

# Feminist Movement for Change in Syria

## Partners' Brief



### Women's Association in Atareb Aleppo – Est. 2016

The Women's Association in Atareb is successfully working to increase women's active participation within the district's local councils through campaigning and awareness raising. In 2017, the Association supported the candidacy of five women in local elections by organising a community mobilisation campaign. One of the candidates was elected and now heads the newly-established Women's Office.

### Release Me Idlib – Est. 2016

Release Me provides support to Syrian women former detainees in Idlib, ensuring their participation in the ongoing political process. Release Me runs a rehabilitation programme for former detainees to empower them economically, through employing only former detainees; politically, through workshops and lectures that build on their personal experiences of activism; and legally, through working with rights organisations to prepare legal cases and seek accountability for violations and harm caused.

### Al Wafa Charity Organisation Idlib – Est. 2015

Al Wafa works to support women heads of households to obtain income generation opportunities through training them in 3D design, connecting them with employment opportunities via social media sites and providing women with access to spaces and resources to work and study remotely.

### Souryana Alamal Aleppo – Est. 2015

Souryana Alamal was set up by a group of volunteers in response to the need to strengthen and reinforce the participation of women in public life, especially in executive positions and politics. The organisation seeks to equip Syrian youth with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to build a peaceful, just and civil future Syria. In 2016, the organisation opened a centre providing a friendly and supportive space for women to learn and develop their skills and knowledge.

### Syrian Lights Daraa – Est. 2016

Established by a group of women and youth, Syrian Lights is an independent humanitarian organisation with a focus on increasing women's influence and decision-making role in the community. Syrian Lights provides health, education and relief services to all echelons of society.

## Radio Souriat Damascus – Est. 2015

Radio Souriat is a Syrian non-profit organisation, their work focuses on presenting development issues through diverse outputs made available on various media platforms. The organisation seeks to create societal change through three strategic programmes designed to: 1- build social solidarity and promoting diversity 2- strengthen the participation of women in public life, and 3-grow gender sensitive media.

## Syrian Female Journalists Network (SFJN) Netherlands – Est. 2013

SFJN was established to respond to the need for gender sensitive reporting and media during the Syrian uprising. SFJN seeks to build bridges between the media and the Syrian women's movement and civil society by empowering both men and women journalists to qualify for leadership positions. They also aim to encourage actors in media to raise awareness of gender equality and women's rights.

## Urnammu for Justice and Human Rights Canada – Formally Est. 2014

Members of Urnammu have been actively working to defend human rights and the rule of the law since 2011, by providing support to victims of rights abuses. Urnammu specialises in documenting rights violations from a gender sensitive perspective. They are considered a credible source of information on human rights violations in Syria and an authority on violations related to sexual violence and gender based discrimination.

## Masar Research Centre Saraqeb – Est. 2014

The central objective of Masar is to increase interest in and progress towards sustainable development within Syrian society, especially among youth and women. Within this framework, the Centre aims to a) develop the capacity of local organisations, local governance and individuals; b) increase the responsiveness of the education sector to the needs of the population; c) increase women's participation in all fields of work at the decision making level; and d) transform humanitarian response from short term relief to sustainable development.

## Dawlaty Lebanon – Est. 2012

Dawlaty was set up as a platform to develop and share materials aimed at building the capacity of young Syrian activists in Syria and the diaspora on subjects related to democratic transition. The feminist values of Dawlaty inform its role as a support and advocacy organisation for Syrian civil society. Dawlaty is intent on ensuring the voices of marginalised groups are included in ongoing political discussions.

## Women Now for Development Lebanon – Est. 2012

Women Now was established to address the particular and often disproportionate impact of the conflict on women and girls. Women Now seeks to support women and girls through protection services, economic and educational empowerment, and programmes aimed at increasing women's awareness of their rights and the value of participating in the political sphere. The organisation also runs its own advocacy campaigns, informed by the women who attend the organisation's centres and safe spaces.

## Musawa Damascus – Est. 2012

With the overall aim of combating gender based discrimination and violence in all domains of public and private life, Musawa works along two parallel streams: 1) the cultural stream, which aims to draw the attention of influential personalities to issues affecting women from a gender sensitive perspective and catalyse them into action, and; 2) the field work stream, which is concerned with increasing awareness of women's rights and gender equality, while empowering women at the political, economic, social and cultural levels.

## Sawa for Development and Aid (SDAID) Lebanon – Est. 2011

SDAID was initially set up as a spontaneous response to the arrival of the first 40 Syrian families displaced from Syria into northern Lebanon in December 2011. SDAID has a vision of Syrians supporting one another to build a just, civil and democratic Syria. They provide holistic and integrated support to individuals through facilitating the exchange of skills, knowledge and resources; encouraging autonomous organising to build strong and vocal communities, and; mobilising for collective action at the local and international levels.

## Syrian Women's Network Turkey – Est. 2013

The Syrian Women's Network was set up to facilitate effective coordination and networking among those working in the field of women's rights in Syria. Comprised of over 100 individuals and 16 organisations, the Network aims to ensure respect for human rights and international law and that full equality for women is enshrined in the future constitution of Syria. The Network members also share the objective of working towards the meaningful participation of women in all domains of public and private life, including in national committees concerned with transitional justice, national reconciliation and drafting the constitution of Syria.

## Damma Women's Network Lebanon – Est. 2011

Damma is a community based organisation of women well known for its origins in spontaneous grassroots peacework in the rural Damascene town of Madaya, where they negotiated directly with multiple parties, successfully lobbying to lift the siege on the town between 2015 to 2017. Damma seeks to continue its grassroots, women led peacework within the displaced communities from which it originated.

## Citizens for Syria Germany – Est. 2013

With branches in Berlin, Turkey and the Kurdistan region of Iraq, Citizens for Syria operates in Syria and neighbouring refugee host countries. Citizens for Syria is a catalyst for cooperation and exchange of experiences and information between Syria civil society actors and civil society organisations from around the world. Citizens for Syria plans to develop gender sensitive research tools to advance its mapping of Syrian CSOs, providing data to allow for evidence-based recommendations to improve gender equality among Syrian CSOs.

## Badael Turkey – Est. 2013

Badael, established in 2013, is committed to strengthening inclusive, representative, grassroots civil society organizations working in Syria. Badael's fundamental mission is to support peacebuilding and democratization efforts, especially those taking place at a grassroots level. In addition, Badael's research on Syrian refugee women in Turkey serves as the basis for a multi-faceted rights-based programme in the country.

## Anonymised for security reasons Damascus – Est. 2017

A Damascus based women led initiative that aims on raising awareness and documenting incidents of sexual harassment in universities and workplaces in Syria. The initiative plans to advocate for the amendment and/or revocation of domestic laws and legislation that afford impunity to perpetrators of sexual harassment, and lobby for the introduction of new legislation to criminalise and deter the phenomenon.

## Anonymised for security reasons Daraa – Est. 2017

A network established as a civil society platform, with the aim of building women's leadership capacity and increasing their engagement in a male dominated public sphere. Having emerged out of an initiative of local leaders that hold community discussions on political and social issues facing southern Syria, our partner will continue their inclusive peacebuilding work in southern Syria.