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OUR VOICES

ems women's network



WOMEN IN AFRICA – THE WILL TO ARISE

AN EMS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2010 FROM CAMEROON

ENGLISH



Association of Churches and Missions
in South Western Germany

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**Dear Women,
dear Sisters in the EMS network,**

this issue of OUR VOICES would like to introduce women from Africa, in particular women from Cameroon, Ghana, South Africa and Tanzania. They are all from churches which have belonged to the EMS-fellowship for a long time.

Special attention is given to women in Cameroon. It is they, who in a long ecumenical process, have developed the Order of Service for the World Day of Prayer 2010 and now present it to us. Beatrice Ngeh, head of the women's fellowship of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC) gives us an insight into this process (page 10).

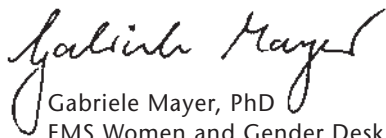
Jeanne Mbah tells us how men and women from Cameroon feel when trying to build up their lives in the diaspora – literally as our neighbours here in Stuttgart (page 14).

Melania Mrema from Tanzania is linked with us via the Moravian Church. She was head of the women's fellowship in South Tanzania. Being HIV-positive, she courageously chose openness – thus setting in motion a process of rethinking in her church and among its leaders.

The Ghanaian sisters (and brothers) have become closer to me through my teaching position at the Trinity Theological Seminary in Ghana. During this very intensive period of time I was bestowed with manifold "eye-openers" – not only with regard to the history and cultural diversity of Ghana, but also through the power of spiritual life in the PCG and other churches. In several contributions, such as "God is near" and "Dora", some of these experiences and impressions are described.

When reading the articles, may you feel something of the fascination of Africa. May you take heart in the will to arise of our sisters. May you yourselves receive the strength to get up again and again.

Kind regards from Stuttgart


Gabriele Mayer, PhD
EMS Women and Gender Desk
June 2009



“God will heal our church through you and your openness”.

A woman comes out with her illness AIDS

Melanie Mrema-Kyando is the head of the Church Women’s Fellowship of the Moravian Church in Tanzania



Photo: EMS Gabriele Mayer

After the service there is time to talk – especially about experiences of illness

In 2003 my husband fell seriously ill. It started with loss of appetite and when he forced himself to eat something he threw it up. His condition became particularly noticeable to me when he visited me in Zambia where I was on an advanced training course. When I asked him “What’s the matter with you?”, he answered only “I don’t know either!”.

After completing the English language part, I interrupted the advanced training course and went back home to care for him. His condition grew worse so we moved house and later went to live with his sister near Mbeya to be near medical care. Several times I tried to persuade him to get HIV-tested. He refused and said only: “Where should I have contracted this disease? I do not have AIDS. His illness made me very anxious and uncertain for of course I thought it might be AIDS. I had attended many courses and knew the symptoms of AIDS. In this uncertainty I decided to take secret action. I wanted to be sure whether I was infected or not. Then I would know what to do for my husband and myself.

My husband could not be rescued

In spite of all medication they could not heal him. He died on January 1, 2004 at 11pm in the Baptist hospital in Mbeya. His elder brother was with me at his deathbed.

But before I told his family, I decided to ask the doctor in charge which illness had killed my husband. He answered: “Your husband died of AIDS”. I was thankful to the doctor and returned to the death room. I could now say to my brother-in-law that he had died of AIDS. I did this very consciously having my future in mind in case I fell ill with AIDS and the family might accuse me of immoral conduct.

In my head there were more agonizing questions:

- Can all this be true?
- Why did I marry at all?
- What about my future?

The funeral was on January 2, 2004. Shortly before his death my husband declared to his family that if he should die, I should not stay in the mourning family for more than two weeks, but return to Zambia to continue my advanced training course

But during all the time of mourning I was preoccupied with the thought that I would be the next. I had to face this alone, I could not yet speak to anybody about it.

I fell ill

In October 2005 I fell seriously ill and gave up all hope of recovery. Now it was certain – I was infected. I went to a hospital in Mbeya and was HIV-tested. I was supported by Sister Luise Plock, a former colleague in the Women's Association of the Moravian Church. She had also known my husband and had visited him during his illness. After the medical check-up it was clear: "You have AIDS". And still I could not speak about it. I kept silent.

But I could not keep calm, my thoughts were spinning around:

- When people talked and I could not understand them I imagined they were speaking about me and my illness AIDS.
- When they find out that I am infected what will they think about me?
- I am the head of the women's association, how can I start to inform people and speak about my illness?
- What will the family of my husband say and how will they deal with this fact?
- I am a reborn Christian. What will my brothers and sisters in faith think about me?

These thoughts made me feel even worse and this weakened my body additionally. Then I went to hospital and started the treatment with CTC. Until this day I am still taking antiretroviral drugs. It is true: not talking about AIDS can kill a person quickly.

I came out with my illness.

In July 2007 I participated in the World Conference of YWCA in Nairobi, Kenya. I shared a room with a fellow sufferer. We both were infected by HIV. The difference between us was that my roommate admitted having AIDS, I could not. I took my drugs secretly, always afraid that it might be discovered. She, however, could behave freely in spite of her illness. And I wondered: "When will I gain this freedom and be able to live like other HIV-infected people?"

I used the offers during this conference to find a solution for myself. As if by a miracle I met many women living with HIV and they did this openly.

Participation in these working groups strengthened my wish to live freely and openly. Thus I decided, on my return to Tanzania, to face up to my illness openly and truthfully within my church and my social surroundings. This would help me to counsel others and encourage them to be HIV-tested.

But before I informed the church leaders I asked my husband's family for permission to speak about my illness



In this book women tell about their lives. This was initiated by a writing workshop with Luise Plock. Melania Mrema's report in this book is printed here in a shortened version (by courtesy of F. Reinhardt Verlag). Translations into English and Kishuaheli are in preparation.

openly. Finally the family and the children of my husband agreed.

On 19th of September 2007 I informed the church leaders and I asked for permission to speak publicly about my illness. The brothers of the church management were deeply impressed and said: "God will heal our church through you and your openness".

After a short service I spoke to all staff members about my illness for the very first time. They asked me: "What did you feel when you heard the bad news after your check-up?" Many people are very afraid of such news; they think they would die for fear immediately after such news.

Then I continually encouraged people in my congregation and in women's groups etc. to have themselves HIV-tested. I did this in my own church district and in the neighbouring district. Often this resulted in great emotions.

But I have decided to continue encouraging and counselling others. I have experienced what it means for infected people not being able to talk openly.

I have come to the conclusion that when a person speaks openly about his or her illness

- he or she receives help from other people
- the speed of infection slows down (less sexual intercourse)
- this helps the person feel freer towards others
- it is easier for others to seek advice from such a person.

Since I have spoken openly about my illness I am becoming safe and sound in my heart. <

Photo: EMS Gabriele Mayer



Putting anxieties into perspective

Men and HIV&AIDS – An International Workshop in Bali

Dr. Debora Murthy, acting member of the EMS-HIV&AIDS Advisory Board, is working as medical doctor in health project work of the Protestant Church of Bali (GKPB), Indonesia.

One conclusion of the International Workshop on HIV&AIDS and Gender in India, in November 2007, was that men should be involved actively in every part of the HIV&AIDS work be it prevention or/and care & support.

Learning from these experiences Indonesian participants developed a workshop which was carried out by EMS, mission 21 and UEM in Indonesia. This was the first HIV&AIDS workshop for most of the twenty mainly male participants. In the beginning the churches said HIV&AIDS is not a serious problem compared with other health problems in Indonesia; HIV&AIDS is not a church problem; none of their church members is infected; people infected with HIV are sinners; HIV&AIDS is God's punishment, etc.

Churches were not aware that in every province in Indonesia many people living with HIV&AIDS were identified and that possibly one of them might belong to their family. The Indonesian Health Department informed that in 2008 an estimated number of 193.000 persons lived with HIV&AIDS in Indonesia. Out of them, 78.7% were men, 20.7% were women and 0.5% were unknown.

The Indonesian sociologist Dr. Dede Oetomo asserted that reaching men in order to overcome HIV&AIDS is absolutely necessary. The approach of men in Indonesia and maybe in all parts of the world about HIV and sexuality is based on certain masculinity norms and arises out of a certain belief system: Men should be strong and brave to take risk. Male peer groups would influence guys very early to display dangerous behaviors like smoking, fighting, drinking, or having unsafe sex (with several partners). Prof. Wirawan, HIV activist from Bali, said it is very rare that a man would come voluntarily for HIV testing even if he knew that he was at high risk. Mostly men would be identified as infected persons only when they fall very sick and have to go to hospital.



Photo: Debora Murthy

Attentive participants at the workshop.
At the microphone Andrea Pfeiffer,
EMS-HIV&AIDS Coordinator

The workshop participants had the chance to become more acquainted with the real situation of people with HIV&AIDS in the community through discussion sessions with sex workers, people living with HIV&AIDS, transgender and lay counselors. The awareness and compassion of participants on the HIV&AIDS problem was clearly seen in the documentation that was produced at the end of the workshop.

Theological principals were developed as philosophy of the ministry which said:

- Men and women are equal as they are both the image of God
- Churches are healing communities that should play an active role by guiding, supporting, making peace, advocating, nursing, and healing.

Church leaders agreed to use all of the church resources to deal with and to overcome HIV&AIDS, particularly to develop a strategy to reach men and involve them in their ministry. ☺

Ngeh Beatrice V. Tunyi – an interview on the PCC Women's Fellowship

In March 2008 Elke Elwert and Christel Hansen, mothers of EMS volunteers in Cameroon, were able to meet the National Secretary for the Women's Fellowship in the Presbyterian Church of Cameroon

Photo: Elke Elwert



Ngeh Beatrice
V. Tunyi

elected President and a Secretary, both of them work as volunteers. Furthermore we have 18 trained volunteers, who serve as field staff.

What is the main emphasis of these women groups?

The PCC celebrated in 2007 their 50th anniversary. In 1886 the first missionaries were sent from Basel Mission (today mission 21). In the 1960s female missionaries such as Maria Schlenker, Anna Frank and other committed women from Germany and Switzerland laid the foundation for today's women's fellowship. The women are very dedicated church members. Women do a lot: they visit the people, when a child is born, when someone dies, when family quarrels are emerging. They come and pray, they support the church financially. Actually, the women are the backbone of the churches.

In 1961 the PCC women's fellowship endorsed their constitution. Since then every year educational efforts are on the agenda of the PCC WF: courses in reading and writing, knitting, Bible Studies strengthened the women a lot. More and more women became lay preachers. They know their Bible very well. They are very committed and share a spirit of sharing and giving – not only in financial terms. During all these years the women's fellowship became something like the bedrock of the church.

In July 2005 we started an intentional collaboration with the men's department which found its expression in a joint venture of co-editing the yearly working guidebook for the

May we ask what is your personal and educational background, Beatrice Ngeh?

I was born in 1957 into the family of a Presbyterian evangelist, Daniel Tunyi. My formal education includes graduating from High School with the General Certificate of Education. I finished my studies in Social Sciences at the University of Yaounde (BA in History and Sociology). Further studies allowed me to teach History and Geography at secondary high schools. My interest in theology was nurtured by a four years programme in Biblical Studies.

I am married. As the National Secretary I am now living and working in Bamenda.

How is the women's fellowship in the PCC organized?

Our National Office is located in Bamenda with three staff persons in the administration. Regional secretaries (i.e. Bamenda, Yaounde) try to empower the women groups in their respective region on a regular basis.

Today in all of the 12 Presbyteries we can find strong women fellowship groups: Akwa, Bafut, Tubah, Batibo, Bui, Donga-Mantung, Menchum-Boyo, Meta, Mezam, Ndop, Ngie, Njika and Santa. In each Presbytery there is an



Photo: Ulrich Frank

World Day of Prayer Service on March 6th, 2009 in Buea

Christian Women and Men Fellowship, read all over the country on a weekly basis.

What are the challenges you are facing today?

Women are very active in our church, but only few are in decision making positions. In local churches 75% of the active church members are women; more and more elders are women nowadays.

But our society and church is still impacted by beliefs that discriminate women, for instance believing that wives are their husband's property. Or widows are in a very vulnerable position and need more support.

In light of many women's responsibility to contribute to the family income we are searching for ways how to initiate income generating projects for women. This is a new educational field we are going into – with the help of our partners such as mission 21.

At the moment we are also exploring ways how to collaborate with an NGO in the field of HIV& AIDS prevention. Since women especially in rural areas are often cut

off we can be a link between them and resource means more easily available in urban areas.

I am convinced that education and mutual respect can change a lot and provide a solution to the many challenges we are facing. ☺

In fall 2009 Beatrice Ngeh will come for a visit to Germany to share her expertise and knowledge with people involved in preparing the World Day of Prayer.

World Day of Prayer – Developing the Order of Service

Women in Cameroon have been celebrating the World Day of Prayer since 1965, but then still divided into the Francophone and Anglophone areas. The Presbyterian women in Cameroon used leaflets, an adaption for their local situation.

Creating an ecumenical body

Since the Order of Service for 2010 is coming from Cameroon, the Women's Fellowship of PCC were approached by the New York staff to set up a committee specifically to develop and prepare all the material as an ecumenical body. Thus elections were held in Yaoundé, the administrative capital of Cameroon by representatives of the following churches: The French speaking Evangelique Church, Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Lutherans, Catholics, National Baptist Church, Cameroonian Baptist Convention. Two members from each church had to be elected. The president was recruited from the PCC. This position is not paid but a voluntary office. The Committee embraces seven women: five from Francophone, two from Anglophone Cameroon.

At a later point, when the material was ready for adoption, many leaders of women's fellowships were invited.

Process of writing the Order of Service

In 2006 Helen King from the Headquarters in New York visited Cameroon for four days with a mixed group of women, lay and theologians, the National Committee, to introduce the writing process and to set up the various task forces.

By April 15th, 2008 the Cameroonian national committee was asked to submit their results to New York, both in English and French language since both languages are essential to Cameroonian communication.

The work itself was done by many people and it has not been an easy work.

In order to make this possible various committees were installed to work on tasks such as:

- Children's liturgy
- Background situation such as geography, history, people, cultures, government, economical situation, women, health, participation in decision making, religions and churches.
- Composing and writing the Order of Service.
- Art work
- Songs

In New York they polished the whole draft to be a homogenous piece of work. Then it was printed and sent to the National Committees, one year before the WDP focusing on Cameroon 2010 will take place.

Only then the actual preparation process for regional and local groups and churches start: leaders of the villages will receive it. Since they need the order of service in Pigeon English, this translation has to be provided before local groups can start.

Spiritual search for the Bible texts

This process of selecting the Bible texts was a highly spiritual and participatory process, some very intensive days of meditating, praying and deliberating various biblical dimensions.

Psalm 150

Praise for God's Surpassing Greatness

Praise the Lord!
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty firmament!*
Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
Praise him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!
Praise him with clanging cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!*
Praise the Lord!

*The motto of World Day of Prayer 2010

After the theme „Let Everything That Has Breath Praise God“ had been introduced, everyone was sent to meditate in one's room silently with the task to go for two passages from the Old and the New testament. The next day after breakfast we were asked to write down each passage with a rationale why this one should be chosen. For two days we were doing that, with 30 women. First listening to the passages and the narrations of them – then good reasons why these passages were chosen.

Then, in the plenary session, in joint discussion, as a matter of the whole plenary, passages were scrutinized

and dismissed. It was an intentional effort not to argue for one's own passage nor take it personal if one's passage had been refused but rather develop a spirit of oneness.

At the end three passages remained:

Song of Mary (1), Paul and Silas (2) and Hannah (3). Since passage 1 and 3 were dealt with in the past they had to be dismissed also.

Now we are grateful and inspired and a little bit exhausted about this demanding but very promising process. First of all we women in Cameroon benefitted most for our ecumenical cooperation and the deepening of collaboration in light of the upcoming World Day of Prayer. It is our hope and prayer that the order of service and the material will enrich and inspire many women groups round of the globe: that everything that has breath praises God. ☺



Photo: Ulrich Frank

Cameroonian women presenting the WDP with the Order of Service from Papua New Guinea on March 6th, 2009.

Women – highly committed and strong

International Women's Day in Kumbo

Paul-Bernhard Elwert volunteered in Cameroon within the framework of the EMS Ecumenical Volunteer Programme 2007/08

"Today I'll cook for my wife. She can go out with her girlfriends and celebrate", says a young man to me one afternoon under the corrugated roof of a small palm wine bar.

I was on my way home and had to seek shelter against a sudden heavy shower. Some women are sitting near-by and packing ground nuts in small plastic bags. The modern approach of this man impressed and surprised me. We continue to chat, again and again interrupted by his jocular request to give him money for some palm wine. "I love my wife, I adore her", he says convinced. "I buy her new clothes, give her money for the hairdresser – I do everything to make her feel well. I respect her!" There has certainly been

some progress in recent years with regard to gender equality, I immediately thought. "But if she is not back by 7 o'clock, she can pack her things and go back to her mother!" he concludes dramatically. It would have been too revolutionary ... "Do you always come home at 7?" I asked provocatively. "No, of course not! I am away as long as I want! I am the master of my house! Listen, the important decisions must be made by the husband alone – women cannot do that! Your wife is your first child. You have to supervise her and tell her what to do."

Contradictions which I heard again and again... obviously it will take more time to change people's thinking basically – certainly not only in Cameroon.

In the meantime, the thirsty man asked the women who had been laughing and whispering to each other during his little speech for some palm wine. "Today is World Women's Day! You must donate a bottle of Mimbo to me – that's the custom!" Ah, of course, obviously women have to give men something on World Women's Day! Gradually it stops raining. Respectfully we say goodbye to each other although he is somewhat offended as I give the two bottles of palm wine I had bought to the laughing women and not to him.

Photo: Paul-Bernhard Elwert



Women taking open initiative for information and education.



Photo: Paul-Bernhard Elwert

Even with high heels things get into motion.

In the morning, before the rain, I had gone to the big fairground where several hundred women from Kumbo and the surroundings had gathered with their groups. They participated in the ceremonial parade. One group after the other marched proudly along the tribune with important people. Against the background of music of the marches the enthusiastic voice of the commentator boomed out of the overdriven loudspeakers: "Star Crusaders Women's Group! In their new uniforms! Look at these pretty women! – Solidarity with HIV&AIDS infected and persons concerned – that's their motto! And the next is ..."

I discover women's groups from all imaginable areas of life and needs: political, social and church groups, choirs, cooking groups, teachers, market-women, micro-credit associations etc. Many women belong to several groups. The participation in a women's group meeting is probably more tolerated by husbands than private leisure time activities. The respective tasks, aims, messages and claims

can be read on big signposts. Awareness training is offered, more gender justice and better health care are claimed for and furthermore the women raise their voices against child labour, corruption and unequal chances for education.

Women take a stand, they take initiative in spite of difficult surrounding conditions and problems often seeming hopeless. Being united in the groups they impressively display their will, their commitment and their strength; these must not be underestimated in the struggle against social grievances and on the way towards more gender justice. ☺

Cameroon in Stuttgart

Establishing a Cameroonian congregation

Jeanne Mbah is a pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon and presently working as ecumenical co-worker in Stuttgart, Germany.



Photo: Bärbel Wuthe

New mother Jeanne Mbah with little Precious

There are many reasons for people in the diaspora to feel home sick. They miss the family fellowship and love, friends and the social and community life they used to live while back home. They also miss the traditional meals their mothers or grandmothers used to prepare for them and the palm wine their fathers brought from the palm bush.

The Cameroonian Presbyterian Christians in and around Stuttgart, Germany missed in addition the lively worship services.

We, the PCC Christians thought it would be wonderful to have a congregation of our own where we can worship and sing happily just as we did at home.

This idea was discussed by some with Rev Jeanne Mbah. It was a wonderful idea but making it practical was the problem. It was during the funeral service of a two months old baby that the announcement was made about beginning a PCC congregation in Stuttgart. One could see smiles on the faces of the mourners as they nodded their heads in approval.

By the grace of God, the information spread far and wide and on Easter Sunday, March 23rd 2008 the first service was held. Though the weather was so cold with snow, the Presbyterians braved it and laid the foundation for the PCC Stuttgart congregation. There were 18 Christians on that Easter Sunday – adults and children inclusive.

The services from that Easter Sunday till June 2008 were being held in the living room of the Pastor's apartment. Thanks to God it was big enough to contain more than 25 people.

In June 2008 we started worshipping in the church building of the Rosenbergskirche, an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation being linked by a partnership with the PCC.

This young congregation together with the Basel Mission German Branch organised and celebrated the PCC day in November. The day began with a church service with about 150 worshippers i.e. numerous Cameroonians, former missionaries, members of some partnership districts and other interested Germans. The program continued after service with lunch made up of mostly Cameroonian dishes and some German delicacies.

In the afternoon we had activities such as: singing of the PCC anthem, reading of the moderator's message, drama by members of PCC Stuttgart, singing, and the reciting of memory verses by Sunday school children. It was an interesting day that made the people have a taste of PCC day celebrations in Cameroon.

The young congregation is growing numerically by the grace of God. Starting with 18 Christians the congregation has today (after eight months) 45 Christians. Our future is bright. ☺

Photo: Jeanne Mbah



Enthusiasm is in the air:
Worship service in
Stuttgart.

“A taste of home”

Jeanne Mbah, you are a pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. How did you come to Germany?

My church in Cameroon has sent me to Germany. I had been twice to Europe (Netherlands) before. I feel God has sent me to Germany. It is, however, none too pleasant to say good-bye to one's family for a longer period of time.

My husband agreed with this decision. He accepts that I have a task of my own here. One guideline for my work here is: “You will be my witnesses”.

Feelings of strangeness and also loneliness overshadowed the beginning of my time in Stuttgart.

I missed my husband and family very much and also the liveliness of Church services in Cameroon. Problems with the language were an enormous barrier. In my language course I learned to understand and speak German more and more. Colleagues at DIMOE and EMS looked after me and I found friends in the Cameroonian congregation. Cameroonian food and spices help to get “a taste of home”. On the other hand I now highly appreciate “Spätzle” (typical Swabian food) and salad.

How did you experience the birth of your daughter in a foreign country?

In Cameroon women must bring along themselves all that is necessary for the birth. In German hospitals everything is at one's disposal. It was a great joy that my husband could be with me during the birth. I wish and hope this will soon be possible in Cameroon too.

What vision do you have for your stay in Germany?

It is wonderful to be able to present so much of my own country here in Germany. Via songs and texts it is possible to make Cameroon closer and tangible for the people living here. It is enriching to exchange greetings and cultivate contacts between partnership groups and to hear about and share experiences in faith.

I hope that the Cameroonian congregation in Stuttgart will continue to grow and the biblical saying “You will be my witnesses” will come true. ☺

Jeanne Mbah in conversation with Bärbel Wuthe, staff member at EMS Women and Gender Desk, Stuttgart.

Dora-Otema Quainoo – an expert on girls' education in Ghana

Dear Dora!

We have only known each other for a few months and you are often in my thoughts.

In November 2008 I was a guest at the annual conference of Presbyterian women theologians of the PCG (Presbyterian Church of Ghana) in Abokobi. We both took part in discussions on urgent social problems concerning girls and women, these being the kind of problems we are both confronted with in our work with deprived people in our respective societies, Ghana and Germany.

During my four months in Ghana I saw the suffering of many young girls and women; I learned how difficult life can be when family structures don't work anymore as they used to. This is where your ministry is: you are a pastor living in the midst of a group of girls and young women who have often experienced violence, who are mostly very poor and have tried to make a living in very ignoble conditions, for example as porters in one of Accra's big markets.

You also work as a part-time pastor of a small congregation in Nsawam. My question arose very soon: how can one single person manage all of this work? Where does the energy come from? Your answer was humble and seemed to be very clear for you: It's God's work and God provides for all our needs.

In December 2008 I was able to visit you and to learn a little about your life in Nsawam, a small town about 30 km north of Accra. You shared with us the history of the project and also told us about yourself and how God has guided you in your life's journey: You went to Germany when you were 20 years old with your husband, not knowing anyone and not knowing the language. Living in Germany as a black person was not easy, even in an "open-minded" city like Hamburg. You gave birth to two sons; when they went to kindergarten and to school, you got to know the Germans, their society and their mentality. You found how to be part of this society in doing some volunteer work and later you also found paid jobs.

Dora, you must have been a tough person already at that time when you had to support yourself and your sons with different jobs! And I am sure that you learned how to fight and how to pursue a goal, not to give up but to wait and to pray! You looked after other foreign women because you knew their needs. You gave advice regarding their basic needs in a foreign country, how to get along in the German school system and if necessary you interpreted for them or you made contacts to legal advisers. At that time you worked as a student counselor for an agency which organized schooling for handicapped and deprived youths. Thus during difficult life stages and in different functions you have acquired a lot of abilities and expertise!

Then came 1990 and "the call"! It is not easy to understand what you mean by "call". Is it that you felt called by God to go back to Ghana? Ghana – on the one hand your home country, and on the other hand it had become a strange land for you after more than 20 years! But you knew that there was a great deal of work out there! And that's what you felt called to do. For many years you traveled back and forth between your two "homes": in Germany you explained your ideas and tried to raise money, while in Ghana you tried to find partners and a place where your ideas could be realised.

The "Rural Women's Skill and Development Foundation" was registered as a Charity in 1994 and provides professional training in either batik or tailoring or catering services for some 80 girls:

- the first year at school to acquire basic skills and knowledge, accompanied by practical work on the compound (cooking, washing, farming),

- in the second year every girl has a work placement in their professional areas, e.g. in a hotel or workshop
- the third year brings them back to school to fill the gaps that have become evident during the practical work period. There are also additional courses in health education, human rights issues, economics or cultural values and child education.

During the second year, the headmistress travels around to visit and to advise each girl at her work placement.

"Your girls" – You have a share in their lives, you eat together and if they have financial problems, you are as affected as much as the girls and all the other employees. And I will never ever forget the story you told us about one of your girls, Paulina (page 24).

Most of the parents of your girls are not able to pay school fees, which is why you are dependent on private donations or on money given by organizations. But as such money comes irregularly, it is always worrying to wait and wonder what comes next – you really need God's help and guidance to survive economically.

This vision will continue to come true: You got a donation of land and you have already started to build new classrooms, dormitories and administration buildings. In December 2008 together we harvested red peppers on this land. The red peppers have become for me a symbol for your work and future: the red color is a very powerful color and the fruit itself doesn't show its power immediately, but when we add it to our food, it develops its spicy and healthy power!

May God continue to bless you and all your co-workers as well as the future of all the girls at Nsawam!

Kindest regards, Christina

Dora-Otema Quainoo was born in 1957 and has been a pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana since 2007.



Young participants in the education project in Nsawam with its initiator Dora-Otema Quainoo (right)

“My Sister’s Place”

Church women declare their solidarity with prostitutes

Dorothea Schweizer lived and worked in Korea for 12 years. She visited the PROK Women’s Fellowship on the occasion of their 80th anniversary in September 2008 on behalf of EMS Women and Gender Desk .



Logo of the 80th anniversary of the PROK Women’s Fellowship

The women’s fellowship of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) is for a prime example for the women’s will to arise. With all their commitment these women stand for the restoration of violated human dignity, for liberation from degrading life circumstances, from unjust structures and traditions. They stand for participation in education and the possibilities of being successful in life. They speak on behalf of those who are marginalised and have no voice.

During the dangerous times of the military dictatorship in the 1970s and 1980s, the church women often were those who refused to be silenced or who ignored the ban on freedom of assembly, even if this involved imprisonment

or torture under police interrogation. Today, they still do not shrink back from unpopular projects.

At the same time, they are inspired by the vision to work for reconciliation and healing in their own society and to spread awareness for reunification on the Korean Peninsula. These church women were and are those who succeeded in organising encounters with Christian women from North Korea, so fostering closer relations at a personal level.

During my 12 years service in Korea, I experienced these women as outstandingly courageous, strong in their faith and in prayer, full of ideas and strength to implement them in a male dominated church and society. They are self-confident, but also selfless when it comes to standing up for the weak in society and for their rights and concerns.

One of the very unpopular projects is “Durebang”, in English: “My Sister’s Place”.

It is situated near a US military camp.

Everywhere in the world where there are big military camps, there is also prostitution, legal or illegal. The fact is that both governments have signed treaties legalising the lawfulness of this trade. Until a few years ago, Korean women were hired to work in the camps. Today, this “trade” is international as many others. Mainly Filipino women from

very poor homes work in the camps. This is also “legally” arranged. However, the precondition for the women coming to Korea are quite different. They have a contract in their hands calling them “entertainers”. If they fail to meet the demands of the club holder because they do not sell enough drinks, for example, they are forced into prostitution, i.e. they are referred to the US camps. They have to accept the job, otherwise they are put on the streets, unprotected and without any rights, incapable of earning their keep, let alone keeping their extremely poor families financially above water. Their lives in the US camps are often a never-ending tragedy. They are threatened and mistreated, their pimps do not pay their wages for months. If they fall pregnant, their “lovers” simply leave them. Although they protect themselves and regularly have preventive medical checkups, many women suffer from severe health problems. They are avoided, despised and marginalised by society in Korea as well as at home

Against this background how important and necessary is a place such as “My Sister’s Place”! My Sister’s Place was established 20 years ago and has developed into a qualified counselling centre. Head of the centre, Rev Yoo Yong-Nim and her four colleagues (all of them have completed their studies in social sciences and have taken professional advanced training courses) have the following aims:

- professional and pastoral accompaniment in one-on-one and group discussions
- professional help in traumatic experiences
- building women’s self-esteem, encouragement for their dignity and the right to stand up for themselves
- training courses
- legal counselling and support at court
- medical counselling and financial support
- care for elderly prostitutes
- influence on legislation
- raising awareness among the population and in churches to support this work financially and spiritually

Rev Yoo and her colleagues can neither count on understanding nor recognition from the public. They need to invest a lot of strength, especially mental and spiritual strength.

The Women’s Fellowship of the PROK stands behind this centre and its co-workers, supporting them with personal encouragement, practical aid and regular intercession. The centre is an example for Christian, sisterly advocacy. ☺

“Just great”

A moving encounter with a youth choir from South Africa

Katharina Berr, schoolgirl and daughter of one of the guest families hosting the choir members within the framework of a direct partnership between the church district Backnang, Evangelical Church in Württemberg and District II of the Moravian Church in Cape Town.

In July 2008 I had a wonderful experience: two girls from South Africa, Odette and Althea, came to Germany with the youth choir from Cape Town and stayed at our home for one weekend.

The whole choir, consisting of 40 young people and their leaders, arrived on Thursday evening at Murrhardt. We experienced their wonderful singing that very evening: together with the Murrhardt Youth Choir, they gave a lively mini-concert. It was fantastic. Afterwards we took Odette and Althea, 16 and 17, home. We became friends immediately.

After a sightseeing tour in Stuttgart the next day, the time came for the choir's big concert in the church. Everybody was very excited: the choir waiting in the wings, the church overcrowded – everybody could hardly wait it. After a few words of greetings the concert finally began.



Katharina and Odette became friends at once.

From the very beginning the audience were riveted to their seats as the choir sang - it was so wonderful and moving. But when the choir began to dance, everybody joined in. It was such a marvellous concert and the time flew by.

Afterwards, everybody turned up at our house for the “After-Show-Party”. It was just great!

Next morning it was very hard to say good-bye. Will we ever see them all again?

For the last time they sang their hit song:

**HAMBA NATHI COME,
WALK WITH US,
THE JOURNEY IS LONG.**

... and then everybody entered the bus. It was so sad!

I will never forget this wonderful time! I am still in touch with Odette and hope to see her, and all the others, sometime in the future! ☺



South African singers waiting in the wings.

Learning from “children with special educational needs”

Luise Vollprecht was a volunteer within the frame of the EMS Ecumenical Youth Volunteers Programme 2007/2008. “Elim Home” is an institution of the Moravian Church of South Africa (MCSA) for children and adolescents with multiple disabilities. The home is situated about 200 km from Cape Town. Home residents come from a catchment area of about 700 km.



Luise with two of “her” Elim-Home residents during Sports Day

Photo: privat

After having passed my school leaving examinations in spring 2007 I spent six months in South Africa as part of the EMS Ecumenical Volunteers Programme.

I came to Elim, a small mission station of the Moravian Church, which is situated in quite a remote area right in the very south of South Africa. I volunteered at the Mispah School for LSEN (Learners with Special Education Needs), a school particularly for children with learning disabilities.

This period of time was one of the most intensive experiences in all my life hitherto. I had to readjust myself completely. Not only did I have positive experiences, but also rather distressing ones, concerning, for example, education and hygiene, which demanded a great deal from me.

Standards and values of the Elim community took some time getting used to.

But there were also many positive experiences which helped me a lot. The most important encouragement came from the children of Mispah School whom I grew very fond of during the six months of my stay. I got to know them in different activities, one of which was sport which plays an important role at the school and for many pupils is the highlight of everyday school life. During the big regional sports day once a year children compete with other LSEN-schools. Already months ahead they look forward excitedly to the event.

During my own activities such as the performance of a nativity play I began to see the children in a different way, no longer as children with disabilities, but as equals with whom you can have a great deal of fun and who are direct and natural. This was very important and encouraging for me, especially in Elim. Again and again the children showed me what really counts in life, i.e. friendship, honesty and cheerfulness even in difficult situations. I am very grateful to them for this.

Without being able to or even wanting to forget the distressing part of my experience, I still learned a great deal during the period of time I spent at Elim. And who can stay in South Africa without learning to love this amazing country? ☺

All must contribute that our country Ghana will prosper

My name is Thelma Arkin-Torke. I am 16 years old. I come from cape coast in the central region of Ghana . I was born in Prestea, a mining town in the western region of Ghana. I attend Wesley Grammer Senior High School in Accra, the capital city of Ghana.

I wish to be a journalist in the future. Jollof rice with chicken is my favourite food. I like reading and love playing volleyball.

I am currently the only child of my parents, Rev. Isaac J. Arkin-Torke, an ordained minister of the Methodist Church Ghana and Gladys Arkin-Torke, a hairdresser.

These are my expectations for the year 2009:

We need to thank God for ushering us into another beautiful year. The future of a nation depends on the people in it.

Ghana is a country in West Africa. It is described as the gateway to West Africa. On January 7th, 2009 President John Agyekum Kufour handed over his office to the new elected President John Evans Atta-Mills.

My expectations are that the government will improve the living conditions of the people by providing them with good health and educational facilities, food, water and shelter. It must also provide sound and peaceful environment for the people.

The citizens of the country must respect the government and laws.

Parents must play their parental roles well. They must give guidance and direction to their children and pay their school fees. Children on their part must learn hard and respect and obey their parents for this is written in the Bible.

It is also important that children join good company. If children refrain from bad habits, it is going to help them a lot. Society can count on them any time as the future leaders.

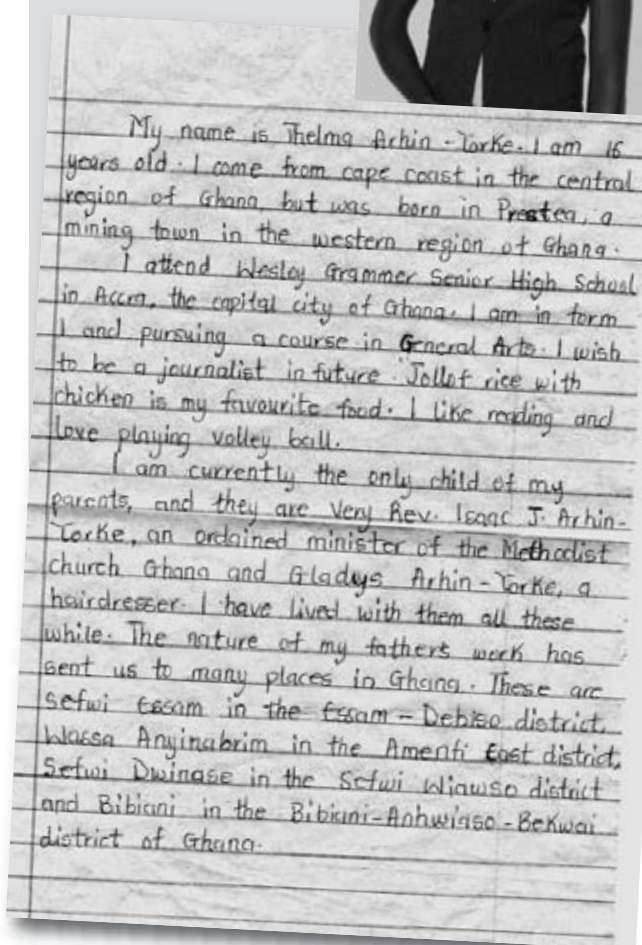
Religious leaders must educate their members on good morals. Members must heed to advices given to them.

Traders must exercise patience so that they do not drive their customers away. They must not sell expired products because this causes illness. They must not cheat on

Thelma's ideas and desires for 2009



Photo: Gabi Bürkle



their customers by adding additional prices to the normal ones.

Conclusion: The country is going to develop if what is expected of us is done and done very well. ☺

Thelma Arkin-Torke, schoolgirl living for some time at the campus of Trinity Theological Seminary.

God is near

Daily life and faith in Ghana

Gabriele Mayer, EMS Women and Gender Desk, had a teaching assignment at Trinity Theological Seminary in Ghana from August 2008 to January 2009.



Esther M. Ackah, a student at TTS and an impressive practical theologian

Living in Ghana for six months and teaching at the Trinity Theological Seminary made it possible for me to have a share in the everyday life of a Ghanaian campus-community and experience more of their religious life.

I lived at the “Lady’s Hall”, the dormitory for female students and could witness at all times of the day what was going on due to the various background sounds. Already early in the morning at 4 o’clock small groups gather to pray together. Singing and daily sounds of sweeping mixed from 5 o’clock onwards.

At 6.25 drums are beaten in exact rhythm and sounds. Esther, a registered nurse and midwife, now in the last year of her theological training, is a specialist in drumming.

Not only she teaches younger students the special drumming techniques, but also awakens appreciation and understanding for how drums have been nobly telling the history of God and his people over centuries.

And now these drums persistently called everybody to the morning prayer every school day at Trinity Theological Seminary.

At 6.30 in the morning students sat closely together in their benches. Even if the night had been short, at 6.35 they stood together and fervently sang “their” hymns impressively loud. They are indeed their hymns – they know most of them by heart and are so familiar with them that the preacher only needs to hum a few notes and they all join in, first in unison but quickly developing into harmony. This powerful singing was the beginning of “praying”, talking with God, somewhat unusual for European ears. Simultaneously everybody brings forward their concerns. The responsible person calls out catchwords such as “presidential election” or “upcoming exams” and the impressive sound level shows how seriously this call for prayer is taken.

Shortly before the upcoming presidential elections tension in the media distinctly increased, students and colleagues of quite differing political opinions said: no, there will be no violence, we pray for peaceful elections. After the

violent riots in Zimbabwe and Kenya one could feel how worried everybody was – will there be violence in Ghana as well? In every service, during the synods, at all morning and evening prayers from August to January, people asked God to ensure a peaceful transition to democracy.

Not only topics such as the political future of the country, but also situations of everyday life are unthinkable without a short or longer prayer.

When somebody visits, even a glass of water is preceded by a prayer. At the beginning and end of the lecture, at the beginning of a meeting – even with just five colleagues meeting in the office of the president, people pray. When starting a longer journey by car, before the driver turns the key, one person will pray.

Esther, student and nurse of the Campus-community, reflects much of this unquestionable faith lived in everyday life.

One evening she was involved in a trotro accident (trotro is a Ghanaian vehicle, a kind of shared taxi). One day later she was back in her room, her face swollen, covered with bruises, in pain and extremely worried about her teeth. When talking about the accident, her main thoughts were her thankfulness that she could climb out of the trotro all alone and the anticipation that God would rescue her teeth. As a nurse she realised the risks and as the breadwinner of her family she was aware of her small purse. For people not knowing how to pay the next bill, living in a country without a social network of benefits, God's assistance must be precisely reckoned with – in a double sense.

It was also obvious that Esther's trust in God's help did not make her passive: simultaneously it made her capable of courageous action. Immediately at the scene of the accident she pushed her incisor back into its place – knowing, hoping, praying that the nerves, possibly still intact, would allow it to grow together again. Life in a privileged country allows to focus on the medical chances and hospitalisation. Esther's situation and traditional faith gave her a different attitude to life and religion.

Over and over again I encountered the attitude in which God's help in daily life was expected and counted on. One day, for example, guests were expected and more food was needed. A chicken given to Esther during her way back home was interpreted as help from God.

She and many Ghanaian sisters and brothers act being convinced that their own giving will bring about a blessing. This becomes visible in the enormous amount donated in the Sunday collections, but also in overwhelming hospitality. ☺



Every morning at 6.30 drumbeat calls to the morning devotion – and almost everybody comes.

Photos: EMS Gabriele Mayer

The search for Paulina – an extraordinary Christmas story

Let the same mind be in you that was
in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself and became obedient to
the point of death – even death on a cross.

Philippians 2: 5-8

Listening to the story of Paulina, 16 was an eye-opener to newly understand the incarnation of God. From a devotion at Trinity Theological Seminary shortly before Christmas 2008 in Legon/Ghana:

Paulina* lived far North with her parents and she was about 14 years old when she de-

cided to run away from home.

She had been selling her mother's groundnuts and gradually had put some money aside. She had heard that she could live by herself and make a living as a porter at one of the big markets at Accra. There are people who organize big trucks to transport these girls to Accra. They take quite some money for their services, of course, and we have to name their "business": it is part of the child trafficking business. As for Paulina, there were presumably some wrong promises made, but she believed and decided to join them.

So, one day, about two or three years ago, Paulina entered the truck – full of hope to head towards a better life; just like some other 50 girls with her. Amazingly, a brother of hers came around in the very moment when the truck was about to leave. Although Paulina was looking aside, he recognized her. He made an emergency call to his other sister, Sarah, who at that time was a trainee at the vocational center at Nsawam.

Sarah got extremely worried when she heard about her sister; she knew similar stories from her class mates; so she knew also what was probably ahead of her little sister: A life not worth to be called life – it is a mere existing, an extremely dangerous situation. Hard work, carry heavy loads, making small money only, with hardly a place to stay. Plus: being by herself at age 14, no family support around, depending on a "community" of peers who are all together as vulnerable as herself. The girls are exposed to all kinds of people and among them are many who exploit them at different levels: there is economical exploitation, emotional distress and a lot of forced sexual services and violence.

Sarah talked to the project manager who is the "mother" of the girls. What should they do? How to find this girl? Somewhere in Accra, somewhere at Central market or even somewhere else at a large market place? But they tried to do the impossible because they desperately wanted to save Paulina.

Sarah and mummy developed a plan: Sarah would get an old tin-plate and then go to Accra Central market to become one of the hundreds of porters there. She would dress like them, share their place, adapt to their life and rules and move around in order to find her little sister.

The mother would have liked to go herself, but she was not able to perform a porters life. She looked too old, she didn't know how to behave like these Northern girls and thirdly she didn't speak their language.

There was no other way: if they wanted to save Paulina from this dangers, Sarah would have to go.

And Sarah went. She left her safe place at the school and all the privileges there. She had to undergo all the difficulties and risks of a porter's life. She took on – if I could say – a porter's identity, shared their life, their work, their problems. All that in order to find and save Paulina! A little cell-phone was the life-line to connect her to her mother in Nsawam. The latter had sleepless nights because she could not simply call her daughter as the cell phone was only to be used secretly at night or in a case of emergency.

Sarah tried to do as much as she could. Her calls home were often desperate calls, she was crying at the phone wanted to get home. But she didn't give up. After one endless month, Paulina was not found. Sarah and her mother decided that they should search for her at another big market. Eventually, after 2.5 months they found her at Kumasi and took her to Nsawam to the safe place. When Sarah was brought there, she was in a very bad shape: she was slim like a stick and didn't talk at all about her experiences. With a lot of love and perseverance she could slowly open up and the process of healing from traumatic experiences could start.

We met Paulina two weeks ago in Nsawam. She is actually trained in batik and preparing for an own professional business in that field. Ahead of her lies a different future. ☺

Christina Holder, Gabriele Mayer

* name modified

News from EMS-Women's Network

Liaison women report from the churches in EMS-Fellowship

LEBANON

Wadia Badr, liaison woman in Lebanon and president of "Women's Helping Hand Society" at National Evangelical Church of Beirut NEC, reports:

After three and a half years of turmoil and insecurity in Lebanon, the second half of 2008 brought us a political agreement that helped significantly in the efforts towards reconciliation between the government and the opposition. A national unity government has been formed and relative calm prevailed.

After being in a security zone in downtown Beirut for eighteen months, the NECB church premises were freed of all its previous troubles, and activities resumed normally.

The "Helping Hand Society," which is the women's group in our Church, was quite engaged in all the activities related to the World Day of Prayer programs (English and Arabic) in March. Two of the women from our Society are members of the WDP Steering Committee. Wadi'a Badr, the president of the Society, was the main speaker at the Arabic service for the WDP that took place in a Greek Orthodox Church. She spoke on the theme "God's wisdom gives new understanding."

In the month of November, and in conjunction with the feast of Thanksgiving, the Society prepared and distributed food parcels to 54 needy families. This has become an annual tradition for us wherein we thank the Lord for His many blessings upon us. This was followed by the annual fund raising Cake Sale that the Society holds during the last week of the Advent season. It was exceptionally successful this year. The proceeds were distributed to many needy families and individuals.

Christmas Eve service held at the church building in downtown Beirut that brought together several Protestant congregations in and around Beirut. On Christmas day the church was full, so also on New Year's Day, whereby we started the year with a communion service. Many church members living or working abroad returned for the holidays to celebrate with their families. Thus there were several baptisms and weddings during the season, and church life was quite vibrant. Indeed the church premises were flooded with colored Christmas lights, and a giant Christmas tree with a beautiful crèche scene graced the sanctuary.

This coming year the Society aims to help the NECB in fund raising for the Old People's Home project in Beirut that is in the process of construction.

Finally, as we continue to pray for the people of Gaza in the hope that God will alleviate their suffering, we ask you also to keep that area and the whole Middle East region in your thoughts and prayers, so that peace may at long last become the normal pattern of life in this part of the world. ☺

INDIA



The new EMS liaison woman from India, Chopra Synthia Sobha Rani, General Secretary, Church of South India Women's Fellowship, introduces herself:

I am Chopra Synthia Sobha Rani born on 1st March 1964. I am 4th in the family. I hail from Eluru, Krishna-Godavari District, Andhra

Pradesh. I belong to Krishna-Godavari Diocese of Church of South India.

In C.S.I. English Medium school, Eluru I studied Bachelor in Science and Bachelor in Education and worked 23 years as the school Assistant. I did my theological education, i.e. Bachelor in Christian Studies from Serampore University.

I am doing my Master in Theology (external studies) through TAFTEE, affiliated to Wales University. As a Sunday school teacher I worked in my Parish, C.S.I. Christ Church, Eluru and as Youth Coordinator for Krishna-Godavari. I am the member of Christian Education Department of Church of South India Synod and I visited Oberhessen Diocese in Germany as a youth delegate in 1995 for an exchange programme for youth. ☺



Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar has been president of the Women's Fellowship of the Church of South India (CSI) since 2008.

Before that she had been vice-president of the CSI women's fellowship for five years. Working as a pastor

since 1976 she is presently the Presbyterian-in-charge of St. John's Church, Bangalore, which has a membership of 2,200 families. She is also responsible for several projects undertaken by women in the Karnataka Central Diocese (KCD), Church of South India (CSI). She is wife of Bishop Rt. Rev. S. Vasanthakumar of the KCD.

Rev. Nirmala is the second woman priest in the Karnataka CSI diocese, and the first in South India.

She has worked as Executive Secretary for the Women's Desk of National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) for five years. In fact, it was very challenging to co-ordinate the women's ministry of the 29 member churches of the NCCI. She was given the opportunity to organize the EMS Women's Conference at Bangalore on behalf of CSI Women's Fellowship in 1998.

She served the CSI Women's Fellowship as the Vice President for two terms from 1999-2004, and in 2008, assumed the mantle of President of the CSI Women's Fellowship. ☺

We are looking forward to further cooperation with Chopra Synthia Sobha Rani and Nirmala Vasanthakumar and wish both God's blessings for their responsibilities.

Gabriele Mayer

INDONESIA

Krise Rotti-Gosal from Minahasa Church (GMIM), our liaison woman in Indonesia writes:

Empower women to political action

"Self-Stigmatization" is a phenomenon typical for the majority of Minahasa-women, above all those living far away from the cities in rural areas or those living at the margins of the cities without education. They feel stupid and they do not see laws and their own rights. That's why they keep silent.

The choice of keeping silent or staying in the position of a victim of violence is for some of them a sort of "pseudo-proudness" because they think to be loyal to the Bible. The reason for this feeling is the fundamentalist exegesis of Bible passages on the oppression of women, which allegedly teach that women must be loyal in suffering.

To overcome this attitude it is not sufficient to "read the Bible with new eyes". What is also needed is a direct transformation into daily life against the background of social reality.

The Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) has challenged the women's fellowship of GMIM to become active in the

field of education and information.

Thus in 2008 the women discussed in detail a "Critical Examination of the Draft Bill Against Pornography". GMIM-women decided to reject this draft bill because of religious tendencies and a marginalisation of minorities as well as an underestimation of the diversity of cultures.

Thus 204.000 women recommend:

1. Empowerment of women, rejection of any regulations oppressing women
2. Awareness raising with regard to women's rights
3. Public declaration of the rejection and direct information of function owners
4. Filing an objection at the Constitutional Court

The struggle of women aims at any form of violence so that all people, men and women, become agents for justice and peace. ☺

GERMANY

Rev. Andrea Wöllenstein has been delegated since 2008 from Protestant Church in Kurhesse (EKKW) to EMS Advisory Board:

The Evangelical Women's Fellowship within the unit "Adult Education" of the Protestant Church in Kurhesse (EKKW) invites to the "Landesfrauentag", a regional women's meeting at Fulda on August 29th, 2009.

The "Landesfrauentag" offers opportunity to deal with the topic of "Strong Women" in all kinds of aspects. Lectures, workshops and creative offers approximate the topic from different angles with an own focus each, f.e.:

Strong Women

..... **know their history**

..... **move the church**

..... **draw from their sources** ☺

NEWS from the EMS-Secretariat

Presently the international EMS Fellowship deals more intensively with "Mission and Migration". During the period of the annual project 2008/09 WOMEN LIVING IN A STRANGE LAND new links were established between migration centres in Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Lebanon and Germany.

During the Day of Encounter in Stuttgart in April 2009 people from different countries introduced their experiences with migration under the motto "At home in two worlds". For further information please contact: wuthe@ems-online.org. ☺

The Liaison Women of the International Women's Network



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PHOTO ON FRONT PAGE: by Ulrich Frank, Cameroonian woman from Dschang

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NOW HE WAS TEACHING IN ONE OF THE SYNAGOGUES ON THE SABBATH. AND JUST THEN THERE APPEARED A WOMAN WITH A SPIRIT THAT HAD CRIPPLED HER FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS. SHE WAS BENT OVER AND WAS QUITE UNABLE TO STAND UP STRAIGHT. WHEN JESUS SAW HER, HE CALLED HER OVER AND SAID, "WOMAN, YOU ARE SET FREE FROM YOUR AILMENT." WHEN HE LAID HIS HANDS ON HER, IMMEDIATELY SHE STOOD UP STRAIGHT AND BEGAN PRAISING GOD.

LUKE 13: 10-14