children as partner

Children of Syria and those of the besieged areas have seen horrific atrocities and have bravely survived them. We look at them as heroes and survivors and not as victims or a subject of pity. Thus, we in Damaan Humanitarian Organization never portray our children partners as helpless victims or people in need, but as well-respected human beings with rights.

Girls and Boys are equal and are the same for us

The projects of Damaan Humanitarian Organization are designed and tailored to be inclusive for all children in the besieged areas. We do not differentiate between girls and boys and we believe that all children are important for the future of Syria and that Education is a right for every child regardless of gender, sex, religious / ethnic background.

Food and nutrition programme

In the face of a dire situation where food supplies have become scarce and financial resource have been depleted, the majority of Syrians have become more and more dependent on the assistance and food supplies provided by international and national NGOs, if available. In some parts of the country, thousands of people were denied food supplies and forced into starvation which lead to many children, women, elderly and men losing their lives.

In Damaan Humanitarian Organization we take our share of the responsibility and provide food to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged populations through a variety of programs especially in the besieged areas in Syria. We further support and implement self-reliance such as agricultural programs.

We, through our three communal kitchens and in line with the main goals of the world food programme response plan in Syria:

- Deliver food to the most affected and disadvantaged people in Syria especially children, and women;
- Provide emergency food assistance, and;
- Support and offer tailored programs focusing on self-reliance such as agriculture and animal husbandry.

We value the dignity of our beneficiary and carry our work with the utmost respect to them.

Damaan's development projects - Groundwater wells

A project by Damaan Humanitarian Organization in response to the lack of clean water in the besieged Eastern Ghouta, where the water supplies has been cut or stopped due to destruction of infrastructure as a result of continuous bombardment on the residential areas.

The program is need-based and is being implemented in coordination with the Local Councils. The besieged Eastern-Ghouta, an agricultural and groundwater-rich area, is in dire need for water to accommodate for the needs of the residents and their crops.

Aims and objectives:

- Clean water supplies
- Sustainable water supply to residents and farms
- Reduction of financial costs for residents

Implementation:

The program is being implemented with the cooperation of the Local Councils and the expertise of local engineers. The "Shallow Wells" type of infrastructure provided by Damaan is cost-effective and efficient.

The idea is to drill through dirt and rock, casing is installed to keep the hole from collapsing. Then a concrete base is formed around the small casing (a few feet in diameter) and is left to set up overnight. Once the concrete pad is dry, the pump mechanism is carefully lowered into the hole and a hand pump is attached. The experts makes note of how much water flows and ensures it is safe to drink.

Because these new wells are completely sealed, the water stays clean and can be consumed without any treatment.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Maintenance:

The program is regulated and monitored by Damaan and the local councils including the medical local councils.

Regular check-ups and maintenance rounds are in place to ensure that the water is safe to drink and for other use.

Adult Education and Illiteracy Elimination Programme

The programme has been designed and implemented in response to lack of education programs and facilities given the current situation in Eastern Ghouta, where schools and other education facilities and infrastructure were bombed and destroyed or do not have sufficient support.

The programme is a specialized non-formal adult education scheme that has been tailored specifically to target girls and women in Eastern Ghouta in coordination with the Local Education Offices.

The targeted group is illiterate or semi-illiterate girls and women aged 15 and above. The programme emphasizes on the following skills / subjects:

- Arabic language classes: reading and writing
- Mathematics

Aims and objectives

The aim of the programme is to foster sustainable education training for socially disadvantaged girls and women and empower them in their societies.

- Empower learners with functional literacy and life skills
- Reduce illiteracy rates
- Foster community capacity building and development

Monitoring and Evaluation

The programme is regulated and monitored by Damaan and the local education offices.
Impact and Achievement