

"From Milkpowder to Rights – DanChurchAid's History in Palestine from 1954-2022"

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From the author's introduction:

"The Middle East context as well as DCA as an organisation has evolved tremendously since DCA for the first time provided humanitarian aid to Palestinian refugees in 1954... Apart from DCA's engagement in Europe, the Middle East/Palestine engagement represents the longest span of DCA's history: 70 years. This makes this study all the more interesting, because it reflects how DCA's self-understanding and involvement in humanitarian work in general evolved over time, including its theological understanding of diakonia (Christian service). It also reflects how society's understanding and the developmental political environment evolved over almost seven decades.

In order to somehow illustrate this, I have chosen an approach of writing this history where I follow a chronological timeline, but for each period of time I have written an introduction and described DCA's work from four thematic perspectives: 1) understanding of aid; 2) awareness-raising and engagement; 3) financing; and 4) practical implementation.

Writing this history in this manner, enables us to reflect on issues such as: (1) How did DCA understand and present its humanitarian work in the early years and through the following decades? (2) What was DCA's own understanding of the political context and how did it present this to its church constituency and broader public over the years? (3) When, why and how did DCA see the need to engage in a rights-based approach and in advocacy work in the Middle East – a context that was and is highly politically volatile and contested? Hopefully this thematic approach can also stimulate open reflection on where DCA finds itself today and which direction it might wish to take in the future."

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