



Evangelical Mission  
in Solidarity

**INTERNATIONALISATION**



## IMPRINT

### EVANGELICAL MISSION IN SOLIDARITY (EMS)

Vogelsangstr. 62 | 70197 Stuttgart  
Tel.: + 49 711 636 78 -0  
Fax: + 49 711 636 78 -45  
Email: info@ems-online.org

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### IMPRINT

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Stefan Schaal,  
Regina Karasch-Böttcher

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Cover photo: The Toraja Church in Indonesia  
trains young women to become  
excavator operators (see p17).  
Photo: EMS/Lohnes.

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## “BUT THE LORD LOOKS ON THE HEART”

### Mindfulness and respect – the basic spirit for successfully internationalising the EMS

“The EMS is an association of Evangelical churches and mission societies in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe, all connected by faith in Jesus Christ and hope in the Kingdom of God. It promotes mindful and respectful encounters across cultural and religious boundaries. It stands up for the lives and in particular for the rights of the vulnerable, the poor and the marginalised.” This is how the articles of association describe the mission and the tasks of the EMS. Its most innermost concept is therefore international from the outset.

On the one hand, this internationality is not self-evident. Many old traditions that are not based on an encounter between equals still linger on, even in the EMS. And we realise even today that internationalisation does not automatically redress structural and financial imbalances.

But on the other hand, the history of the EMS churches and mission societies contains a myriad of positive examples which illustrate mindful and respectful encounters across and beyond all boundaries. In many cases, this has led to the growth of a new community that is borne by a common spirit. Indeed, the key words to describe this new

form of community are mindfulness and respect. These two terms reflect the basic spirit in which God Himself looks upon humanity: “They look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7). So, from a theological viewpoint, internationality is a matter of the heart. When I start to look on others with the eyes of God, something grows from our encounter – it gives rise to a totally different quality of community – one that is mindful, respectful and connected to the heart.

You will find many examples of this in the Annual Report on the activities of the EMS in 2019. At this point, I would like to thank all those

who made their contribution towards making this possible. My special thanks go to those who steered the EMS through this year of transition and realignment. I assumed the duties of General Secretary on 1st April 2020. With all my heart I look forward to upcoming encounters in the EMS.

**Reverend Dr Dieter Heidtmann**  
*General Secretary*



Photo: Ralf Stieber

## COMMUNICATION – THE KEY TO INTERNATIONALISATION

**The EMS Fellowship has come a long way from a German mission society to an international organisation**

Dr Rima Nasrallah van Saane, professor at the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut, Lebanon and member of the EMS Women's Network, and Dr Kerstin Neumann, Head of the Mission and Partnership Department at the EMS Secretariat speak about the process of internationalisation in the EMS and the challenges that still lie before EMS members.

■ *What does internationalisation mean in the EMS Fellowship today?*

**Dr Kerstin Neumann:** We believe that we are called upon in the Mission to be witnesses to the love of God in and for this world. Internationalisation is the practical realisation of this conviction. Since 2012 when the new EMS constitution was adopted, we have been an international organisation in which the churches work together. We share our faith, our financial resources and our staff. The EMS is like a family whose members help each other.

■ *When the Evangelical Mission Society in South-West Germany was founded in 1972, representatives of the international member churches took their seats in the gallery. They listened while the delegates of the German member*

*churches made important decisions. A lot has changed since then. What do you think of these developments?*

**Dr Rima Nasrallah:** The EMS has really come a long way – it has become an organisation where people from the global South are appreciated as full members. In principle we all sit together at one table and make decisions together. This is a big step forward – especially compared to other non-governmental organisations I know. It took a lot of courage for the Germans as they had to relinquish power and prestige and accept that things could actually function differently.

■ *What structural hurdles still need to be crossed until the EMS can claim to be a truly international organisation?*

**Nasrallah:** One example is the legal restrictions. The EMS is registered in Germany so it must comply with German laws and have an address in Germany. At the same time, there is a wide disparity between the partners. Member churches and organisations are not all at the same level – either financially, demographically or academically. This has an effect on how members participate. It's not only the EMS that has this problem – it

is in fact a global challenge. Even in the same country there are people who are more in a position to take part in international dialogue than others.

■ *The Presidium consists of three men, two of them German. But this contradicts the EMS aims of becoming more diverse and more international.*

**Neumann:** That's correct. And we are all very aware of this. Firstly, this has to do with the structural problems that Rima mentioned. For example, it is much easier to obtain the signatures needed if two of the three members of the Presidium come from Germany. But we must find ways how to do things differently. The same goes for gender equality. We are working on it.



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

■ *Internationalisation and equal-rights cooperation across continents places high demands on EMS member churches. This must certainly lead to many conflicts. How can they be overcome?*

**Neumann:** I remember discussions about evangelisation and mission that I found were not easy. It's difficult to be open and listen to the opinions of others although one may possibly not share them. It's just as difficult not to force one's own position on the other. Communication is therefore extremely important. Networks play a very important role here. We have networks for young people, for women, for project sponsors and there is also a network for communicators.

**Nasrallah:** I admit it's not easy to challenge oneself and still respect one another. Still, I would be delighted if people would stand up and say 'I don't agree!' We should change the way we think about not really challenging the other just to preserve the peace, harmony and friendships.

■ *Colonial thinking and racism are deeply rooted in people and societies. They don't just disappear like that. How "colonial" and "racist" is the EMS still – perhaps without even wanting to be?*

**Nasrallah:** Overcoming colonial mindsets is a long process. For both



sides! We in the former colonies suffer from a "colonial mentality". That means we have always looked up to the "West". And vice versa, western countries tend to look down on us. The EMS has proved to be a very helpful platform to reflect on the way we look at ourselves and at each other. It is a fact that racism, sexism and certain hierarchical problems also exist in our own communities.

**Neumann:** We have to be patient. It needs time to unlearn something that is deeply rooted in us. I remember my first Mission Council meeting in 2015. Only the Germans spoke their opinions. Now when we meet, discussions are very lively. Everyone presents his or her issues. That's just great.

■ *What are the plans for the coming years?*

**Neumann:** We are working on several different concepts. For example, on the issue of staff. So far, we only had a so-called 'liaison' staff member in India – a person from the member church. Now there is another pastor in Korea

and we are in the process of setting up the same post in Indonesia. This strategy is part of the internationalisation of the Secretariat. Another new step is cooperation within the EMS unit "Intercultural Learning" for children in the fellowship. In the past year, we have concentrated on the life of children in South Korea – with the support of a Korean pastor and the member churches there. This is how we intend to promote intercultural learning within the EMS.

*The interview was conducted by*  
**Ute Dilg-Sassmannshausen**

## STRENGTHENING TOGETHERNESS WITHIN THE EMS

### Ecumenism and internationalisation flourish from the exchange of ecumenical co-workers

Ecumenical co-workers make a vital contribution to the internationalisation of the EMS. While Gregson Erasmus from South Africa was hired at the Mission, Ecumenism and Development Department (DiMOE) in Stuttgart, Ralf Rohrbach-Koop from Wuerttemberg arrived in Cape Town and was integrated as an equal in the co-worker community.

#### **“We are part of the internationalisation of the EMS.”**

New relationships between EMS member churches replace old asymmetries. This is also what we experience as ecumenical co-workers. Since March 2019, I have been lecturing at the Moravian Theological Centre in Cape Town on an introduction to Biblical Greek and the theology of the New Testament. I also assist as pastor in three congregations of the Moravian

Church in South Africa (MCSA). I preach in sermons, conduct holy communion at home and teach confirmation classes. I was not sent by a mission society as a one-way German pastor as in former times. In my case, two churches in the EMS Fellowship agreed to do an exchange. By the way, many church leaders of the MCSA have worked as ecumenical co-workers in Germany. My predecessor here in Cape Town came from an Indonesian sister church. Thanks to this and other personal contacts, the international fellowship of the EMS is growing closer and closer together.

#### **Reverend Ralf Rohrbach-Koop**

*Ecumenical co-worker  
in South Africa*

#### **Mission as a bridge**

At my home church, the Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA), we pastors work almost exclusively in community service. The tasks assigned to me by the Mission, Ecumenism and Development Department (DiMOE) have given me the chance to learn all about Swabia (region in southern Germany) and many different congregations.

I find that mission is a bridge that can be walked both ways. The diversity of topics I have learnt at



*Photo: EMS/Heiligers*

the DiMOE have changed my way of thinking about my responsibility in the world and also about the development of the whole of humanity. After I return to South Africa, I will carry on dreaming of a world where justice and peace espouse each other, where churches worldwide stand by each other, give each other support, pray for each other and help each other whenever something happens.

#### **Reverend Gregson Erasmus**

*Ecumenical co-worker at the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in  
Wuerttemberg*



*Photo: privat*

## “WE’VE LEARNT A LOT FROM YOU”

### EMS Fellowship celebrates forty years of partnership with Korea

The EMS Fellowship had a good cause to celebrate in 2019: 45 years of partnership with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) and 40 years of partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK). “The Korean churches have made an enormous contribution towards the internationalisation of the EMS,” declares Solomon Benjamin, Liaison Secretary for Asia. “For example, the new ecumenical constitution of the EMS in 2012.” Benjamin adds that the Korean churches are also very active in North-South, South-North and South-South exchanges.

#### Peace and democratisation as core issue

Korean Christians are particularly active in the areas of peace and democratisation. The two EMS member churches are influenced by the military dictatorship of the 1970s and 1980s and the continuing tensions between the two Korean states. “Despite many instances of

oppression, the Korean churches started a civil rights movement and show that they stand in solidarity with the disenfranchised,” emphasised Kerstin Neumann, former Acting General Secretary of the EMS at the annual general meeting celebrating the anniversary in Seoul in September 2019. “We’ve learnt a lot from the churches in Korea!”

#### Hope of reunification

Representatives of the EMS handed over gifts of silver coins commemorating the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 to their hosts as a symbol of a common history of division. They also honoured the efforts of the Korean churches to reunify the two states on the Korean peninsula. ■



## A BRIDGE BETWEEN CONTINENTS



The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) and the Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA) concluded an agreement on bilateral partnership in 2019. The first step of the cooperation focused on providing aid to “Elim House” in South Africa, a facility for children with disabilities. The first delivery of relief supplies from South Korean congregations has already arrived. “Geographically we live on two continents but spiritually on one,” said Jae-Cheon LEE, General Secretary of the PROK at the signing in September 2019. Godfrey Cunningham, President of the MCSA, was delighted that the internationalisation of the EMS had become more tangible as the result of this partnership: “It’s time that partners start connecting up with one another directly.” ■

## OBTAINING JUSTICE IN AN UNJUST WORLD

### EMS Mission Council convened for the first time in Lebanon in 2019

Members of the EMS Mission Council convened their meeting in June 2019. What was particular about this meeting is that it took place in Lebanon for the first time since the EMS was founded. Who would have thought that a mere four months after the meeting there, nothing would be as it was before? The population revolted against a corrupt political system; followed by an economic and bank crisis; the inability of the state to pay its loans; devaluation of the currency from 1,500 pounds to 7,000 pounds for one dollar; a massive increase in consumer prices and an explosion in unemployment. Many family fathers committed suicide since they were no longer able to feed their families. And as if that was not enough already, the coronavirus pandemic struck at the beginning of 2020. For the Lebanese people, life since October 2019 has become more and more difficult. Was it already foreseeable how close the country was to the edge of the abyss at the Mission Council meeting at the end of June? Was it prophetic that the theme of “justice” seemed to be the common thread running through the prayer services? “The righteous flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon” (Psalm 92:12).

### Code of Conduct against sexual harassment adopted

The main item on the agenda at the Mission Council meeting was the Code of Conduct against sexual harassment. This document was adopted unanimously by the meeting (see p10). In addition, discussions took place on the future orientation of youth work in the EMS and its member churches. The venue – the Schneller School in Lebanon – served as an example of how young people from different religions and family backgrounds learn together and receive fair opportunities in life. The Mission Council also extended the funds to finance a pre-school for Syrian refugee children for a further year until the summer of 2020. The head of the pre-school travelled from Syria to the meeting just to report on the project in the Valley of the Christians. Since then, this suc-



cessful project has finally ended in a moving ceremony after lasting seven and a half years. Meanwhile, all pupils have found places at regular schools. A little bit of justice – in an extremely unjust world. ■



## THE VOICE OF YOUTH

### Members of the youth network express their views at the Mission Council meeting

When Judith Damian and Joongho LEE landed in Beirut in June 2019, they didn't know exactly what to expect. They would be acting as youth advisors at the annual meeting of the EMS Mission Council – something unprecedented in the history of the EMS. “They listened and took note of our opinions,” says Judith Damian, summarising. Joongho LEE wishes that in future, young adults could attend not only as observers but they would actually be entitled to vote.

#### Climate change – an important theme

The most important issue for the two youth delegates is climate change. “The EMS should focus more attention to this theme in their agenda,” explains LEE. The Korean is a member of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) and spent six months as a volunteer

with the social welfare service of the Ludwigsburg church district. LEE strongly supports the aims of the “Fridays for Future” movement. Only talking about climate change would only downplay the problem, he says. The crisis is now affecting the whole world. “The Mission Council meeting discussed how the EMS can contribute more to climate protection, for example by introducing video conferences and reducing air travel,” adds Judith Damian. She is hopeful that the members of the Mission Council will regard the climate crisis not only as a specifically youth topic but as a main theme for the EMS Fellowship. The theology student from the Palatinate in Germany saw it as a very positive move for the Mission Council to adopt a Code of Conduct to prevent sexual harassment in EMS programmes. She hopes that

the topic is not dismissed. On the contrary, she hopes it will continue to be discussed: “It's mainly young female volunteers who are often exposed to sexual assaults,” reports Damian, who spent a year at an integrated school in Jordan as part of the Ecumenical Youth Volunteers Programme.

#### Translating church language for young people

In principle, Damian sees deficits in communication with young people. “The language of the church must be ‘translated’ for young people to give them access to an understanding of liturgical traditions and rituals,” she says. Not only that. They would then understand the Christian message better. This would help to make the relevance of the church more apparent to the next generation.

Joongho LEE also sees his attendance at the Mission Council as an opportunity to learn more about decision-making structures within the EMS. “I've never seen this type of meeting before,” he reports. “It's important to understand the culture of the Mission Council and see how the body reaches its decisions.” ■

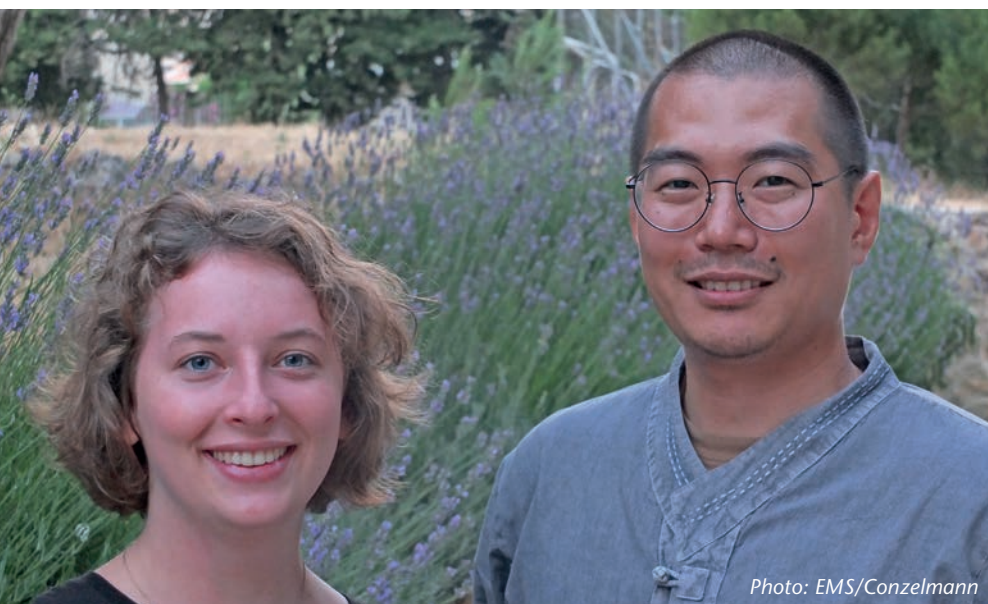


Photo: EMS/Conzelmann

## STOP! TOGETHER AGAINST HARASSMENT

### EMS Mission Council adopts Code of Conduct against sexual harassment

The EMS Fellowship accepts no form of sexual harassment whatsoever. In a Code of Conduct which the members of the Mission Council adopted unanimously in 2019, the church fellowship defines a zero-tolerance policy against harassment, abuse, sexual exploitation and the misuse of power at all EMS activities. “We were in agreement beyond all borders and continents that the Code of Conduct sets a clear signal,” said the former Acting General Secretary Dr Kerstin Neumann, commenting on the adoption.

#### Confidential advisors

The Code of Conduct lays down clear rules to raise awareness regarding sexual harassment. These rules are based on international standards and are intended to prevent harassment from hap-

pening in the first place. It also describes precise procedures for dealing with infringements. All participants attending an EMS event or action will be handed a leaflet informing them of this EMS policy. Two ombudspersons of different gender will also be appointed. “They will act as contact persons and confidential advisors during an event if an incident were brought to their attention,” explains Dr Gabriele Mayer, Head of the EMS Gender Desk. Corresponding guidelines have been prepared for the conduct of the ombudspersons. “The important thing is that confidentiality, protection and respect are ensured on all sides,” says Mayer.

#### An imbalance of power

The Code of Conduct expressly states that the definition of power lies with the victim. In an intercultural context in particular, there are always situations where conduct is interpreted differently – what one person regards as a friendly encounter is an infringement of

another person’s personal boundaries. However, in many cases, sexual harassment is also the result of an imbalance of power and is expressly dealt with in the Code. It occurs when people in positions of power discriminate or exploit others, especially those who are dependent or vulnerable.

#### Instilling confidence

“With the Code of Conduct we would like to encourage all victims to report a case of harassment,” Gabriele Mayer emphasises. She reports there have been many cases in the past. Nearly one female volunteer in two participating in the Ecumenical Youth Volunteers Programme has described assaults or situations in the host country that could have sparked feelings of distress. Many find it difficult to talk about it or even to report it. Therefore, it is all the more important to instil confidence that every reported incident will be taken seriously and treated confidentially. “Here, the Code of Conduct is a step in the right direction,” says Mayer. ■



Photo: EMS/Reimold

## A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

### International photography workshop in Indonesia

Which camera setting do I choose to shoot indoor photos? How do I get the person portrayed to relax? How do I do original group photos? These are questions that are often asked – and not only by beginners.

#### Perspectives, exposure, focus

18 press officers from EMS member churches in Indonesia attended a photography workshop in Denpasar on Bali at the end of November 2019. In cooperation with the EMS, Thomas Lohnes, professional photographer from Germany, assisted in the workshop. The participants included interested beginners as well as journalists who back up their articles with their own photos. Theory and practical work alternated on a number of different themes, among them portrait photography, project reports and special group photos. Participants also exchanged ideas and were able to learn from each other.

#### “Committee for communication” founded

It was the first time that the participants at the three-day workshop on Bali had met. At the end of the workshop, they set up a “committee for communication” to act as a platform for further exchange to improve coordination for their practical work. Reverend Stevi Wowor from the Evangelical Christian Church in Minahasa (GMIM) was elected coordinator. He is supported by Nondy Royandy from the Indonesian Protestant Church in Donggala (GPID) and by Marella Onda from the Regional Council of Churches (PGIW). For the churches in Indonesia as well as for the EMS Fellowship, this committee sets another milestone after similar associations were established in India, Ghana and South Africa. ■



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

## DARUM-JOURNAL IN ENGLISH!

The “darum-journal” publishes the latest news from the EMS Fellowship. Since the beginning of 2019, it is also available in English and can be downloaded as a free e-book:

[bit.ly/darum-journal](http://bit.ly/darum-journal)

## PR WORKSHOP IN GHANA



Photo: PCG

A three-day further training course for PR officers of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) took place in May 2019. It was organised by the Public Relations department of the PCG. Its aim was to update the knowledge of PR officers in modern trends in church public relations work and provide training in effective writing skills for church magazines. “Now I know how to act as administrator for the website and social media platforms of the Presbytery,” said Rev. Ebenezer Ahenkan Owusu from the Asante Presbytery. “It would be helpful to organise training workshops like these on a regular basis so that we can keep our knowledge up-to-date!”

## “Reading the Bible through the eyes of another”

For the past 15 years, the EMS Bible reading project has connected groups from different cultures and countries in the shared reading of Biblical texts. The 148-page book “Reading the Bible through the eyes of another”, published in 2019, documents the wide range of experiences emanating from the project. It also presents in-depth and practical lessons learned from these experiences. It is available on the EMS Online Shop in German and English and costs €15. <https://shop.ems-online.org> ■



Photo: EMS/Richter

## Asia: EMS churches work more closely together

In future, EMS member churches in South Korea and India will address important issues together. At a meeting in Chennai, India in August 2019, they reached an agreement to cooperate more closely together. They stated that their special challenges ranged from themes such as rising unemployment, the increasing pressure from dynamic forces on the free market, violence against women and children or gender minorities, human trafficking and environmental pollution through to the political situation in Korea. ■



Photo: EMS/Benjamin

## The EMS at the "Kirchentag" in Dortmund

The 37th German Protestant Church Congress ("Kirchentag") took place in Dortmund in June 2019. As at previous church congresses, the EMS was again represented on the joint stand of the Association of Protestant Churches and Mission in Germany (EMW). A special highlight was the concert given by the well-known a cappella group "Viva Voce" who attracted an audience of about 10,000 people to the Friedensplatz in Dortmund. The concert was co-organised by the EMS. ■



Photo: EMS/Hessel

## Regional youth group constituted in South Africa

Now South Africa also has a regional group of the EMS Youth Network. It met for the first time in June 2019 to agree on its future structure and aims. Among other things, it plans to make regular visits to local youth groups to inform them about the work of the EMS. The regional group also intends to support German volunteers from the Ecumenical Youth Volunteers Programme (EYVP) during their stay in South Africa.



Photo: EMS/Daniels



Photo: EMS/Schaal

## The EMS at the Landesmissionsfest in Heilbronn

The Landesmissionsfest (mission festival) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg was held in Heilbronn in June 2019. Under the event slogan "Leben schmecken – weltweit" (A taste of life – world-wide), over 20 mission societies and church initiatives presented their work. The Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS) also attended with an information stand. "We are delighted with all those who came to visit and talk to us despite the heat," said Uwe Gräbe, Middle East Liaison Secretary, who was present on the EMS stand together with colleagues and volunteers.

## Middle East conference in Göttingen and Höxter

The EMS hosted an international conference at the University of Göttingen and at the Coptic monastery of Höxter-Brenkhausen in April 2019. The conference focused on the Syrian conflict and its impacts on the Middle East. The conference theme was: "The impacts of current political and social developments on the witness of the churches: time for spiritual rebuilding?" About 50 theologians and students attended from Lebanon, Syria, Armenia, Palestine, the USA, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands. ■



Photo: EMS/Gräbe

## EXPERIENCING BOTH INTERNATIONAL AND ECUMENICAL DIVERSITY

**YOU+ME: FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD** is an educational programme for children and a building block in the internationalisation efforts of the EMS Fellowship



YOU+ME: FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD is an EMS educational programme for children at children's services and at primary school. Children get to know one another worldwide at eye level in an ecumenical context. And they are open for what they share and where they differ. Through the children's programme, the EMS Fellowship gains important experience about how to achieve success with internationalisation.

### **Contents and structural basis of the educational programme**

Internationalisation takes place at several levels. Firstly, the contents of the educational materials allow the children to discover different cultures. A key factor here is the "Diversity" workbook that was published in 2018. It has been printed by many members churches

all over the world and is available in German, English, Korean and Indonesian.

Secondly, the internationality of YOU+ME: FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD is also reflected in its structures. Programme multipliers within the member churches stay in close contact with the staff at the Secretariat in Stuttgart. In 2019, a volunteer post was created and it is planned to rotate the post among the EMS churches to support the educational programme. The work is supervised by an international advisory committee. Exchange also takes place on various communication platforms, for example a blog or social media. ■

"The Friends Programme helps children to learn more about the EMS, its mission and its work all over the world. When children learn about the EMS Fellowship at an early age, it helps our church strengthen our ecumenical relations."

**Reverend Mega Kamase Sambo**  
*Toraja Church, Indonesia*

"The FRIENDS programme and its themes such as "Diversity" and "Global Citizenship" have become part of my ministry. Sharing this during children's services encourages our children as well as our staff. The EMS programme shows us time and again how important global cooperation is in the work of children's services."

**Reverend Heekyung Jeong**  
*Presbyterian Church of Korea*

"I think that educational materials showing people from other countries at eye level are very important to develop an appreciative image of mankind and to distribute resources fairly in this world."

**Reverend Urd Rust**  
*Protestant Church of the Palatinate*

## “CHILDREN SHOULD DESCRIBE THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES”

### Interview with Reverend Dr Hyun Sun OH about the EMS YOU+ME children’s programme

Dr Hyun Sun OH is pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Korea (PCK) and lectures in theology and education at the “Space Elizabeth” institute near Seoul. She works as a volunteer for the EMS children’s programme and holds workshops with children’s service co-workers in South Korea. In this interview she describes what this entails in practice:

■ ***How do people in South Korea respond to the EMS’ offer to work with children internationally?***

They appreciate the fact that the topic of diversity not only includes differences but also similarities among children all over the world and that the booklet “Diversity”

invites children to make contact with other children living in different parts of the world. They also find the practical link to the Bible very helpful. It is a good thing to start with the thoughts and stories the children themselves talk about and then read about them together in the Bible.

■ ***What are your workshops all about?***

Since Korean society sets great emphasis on social success, children’s lives are geared towards competition. Children are used to thinking what others would say and considering whether their answers are right or wrong before they give their own opinions. The “Diversity”

booklet shows that simple questions help children to describe their own experiences and it encourages them to share their opinions without competition or pressure. I think these are strong points in this programme.

■ ***Who attends your workshops?***

Mainly pastors who are involved in educational work for their church.

■ ***What is particularly important to you when you describe the principles of the children’s programme in a South Korean context?***

Christian children in South Korea need to be encouraged to experience Jesus as their friend and not as their judge or punisher. I hope that Korean Christian children learn about peace in the way this programme explains it. In a divided country such as mine, adults and children are used to hearing many discussions about peace. But what we need is real peace in our everyday lives.

*The interview was conducted by*  
**Anna Kallenberger**  
**and Annette Schumm**



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

## STANDING TOGETHER IN NEED

### Examples of lived solidarity in 2019 project work

For some EMS member churches, 2019 was a year when their very foundations were shaken by catastrophes. For the EMS Fellowship, it meant standing together firmly in solidarity, praying for each other and collecting money and expertise for emergency aid and rebuilding. Here are three examples of emergency aid projects in the year 2019:

#### **SOUTH AFRICA: REBUILDING AFTER A MAJOR FIRE**

At the beginning of 2019, a major fire gutted the former missionary settlement of Wupperthal. Today, the settlement belongs to the Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA). The fire destroyed the historical centre, a large number of

thatched-roof houses, the parsonage and the “Red Cedar” rooibos production centre. The boarding school which teaches pupils from remote settlements was also devoured by the flames.

Fortunately, the residents of the settlement survived but they lost their livelihoods. Left to fend for themselves, the poor inhabitants would have been unable to rebuild the settlement. The MCSA backed by funds from the EMS first provided food, clothing and emergency shelters for all the victims. In the meantime, school has restarted. Work on rebuilding the houses is still in progress.

#### **INDIA: EMERGENCY AID AFTER FLOODING**

In 2019, the southern Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu were devastated by violent monsoon rains. In 2018, flooding had already forced many people to leave or abandon their homes. They lost all their possessions. The Church of South India (CSI) provided those affected with vital necessities and dry shelters. As in the previous year, the young church members helped to find missing relatives by organising a major social media action.

#### **INDONESIA: HOPE AFTER THE TSUNAMI**

In September 2018, the ground shook for twenty minutes in the north of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, followed by a devastating tsunami. The Indonesian Protestant Church in Donggala (GPID) continues to struggle with the aftermath of this natural disaster. In 2019, they pitted all their efforts to continue rebuilding (see p18).



Photo: MCSA/Engel

## CONTINUOUS GROWTH IN PROJECT SUPPORT

In addition to emergency aid, our long-term projects – nearly forty of them – continued to advance and were modified to suit the circumstances.

Here are some examples:

For many years, the Toraja Church (GT) on Sulawesi has been training young people, many of them early school leavers, at the Technical Training Workshop “VTC Tagan”. The young adults train to become car mechanics, mechatronic technicians, heavy machinery drivers and IT technicians. In 2019, some students took part in a national technology competition. For the first time, two young women were also trained to become excavator operators (see cover photo).

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) offers a Poor and Sick Fund to support 900 women, men and children who cannot afford hospital treatment. In 2019, they received medical care at one of the PCG healthcare centres.

## NEW FOCUS: PROTECTION OF NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In 2019, India added an important project to preserve the creation – “Environmental protection as the church’s mission”. Climate change and the irresponsible handling of nature result in regular natural disasters in South India. Drought followed by heavy monsoons and cyclones devastate whole areas of land, destroying the livelihoods of thousands of people. The CSI is engaging schools and church co-workers as multipliers to start

practical environmental protection projects. This is a futuristic programme described as exemplary by UNESCO (see p19).

## EMPOWERING WOMEN, PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

Empowering women remains one of the main projects supported by the EMS. For example, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) supports the mothers of children suffering from cerebral palsy by providing them with practical knowledge on how they can better understand, care for and give movement therapy to their sick children. The women train to earn their own income by attending handicraft courses and receiving microcredits to set up a micro enterprise. Under the umbrella of the PCG, women also run a small animal rearing project on their own to give them greater financial independence.

The Church of South India (CSI) held courses for young women to make up for lost school knowledge, learn self-care and provide training so that they can become counselors for family work and ministry in their parishes.



Photo: EMS/Edwards-Raudonat

## WITH SUPPORT FROM THE EMS FELLOWSHIP

### Church communities in Donggala, Indonesia rebuild their churches

When the earth trembled in September 2018, it was followed by an enormous tsunami that swept over the coast. The church centre of Jono'oge in Palu, a town in north Sulawesi, sank under the waters. A total of three quarters of all church buildings belonging to the Indonesian Protestant Church in Donggala (GPID) were destroyed or damaged. Only one in four churches survived the disaster without significant damage.

#### Progress in rebuilding

In the meantime, many churches have been repaired. But even at the end of 2019, many congregations were still celebrating services under plastic tarpaulins and bible circles and other events were still being held in tents or in the open air. Nearly everywhere, communities are working on repairing or rebuilding their churches. Such as in the Keselamatan ("Salvation")



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

parish in the village of Mataue, about 30 kilometres south of Palu. The outside walls and part of the roof had to be replaced.

In 2019, just under 450,000 euros were provided for emergency aid and rebuilding. This money came from the overwhelming helpfulness of many private donors, church communities and EMS member churches. Communities in the affected region know they are supported by the solidarity of the EMS Fellowship.

#### People are now standing on their own feet again

And this aid is now benefiting other parts of the population. For example, in the Palu region, not only have eleven motor boats been donated to fishing families. Agricultural equipment, seeds and fertilisers have also been distributed as well as 30 pregnant sows, 100 piglets, 20 goats and about 100,000 young fish to secure incomes for farming families. The first harvests were brought in at the middle of 2019 – partly maize and sweet potatoes where rice once grew before the irrigation channels were destroyed. By the end of the year, the people had repaired some of the irrigation systems, allowing rice to be planted and fish to be reared again in the rice paddies. ■



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AS THE CHURCH'S MISSION

### Green School programme teaches sustainable ways of living

The programme for sustainable environmental education by the Church of South India (CSI) is targeted at church co-workers, teachers, students and children. The central theme of the programme is climate protection.

### Preserving the creation as a Christian duty

The CSI is the only church in India which has adopted environmental protection as its mission aim in its constitution, stressing that Christians have the moral duty to preserve God's creation. As a consequence, the CSI Synod published its Green Protocol for Green Discipleship in November 2018 – a 12-point plan which calls upon its parishes to do more to protect the environment.

### Practical environmental protection at schools

A special focus is the CSI's Green School programme that was started in 2015. Students learn how to live sustainably and share this knowledge with members of their families and in their communities. They are encouraged to learn how to think critically and develop innovative solutions to promote further sustainability. Since 2015, more than 2,100 schools have taken part in the programme.

"The 430 pupils and 17 teachers at the CMS primary school in Vechoochira (Kerala) are dedicated to saving energy and water, harvesting rainwater, avoiding waste and growing vegetables and herbs organically," reports Prof Dr Mathew Koshy Punnackadu, Director of the Department of Ecological Concerns at the CSI. "The school is a model for all others in the district!"

### Pupils audit their environment

An important part of the programme is an eco-audit that the students conduct themselves for their school. It forms the solid basis for environmental management at the school and actively involves the entire student body. Normal school subjects can be taught during the audit, for example the children have to calculate the volume of waste produced (mathematics), produce compost (biology), write reports about this in English, type this into

a computer and design an effective public relations campaign on the subject of waste management (languages, computer, social studies). Schools can only call themselves "Green Schools" when they reduce water consumption, optimise their energy efficiency, produce less waste, collect and recycle water and offer a healthy learning environment. According to Punnackadu, the welfare of humanity and the environment and the efficient functioning of the economy ultimately depend on the responsible handling of the planet's natural resources: "We no longer welcome guests with flowers or garlands but with a little tree!" ■



Photo: CSI

## ACTING IN SOLIDARITY

### Seeking a new future from deep inside a pandemic

Perseverance and tenacity are the rules that were imposed upon us all over the world in 2020. It is my duty and wish to report on the year 2019. Admittedly, we have all been marked by the events of 2020, a year dominated by the coronavirus pandemic. It was triggered by a virus that causes respiratory diseases which, in the worst case, may result in serious illness or even death. So far, there is no vaccine or healing medicines. The world has gone into shutdown. People must distance themselves from each other to reduce the risk of infection. And what we have never known before: churches and houses of God must remain closed. Worship services take place virtually – as do parts of working life.

#### More solidarity is needed with less financial means

What is expected of us all now is especially perseverance and tenacity. At Easter 2020 – when I was writing these lines – we were right in the middle of a time when we were asked to stay at home and minimise personal contacts. “Jesus Christ has arisen!” That is the message we proclaim at Easter. It is a message that now takes on a new meaning for every single person in this worldwide crisis. But most of all, it is also a challenge for

the future work of the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, our Mission must transform this challenge into solidarity within the international context of its churches and mission societies – at a time when the financial basis of the churches and their organisations in Germany has dwindled.

#### The historical background

Perseverance and tenacity were also expected from the first missionaries who travelled to different continents to sow the seeds of Christian faith. In the uMzinyathi region in Zululand about 80 kilometres inland from the eastern coast of South Africa there is a farm that was started by the Hermanns-

burg missionaries and called “Perseverance”. In the early 1850s, a group of missionaries and craftsmen from the region built a settlement which they called Hermannsburg after the place in the Lüneburger Heide (Lueneburg Heath) from whence they started. After they had tried unsuccessfully to settle down in Ethiopia, they sailed further along the African coast until they reached Port Natal on the east coast of South Africa, now called Durban. They set off on a strenuous trek to the vast area of fruitful rolling hills of Zululand where they started to work with the people there. They needed perseverance to endure the harsh living conditions and the tender shoot of Christian identity grew very slowly. Of course, these were different challenges that required perseverance and tenacity. Nevertheless, it is only through experiences such as these will we face the challenges that have now been imposed on us.

#### Ministry and mission – the foundations of the churches

We all realise that the time AFTER Covid-19 will also be a time WITH Covid-19. It will change our lives and the way we live. It will also bring changes in how we conduct ourselves at work and in our duties. We can also regard this as an op-



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

portunity. The church will have to reconsider its duties of ministry and mission – they are substantial parts of its foundation. The organisations which execute these duties in and with the church will have to be regrouped and restructured to maintain a stable foundation. The EMS will be part of this. Its international standing and proclamation of solidarity – in full awareness of its missionary responsibility – will be able to contribute to the stability of this foundation in cooperation with other mission societies. This is where we need perseverance as well as clear aims.

#### **Many thanks to all congregations and private donors**

Despite everything that has happened in 2020, we should not lose sight of our retrospect of the year 2019. As in previous years, the annual financial statement is balanced by a further increase in necessary reserves. We would like to extend our special thanks to all congregations and private persons for their offerings and donations which were again pleasingly high in 2019. This has allowed us to back many projects and programmes and also provide emergency aid. In 2019, a significant amount of donations went to providing extensive support to the Donggala region on Sulawesi which was badly hit by the earthquake and tsunami and also for relief sent to the flood disaster in Kerala, India. A special aid

package went to the people in Wupperthal, the missionary station in the Cedar mountains in the Western Cape of South Africa. The town was almost destroyed by a major fire at the turn of the year 2018/2019. The people affected by these incidents must also summon up perseverance and tenacity. Our financial as well as moral and spiritual help should go a little way towards helping them return to normality. For this reason, the aid provided by the EMS; in particular between its members, cannot be regarded primarily as emergency aid. It serves as immediate relief to create the conditions to bring life back on track. This is lived solidarity. The reports from people and churches in the affected regions are proof of this. It is pleasing to see and know that the aid sent also helped to change things for the better.

#### **Closing ranks while maintaining social distancing**

Solidarity and collective action will require time, especially in the future. In order for us to carry out our mission and our responsibilities in future as church agencies and organisations, we will have to close ranks, especially in times of “personal distancing”. The door for this opportunity may only be open for a limited period of time and it requires courageous decisions to continue with our Christian values and ecumenical and missionary

work. We have the moral reserves to do this. But we still have to summon up perseverance and tenacity.

**Rudolf Bausch**  
*Executive Secretary*

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2019: OVERVIEW OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

**Revenues 2019: € 7,690,212.00** (2018 € 8,125,520.04)

Donations, offerings	2,885,124.77 € (2018 € 3,100,146.03)
Contributions from member churches	€ 4,116,428.96 (2018 € 4,009,650.73)
Project refunds and subsidies	€ 379,115.32 (2018 € 454,131.14)
Interest, dividends	€ 106,047.12 (2018 € 107,919.83)
Rental revenues	€ 95,327.10 (2018 € 96,991.42)
Withdrawal from free reserves	€ 95,000.00 (2018 € 213,000.00)
Sale from projects	€ 4,468.93 (2018 € 42,874.92)
Reversal of project accruals	€ 8,486.00 (2018 € 99,988.96)
Annual surplus	€ 213.80 (2018 € 817.01)



**Expenditures 2019: € 7,690,212.00** (2018 € 8,125,520.04)

Project donations to partners	€ 3,173,577.85 (2018 € 3,325,682.73)
Allocation to reserves (pensions)	€ 300,000.00 (2018 € 300,000.00)
Staff costs, administration	€ 971,429.07 (2018 € 878,956.77)
Staff costs, programmes	€ 1,648,080.70 (2018 € 1,730,795.31)
Staff costs, ecum. co-workers	€ 250,205.96 (2018 € 240,208.60)
Write-offs	€ 46,666.95 (2018 € 41,292.42)
Costs of product sales	€ 209,004.87 (2018 € 26,359.09)
Material costs, administration	€ 509,158.89 (2018 € 739,359.16)
Material costs, programmes	€ 582,087.71 (2018 € 842,865.96)

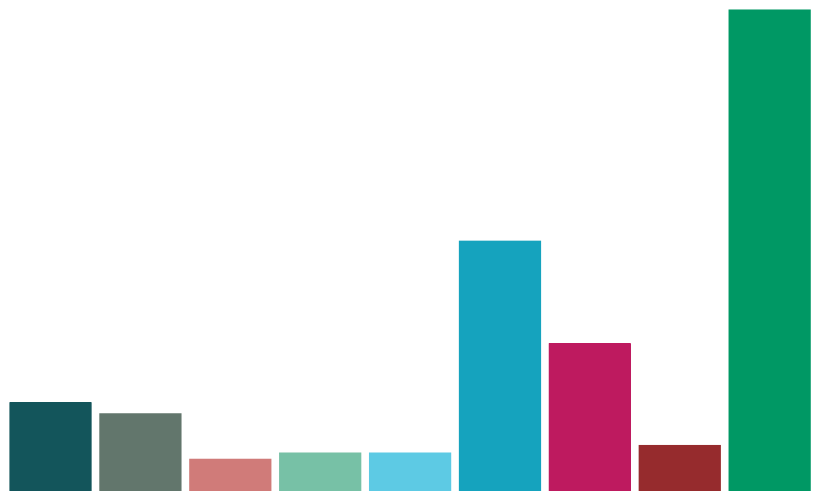




Photo: Pixabay/Caniceus

## UNITED AGAINST CORONA

**God's spirit can be experienced wherever people stand by one another in times of need. The Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS) has launched an appeal for donations under the slogan "Living. Solidarity. Worldwide. United Against Corona" to support its member churches.**

The coronavirus holds the entire world in its grip and does not stop at the countries of the EMS member churches. Most of all, the pandemic has hit the weakest and the poorest totally unprepared. The local churches and communities are making an indispensable contribution to alleviate those who are in need. In the meantime, many of the helping hands are now relying on support themselves.

"The health and economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic are dramatic in India, Indonesia, South Africa and the Middle East. There is enormous demand for protective coverings and medical care. Due to the lockdowns, many people have lost their jobs," says EMS General Secretary, Reverend Dr Dieter Heidtmann, describing the urgency of the situation.

On top of all that, the coronavirus is severely testing the spiritual life of EMS member churches. Worship services have stopped in many places because of the risk of infection. Social work and ministry are also at their limits. Now that the churches have lost their income from collections, they cannot maintain these services any longer.

**Donate now! With every Euro you make a vital contribution towards empowering people during the Covid-19 crisis – and beyond. Thank you for your help!**

Living · Solidarity · Worldwide



United Against Corona

### DONATION ACCOUNT

Evangelische Mission in Solidarität e.V.

Evangelische Bank – IBAN: DE85 5206 0410 0000 0001 24

Purpose: "United Against Corona"



Photo: EMS/Karasch-Böttcher



## SETTING A SIGN OF SOLIDARITY

The member churches of the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS) in Africa, Asia and Germany are committed to proclaiming the Gospel tied to diaconal and social ministry. Through its projects, they set visible signs of solidarity, charity and peace. They give a voice to the disadvantaged, promote dialogue between religions, care for the elderly and the sick and open up life opportunities to children and young people.

**Do you want to share in this valuable work? Then discover the EMS Foundation for Mission in Partnership.**

An endowment in the form of a bequest or legacy allows you to make a long-term investment in projects of the EMS Fellowship to help shape a more peaceful and righteous world of the future.



EMS-Stiftung  
Mission in Partnerschaft

### YOUR CONTACT

**Dr Dieter Heidtmann**  
*General Secretary*

Tel.:

+49 (0) 711 636 78-21

Email:

heidtmann@ems-online.org