

CASE STUDY: SURIANA

PIONEERING SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT AND DIGITAL
SAFETY



ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Founded in 2018, Suriana for Sustainable Women's Development is a women and youth-led civil society organization operating across Armanaz, Idlib, Aleppo, and the Latakia countryside. With a professional core team, Suriana is dedicated to supporting vulnerable populations, including conflict survivors and people with disabilities. The organization operates under the mission of "a better life for all Syrians," focusing on the intersection of empowerment, recovery, and the meaningful integration of marginalized groups into peacebuilding efforts.

AREAS OF WORK



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
OF WOMEN



LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL
PARTICIPATION



PREVENTION OF AND
RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE



LEGAL RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY



WOMEN'S HEALTH



EDUCATION AND SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT



COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

2024–2025 IMPACT: SURVIVAL THROUGH SUSTAINABLE PROTECTION

In the past two years, Suriana has implemented a strategic model that connects immediate protection with long-term livelihood security. Operating across fragmented regions like Jabal al-Zawiya, Hama, and Idlib, the organization has created a network of safety and trust for women and youth.

- **Integrated Protection and Safe Spaces:** Suriana’s programming treats protection as a prerequisite for daily survival. By establishing safe spaces and providing psychological support, the organization reached 200 women directly and 600 indirectly, strengthening their ability to recognize risks and seek support while maintaining consistent access to essential services.
- **Sustainability-Focused Livelihoods:** Moving beyond one-time assistance, Suriana supported six existing small businesses and launched the "Bridges of Hope" project. This initiative distributed professional equipment to women entrepreneurs, facilitating their entry into the labor market and ensuring their economic projects remained viable in a volatile economy.
- **Pioneering Digital Security:** Recognizing that digital threats often escalate into physical and psychological violence, Suriana conducted intensive digital security training in the Darkush area. The program equipped 20 young women with the skills to defend against hacking, phishing, and extortion. To institutionalize this knowledge, Suriana trained “Digital Security Ambassadors” who delivered 15 community-led sessions and promoted a custom-developed mobile application designed to shield women from cyber threats.

TANGIBLE RESULTS

The impact of Suriana’s interventions is best measured by the long-term agency and professional growth of its participants, who have transitioned from survival to self-sufficiency. Notable outcomes from the 2024–2025 cycle demonstrate a clear link between vocational training and social mobility, as young women equipped with income-generating skills successfully utilized their earnings to fund their own university tuition. In the industrial sector, this agency scaled into community-level impact when graduates of the empowerment program launched a small factory that now provides stable employment for seven local women. Beyond economic gains, Suriana’s commitment to civic integration saw five women move into specialized roles within civil society projects focused on mitigating gender-based violence, effectively transforming from beneficiaries of safe spaces into strategic advocates for women’s safety across the region.

NAVIGATING CONSTRAINTS THROUGH STRATEGIC PRIORITIZATION

The primary challenge for Suriana is a stark disparity between immense community demand and limited programmatic resources. To navigate short funding cycles and restricted financial capacity, the organization has shifted its strategy toward prioritizing sustainable, high-impact projects over broad, superficial reach. By selecting participants for deep, strategic support and advocating for community-led contributions, Suriana has maintained its effectiveness despite the pressures of a resource-poor environment.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRATEGIC INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

To address the systemic barriers facing local organizations and to scale sustainable development, Suriana recommends that international partners:

- **Prioritize Project Longevity:** Shift toward long-term project cycles that allow for measurable generational change rather than short-term relief.
- **Broaden Grant Scope and Flexibility:** Ease the criteria for local organizations and offer a wider scope of work that encompasses logistical support for sustainability-focused initiatives.
- **Invest in Digital and Professional Infrastructure:** Increase support for specialized programs like digital security and small-business equipment provision, which directly decrease vulnerability to exploitation.
- **Direct Support for Women-Led CSOs:** Strengthen the institutional capacity of women’s organizations to ensure they remain the architects of local recovery.

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