



The Diakonia Council of Churches

In pursuit of justice

In 1976, when South Africa was being faced with increasing oppression and injustice, Diakonia was established to mobilise member churches and support their activities in the pursuit of justice. In 1994, Diakonia merged with the Durban and District Council of Churches and the Diakonia Council of Churches was formed. Their aim is to provide an enabling environment for people and organisations determined to participate in genuine social transformation. They strive to remain informed of developments within faith-based and social justice communities and promote the bringing together of churches.

Their activities concentrate on the area covered by the eThekweni Municipality around Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Last year, Diakonia provided direct support to around 5 000 individuals 18 years and older. However, when considering the broader aspects of their services, they indirectly probably impacted on an additional 25 000 individuals.

Over the years, Diakonia provided packaged programmes and interventions to churches and other affiliated organisations. The three main categories that these programmes fell under were economic, environmental and social justice. Social justice was further divided into areas such as democracy and governance and ministry support, and issues such as gender and HIV/AIDS were also mainstreamed and became incorporated into the interventions that were offered. Due to a challenging funding environment, a review process was conducted and various activities have been streamlined with social justice remaining the core focus of their strategic direction. Instead of packaging pre-determined programmes, facilitators will now engage with the churches and assist them in achieving their own goals. Diakonia wishes to awaken a new generation of social justice activists so necessary for the advancement of our country.

In addition to the various interventions, the Diakonia Centre was established 20 years ago and provides a platform for individuals and organisations to engage around social transformation. Diakonia is well known for numerous activities, including the self-help groups it facilitates, to assist with poverty eradication and transformative healing processes; its stand against violence imposed on women and girls; its recognition of champions of social justice; the ecumenical Good Friday Service and more.



THE DIAKONIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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