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# OUR VOICES

ems women's network



**WOMEN INITIATING AND INSPIRING**

ENGLISH



Evangelical Mission in Solidarity

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**Dear Women and Sisters in the international EMS women's network,**

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness".

For German churches this is the watchword of the year 2012. Christian people around the globe feel linked with each other through the daily watchwords in the Moravian Daily Texts, a Devotional Guide for Every Day.

Many of us, however, know from experience how quickly a woman can reach her own limitations. Political decisions and financial markets operating nationally and globally can trigger developments which make us all feel powerless. It is no wonder that this feeling of "weakness" is gradually paralyzing us.

**Women initiating and inspiring** – this issue of OUR VOICES draws our attention to women who have launched new projects, thus becoming an inspiration to others:

For example OH Hyun Sun in South Korea who, together with volunteer students, is developing a new type of school for under-privileged young people. Or Ibu Made in South Sulawesi who has set up small village cooperatives granting microloans. And there is the women's fellowship of the Church in South India which trains young women to be moped mechanics. These are only three examples among many others. They remind and encourage us: Paralysis must not be allowed to prevail, "for my strength is made perfect in weakness".

Historic decisions were made during the EMS-Synod on November 10th: From January 1, 2012, the initials EMS will stand for Evangelical Mission in Solidarity. So finally we are now legally an international mission society in which all members are equal.

In 2012, the EMS Fellowship is celebrating her 40th anniversary. And OUR VOICES can look back on twenty years of publication.

For this reason we want to publish a special anniversary issue of OUR VOICES. Your ideas, contributions and reports of your own experiences would be highly appreciated. We would be grateful if you could submit these by March 15, 2012.

With this issue of OUR VOICES we have to say "Goodbye" to Gertrud Hahn, member of the editorial team for more than eight years. During all these years she offered her expertise which was most helpful. We thank her wholeheartedly and wish her divine blessings for the future.

Kind regards from Stuttgart

  
Gabriele Mayer, PhD  
EMS Women and Gender Desk  
November 2011

## Reading the Bible in the midst of severe living conditions in Brazil

Roselei Bertoldo from the South of Brazil, pastor and catholic nun of a religious community. Since more than 15 years she has been working in Piauí, in the northeast of Brazil. She accompanies women farmers affected by land conflicts.

Anne Heitmann pastor of the Protestant Church in Baden, member of the international project committee of EMS Bible Reading Project 2010 exchanging thoughts with her German women's group with women farmers in Piauí, Brazil

A beautiful white hammock was chosen by the women from the dry northeast of Brazil as their "symbol of hope". In the midst of the hammock you can see a painting of green palm tree branches and the Bible which "rests" upon them.

"This symbol combines both, the daily life of the women and the power of faith which has been deepened through reading the Bible," tells Roselei Bertoldo. As a Catholic nun she accompanied this group of female farmers within the frame of her ministry.

The hammock is bed, cradle and sickbed in the daily life of these women. More pieces of furniture are seldom in the humble clay huts. Those who build a stone house must be aware that it might be torn or burnt down by the land owners. It is still a matter of conflict in the northeast of Brazil that their traditional homestead is not being recognized.

The women earn their living for themselves and their families by small-scale subsistence farming, with special focus on the fruit of Babcu coconut palm tree. From the pulp a fine, healthy and nutritious flour can be extracted and also valuable oil. The women in Miguel Alves have joined together to process the nuts. To open the small nuts is hard work. They bought together a mill with which the seeds can be processed more easily – for example into soap and cleansing agents.

The branches of the palm tree stand for that which made survival possible for

Photos: Roselei Bertoldo



Women farmers express their life journey through painting. Writing is not necessary.



In the midst of severe living conditions the Bible comes close to these women.

these women. And the Bible is in the middle. It is an essential part of their survival. This is astonishing as most women of the group cannot read or write.

Roselei Bertoldo tells:

"It was a great challenge to perk up one's ears and to interpret the texts which we had listened to in detail. During the women's meetings the first question is what they feel like and which problems and concerns, but also which pleasures they bring along. After the first contact with a biblical text the women took the text along to their homes and asked their family to read it again aloud. Mostly the children can take over this task. Thus, the whole family is involved in that kind of "Bible Study". During the next meeting the text was read aloud again, then the women tell in their own words what they heard, paid special attention to the individual persons in the text or to the pictures which rose special interest. In small scenes the stories were connected to their realities. Then they search to transfer the text into their life, into their congregation and families. At the end we pray and sing before God."

In this way some of the women had their first encounter with a specific Bible story. Or, for the first time in their life, they took a paint brush into their hand and brought colourfully to the paper what is important in their lives.

Roselei Bertoldo tells with how much ease these women transfer Biblical stories to their life, how easily they can perform scenes of life or paint pictures. As "preservers of life" they have a close relationship to the land, the soil, the seeds and fruits. Although they cannot read and write, they are very close to the Bible stories and experience them physically.

This became especially clear when reading the story of Ruth and Exodus. The women know about the struggle for survival which Ruth and Naomi went through. Often they are solely responsible for their families, because during the periods of drought their husbands go south to search for work. "The story of Ruth helped them to trust in the mercy and care of God in situations in which they lack the essential," says Roselei Bertoldo.

All women have also suffered land conflicts. They know about the longing for a piece of land belonging to themselves and the joy when a lot of land is granted. Then they sing and hold a service as Mirjam sang with a loud voice after the flight from Egypt land. The certainty that God goes with them in conflict situations strengthens them.



Photo: Roselei Bertoldo

The intensive contact with Bible stories also opened new horizons for the women, new horizons going far beyond their own situation: "The exchange with the Bible reading group in Ettlingen, Germany has widened their view on the world and initiated new interests – e.g. to learn to read", says Roselei Bertoldo, "and their self-esteem was strengthened. At the beginning they felt like: We have nothing, we know nothing and can nothing at all contribute to this exchange on the Bible. But then they realized: Our experience is important. Yes, we all are "women theologians" and can interpret the Bible – not only pastors or those who accomplished their study courses. What we can contribute counts. And it helps others to better understand Biblical texts." ☺



Photo: Claudia Rauch

Roselei Bertoldo with the self-made hammock of the Brazilian women's group.

# A woman has founded the “Gwangju Seed School” – a school for under-privileged young people in Korea

OH Hyun-Sun is professor for religious education in Gwangju and ordained pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Korea.

Since September 2010 the Gwangju “Seed School” project has started caring for under-privileged pupils after school. Every Tuesday 20 pupils (called T2) meet their 25 “mentors” (called T1), young adults studying for their bachelor and master degrees in theology.

These young people are taught to find their own identity and values. In the course of the two school terms, two sectors, “Vision-Coaching” and “Learn-Coaching”, are to be further developed. We planned a curriculum over two terms and produced a text book with one chapter per week. We hope to enable these young people to find their visions themselves and realize their dreams.

The textbook contains questionnaires and tasks such as: “drawing my way through life, discovering my own values, making a list of my dreams, writing my own web blog, finding out what I can do best, discovering role models”, etc.

Learn-Coaching is on the agenda during the second term: training critical facilities, becoming independent, practising time-management, learning to see things from various viewpoints, rhetoric, sex education, effective learning.

In a festive atmosphere pupils receive their certificates at the end of the term.

The seed school is a new type of Christian education. No direct explanations on Christian faith are given, no evangelisation takes place. But the invitation to join Christian faith is obvious, values are offered on the basis of Christianity. Our observation is that faith won through short-term missions and Sing-and-Pray-events does not last for long. Many young people soon leave the church again. The seed school is a new challenge for these young people and a good place of learning processes.

“T2” are young people from families which, in comparison with others, are under-privileged. But who would come to our school if we said this openly? This is why we talk directly to the headmaster and teachers, explaining our plans and aims. They then find young people who

Photos: OH Hyun Sun



Creativity and fun are important elements at the Seed School.



Learning is easier in small groups.

would benefit from the school. In September we gather all first class pupils of the secondary school and tell them about the seed school. Then we distribute application forms together with agreement forms for the parents. After sending in these papers the young people can become "T2" pupils. In this way it is mainly children from disadvantaged families who cannot afford expensive private coaching who take part.

The Seed School does not take place at a special mission school but at the secondary school. In the beginning it was difficult to find a school prepared to host the Seed School.

After having convinced the schoolmaster, we met the teachers, again explaining the idea and then started to look for pupils. I take every opportunity to preach in other districts explaining the idea of the seed school. I do the same when visiting Christian groups at the university when looking for volunteer mentors. I also visit pastors of district churches asking them to send pupils. In addition I am responsible for raising financial support from professors from the district of Gwangju, pastors of the church district, doctors, lawyers, enterprisers etc

Now after almost two terms of the project the teachers of Chi-Pyeong secondary school are delighted. In the beginning many had doubts as they had thought the Seed School was just a missionary project. But now the teachers are most appreciative and say that the work is really worthwhile.

The seed school has acquired a good reputation in Gwangju district. Last term not only did our "T1" take part but also other teachers and interested people from the district. The result is that many schools have asked to run the project in their schools. Unfortunately, due to the financial burden which we bear ourselves, this is not

possible. The planning, teaching materials, development of the text book, printing, the meals and snacks all costs 30 million Won (18 000 Euros) in total. To collect this amount of money we are asking for support from church members, pastors, the education ministry and members of parliament, interested academic persons and citizens. But there is a long way to go.

### How have the pupils changed?

"The headmaster and the teachers were very moved to see how the young people's attitudes have changed. Violence at the school has become less, the atmosphere has changed, and the behaviour and expression in the eyes of the young people have changed. For this reason the school has become well-known."

The Seed School has no attendance register. The school wants participation to be voluntary. What is astounding is that attendance is almost 100%. Even after special holidays at their secondary school when pupils could go home, they prefer instead to wait for the usual session at the Seed School to start. This fact fascinated the teachers in particular.

I hope that the **Sunday schools** will become involved in the Seed School. In a society of materialism, harsh competition, the power of the strongest at school and in the family, today's frontal education system with the priority of just imparting knowledge by the teachers one-sidedly is not productive or beneficial. Dreams and visions of Christian values and of a happy and healthy life cannot be conveyed in this way. The Seed School is a school which "ploughs" hearts. My heart beats when I picture seed schools being established at state and Sunday schools.

The Seed School is a way of transforming state and church education. Is this vision too vague? All participants in the seed school and myself have the vision that this project will be expanded to the **poor in the developing world**. We think that the occasion will come when we can tell foreign students from abroad studying in the Gwangju district of about the Seed School and to teach them the methods. One church has offered to integrate Seed School programmes in their summer camp for young people.

In the meantime we are preparing another type of Seed School: **the multicultural Seed School** in Gwangju. A seed school for children of migrants during the summer and winter holidays.

Last year I completed my research on multi-identity of the second generation of migrants. These results will be the basis for the project.

Korean society is becoming more and more a multi-cultural society. This is why educational issues and human rights are important for the first as well as the second generation of migrants. We urgently need the multi-cultural seed school for the education of these second-generation migrants.

We kindly ask for your support and prayers! ☺



Pupil and student as a „learning tandem“.



New behaviour can be practiced in role-playing.

Photos: OH Hyun Sun



## Ibu Made launches farmers' cooperatives in Indonesia

Hiltraud Link, presently ecumenical worker of EMS in Indonesia, teaches at the Theological University STT Intim in Makassar/Sulawesi.



Hiltraud Link

Everybody who meets her feels her commitment, she puts her heart and soul into this work with the women in the villages. She wants to build the future together with them. Many women's groups wait for her to come. But after severe illness last year, it has become increasingly difficult for her to make the long ways to the villages on her moped. She is urgently longing for a women successor continuing her work with the same commitment to the women in their villages. Many women's groups want to establish their own Credit Union, but they still need support. ☹

**T**hree weeks ago Ni Nyoman Murni celebrated her 64. birthday. Almost nobody knows her by this name, everybody calls her Ibu Made.

Ibu Made was born on Bali, Indonesia. Her parents, sisters and brothers moved to central Sulawesi when she was still in primary school. That's why she grew up in a children's home of Bali church. She accomplished a training to be a midwife. After some years of working as a midwife she married a pastor of Bali church. Together with him she went to South-East-Sulawesi to accompany migrants from Bali in the local church GEPSULTRA.

On Bali, she had lived in Denpasar and now she found herself in a small village without electricity and infrastructure. Here she raised three children, a change of life which probably was not always an easy task. But more and more she became closer with the people of the village. The salary of her husband as a pastor was small. Thus she started to grow pepper, cacao, coffee and much more. She wanted to pave the way for her children to accomplish an education at the university. People in the town often laughed at her because she worked as a farmer. Many thought this would not be suitable for a pastor's wife.

More and more she became a contact person for other women farmers. She perceived that the women needed someone to initiate their further development. In the eighties she started to educate women farmers in farming and marketing vegetables. The first Credit Union was established. Ibu Made accompanied this development. In the meantime there are 15 groups in 15 villages.



Photos: Gabriele Mayer

Ni Nyoman Murni during her visit in one of „her“ villages.

# Yellaam Yesuve – 50 songs from five continents – a new ecumenical hymn book

Andrea Wöllenstein is a pastor of the unit „Adult education/Women’s fellowship of the Evangelical Church of Kurhessen-Waldeck and chairperson of the “Christian Education Fund”.



Andrea Wöllenstein

Last year in Kurhessen-Waldeck, Germany, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FUND (as reported in OUR VOICES 2010/11). During the last fifty years more than 2,500 boys and girls in our partner churches have been supported by scholarships in order to finish their school education or do vocational training courses.

How can such a jubilee be better celebrated than with music, with hymns of praise going around the world?

This is why we asked our partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America to send us their favourite songs – and from these we have produced a hymn book

Indian texts arrived as well as songs with Asiatic notation from Indonesia, handwritten copies from Africa, sound recordings and videos with melodies which hitherto did not exist in writing. Some songs had already been written for choirs, others were newly arranged for four-part choirs by the musician Jean Kleeb from Brazil.

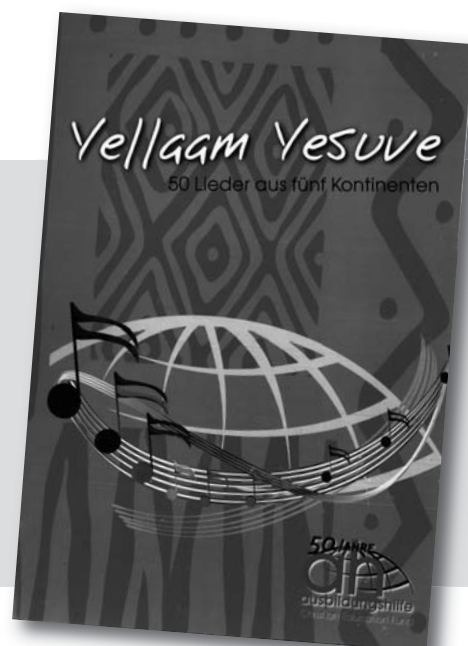
We want to encourage singing the songs in their original languages. In this way the singers will discover the special acoustic colour of different languages and come closer to other cultures.

Thus, “Yellam Yesuwe” (“Jesus is everything”) is a birthday present for everybody. Everybody is donor and donee in one person. A musical journey around the world gives insight into the kind of spirituality from which the songs originate. They can lead to new dimensions of religiousness.

“Yellam Yesuwe” for example repeats the name of Jesus again and again, as a mantram, which is the invitation to open one’s heart for the presence of God. How will these

songs sound from the mouths of singers in Africa? What happens when Indian choirs sing the pulsing rhythms with the vitality of Africa? What horizons open up when in German services faith is proclaimed with words and melodies from partner churches around the world?

Each culture will have its own way of making the music sound. This musical encounter enables new ways of praising God and allowing different musical traditions to shine through in these hymns. ☺



The song book and CD with the gospel choir “Joy of life”, Kurhessische Kantorei Marburg conducted by Jean Kleeb, can be ordered through: [www.ausbildungshilfe.de](http://www.ausbildungshilfe.de)

## 8b. Yellaam Yesuve

Tamil

எல்லாம் ஏகவே, - என்கெல்லா மேசுவே

Tamil / engl.

Jesus all in all / Jesus ist alles

trad.

Arr.: Jean KleeB

♩ = 104

Tamil Nadu - Südindien

S A

Ye - llaam Ye - su - ve, ye - na - kke - lla Me - su - ve.  
Je - sus all in all! Je - sus all in all for me.

B

Fine

S A

To - lla - mi - gu mi - vvu - la - gil, tu - nai Ye - su - ve.  
In this world of tri - bu - la - tions He's the on - ly way.

B

S A

1.Aa - ya - num sa - gaa - ya - num nee - ya - num u - baa - ya - num  
1.He's my Shep - herd and my guide, Coun - se - lor and friend be - side

B

S A

Naa - ya - num e - na - kkan - baa - na nyaan - na - rha - na vaa - la - num.  
He's my Lord and Mas - ter, Tea - cher, Wise and lo - ving bri - de - groom.

B

2.Tandai taay inamjanam panduloor sineegitar  
Santooda sakalayooka sampuurana baakyamum.  
3.Kavalaiyil aarudalum, kangulilen jootiyum  
Kashdanooy padukkaiyilee kaikanda avizhtamum.  
4.Poodaga pitaavumen pookkinil varattinil  
Aadaravu seydidung kuttaaliyumen toozhanum.  
5.Aniyum aabaranamum aastiyum sambaatyamum  
Pinaiyaaliyum miidparumen piriya mattiyastanum.  
6.Aana jiiva appamum aavalumen kaavalum  
Njaana kiidamum sadurum naattamum kondaattamum.

2.He's the bread of life so pure,  
Heart's desire and guard secure  
He's the song of heavenly songs,  
O let us praise and celebrate.

Reprinted with permission

# Women's Fellowship of the Church of South India (CSI) initiates new projects

Christine Grötzinger, EMS coordinator Programmes and Projects Promotion, running over with enthusiasm for two new projects after returning from her official trip to India.



Photo: Lutz Drescher

Moped driver who benefits from the new training branch.

## Moped mechanics - new branch of education programme for women

For many women the moped is an important means of transport in the towns. For machine care and repair garages are necessary. These are mainly attended by men. Young women have often been badgered or even harassed when asking for help in a garage.

For this reason a new branch of education was established in 2010. The diocese of Trichy-Tanjavur offers a Skills Training Programme, especially for young women to become moped mechanics.

The programme does not only have the aim to train women as moped mechanics. At the end of the training programme they are offered to take out a loan to establish their own garage. Thus, women can earn their living and women with mopeds can come to have their mopeds attended and repaired and stay unmolested.

The project responds to such a great demand and is so convincingly organized that the city of Trichy supports the programme. These funds are, however, not sufficient. Thus, EMS is going to promote the project in the future.

## Accompaniment of prisoners and their families

In Indian society, often even in church surroundings, prisoners and their families are stigmatized.

Within the frame of the "Prison Ministry Project" mainly women, but also men wanting to work in a diaconal field, are now educated to accompany prisoners in a pastoral way and to counsel their families.

The project is well accepted in all participating dioceses. People, especially women let themselves be inspired to take over this kind of job. At many places the accompaniment of families affected has already started.

A special focus is laid by co-workers on the support and (re-)integration of children. They aim to cut off the downward spiral of marginalization and criminality in the families concerned. ☺



## Women in South Sudan bear the brunt of the work – Inspiration born of necessity

Gunda Stegen, former ecumenical worker in Sudan via mission 21, was employed at the Sudan Council of Churches und Presbyterian Church of the Sudan. She reports on the situation in the new Republic of South Sudan after its foundation in July 2011

**W**omen go through a variety of changes in their lives. Every upheaval in society or change in fortune is accompanied by uncertainty, fear and stress but also opens up new chances.

In the run-up to and during the foundation process of the Republic of South Sudan on July 9th, 2011 uncountable social changes took place: Whole families left the refugee and displaced camps which they had been forced to accept as their home during the past twenty years. With bag and baggage, they travelled back to the big cities in Sudan – in overland trucks, by boat and plane. For three months they received beans, rice and oil from the stock of international aid organisations. Now, equipped with hoe and seeds, they are expected to produce "free" corn as "free farmers" from the hard soil which in the meantime is partially overgrown by the bush.

But the new republic is not a safe country yet. Mary, from the tribe of Anwak, is a member of the Presbyterian Church in Khartum and an active member of the Christian Women Fellowship in Sudan. During her journey via Malakal (the capital city of Upper Nile in South Sudan) to Akobo (in Jonglei State, approx. a journey of 4 days) she lost two of her children during armed attacks. I met her in March 2011 in Akobo where – in the meantime – tribal conflicts between Nuer and Murle have broken out.

It is unbelievable how resourceful women can be when suddenly confronted with the problems of having to accommodate ten to fifteen newly arrived lodgers, giving them a temporary domicile, organising additional food, arranging meetings with key persons responsible for land tenure in order that the newcomers can buy small pieces of land, helping them to build huts with material from the surroundings (clay, wood and grass) with an imported corrugated iron roof on top.

They receive no recognition or thanks. During official rallies representatives of government and international aid organisations justifiably demonstrate their pride of what they have achieved - ignoring how, in doing so, they leaned on the bent backs of the women. The effort these women have put into accommodating thousands of

fellow Sudanese people is astounding. Only during festivities do they show their pleasure in joyful dancing and singing. The few women who have been able to find jobs and earn their own living are role-models for all others. They feel strengthened by the first "free" elections in which women were given the right to vote. They are demanding a higher percentage than the 25% quota for women in government and administration. Women are part of social and political changes. Their longed-for hopes will come true when they achieve economic participation, political leadership, equal access to education and health care, peaceful coexistence between diverging ethnic groups and prosperity for all. ☺



Women in South Sudan calling for more political participation.

Photo: Gunda Stegen

# A pentecostal meeting through intercultural Bible Reading

**Reinhild Burgdörfer, pastor of the Protestant Church of the Palatinate, participated in the International Day of Encounter on Intercultural Bible Reading organized within the frame of the EMS-Bible Reading Project "Reading the Bible through the Eyes of Another" in 2010/2011. This contribution was published in: eFa, a publication of the women's fellowship in Palatinate.**

When I arrived at the Herz-Jesu-Kloster, a small monastery and educational institution in Neustadt, Germany, I felt I had joined a small pentecostal meeting. The house was full of people from different countries, colours and languages. In a casual atmosphere people were getting to know each other and trying out in which language they could communicate best.

Then at one point Elizabeth Aduama gave a sign, - and this was what she did again and again in the course of the day - inviting everybody to sing together, each in their own language. Everybody joined in light-heartedly, got to their feet and started moving in time to the music, in keeping with their own culture.

In this way we had a share in the aspirations of other people – those who are not often noticed: women drawing hope from the Bible but still suffering under gender injustice, and also people from other cultures who, through what they have experienced, have become "outsiders" in their societies. Only in mutual exchange can we discover the fullness of promise and the message of the Bible.

The delegates from South Africa, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Korea, Japan and Brazil had participated in the EMS Bible Reading Project "Reading the bible through the eyes of another" during the previous months and had exchanged their thoughts across the continents. We, the participants of this day of encounter, got an impression of these interchanges when we met in mixed groups for "Bible Sharing". The passage from Gal 3.25 – 27 was dealt with. These verses play an important role in the discussions on gender equality. For one woman from India the promise that, as believers in Christ, there should be no discrimination at all, was important. Unfortunately Indian society is a long way from this goal. A woman from South Africa reported about having lived in Germany for six years, and how difficult it had been for her to adapt to church services and community life here. However, now she feels that her faith has actually grown and been strengthened. Thus we obtained a glimpse of the wealth of experience which can be expressed in just a few Bible verses.

In the afternoon a lecture was given on "Bible in a just language". It became clear that translations always involve some kind of interpretation of a text no matter how hard the translators try to stay as close as possible to the original. Roselei Bertoldo, a nun from Brazil, reported on her project with Biblical texts. She works with poor country women, some of whom can neither read nor write. She brought along an impressively painted hammock, on which the Bible lies like a baby amidst palm and oil branches as an elementary symbol of the "sustenance of life".

Cesar Santoyo, arriving straight from the earthquake area in Japan, very movingly told us about his missionary project "Mose-Rap". He mainly works with young Philippine mothers with whom he tries to identify both Philippine and Japanese cultures and how to make the most of them. Although it was very tiring trying to communicate in different languages, I do not regret a single moment of this day. Rather it has inspired me to start a bible group with our partner congregation in Bolivia in order to read and explore Bible texts through the eyes of "another". ☺



Photo: Claudia Rauch

Participants of the Bible Workshop listen to the voices from other cultures.

# Courageous opposition against nuclear energy in Japan

Phone Interview with Terumi Kataoke in July, 2011. She has been an activist in the movement against nuclear energy for more than 15 years. She belongs to the KYODAN church council.

## \* Where are you living and working?

We live in Tohoku, a city about 100 km away from Fukushima.

## \* In which activities are you currently involved?

I am planning to take a group of 38 persons away from the radiation area to get away and respond to the invitation of Kyoto parish. 28 children (1 year – 16 years) and 10 mothers/parents. I am preparing the orientation day and the schedule for the trip.

The Peace Movement in which we are involvement is undertaking several projects. One important currently is to teach people on radiation and its dangerous impact. They are learning to use the radiation counter and to report back to us that we learn to know where are dangerous areas and where are clean areas. We just started and want to compile data from an analysis. Then we can tell the children which areas they have to avoid. In a few weeks we will have more information. Two counters are with me currently, two counters are available to rent for the people.

## \* Do you feel safe?

Since we are 100 km away from the reactor plant they tell us that would be enough. But when we use the counter it is not safe. We do not know the long term impact on children even with low radiation. We are afraid, in particular for the children.

## \* Do people want to know the dangerous situation?

Here we have now a group of 40 mothers who are aware after 3 months work. It is difficult to make them understand. On one hand it seems too far, on the other hand so many scholars are saying it is safe – but they are sent by the government. Furthermore the people want to feel safe and reject dangerous information. It is a rural area and they grow fruits and rice. They depend on agriculture and do not want to give it up.

## \* Do you get any support?

The last three months I am running and running and running. We need more people to share our work, besides friends.

We are a team, and when we are tired it is important to come together and to share our feelings. If someone wants to give up others can encourage. We encourage one another what we are doing is important for the children, for the future of the children. We just keep going.

We need to raise money for additional counter, in particular for food radiation. This is very expensive and not enough available. We hope to get one until September/October.



Ms Kataoke receives the new counter through Bernhard Dinkelaker, EMS general secretary.

## \* What motivates you on a personal level?

15 years ago the day care centre was running quite well. A Russian couple brought their little baby since both of them were working at the Isu University. Their baby was very weak, often crying and easily caught a cold. When she turned one year old she passed away. Because of the shock and deep pain of the parents we could not ask where they grew up. The doctor only told us it is a very rare sickness and her guts were rotten.

My mother and I looked at one another guessing the history behind. Later we learnt that they expected the child's death. Today I am sure that the baby was exposed to radiation. I do not want Japanese parents to expect the death of their children! That occurrence was 10 years after Tschernobyl.

## \* How can we support you?

People who have been very active in the movement "Stop nuclear plants" had and have such a small voice, the movement is so small.

But today after Fukushima we are blaming ourselves even though we had worked hard. We are very sad that Fukushima could not be prevented. We need to support each other.

Immediately after the catastrophe we were shocked and running away from the area, but then decided to come back. We feel we have the responsibility and we feel we can do something. That is the reason why we came back.

Yes, we need support, support from abroad. Our Government is so instable, we do not receive appropriate information. We can see what the German government, what the Italian people are deciding. We have peace walks, demonstration, but our mass media is controlled by the government and they do not report on opposition in Japan.

Thank you so much for sharing your concerns!

The interview was held by Gabriele Mayer. ≡

## NEWS from EMS Women's Network

### Women from Germany, Ghana, Korea, India, Lebanon and Cameroon share their inspirations.



#### **Germany, EMS Women's Advisory Board**

My name is Barbara Kohlstruck, born in 1959, married for more than 20 years and mother of two adolescent sons, I am working as a pastor. Again and again I am caught and inspired how fast women come into contact, build relationships and come close to each other sharing their life, thus offering mutual empowerment. ☺

#### **Katharina Goodwin, South Africa, today EMS Women's Advisory Board in Germany**

In 1945 I was born in South Africa, where I grew up in the Moravian Church. 1973 I settled in Germany. Besides my family (three children, two grandchildren) and my work (I am now retired) I have always been involved in voluntary work. Meeting committed women from all over the world is what inspires me ever anew. ☺



#### **Inspiration for new professional avenues in Ghana The interviews were carried out by Rebecca Abladey**



#### **Dowuona, EMS liaison-woman, ... with a female mechanic and car sprayer:**

Sister Gladys Obeng is twenty-five years old and hailed from Adjumaku – Kokobeng in the Central Region. Gladys has learnt this vocation for three years and can now work on this job needing no supervision. She is working at a garage at Osu near the Presbyterian Church, Salem Road Primary School. She said she took that initiative to work as a sprayer of cars and a mechanic for she realized that is a gift from God. Her hands are blessed for this work.

#### **... with a female film editor:**

I am Matilda Asante; I have had practical experience in the work of Film Production business for thirty-five years. I am presently directing my editor in the editing of a twenty-nine minutes program titled "Family Life – Marriage part 2" for "Chanel of Hope.....Life's getting better" transmission slot.



This profession demands great talent in creativity, and art, refined appreciation of beauty in all forms and insight. Other areas of my specialization in the film business are Audio Visual Archiving, Film Editing, Television Program Scheduling and all related functions like studio setting and shooting directing. I am a member of the Presbyterian Women's Fellowship. I am the National Recorder for the Committee on Women's Ministry (CWM). ☺

#### **Korea: 1000th Wednesday Demonstration – Justice for "comfort women" – Global Action Day on December 14th, 2011 – solidarity actions in Germany**

The working group "comfort women" of the Korean association in Germany is planning an action day in solidarity on the occasion of the 1000th Wednesday Demonstration of Comfort Women (Victims of Military Sexual Slavery during the Asia-Pacific-War) in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul on December 14th, 2011. The first demonstration took place on January 13th, 1991. Since twenty years now survivors and supporters have been meeting every week on Wednesdays to call for dignity and justice to the victims. You can join in in one of the demonstrations: On the website 1000th Wednesday Demonstration you find banners and posters, explanations with signature lists, links, order forms for films etc. We offer a new documentation film on one comfort woman "My Heart Is Not Broken Yet" with English subtitles. <http://trostfrauen.koreaverband.de> or <http://en.womenandwar.net/contents/home/home.asp> ☺



**Synthia Sobha Rani**, EMS liaison woman and general secretary of women's fellowship of the **Church of South India (CSI)** writes, among other topics, on the EMS Bible Project "Reading the Bible with the Eyes of Another": A study group comprising the office bearers and other women fellowship members were studying the Bible in tandem with a group in Kirchoff, Germany. The General Secretary of CSI Women's Fellowship and the Women Fellowship President of East Kerala Diocese, Dr. Elizabeth Daniel, attended the workshop conducted by EMS in Germany in March 2011. It was indeed a wonderful experience to meet so many people from all over the world who had been studying the same Bible passages and learned from each other. Even though we all speak different languages and come from different cultures we all are one in Jesus Christ. ☺

Photo: Claudia Rauch



Elizabeth Daniel and Synthia Sobha Rani during the Bible Workshop

**Wadia Badr, EMS liaison woman in Lebanon:**

The women's Helping Hand Fellowship of the National Evangelical Church of Beirut (NECB) this year chose to invite to its monthly general meetings guest speakers from other denominations and religions, because we believe that in order to "know the other" better, we need to be nearer to them and listen to their way of thinking and expression. We hosted a Muslim woman (Racha Al Amir) who is a novelist and owner of a publishing house in Beirut.

We also hosted a well-known Muslim writer and journalist (Suleiman Bakhti), followed by a Maronite priest (Msgr. Mansour Labaki) who is a talented musician and a very popular hymn writer and composer. His hymns are sung in ALL the Christian churches of Lebanon, including ours. All three received a very warm welcome from the Women's Fellowship and the quality time they gave us, provided a rich ecumenical encounter and was very highly valued by all.

Furthermore, our Women's Fellowship, as always, accompanies its intellectual and spiritual endeavours with acts of diakonia towards society; as well as support for NECB in its social ministries. This year the Fellowship offered a substantial gift to the new Centre for the Elderly that our Church is setting up. It is our hope to become very actively involved in the future management and activities of the Centre.

Finally, we remain committed to the World Day of Prayer that takes place in March of every year. This year our women greatly helped in the preparation of the liturgy and engaged the youth of NECB in the readings and songs during the service. ☺

**In June 2011 the Christian Women's Fellowship of the Presbyterian Church of Cameroon** celebrated her 50th anniversary. In the Mission House in Basel, Switzerland women from Cameroon, Germany and Switzerland came together to celebrate with songs and Cameroonian rhythms. During the festive service Maria Schlenker, one of the founding members of the Fellowship shared the proverb: "Tradition does not mean to keep the ashes, but to keep the fire burning" In the meantime 960 women's groups with almost 46.200 members were established in Cameroon. Leadership has been in Cameroonian hands for many years now. ☺



Women from the Women's Fellowship of the Presbyterian Church of Cameroon celebrating their 50th jubilee in Basel, Switzerland.

Photo: Meike Sahling/mission 21

After a partnership visit of a delegation from the **Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA)** in October 2010 to church district in Backnang, Germany, Davina Rossouw from the MCSA Women's Fellowship and District Partnership Committee sent a report. In spite of language barriers the consensus after several days of encounter with German partners was that partnership relations are inspiring and worthwhile to extend. ☺



Photo: privat

### New EMS publication from Women and Gender Desk

#### **MISSION AND GENDER – Perspectives on Good Practice**

Editors: Gabriele Mayer, Ulrike Schmidt-Hesse

Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS), 2011

Can be ordered for 10,- euros: [vertrieb@ems-online.org](mailto:vertrieb@ems-online.org) or phone no. 0049 (0)711 636 78 71/72

The authors of this book, men and women, are all associated with churches and mission societies in one way or another. They have been working persistently for more gender justice. In this book they describe progress, but also obstacles and stumbling blocks along the way.

The contributions reflect ten years of passionate commitment. Changes in fields of work and structures of organisations are described and that in the South as well as in the North. ☺



## **MISSION AND GENDER**

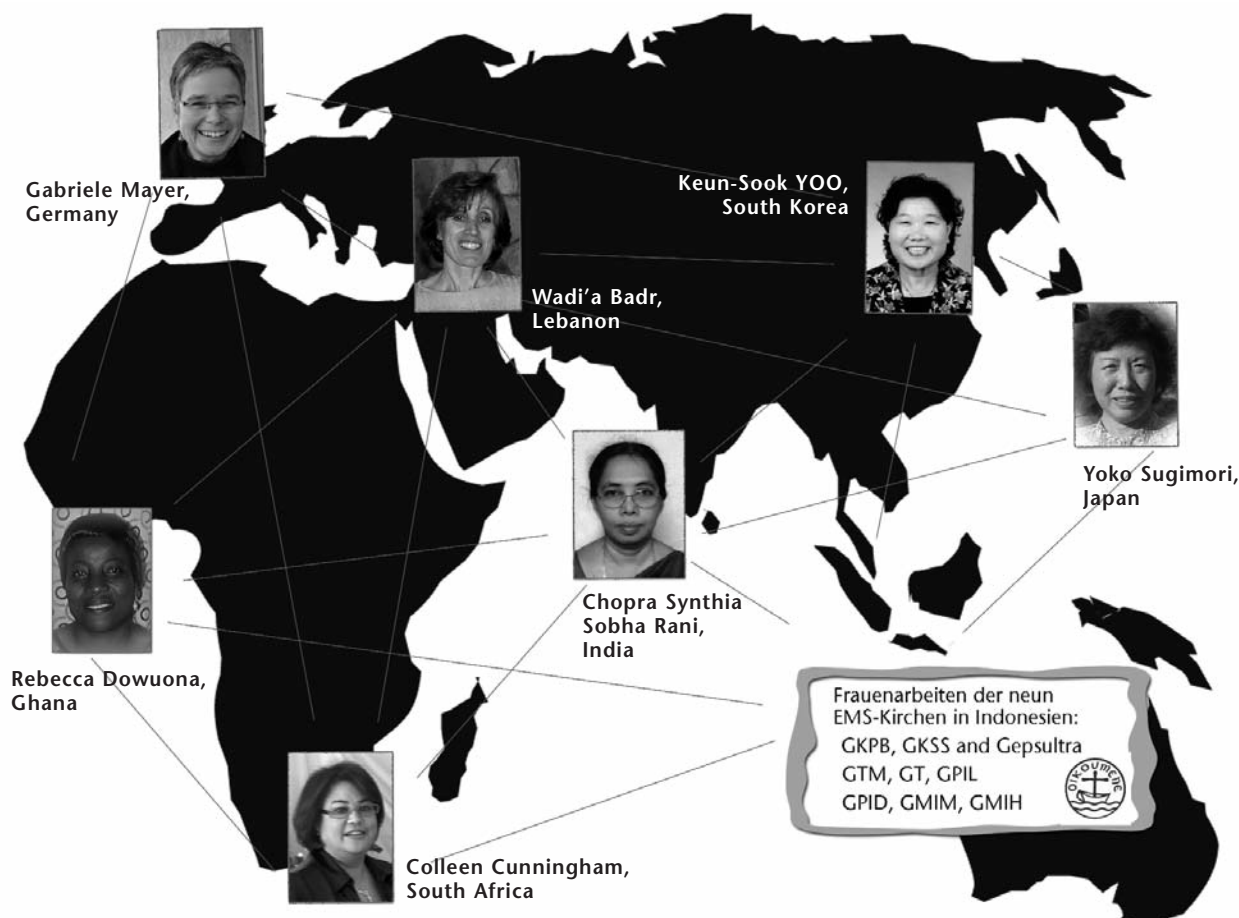


**Perspectives on Good Practice**



Evangelical Mission in Solidarity

## The Liaison Women of the International Women's Network



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AND HE SAID UNTO ME, MY GRACE IS  
SUFFICIENT FOR THEE: FOR MY STRENGTH  
IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9



Evangelical Mission in Solidarity