



The Foundations of Recovery:

Beit Karam's School Rehabilitation in Syria

Table of Contents

Impact & Progress	03
Context: Why school rehabilitation matters now	03
Karam's Approach to School Rehabilitation	04
What we've achieved: Impact snapshot	05
Beyond infrastructure: Activating schools	05
Rehabilitation Catalog & Future Investment	07
How School Rehabilitation Works	07
The Foundations of A Restored School	09
Investment Pathways	14
Full School Rehabilitation	14
Targeted Infrastructure Improvements	14
Program Activation & Learning Spaces	14

Impact & Progress

CONTEXT: WHY SCHOOL REHABILITATION MATTERS NOW

On December 8, 2024, Syria's 14-year war came to an unexpected end with the fall of the Assad regime, closing one of the most devastating conflicts of the 21st century. Throughout the conflict, civilian systems, including schools, hospitals, and markets, was repeatedly targeted.

Today, more than 60% of Syria's infrastructure is destroyed, and 90% of the population lives in poverty. Access to basic services such as water, electricity, healthcare, food, and education remains severely limited.

The education sector has been especially affected. More than 2.5 million children are out of school, and at least 5,000 schools lie in ruins. Many of the schools that remain are overcrowded, unsafe, or underresourced, leaving students and teachers without adequate conditions for learning.

As Syria begins rebuilding, restoring safe learning environments is essential. Schools provide structure, stability, and a sense of normalcy for children who have experienced years of disruption and trauma. Rehabilitating schools is therefore a critical step toward restoring access to education and supporting community recovery.

KARAM'S APPROACH TO SCHOOL REHABILITATION

Karam's school rehabilitation work is based on a simple principle: **the learning experience is inseparable from the condition of the learning environment.**

Safe buildings, reliable electricity, clean water, adequate furniture, and protection from the elements are essential for students' ability to learn, concentrate, and feel secure in the classroom.

Guided by a "build back better" philosophy, Karam approaches school rehabilitation as an opportunity to move the Syrian education system forward rather than recreate pre-war conditions. This includes integrating resilient and environmentally sustainable solutions, such as solar energy systems, and creating spaces that support creativity, collaboration, and engagement.

Our approach is locally led and needs-based. Schools are prioritized according to levels of damage, student population, and community need, with particular focus on rural areas and heavily war-affected communities.

Karam works closely with school leadership and local education authorities to identify priorities and implement solutions that combine physical rehabilitation with educational transformation, ensuring that schools are restored in ways that support long-term learning and community stability.



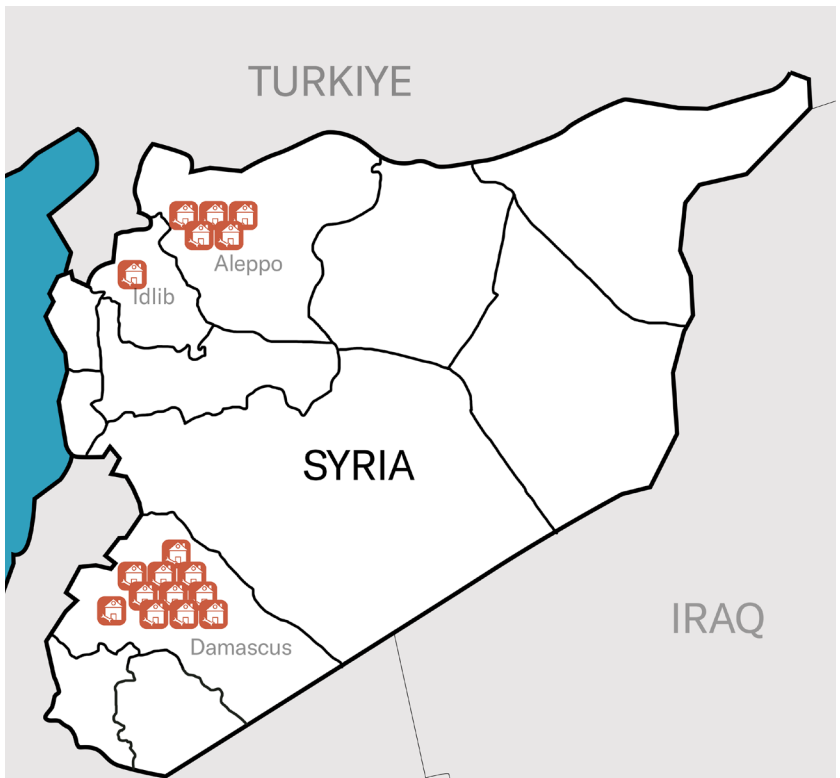
WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED: IMPACT SNAPSHOT

In the past year alone, Karam has completed or supported rehabilitation projects across 17 schools in Syria, reaching communities in six cities, spanning both rural communities and heavily war-impacted urban areas.

These rehabilitation efforts have directly benefited close to 10,000 students (36% girls and 64% boys), restoring access to safer and more functional learning environments.

Restoration initiatives have included combinations of structural repairs, classroom renovations, sanitation upgrades, electricity and lighting installation, solar energy systems, furniture provision, and improvements to school grounds. These projects emphasize the range of needs addressed, ensuring schools are safe, functional, and conducive to learning.

BEYOND INFRASTRUCTURE: ACTIVATING SCHOOLS





As rehabilitations are completed, Karam will activate rehabilitated schools through integrated programming delivered by Syrian mentors through Karam Studios and Karam Caravan. These programs introduce studio-based learning, creative expression, and teamwork within classrooms and outdoor school spaces, and will include structured learning and sports, and movement-oriented sessions.

These activations demonstrate exactly why infrastructure matters. Safe classrooms, reliable electricity, and dedicated activity spaces make it possible to introduce innovative initiatives, hands-on learning, and creative exploration. Physical rehabilitation enables schools to move beyond basic functionality and become environments where students can learn, heal, and imagine their futures.

Rehabilitation Catalog & Future Investment

HOW SCHOOL REHABILITATION WORKS

Karam's school rehabilitation model is designed to be flexible and responsive to the realities of post-war recovery. Rather than applying a fixed rehabilitation package to all locations, each school is restored through a combination of core infrastructure and learning environment elements based on condition and needs.

Assessments conducted with school leadership and local education authorities determine which interventions are required for a school to function safely and effectively. In some cases, this may involve structural repairs such as walls, roofs, or gates. In others, priorities may center on electricity, heating, classroom environments, or student furniture like desks and chalkboards.

This approach ensures that rehabilitation investments are both needs-driven and resource-efficient. It also allows rehabilitation work to scale across diverse school contexts, from rural communities to heavily war-impacted urban areas.

Because rehabilitation is element-based, donors can engage at multiple levels depending on their philanthropic priorities and capacity. Support can take the form of funding specific rehabilitation components, contributing to the full rehabilitation of a single school, or investing in multiple schools across a shared geography.

This flexible investment structure enables donors to directly shape tangible education outcomes while contributing to Syria's broader recovery through school-based infrastructure rebuilding.

تحت رعاية مديرية التربية محلب
وبمساهمة كريمة من



جمعية
بيت كرم

ترميم مدرسة خالد بن الوليد الاعدادية

١٤٤٧ - ٢٠٢٦ / ١ / ١

THE FOUNDATIONS OF A RESTORED SCHOOL

1. Safe Classrooms & Structural Repairs



For nearly the entire lives of today's Syrian K-12 students, schools have often been unsafe spaces and military targets. This category focuses on restoring the physical safety and structural integrity of school buildings. Typical interventions have included:

- Building or repairing school walls and roofs
- Repairing doors and windows
- Conducting metal and structural repairs
- Raising perimeter walls and installing school gates
- Replacing broken window glass
- Improving roof insulation where needed

Structural rehabilitation allows students and teachers to enter buildings safely, protects classrooms from seasonal extremes, and restores schools as community institutions rather than remnants of conflict.

2. Electricity & Lighting (Including Solar Systems)



Restoring electricity has been central to many rehabilitation projects. Interventions have included:

- Installing or repairing electrical systems
- Restoring damaged wiring
- Installing classroom and hallway lighting
- Adding outlets and electrical fixtures
- Installing solar systems in selected schools

Reliable electricity allows classrooms and shared spaces to function properly. Solar systems provide a resilient source of energy that reduces dependence on unstable power grids while strengthening long-term sustainability.

3. Clean Water & Sanitation



Access to clean water and functional sanitation facilities has been a priority across multiple rehabilitation sites. Projects have included:

- Repairing or expanding bathroom facilities
- Constructing or rehabilitating toilet blocks
- Installing porcelain washbasins with plumbing
- Repairing water faucets
- Restoring drainage systems
- Installing water tanks to ensure reliable water access

Reliable water and sanitation systems improve health conditions, support school attendance, and ensure that students and teachers have access to safe and hygienic facilities.

4. Student Desks & Learning Furniture



Providing adequate classroom furniture has been another key component of Karam's rehabilitation efforts. Across schools, this has included repairing and providing student desks, installing durable classroom furniture, and equipping administrative and teaching spaces with tables, chairs, and cabinets where needed.

5. Heating, Cooling & Weather Protection



Rehabilitation projects have also addressed seasonal and climate-related needs. Interventions have included:

- Providing heaters and fans
- Conducting chimney maintenance
- Improving roof insulation
- Repairing structures to protect classrooms from extreme weather conditions

These improvements ensure that schools remain usable throughout the year and that students and teachers can continue learning without disruption.

6. Interior & Exterior Learning Environments



Many rehabilitation projects have included interior and exterior painting, classroom renovations, improvements to entrances and corridors, and courtyard tiling.

Clean, repaired, and thoughtfully restored environments contribute to a sense of dignity and stability while creating spaces that support concentration, creativity, and engagement.

7. Activity Rooms & Creative Learning Spaces



In addition to infrastructure improvements, selected schools were equipped with dedicated activity rooms designed as safe and creative learning environments for students.

These spaces were outfitted with chairs, tables, lighting, curtains, paint, and heating to support structured learning, teamwork-based activities, and creative educational approaches introduced through Karam Studios and Karam Caravan programming.

Activity rooms also remain available for broader school use, allowing restored schools to support collaborative and hands-on learning beyond basic classroom instruction.

[Click here for more details.](#)

INVESTMENT PATHWAYS

School rehabilitation is not a uniform intervention. Each site requires a different combination of structural repairs, sanitation work, electrical systems, furniture, and, in some cases, sustainable energy solutions. For this reason, Karam's model allows for different levels of engagement. The following are ways to support Karam's school rehabilitation efforts.

FULL SCHOOL REHABILITATION

Support the complete restoration of a single school, bringing a damaged or under-resourced site back to safe and functional operation.

Typical interventions may include:

- Rebuilding walls and gates
- Repairing roofs and windows
- Restoring electricity and lighting systems
- Rehabilitating sanitation facilities
- Installing water tanks
- Equipping classrooms with desks and furniture

TARGETED INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Support a specific category of improvement across multiple schools, strengthening critical systems while benefiting students across several communities. Examples may include:

- Solar energy systems
- Sanitation upgrades
- Classroom desks and furniture

PROGRAM ACTIVATION & LEARNING SPACES

Support the activation of restored schools through Karam Studios and Karam Caravan programming. Once classrooms are safe and functional, they can host structured learning, teamwork-based activities, and creative educational sessions led by Syrian mentors.

Investing in school rehabilitation strengthens the institutions that will carry Syria forward while restoring safe and dignified learning environments for the next generation of students.

karamfoundation.org | karam@karamfoundation.org

2045 W Grand Ave Ste B Unit 88293, Chicago, IL, 60612
Karam is a 501(c)3 organization founded in 2007 in Chicago
TAX ID 37-1548241