Dan Church Aid
Recertification Audit – Summary Report 2020/12/04

This is the Stage One Report of the Recertification Audit. It includes the findings from the first phase of the audit process, which scope is limited to the open non-conformities (CARs) and relevant policy-level requirements. If no major non-conformity is identified at Stage One, the HQAI certificate can be renewed.

Stage Two of the Recertification Audit will include site assessments to a sample of country programmes. Upon completion of Stage Two, a final audit report will present the complete findings of the audit and final conclusions on the performance of the organisation against all commitments of the CHS.

If major non-conformities are identified at Stage 2 of the audit process, the certificate will be suspended, possibly withdrawn following HQAI procedure (PRO116 – Issuance, suspension, reinstatement and withdrawal of certificates).

1. General information

1.1 Organisation

Type	Mandates	Verified
X International ☐ National ☐ Membership/Network ☐ Direct Assistance Federated With partners	X Humanitarian X Development X Advocacy	X Humanitarian X Development X Advocacy
Head office location	Copenhagen, Denmark	

Total number of country programmes	18	**Total number of staff**	861

1.2 Audit team

Lead auditor	Karin Wierenga
Second auditor	Jordi Capdevila
Third auditor	--
Observer	Ricardo Bianconi, ACCREDIA
Expert	--
Witness / other	--

Date	2020/11/9

Location	Copenhagen, Denmark (remote)

1.3 Scope of the audit

CHS Verification Scheme	Certification
Audit cycle	Second audit cycle
Phase of the audit	Recertification audit
Extraordinary or other type of audit	---

1.4 Interviews conducted during Stage 1

Position / level of interviewees	Number of interviewees		Onsite or remote
	Female	Male	
Head Office			
Management	2	3	Remote
Staff	5	4	Remote
Country Programme / Project Office(s)			
Management			
Staff			
Partner staff			
Others			
Total number of interviewees	**7**	**7**	

1.5 Opening meeting

Number of participants	9
Any substantive issues arising	No issues

2. Background information on the organisation

2.1 General Dan Church Aid (DCA), founded in 1922, is an independent, non-profit, faith-based **information** organisation rooted in the Danish National Evangelical Lutheran Church, based in Copenhagen, Denmark. DCA is a member of the ACT Alliance and cooperates with the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches.

DCA's purpose is to empower the world's poorest in their struggle for a dignified life. This effort is based on a Christian worldview and anthropology as well as respect for human rights and the equal worth of all human beings. DCA organises aid and assistance at local, national and global levels, in close cooperation with churches and other partners, and engages with people's movements and political powers to influence decision makers to improve conditions for the world's poorest.
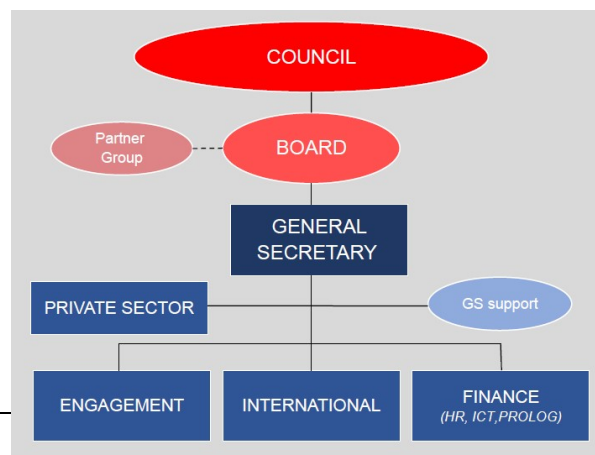
DCA has a country office in 18 countries, mainly in Africa, but also in Asia and the Middle East. The revised International Strategy (2019-2022) forms an integrated part of the eight years (2015-2022) Global Strategy. DCA pursues three global goals:

1. Save lives; strategic intervention areas include rapid humanitarian response and preparedness, emergency livelihoods and sustainable recovery, community safety and protection.
2. Build resilient communities; strategic intervention areas include community-based disaster risk reduction and risk management, sustainable community livelihoods development and job creation, communities influence decisions for building resilient communities.
3. Fight extreme inequality; strategic intervention areas include space for civil society and protection of human rights defenders, inclusive participation in decision-making, equitable distribution of resources through inclusive and accountable institutions, combating discrimination and promoting rights of excluded groups.

All international programmes and projects in DCA are developed and implemented within the priorities of the thematic policies: Active citizenship, Right to Food, Humanitarian Action and Safer Communities in which gender and rights-based approach are mainstreamed. DCA is funded by more than 60 different international donors in addition to funding from Danida as part of a Strategic Partnership Agreement (2018-2021), ECHO FPA strategic partnership as well as contributions from individuals and companies.
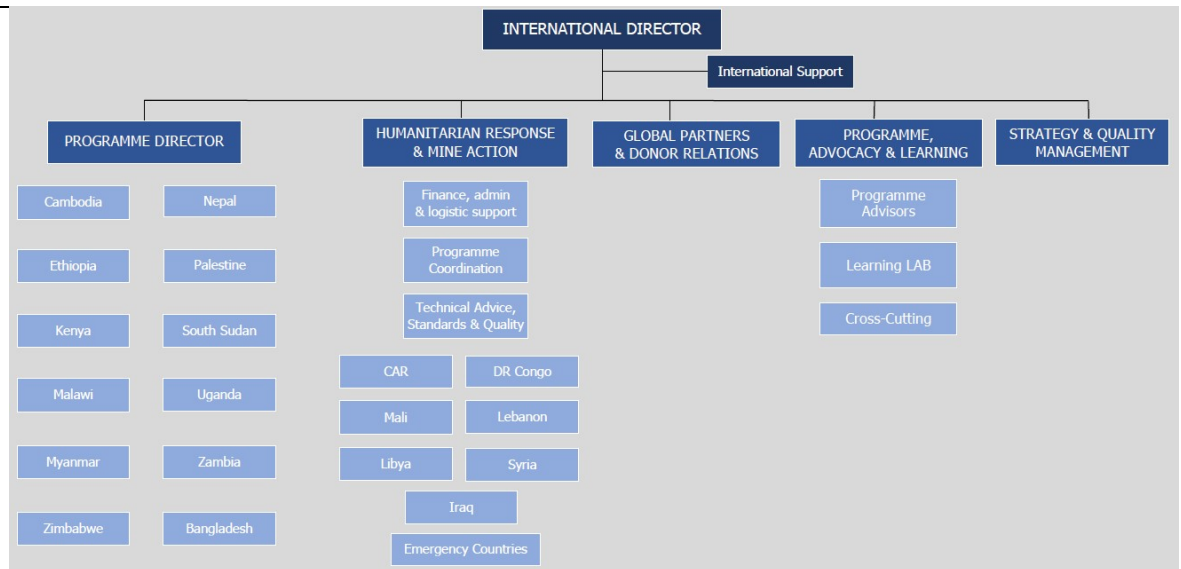
2.2 Governance and management structure A Council with a maximum of 30 members representing stakeholders of the organisation governs DCA. The Council is the supreme governing body of the organisation with responsibility for DCA's vision, values and overall objectives and strategy. The Board has a maximum of 11 members (7 appointed by the Council, one elected by DCA staff and 3 co-opted by the Board) and is responsible for the political management of the organisation in close cooperation with the operational Senior Management of DCA.

Organogram Board – General Secretary and departments

The international Department encompasses humanitarian and development work, with a common approach to strategy and quality management, and advocacy and learning. Decision-making authority is decentralised to the Country Directors, who are responsible for the country programme strategy and projects in line with the global DCA policies and strategies.

Organogram International Department

2.3 Internal quality assurance mechanisms and risk management	DCA has built its approach to quality management and accountability on its commitment to the CHS (DCA International Strategy 2019-2022). A systematic assessment of DCA's adherence to the CHS has been put in place by a mandatory Accountability Improvement Plan (AIP) that is congruent with the 38 CHS Key Actions for each Country Program (CP) to be completed in December each year. The purpose is to detect any gaps and weaknesses in the way DCA and partners work and to identify actions and steps to address them. Accountability focal points have been appointed in each country office, providing support regarding DCA's efforts towards accountability, transparency and enhancing quality assurance throughout the organisation, including CHS standards. The Partner Assessment Tool (PAT), which is a pre-requisite for finalising Cooperation Agreements for funded activities, now includes more explicitly CHS commitments including PSEA, Code of Conduct and Complaints and Feedback mechanisms.		
2.4 Work with partner organisations	Working with partners is a core principle for DCA and fundamental to its values and identity. DCA works with a total number of 195 local partners for project implementation (signed cooperation agreement) out of which 145 partners have long term partnerships. As a signatory to Grand Bargain, DCA is committed to fund local and national partners directly, and systematically measure the multi-year investment to support partner capacity development. DCA uses a Partner Assessment Tool (PAT) to assess, monitor and document partner's organisational strengths and weaknesses, in order to strengthen partners' capacity building and organisational development. In 2019, DCA transferred 19% of total humanitarian funding directly to local and national partners while 33% of DCA's development funding was transferred to local and national partners. This represents a slight decrease since 2018 - the figures were respectively 20% and 34% (DCA International Report 2019). DCA's partners include civil society organisations; churches; faith-based organisations; governments; academic institutions; political parties; international regional and global institutions; networks; and private sector actors.		

3. Summary of non-conformities on Organisational Responsibilities

Note: this summary is based on the Stage 1 assessment results only and forms the basis for the Stage 2 assessment. The conclusions can potentially change after onsite visits are conducted, as a result of new evidence identified.

Corrective Action Requests (CAR)*	Type	Resolution due date	Date closed out
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Total Number	**0**	--	--

4. Stage 2 recommendation

Stage 2 is recommended	☒Yes ☐No
Explanation / pre-conditions	The Stage One of the recertification audit reviewed all Organisational Responsibilities including closed non-conformities and observations identified in previous audit reports. Findings are limited to desk review of HO documents and HO interviews. The work with partners and communities will be assessed during Stage 2. Due to the ongoing COVID19 pandemic, HO and field assessments are to be conducted remotely.
Recommended timeframe for Stage 2	25-29 January 2021: Ethiopia 8-12 February 2021: Democratic Republic of Congo, Palestine

4.1 Sampling* recommendation for Stage 2

Randomly sampled country programme sites	Included in final sample	Replaced by	Rationale for sampling and selection of sites	Onsite or remote
Ethiopia	Ethiopia		Country programme with both development and humanitarian portfolios with both implementation through local partners and self-implemention.	Remote
Palestine	Palestine		Development	Remote
DRCongo	DRC		Humanitarian	Remote

Any other sampling performed for this audit:
Application of the recommendation from the MA 2020: assessment of DCA self-implementing humanitarian programme.

Sampling risk*: Visits will not be possible due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Remote techniques will be applied and potential gaps in the assessment will be highlighted in the final report, as well as subsequent spot checks to mitigate any risk deriving from the use of remote auditing.
DCA is at the beginning of its second 4-year audit cycle with HQAI. Over the first cycle, 2017-2021, DCA has worked steadily through each audit and has demonstrated improving performance over time. DCA has internal quality assurance and control systems in place to address requirements of the CHS, and other strategic commitments. These give the auditors sufficient confidence to recommend that DCA be re-certified. Further checks will be applied through Stage 2 activities.

It is important to note that the audit findings are based on a sample of an organisation's country programmes, its documentation and observation. Findings are analysed to determine an organisation's systematic approach and application of all aspects of the CHS across different contexts and ways of working.

5. Lead auditor recommendation

In our opinion, Dan Church Aid (DCA), has demonstrated that it continues to conform with the requirements of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.

Based on the evidence obtained at this Stage 1, we confirm that we have received reasonable assurance that the organisation has demonstrated that it meets the requirements of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.

We recommend certification.

Based on the evidence obtained at this Stage 1, in our opinion Dan Church Aid has demonstrated a high level of commitment to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.

We recommend.

Name and signature of lead auditor:	Date and place:
Karin Wierenga	2020-12-04

6. HQAI approval of report and validation for Stage 2

Report approved	☐ No ☒ Yes	Comments
Stage 2 approved	☐ No ☒ Yes	
Sampling recommendation approved	☐ No ☒ Yes	
Name and signature of HQAI Executive Director:	Date and place:
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Pierre Hauselmann	January 5th 2021, Geneva

7. 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: Birgitte Qvist-Sørensen	**Date and place:** 22. January 2021, Copenhagen

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.

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www.hqai.org
Ch. de Balexert 7-9, 1219 Châtelaine (Geneva), Switzerland

DCA-REC-2021

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