

# Empowering Community Prosperity

## VSLAiE CASE STUDY

## Sharia Compliant Group Investment, Syria

The Raqi Group is a VSLA in Emergency (VSLAiE) group in the rural area of northern Aleppo, in the Qabasin community of Al Bab sub-district, near the Syrian-Turkish border. IYD, a local organization that CARE partners with, approached the community to propose the idea of forming VSLAiE groups.

Imad Amro, one of the VSLAiE members, stated the following:

“In the beginning, we thought it was a financial association held among community members as is commonly known. However, after meeting with the facilitator and receiving an explanation of the saving and lending process, we liked the idea and decided to establish a VSLAiE group. We had nothing to lose, so we promoted the idea among friends, neighbors, and acquaintances.”

Following IYD’s engagement with the community, Al Raqi group was formed, consisting of 24 members. The group was composed of both men and women living in the Qabasin community. The members all work in various professions including university students, teachers, farmers, and housewives.

Imad shared how the idea of saving under the VSLAiE group brought them all together. After they started saving, they were able to begin borrowing from the group's box. The member describes VSLA as “an interesting and excellent idea, especially in emergency situations” which allows for them to no longer need to borrow from others outside of the group.



“VSLA is an interesting and excellent idea, especially in emergency situations.”





## Challenges

This region suffers from a lack of job opportunities and poor economic conditions. Most group members are women and individuals with limited incomes, some of whom are seeking job opportunities.

## Opportunities

At the beginning of the second cycle, CARE and IYD proposed the idea of collective investment to VSLAiE. Through the partnership with IYD, CARE provided VSLAiE group members with training on financial literacy and collective investment. As a result, members were able to propose a collective investment project to buy and sell olive oil, since it is a basic consumer need

in every household in their community. Since the majority of group members have good experience with buying, selling, and examining the quality of olive oil, the group investment project was accepted by the IYD organization which then supported the group with capital.

