Diakonia Sweden
Renewal Audit – Summary Report – 2022/12/13

1. General information

1.1 Organisation

Type	Mandates	Verified
☒ International ☐ National ☐ Membership/Network ☐ Direct Assistance ☐ Federated ☐ With partners	☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☒ Advocacy	☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☒ Advocacy
Legal registration	INGO, registered with the Swedish Tax Authorities	
Head Office location	Stockholm, Sweden	
Total number of organisation staff	275	

1.2 Audit team

Lead auditor	Birgit Spiewok
Second auditor	Elisabeth Meur
Third auditor	-
Observer	Lina Muñoz Figueredo / HQAI (site visit Colombia)
Expert	
Witness / other participants	

1.3 Scope of the audit

CHS Verification Scheme	Certification
Audit cycle	Second Audit Cycle – Transition to the three-year audit cycle.
Coverage of the audit	The entire organisation, including all mandates and all sites.

1.4 Sampling*

Total number of Country Programmes included in the sampling			25
Total number of sites for onsite visit			2
Total number of sites for remote assessment			3
Name of Country Programmes	**Included in final sample (Y/N)**	**Rationale for sampling and selection / de-selection decision**	**Onsite or Remote**
Random sampling			
Honduras	yes	New random sampling, covering the Latin American region. Also a long-standing programme of Diakonia, allowing to	Remote

		explore further the relationship between a Country Office and the Regional Office.	
Burkina Faso	no	Not included, as it was already covered in the initial audit.	
Guatemala	no	No included, to allow for a broader geographical coverage – Latin America already being well represented in the overall sample.	
Thailand	yes	New random sampling, covering the Asia region. An average size Country Programme which also allowed to ask some questions regarding the role of the Asia Regional Office to complement the finding of the Latin American Regional Office.	Remote
Egypt	yes	New random sampling, covering the North African region, which had not been covered in any previous audits. Small Country Office working with long-term partners.	Remote
Purposive sampling			
Colombia		Random sampling done in 2020. It was agreed to keep this sample for the onsite visit in order to complement the findings of the initial audit and close gaps due to not being able to visit the Partners Organisations and meet with communities. Therefore, the focus of the visit was on partner and community consultations. The sample in Colombia includes the Regional Office for Latin America to reflect on the specific role of the Regional Offices in the management system of Diakonia Sweden. The Regional Office for Latin America was also initially selected in 2020 and this selection was kept for this audit allowing for onsite staff interviews as part of the Colombia site visit.	Onsite
Bangladesh		Random sampling done in 2020. It was agreed to keep this sample for the onsite visit in order to complement the findings of the initial audit and close gaps due to not being able to visit the Partner Organisations and meet with communities. Therefore, the focus of the visit was on partner and community consultations.	Onsite

Any other sampling performed for this audit:

At the HO, the audit team interviewed both management and staff covering a wide range of positions and responsibilities. Also, some interviews were done to specifically include the IHL programme.

The decentralised structure of Diakonia requires specifically gathering findings on how the Regional Offices work. The initial audit in 2020 included interviews with staff at the Africa Regional Office in Kenia and the Latin America Regional Office in Colombia; this audit now included fully the Latin America Regional Office in Colombia focusing on the developments in the past two years and complementing these findings with some interviews at the Asia Regional Office in Thailand. The Regional Director for the MENA Regional Office currently works remotely and was also interviewed during the HO visit. Thereby, all Regional Offices have been included in the sampling over the past two years.

During the two onsite visits, in each country all relevant staff positions within the Diakonia country teams were interviewed. For the remotely sampled countries, the audit team ensured that key positions were interviewed at least once covering in total all positions relevant to gather findings for all Core Commitments.

The focus of this audit was to audit how Diakonia works with its 400+ Partner Organisations (POs). In order to get a good sample, in each of the onsite visited countries 3 POs were interviewed, and for the remotely sampled countries 1-2 POs were interviewed in each country as well. These POs were selected partly randomly, partly by

selecting both long-term and new POs, large and small POs, those with humanitarian projects and those without. In total, this audit gathered data from 14 POs.

Sampling risks identified:

The sample fully covers the way Diakonia works and complements the data gathering of previous audits with a growing geographical representational sample now also including Northern Africa. Specific focus was put on ensuring that the sample covered all mandates of the organisation: human rights, development and humanitarian projects. Based on the sample outlined above, the audit team is confident in the findings and conclusions of the audit.

2.2 Interviews

Level / Position of interviewees	Number of interviewees		Onsite/ Remote
	Female	Male	
Head Office			
Management	5	6	Both onsite and remote
Staff	10	5	Both onsite and remote
Regional Office Latin America			
Management	1		Both onsite and remote
Staff	3	2	Both onsite and remote
Country Offices			
Management	2	3	Both onsite and remote
Staff	12	17	Both onsite and remote
Staff of 13 Partner Organisations	24	20	Both onsite and remote
Total number of interviewees	**57**	**53**	**110**

2.3 Consultations with communities

Type of group and location	Number of participants		Onsite or remote
	Female	Male	
Bogotá / Colombia			
Interview Rights Holders	1		Remote
Focus Group Rights Holders	4		Remote
Focus Group Rights Holders	4		Onsite
Focus Group Rights Holders	3		Onsite
Interview Stakeholder	1		Onsite
Bangladesh			
Focus Group Student Forum / Nilphamari	17	8	Onsite
Focus Group Women / Nilphamari	13		Onsite

Focus Group School Management / Nilphamari	4	10	Onsite
Focus Group Community Leaders / Nilphamari		7	Onsite
Interview Rights Holder / Nilphamari	1		Onsite
Focus Group Students Forum / Chattogram	35		Onsite
Focus Group Women`s Network	12		Onsite
Interviews Students / Chattogram	4		Onsite
Total number of participants	**99**	**25**	**124**

2.4 Opening meeting

Date	2022/08/24
Location	Stockholm
Number of participants	24
Any substantive issues arising	-

2.5 Closing meeting

Date	2022/09/29
Location	online
Number of participants	20
Any substantive issues arising	-

3. Background information on the organisation

3.1 General information	Diakonia Sweden (Diakonia) is a Swedish faith-based non-profit organisation founded in 1966 by Swedish churches. It is a multi-mandate organisation registered in Stockholm and involved in development, humanitarian emergency response, and advocacy. It supports and works with around 400 locally rooted movements and organisations in 25 countries in Africa (representing 47% of its operational expense), in Latin America (22% of its operational expense), in Asia (14%), in the Middle East (11%), and in Sweden (6%).
	Diakonia's vision is a just, equal and sustainable world. Its mission, pursued in its global strategy and its country strategies 2021, is to change unfair structures – political, economic, social and cultural – that generate poverty, oppression and injustice. Human rights perspective and feminist principles are mainstreamed in long-term development cooperation, emergency response, mobilisation and advocacy work. Communities and people affected by crisis are referred to as rights holders by the organisation to adequately reflect their rights-based approach also in language. This audit report subsequently also uses the terminology rights holders.
	The new global strategy 2021 relies on a Theory of Change based on people's knowledge of their rights, effective agency and mobilisation, and action at both institutional-legislative and social norms levels. To achieve its objectives, Diakonia supports and works through local civil society organisations and social movements that implement projects with and for rights holders. The new strategy also commits the organisation to link development work, humanitarian assistance and peace.

Diakonia has several institutional donors like Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), the EU, a charitable foundation Radiohjälpen, and the Swedish Postcode Lottery. In 2021, Diakonia entered into a new seven-year partnership agreement with ECHO that allows the organisation to apply for funding from the European Commission for humanitarian projects. In addition, in 2021 the new five-year global civil society programme *Shifting contexts, supporting change, transforming societies*, co-funded by Civsam (Civil society support unit of Sida), has been launched with the aim to strengthen the development of civil society organisations and their work for change. In 2021, 88% of Diakonia's income came from Swedish state funding via Sida and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs development cooperation departments through Swedish embassies.

In 2021, Diakonia's revenues amounted to 42 million USD, a decrease of about 8 million USD compared to 2020, and the lowest in 4 years. Consequently, Diakonia's operational expenses also decreased from 46 million USD in 2020 to 38 million USD in 2021. This reduction is mainly due to development cooperation agreements that expired in 2020 and a reduction in agreement volume. 93% of Diakonia's operational expenses in 2021 were devoted to the work on democracy, Human Rights, and gender equality, 6% to humanitarian work and disaster relief, and 1% to information sharing and training.

Diakonia is member of ACT Alliance, the Swedish Fundraising Council, Giva Sverige and Svenska postkodföreningen (the association behind the Swedish Postcode Lottery). The organisation also takes an active part in different fora and groups at the national, European and international levels, such as the Swedish Humanitarian Network for Human Rights, the Swedish Network for Disaster Risk and Resilience, CONCORD, Eurodad, and the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR).

3.2 Governance and management structure	Since the Initial Audit in 2020, there have been no changes in the overall governance structure, and the five main levels of responsibility continue to be the General Assembly (GA), the Board of Directors (BoD), the Head Office (HO), the four Regional Offices (RO), and the 23 Country Offices (CO). The management structure of Diakonia is outlined in various process descriptions including the Order of Delegation, which defines roles and regulations at the different levels of the organisation.

However, Diakonia has undergone significant changes in its organisational structure at the Head Office and the organisation has designed a new strategy.

In 2021, Diakonia carried out an organisational review of its Head Office structure. A sudden gap in funding had been identified at the end of 2020 and the Board tasked the new Secretary General and Senior Management to undertake this review, supported by an external consultancy. Also, the organisation had implemented a very substantial re-organisation and regionalisation process in 2014 which at the time had not included a review of the structures at HO. The results of the review led to some re-structuring and down-sizing, including redundancies and an overall staff cut from 54 HO staff in 2020 to 45 HO in 2022. Some new positions have been created to reflect the newly structured HO team e.g. Legal Advisor. Also, due to operational issues, the Nicaragua Country Programme was closed down, reducing the number of Country Programmes to 24. During this audit, the Secretary General resigned with immediate effect and the Deputy Secretary General stepped in as Interim Secretary General as of September 2022. |

Organigram of Diakonia Sweden (October 2022):
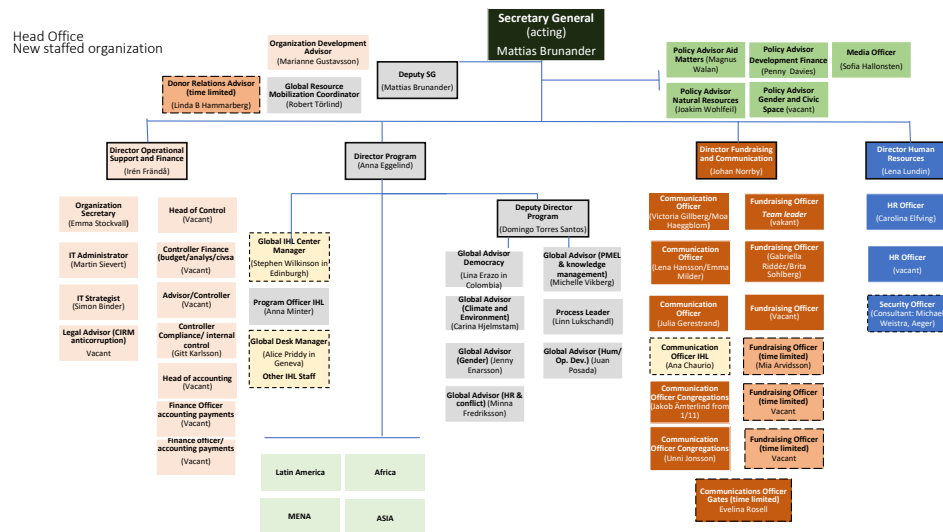
Parallel to undertaking the internal review, Diakonia developed a new strategy from 2022 onwards. This strategy is open-ended with a horizon of approximately five years that is constantly extended. The strategy will be updated annually based on changes in context and lessons learnt. Annual operational plans put the strategy into action and are reported upon.

3.3 Internal quality assurance mechanisms and risk management	Diakonia continues to work through its decentralised organisational structure, implementing programmes and projects solely through local partners (POs). The two exceptions to this rule are advocacy and resource mobilisation in Sweden as well as the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Programme based in Mali, Palestine and Lebanon. The IHL Programme is implemented directly by Diakonia Sweden and provides legal and policy advice to the humanitarian community on International Humanitarian Law.
	The organisation continues to have an HR system that includes performance management and staff capacity building. Its Financial control system regulates the management of hundreds of grants from different donors, implemented by a large variety of partner organisations. The auditing system of Diakonia has not changed since the IA. The organisation undertakes an annual financial audit. Also, Diakonia requires its POs to be audited externally and audit requirements are stated in each contract between Diakonia and the PO. The audit assesses the finances of partner's project, program or organisation (when core funding), and checks the coherence between finances and activities.
	The organisation has several steering documents such as the PMEL Handbook, the Accountability Framework, the Procurement Guidelines, as well as practical tools, formats, instructions and routines. Some of these documents have been updated since the IA in 2020. These documents are accessible for all staff in the intranet, DiaConnect. In addition, the project handling system FixIT ensures the overall access to and the consistency of quality assurance mechanisms.
	Diakonia reports on risks to strategies, programs, projects and grants in their internal data management system FixIT. Since 2022, Diakonia has increased the frequency of its Global Risk Analysis Report to three times a year. Risks are scored and categorised

as contextual or operational risks. Risk analysis and management is considered a responsibility of every employee and board member at all levels of the organisation.

3.4 Work with partner organisations	Diakonia Sweden supports and works with more than 400 implementing partner organisations worldwide and – apart from its advocacy programmes and resource mobilisation in Sweden – does not implement itself. Diakonia strives to support people who do not have their basic human rights respected through the funding of NGOs and CSOs working with rights holders for sustainable change. The organisation is committed to long-term partnerships.

Diakonia is currently developing a partnership policy, but for now, partnerships are guided by the principle of "Good Donorship and Partnership" defined in the General Conditions. The General Conditions state the organisation's commitment to respect each PO`s specific conditions, it emphasises capacity-building and long-term partnerships, and gives priority to core funding and work based on mutual transparency and accountability. Becoming a Diakonia PO requires several steps, which are described in the PMEL Handbook.

Partnerships are based on comprehensive partner capacity assessments (only for long-term partnerships, one year or more), capacity development plans, follow-up logs and contracts including respective rights and duties of partners. The aim of the assessments is to check and analyse relevant information about a potential partner and to engage in follow-up actions on an annual basis. This format enables Diakonia's staff to decide on whether an organisation qualifies for a partnership and funding type.

The partnership assessment covers strategic, programmatic and administrative criteria. Quality and accountability appear in the format as crosscutting criteria. The decision to enter in a partnership is based on an evaluation of both the strategic added-value of the partnership and the risks associated to the new partners. When the organisation starts working with a new partner it first grants short-term small size projects to minimise the risks. The Partnership Assessment is done before a new contract is signed or renewed with both new partners and continuing partners.

Partners' capacity development is central to all Diakonia's partnerships. The follow-up log, part of the assessment format, is filled out in country offices by the programme manager or officer annually with a focus on progress or regression noted during the year. Capacity development is a joint exercise between Diakonia and its partners. Based on partners' strategies, evaluations, audits and monitoring visits, and in close dialogue, Diakonia continuously supports capacity development of its partners. The original partnership assessment serves as a base line and with the annual follow-up, it can include new areas in the partner capacity development plan. Country Offices are responsible to conduct the partnership assessment, to follow up on the workplan and to centralise information on Diakonia IT system, FixIT.

Diakonia has three main types of contracts: core funding, project and programme funding, and short-term funding for project support. Complaints and Incident Response Mechanism, accountability principle, Code of Conduct, and Child Safeguarding are integral parts of the contracts. In addition, these contracts include several annexes which are also mandatory to comply with including Diakonia`s Code of Conduct, Procurement Guidelines and Anticorruption policy. Compliance with these policies and guidelines and all other contractual obligations including reporting is monitored by the relevant Country Office and this is supervised by the relevant Regional Office. As per contract, Diakonia and Diakonia's back donors also have the right to participate in, and

evaluate the various activities, and to visit the partner organisation and the rights holders.

The PMEL Handbook provides detailed information on grant and project cycle management. It also defines the six project types with their respective objectives and budget lines. All projects are connected to a programme that is connected to a strategy. CHS commitments are part of contracts and Diakonia provides trainings to all its partners on the CHS either directly or through external consultants. Transparency, accountability and quality assurance are considered as essential in this cooperation between Diakonia, the partner and rights-holders.

Diakonia seeks to ensure accountability to its partners through good donorship and partnership approach relying on equal and long-term relationships. The key approach for working with partners on accountability relies on partners capacity assessments and capacity development, focusing on accountability between Diakonia and its partners but also on Diakonia's accountability to rights-holders and other stakeholders.

Diakonia's partners sampled for this audit pointed out a very good working relationship with the organisation. While being described as a demanding partner, Diakonia is also recognised as a supportive, accessible, and knowledgeable organisation.

4. Overall performance of the organisation

4.1 Effectiveness of the governance, internal quality assurance and risk management of the organisation

Diakonia has a well-developed quality assurance system in place and these systems are documented and in place. Staff at HO, RO and CO confirm that the organisation`s HR, Finance and Audit systems are in place and functioning and that they are trained in these systems, use them and rate them as practical and easy to apply. The same is concluded for programme quality assurance with monitoring, evaluation and learning procedures in place and applied systematically. Programme planning, adaptation and learning are well structured for human rights and development programmes, which cover 94% of all global expenses. Only "strategic humanitarian countries" and pre-selected partners with an updated humanitarian contingency plan are eligible to engage in humanitarian work. At the time of this audit, 15 out of 25 country programmes and 31 partner organisations were pre-selected to respond to humanitarian emergencies with Diakonia funding. This pre-selection is done to ensure that COs and POs have the necessary knowledge, experience and capacity to respond to humanitarian crisis situations in a principled and accountable way.

This audit identified some gaps with regard to needs assessment, project planning and exchanging learning in Diakonia`s humanitarian projects (6% of global expenses). The organisation provides guidance for this, but there was insufficient evidence provided to confirm the application of principles when partner organisations implement humanitarian projects.

While the pre-selection process is rated by CO staff as useful, the audit identified some gaps regarding ensuring that POs assess humanitarian needs accordingly

The Risk Management procedure was upgraded to be able to identify quicker financial and other risks. Staff stated that the financial gap that was identified in 2021 could have been foreseen earlier on with more effective risk management systems. The Global Risk Matrix is now updated three time per year to allow for more timely analysis and response by the management and Board.

The responsible member of staff for the Complaint and Incidents Reporting Mechanism retired in 2022 and the new to-be-appointed Legal Advisor will take on this task. Data protection will also be part of this role. The re-organisation at HO level has led to high staff turn-over and unrest amongst the team. At the time of this audit, there were still a significant number of positions vacant, especially in the finance department. The Deputy Secretary General covers the post of Secretary General as interim. However, staff at RO and CO did not report on any delays or disturbances with regard to their work due to these changes at HO. Also, management and staff at HO demonstrated well that despite the changes at HO level, the organisation is committed to addressing the root causes of non-compliances and working towards resolving these. The management response and subsequent actions demonstrate this well.

4.2 Level of implementation of the CHS and progress on compliance	At the IA in 2020, the audit team had identified 5 CARs and noted 15 observations. The IA was conducted at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and no site visit were possible. Therefore, community members and people affected by crisis could not be consulted and findings were limited to Head Office, Regional Office, Country Office and Partner Organisations level, leaving gaps in the reporting and a subsequent higher number of observations. In this renewal audit, site visits included direct community consultations, so that this report covers all levels.
	The 5 CARs were still open for resolution at the time of the Maintenance Audit in 2021. These addressed non-conformities relating to not formally committing to collection of disaggregated data and to not systematically protecting personal data. Also, the audit identified three CARs relating to Diakonia not ensuring that communities were giving information about adequate staff behaviour or had access to documented complaints handling systems.
	Overall, Diakonia continues to demonstrate its commitment to the CHS. Staff and POs are being informed about and trained in the standard. The organisation communicates its commitment externally on its website, with POs in contracts, assessments and capacity developments plans, and internally in handbooks and process descriptions. Also, the organisation demonstrates strong commitment to and implementation of gender equality, diversity, PSEA. The Regional offices and Country offices have been given high levels of responsibility regarding their strategies and programming and overall the management structure demonstrates the organisation`s commitment to localisation. The weaknesses identified with regard to the organisation`s overall PSEA management have all been addressed and gaps in findings due to the COVID -19 situation were closed in this audit. Other strengths of the organisation with regard to the CHS are: Strong levels of compliance with HR and finance management requirements, coordination, communication, participation, feedback and learning. Since the IA, the organisation has successfully implemented improvements to address the non-conformities identified.
	However, this audit identified some new non-conformities: The organisation does not comply fully with the requirements related to impartial humanitarian needs assessments (1.2), data protection (3.8), and complaints handling (5.1), and 3 new Corrective Action Requirements (CARs) were raised.

4.3 Performance against each CHS Commitment

Commitment	Strong points and areas for improvement	Feedback from communities	Average score*

Commitment 1: Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant	Diakonia has a system in place to ensure that context, stakeholders and needs are analysed in order to design programmes and to adapt to changes. Context analysis is instrumental for Diakonia's strategic ambition and Theory of Change. Diakonia is constantly analysing context at different levels and adapting its strategies and programmes accordingly. Policies, guidance and procedures commit Diakonia to, and support the implementation of, the principles of impartial assistance and diversity based on needs and capacities of right-holders. The feminist and conflict sensitivity approaches mainstreamed in all programmes, and Diakonia's local long-term presence in countries, enable the organisation to understand the local context and how different right-holders are affected. Therefore, and also due to its active advocacy role, Diakonia and its POs are able to design appropriate and relevant responses. However, Diakonia does not consistently ensure that its partners conduct impartial assessments of needs in order to design and implement appropriate humanitarian projects.	Rights holders perceive activities to be relevant and adapted to their needs. Diakonia's partners, rooted in the local communities, also state that the collaboration with Diakonia has been relevant for them.	2.7
Commitment 2: Humanitarian response is effective and timely	While Diakonia works mainly through a human-rights based approach and is committed to long-term changes in society, it also has effective mechanisms in place that enables it to react effectively and in a timely manner in case of emergency. The organisation also has strong procedures in place to monitor activities, outputs and outcomes. Diakonia aims to be an agile and flexible organisation and the mechanism for budget reallocation within long-term programmes enable a quick and effective response from its long-term partners. However, Diakonia does not always ensure that relevant technical standards are used for small emergency responses.	Partners and rights-holders confirm that Diakonia is open and reactive and that the activities are timely.	2.9
Commitment 3: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects	Capacity building is at the centre of Diakonia's Theory of Change and its slogan "People change the world" shows how the organisation invests in local capacity as a driver of long-term change. Diakonia is clearly committed to the strengthening of the capacities of its local partners, but also civil society organisations, social movements, and rights-holders. Capacity building is prioritised	POs and right-holders have all emphasised how they have been strengthened thanks to the activities proposed. They shared many concrete examples on how the programmes have changed their lives. For instance, some CSOs have	2.5

	in all programmes and adapted to partners' needs, identified through participatory processes. In general, the organisation is well aware of the risks and it has procedures in place to avoid negative effects. While environment is clearly a central mainstreaming area for Diakonia, the organisation has not yet reached the same level in this area as for its other mainstreaming areas, such as gender and conflict. The environment action plan is new and not yet fully implemented at CO and PO levels. In addition, Diakonia does not systematically work with its POs to ensure they establish appropriate systems for its programmes to safely manage personal information about communities and other stakeholders.	developed their own strategies and have applied for grants from donors. Women's forum empowered women to raise their rights during protests or facing local authorities.	
Commitment 4: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback	Diakonia bases all programme goals on the needs as expressed by communities and rights holders. Communication, participation and feedback is ensured via continuous interaction between staff and POs including field visits, workshops, assessment and planning activities. Diakonia shares information about the organisation, the principles it adheres to, how it expects its staff to behave, the programmes it is implementing and what they intend to deliver is provided to communities. Diakonia also supports its partner organisations in complying with this requirement. Diakonia works with long-term partnerships based on experience of working together, trust and the understanding that their partners are community-based organisations that ensure appropriate communication with the rights holders. Diakonia staff regularly monitor partner activities and get feedback from rights holders. Feedback is gathered systematically, paying particular attention to including the voices of girls and women.	Partner organisations and the rights holders state that they feel well informed, can participate in the actions that concern them and give feedback to Diakonia.	2.9
Commitment 5: Complaints are welcomed and addressed	Diakonia has a Complaints and Incident Management (CIRM) system in place, welcomes and accepts complaints and manages these fairly and appropriately. The organisation publishes an annual report on the complaints, some investigations take a very long time. The organisation requires its POs to have their own CIRM and supports them in doing	Rights holders and community representatives confirm having access to adequate complaints handling mechanisms. They stated being well informed about the system, the scope including staff behaviour and management of it.	2.6

	so through trainings and capacity building. A culture of welcoming complaints is promoted with POs and CoC are mandatory for all partners. The organisation and its partners organisations communicate to rights holders what kind of behaviour they can expect from them. Diakonia does not consult with its partners about the design, monitoring and evaluation of its CIRM.		
Commitment 6: Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary	Diakonia is committed to coordination and collaboration with others without compromising humanitarian principles. Diakonia`s work with POs is governed by clear agreements and all POs confirm that these are fair and respectful towards the partners mandates, obligations and independence. Diakonia does stakeholder analyses and ensures that the programmes complement those of national and local authorities and other stakeholders and avoids duplication. Some small gap was identified regarding humanitarian programming not always adequately including information on activities of other humanitarian actors in the region. The organisation is committed to coordination and takes part in regional, national and international networks and coordination fora. Collaboration includes sharing of information and innovation with other stakeholders.	Partner organisations describe Diakonia as a demanding but fair and supportive partner and the capacity building support provided is welcomed and appreciated. Rights holders confirm that Diakonia understands the context it is working in and that no duplications or gaps were experienced.	2.8
Commitment 7: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	Diakonia has evaluation and learning policies in place and provides resources, systems and relevant tools to record and share knowledge and experiences.to learn and improve. Through its networks, the organisation contributes to learning and innovation in the wider human rights and development sector. The organisation learns through monitoring and evaluation and uses learning to guide programme planning. Learnings from human rights and development programming, but not fully from humanitarian projects, are shared internally and externally with staff and partner organisations.	Rights holders interviewed confirmed being well informed and consulted about the programmes, its successes and difficulties. Partner organisations explain how Diakonia applies monitoring and evaluation and uses learning for new programme designs.	2.8
Commitment 8: Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	Diakonia has clear policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff are supported to do their job effectively and are treated fairly and equitably. Until recently, Diakonia had a very low turn-over but since the restructure, layoff, and resignations at HO this has increased.	POs and rights holders feel that Diakonia staff are competent, skilled and professional.	2.8

	Staff confirm that employee policies are fair, that they understand and sign a CoC and they feel supported in the development of their capacities. The HR Policy, the Global salary policy and the decentralisation HR processes at RO and CO levels, ensure that staff policies and procedures are fair, transparent and non-discriminatory. Some HR processes are in the process of being revised, for example the new job descriptions. While Diakonia has fair and transparent HR policies and procedures, employees have expressed a perception of unfairness, an absence of transparency and a lack of open communication related to the restructuring process at HO level.		
Commitment 9: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	Diakonia has policies and procedures in place that ensure that resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose. Diakonia addresses the issue of corruption through policies and procedures (9.6c) and has many financial control mechanisms in place. Diakonia also develops the financial capacities of its POs providing technical support and trainings. An area of improvement is for Diakonia to ensure and monitor that its partners consider their impact on the environment when using local and natural resources.	Rights-holders confirm that resources are well managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose. Some rights-holders know the project budget.	2.8

Note: Average scores are a sum of the scores per commitment divided by the number of indicators in each Commitment, except when one of the indicators of a commitment scores 0 or if several scores 1 on the indicators of a Commitment lead to the issuance of a major non-conformity/ weakness at the level of the Commitment. In these two cases the overall score for the Commitment is 0.

5. Summary of open non-conformities

Corrective Action Request (CAR)	Type	Resolution due date	Status	Date closed out
2022-1.2: Diakonia does not consistently ensure that its partners conduct impartial assessments of needs in order to design and implement appropriate humanitarian projects.	Minor	2025/11/10	new	
2020 - 1.5: There is no policy and tools that formally commits the organisation to collect systematically disaggregated data by age and abilities for all programmes.	Minor	2022/08/03	closed	2022/11/10
2020-3.8: Diakonia does not have a system in place to safeguard any personal information collected from communities and people affected by crisis that could put them at risk	Minor	2022/08/03	closed	2022/11/10

2022-3.8: Diakonia does not support POs to establish systems to safeguard personal information collected from rights-holders.	Minor	2025/11/10	new	
2020-4.1: Diakonia does not ensure that information is systematically provided to rights holders about expected staff behaviour.	Minor	2022/08/03	closed	2022/11/10
2022-5.1: Diakonia does not systematically consult its partners as community representatives on the design, implementation and monitoring of its own Complaints and Incident Reporting Mechanism.	Minor	2025/11/10	new	
2020-5.4: DS does not ensure that their partner organisations enable communities and people affected by crisis to have access to documented complaints-handling processes.	Minor	2022/08/03	closed	2022/11/10
2020-5.5: The organisation does not have robust due diligence processes to ensure that POs welcome complaints and take these seriously.	Minor	2022/08/03	closed	2022/11/10
Total Number of open CARs	**3**			

6. Recommendations for next audit cycle

Specific recommendation for sampling or selection of sites or any other specificities to be considered	Diakonia has cash-based assistance projects but none of them are part of the sampled countries for this audit. Therefore, auditors recommend including humanitarian projects with cash-based assistance modalities in the next audit. Also, in order to cover all regions, sub-Saharan African countries should be considered for an onsite visit at the next renewal audit.

7. Lead auditor recommendation

In our opinion, Diakonia Sweden has demonstrated that it continues to conform with the requirements of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability. We recommend maintenance of certification.	
Name and signature of lead auditor:	**Date and place:** Berlin,10 Nov 2022

![hqai logo] HUMANITARIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE INITIATIVE

8. HQAI decision

Certificate renewed:	☒ Issued ☐ Preconditioned (Major CARs)
Next audit: before 2023/12/13	
Name and signature of HQAI Executive Director:	**Date and place:** 13th December, Geneva

9. Acknowledgement of the report by the organisation

Space reserved for the organisation	
Any reservations regarding the audit findings and/or any remarks regarding the behaviour of the HQAI audit team: *If yes, please give details:*	☐ Yes ☒ No
Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings: I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit I accept the findings of the audit	 ☒ Yes ☐ No ☒ Yes ☐ No
Name and signature of the organisation's representative: MATTIAS BRUNANDER	**Date and place:** 25 JANUARY 2023

Appeal

In case of disagreement with the decision on certification, the organisation can appeal to HQAI within 14 days after being informed of the decision. HQAI will investigate the content of the appeal and propose a solution within 10 days after receiving the appeal.

If the solution is deemed not to be satisfactory, the organisation can inform HQAI in writing within 30 days after being informed of the proposed solution, of their intention to maintain the appeal.

HQAI will transmit the case to the Chair of the Advisory and Complaint Board who will constitute a panel made of at least two experts who have no conflict of interest in the case in question. These will strive to come to a decision within 30 days.

The details of the Appeals Procedure can be found in document PRO049 – Appeal Procedure.

Annex 1: Explanation of the scoring scale*

Scores	Meaning: for all verification scheme options	Technical meaning for all independent verification and certification audits
0	Your organisation does not work towards applying the CHS commitment.	**Score 0:** indicates a weakness that is so significant that the organisation is unable to meet the commitment. This leads to: • **Independent verification:** major weakness. • **Certification:** major non-conformity, leading to a major corrective action request (CAR) – No certificate can be issue or immediate suspension of certificate.
1	Your organisation is making efforts towards applying this requirement, but these are not systematic.	**Score 1:** indicates a weakness that does not immediately compromise the integrity of the commitment but requires to be corrected to ensure the organisation can continuously deliver against it. This leads to: • **Independent verification**: minor weakness • **Certification:** minor non-conformity, leading to a minor corrective action request (CAR).
2	Your organisation is making systematic efforts towards applying this requirement, but certain key points are still not addressed.	**Score 2:** indicates an issue that deserves attention but does not currently compromise the conformity with the requirement. This leads to: • **Independent verification and certification:** observation.
3	Your organisation conforms to this requirement, and organisational systems ensure that it is met throughout the organisation and over time – the requirement is fulfilled.	**Score 3:** indicates full conformity with the requirement. This leads to: • **Independent verification and certification:** conformity.
4	Your organisation's work goes beyond the intent of this requirement and demonstrates innovation. It is applied in an exemplary way across the organisation and organisational systems ensure high quality is maintained across the organisation and over time.	**Score 4:** indicates an exemplary performance in the application of the requirement.

* Scoring Scale from the CHSA Verification Scheme 2020