

Dokumentation

Nr. 3

HEALING AND OUR TRADITIONS

International Women's Consultation Neuendettelsau/Germany May 21st to May 28th, 2004

> Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland

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Preface

"God created both men and women according to God's image". These are very old words from the book of Genesis 1:27. Yet women all over the world have been struggling for them to become reality for a very long time and still are.

Women's lives are still far removed from equity, not to speak of real equality. In many countries around the globe women are still denied the right to own property. All too often they are treated like commodities – trafficking of women from Asia and Eastern Europe is a flourishing business. And paying a dowry is still very common in many countries in the South: a custom implying that women are at their husband's disposal. "If my husband hadn't refused to pay the dowry, I would have been obliged to carry the whole work-load myself", says Lakele Tetac, a pastor from Papua-New-Guinea. "But he is a very understanding man and wanted to get away from some of the customs."

24 women from 16 countries met at the Division for World Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria (MWB) in Neuendettelsau from 21st to 28th May 2004 to discuss the theme "Tradition – When does it aid and when does it prevent healing?" They focussed on churches and church hierarchies, reflected on tradition and religion, took a close look at their own societies and role patterns, faced up to the challenge of HIV/AIDS and women's vulnerability as well as women's responsibility and – last but not least – worked on ways to empower women.

They shared their experiences and knowledge in the light of their different contexts, always aware of the challenge to find a common language and build bridges of understanding. The consultation proved to be an unprecedented experience of working closely together in a completely natural way, bridging differences and enriching each other with the gifts and talents, the power and strength of these 24 individuals who had temporarily been united.

This documentation aims at giving an impression of this spirit of sharing and cooperation, a spirit that expressed itself not only in the discussion and working sessions, but even more in the times of singing and praying together, joining in dance meditation and drama, by listening carefully to each other, taking part or simply by spending time together. All this is difficult to document, but hopefully will be reflected in the morning and evening prayers, the quotations and pictures, the poems and songs.

> "I am the flower and the beauty of my family My father is very proud when he walks beside me My brothers and sisters are also proud of me My mother is even more proud than all of them But she remains quiet because she is a women"

Who am I? I am a Woman – this statement, embedded in a poem written by one of the participants, is both a simple and a powerful example. It gives an idea of the complexity of women's lives, their richness, their vulnerability, their helplessness, their silence, their compliance. The latter became clear in another powerful statement illustrating the inner struggle women are facing: "It's a challenge for me to work against men and painful tradition." Sad to say, but these are the two sides of one and the same coin.

Isn't it women who take razors and circumcise their young girls and daughters? The consultation made it clear that women themselves are also challenged to promote change and leave behind harmful traditions - and there are many different aspects to this challenge. We all get used to traditions, as most of them have been there from the day we were born. Yet in the course of time we have to realize that some of these traditions lost their meaning a long time ago and that many of them merely conserve societal structures - not for the betterment and the growth of many but only for the few. This means that changes can only succeed with the help and support of fathers, husbands, brothers and uncles, colleagues, elders, bosses with the help of men.

Men are needed who are willing to question traditions and practices that, all too often, are for their own benefit and favour their life-styles and role patterns. And women are needed who are no longer willing to keep silent and lead a life full of restrictions and limitations, but who will take up the struggle. Conviction and courage are needed for both men and women to promote change within contexts in which customs and traditions are still very much alive and to face the risk of destroying the positive aspects of traditions too, such as the social importance of the extended family. In Papua New Guinea, for example, changes in or even loss of traditions have led to social disintegration, with all its negative consequences. "Violence against women", says Lakele Tetac – and you can feel the great challenge she is facing in her country, "violence against women is a bad disease".

Sharing – sharing of experiences and community, of competence and knowledge, of hopes and fears, sorrows and strengths, leaving differences behind – was the strong point of the consultation and demonstrated the power of cooperation. A cooperation that became reality due to the commitment of the preparation committee of the EMW Commission on "Women in Mission", the active, constructive and rich participation of all those who attended, and the financial and staff support given by the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions (EMW) and its member organisations. We are also grateful for the support of the Church Development Service (EED) which showed great interest in the consultation and supported it by delegating guest speaker Dr. Rose Wu, Director of the Hong Kong Christian Institute. A word of special thanks goes to Dr. Sonja Weinreich of the German Institute for Medical Mission (DIFÄM), who is an HIV/AIDS expert and whose presentation made a great impact.

Last but not least, it is definitely worth mentioning that the cooperation went beyond boundaries. This consultation was the first joint endeavour of mission societies in Germany (MWB, EMS, UEM, ELM, BMW, NMZ, Gossner Mission) under the auspices of EMW to work together with our partner churches in other countries to deal with issues which are vital to all of us. We not only aim to maintain, but also to develop and to extend this cooperation – to promote women's and gender issues, to speak out and not to remain quiet.

On behalf of the EMW-Commission "Women in Mission":

Nina Dürr (Chairwoman until December 2004) *Alice Strittmatter, Karin Bräuer* (Editorial Team)

"Healing and our Traditions"

Tradition – When does it aid and when prevent healing?

International Women's Consultation in Neuendettelsau/Germany, May 21st to May 28th, 2004

Friday, May 21st, 2004

"Going away and stepping in"

Ulrike Hansen (MWB)

On behalf of the preparation team of the International Women's Consultation I welcome you here in Neuendettelsau at the Division for World Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria (MWB). Especially I would like to welcome all of you who have come from abroad and who have had a long journey to get here. All of you represent different countries and different churches.

When you looked at your flight schedule you saw the two words "Departure" and "Arrival".

Departure means: Going away, saying good bye to the family, driving to the airport, boarding the plan, a long flight, less sleep; there is excitement whether somebody will pick you up at the destination airport. Arrival means: Stepping into a new country with different people, new climate, strange language, different culture, different service, different meetings.

All of you arrived here in Neuendettelsau and we are happy that all of you arrived here safely; we thank God for His guidance on your journey. We think of those women who were not able to join us at the Women's Consultation because of various reasons: Difficulties in the country (Cuba, Congo, Palestine), Visa problems, sickness or any other reason.

Today we will start our Women's Consultation. The opening of the consultation will be done by Dr. Hermann Vorländer, Director for World Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria. Welcome!

"The World is in need of healing"

Dr. Hermann Vorländer (MWB)

I extent a very warm word of welcome to you all on behalf of the Division for World Mission and on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria. I do this also as a member of the Board of the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany (EMW). We are happy to host you and pray for good weather during these days. Neuendettelsau is a small town, but it is well known in ecumenical circles around the world, especially among Lutherans. 160 years ago Rev. Wilhelm Loehe started mission work and sent messengers first to North America, later to Brazil, to Australia, to Papua-Neuguinea (PNG) and to Eastern Europe. Since the 1960s the work extended to Africa, starting with Tanzania, and to Asia, starting with Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Korea. Since 12 years I work as director. I am married with four children and two grandchildren. My wife Dorothea is pastor for a congregation nearby.

The topic of your Consultation is a follow up of the 10th Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) which took place in Winnipeg, Canada, in summer 2003 and which I attended. It dealt with the challenges of the churches under the topic "For the Healing of the World". Healing and Proclamation of the Gospel belong together in our mission work and in the mission of Jesus Christ which is described in Matthew 9:35 as follows: "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness." Jesus went to the people, taught them, preached the Gospel and healed. Jesus wants the people to have life abundantly.

In Winnipeg this topic was discussed under various aspects: The world is in need of healing, the healing gift of justification and communion, healing divisions within the one church, removing barriers that exclude, the church's ministry of healing, justice and healing in families, overcoming violence, healing creation.

You will deal specifically with the aspect of tradition in your cultures. I just returned from a trip to Tanzania this week. I visited several hospitals and was told that healing traditions are becoming more and more important. Ways are explored how to combine traditional ways of healing with modern methods.

Certainly this Consultation will offer you the opportunity not only to deal with this topic but also to get to know our church and country and to get to know other churches around the world. You will hopefully experience a sense of communion within the manifold branches of the Church of God as the body of Christ. You will also meet our Head Bishop Dr. Johannes Friedrich who will visit our Division of World Mission on Wednesday.

Again a very warm welcome on behalf of our staff. I wish you God's guidance and blessing for your discussions and for your fellowship. I hereby declare the Women's Consultation on "Healing and our Tradition" open. Thank you.

A word of greeting "Longing for healing"

On behalf of the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany (EMW) and with sincere greetings from the chairperson of our board of directors, Bishop Mrs. Maria Jepsen, I send you our best wishes for your consultation. In recent months we have been struggling with the question "Tradition – when does it aid and when prevent healing", especially in our preparation for the World Mission Conference with the theme "Come, Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile"; the conference will take place in Athens in May 2005.

Here in Germany we are struggling amongst ourselves with the definition of tradition – not only in relation to traditions of increasing numbers of people from foreign countries settling down in Germany but also in relation to the traditions, cultures

Yours in God's service,

Herbert Meissner General Secretary EMW and values which we have developed in our own society between the young and the old, men and women, poor and rich or even between the different denominations. And how can we find a common answer to the question of healing? The challenges of AIDS call for answers. The experience of violence in our families cries for answers.

Healing – healing in memories, healing of relations, healing of physical and psychological wounds – how can our traditions be employed to help those longing for healing?

I wish you God's guidance and the support of the Holy Spirit in your deliberations. May our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and keep you!

Welcome



The participants of the International Women's Consultation and how it began:

Find someone who ...

wears glasses	lives in a house with more than 3 floors	has earrings	has been doing Women's Work for more than 15 years	has family members of another religion	
-	_	_			
is in Germany for the first time	sings in a choir	can speak more than three languages	owns a dog	knows how to drape a sari	
knows how to cook Wot	is the second born	is left handed	has already held a Gender Course	speaks Spanish	
runs a Feeding Centre in the church	has never seen the ocean	whose country lies south of the equator	has three children	has twins in the family	
-					
rode in a train today	has visited LWF in Geneva	knows what "Ugali" is	is a pastor	has never eaten "Sauerkraut"	
	-				

Evening Prayer "The Great Commission", Mr. 28:18-20

Esther Milandu Mundemba

Our Lord Jesus Christ commissioned his early disciples to go out and make disciples of all nations. He knew that it was not an easy task for his disciples to do. Hence he assured them of his presence always.



1 = mungaka, 2 = deutsch, 3 = englisch, 4 = französisch, 5 = spanisch, 6 = schweizerdeutsch.

Melodie und Text: aus Kamerun, Mungaka. 2+3: Irmhild Lyonga und Dieter Trautwein, 4: Bayiga Bayiga, 5: Pablo Sosa, 6: Basler Mission.

C 4+5: bei den Autoren. C 1,2,3,6: Strube, München

Let us pray:

Our God and loving Father in Heaven, we thank you for making it possible for us to be here for this consultation. We thank you for your traveling mercies to each one of us. We thank you for the people who facilitated this consultation. Thank you for the resources enabling us to participate in this consultation through our different sending organizations. We pray also for our friends who were invited to Similarly we have been called from different parts of the world to come and share experiences and consult one another on the theme: Tradition – when does it aid healing and when does it prevent healing? This is a greet task before us. But I want to believe that the same assurance that our Lord Jesus

gave to the early disciples of being with them up to the end of the age is the same assurance that we too can depend upon as we begin our consultation.

Chorus:

(English)

Let us all pull together, together, together. Let us all pull together in New Life for all. It is my work It is your work It is our work It is God's work Let us all pull together in New Life for all.

(Tonga)

A Tukwelele antomwe, antomwe, antomwe. A Tukwelele antomwe, mubumi bupya. Mulimo wangu Mulimo wako Mulimo wesu Wa Mwami A Tukwelele antomwe, mubumi bupya.

this consultation but are unable to come because they were denied entry to this country or not allowed to leave their own countries. We pray that your will strengthens them and that you will unite us with them in spirit, so that their contribution will be communicated to us through the power of your Holy Spirit, who will give us insight the wisdom from above. This we pray and ask through the name of Our Lord Jesus. Amen. Saturday, May 22nd, 2004

Morning Prayer "God is the source of our healing"

Ellen M. Gbanlon

Song

	F						в,				F	
			J			1			1	1		J
1. / 1. / 1. M	I thank ler- ci		sa- oh coup,	na my o	Ye- su Jé- sus Je- sus	s, I s, mer-		beau	- coup,		Ye- su, Jé- sus, Je- sus,	mer-
1. W	/ir dan-	ken	dir,	Herr	Je- sus C	s, wir	dan	- ken F	dir,	Herr	Je- sus; F	WIT
1	JJ	1		1,		T	1	1	1	f f		
nank yo ci be		my J o J	e-sus,	you ar o Se	re good ig-neu	d. r.	A- I Mer- Wir B	ci	you, beau-co	oup, o	y Jé-sus	s, I s, mer-
=		1						1	11			
hank y ci b	eau-coup,	na my o Herr		s, I s, mer-		you, beau-	coup,	my o		101111	are go Seig- ne	od.
. Ni	nakupend	la Yesi	ı moyor	ni			2. W	ir lobei	n dich,	Herr J	esus	
. Umsalde Yesu moyoni					3. Wir singen dir, Herr Jesus							
. Ukae nasi Yesu moyoni					4. Wir dienen dir, Herr Jesus							
Utuokoe Yesu moyoni							5. Du segnest uns, Herr Jesus					

Psalm 100.1:1-5 "A Psalm of Thanksgiving"

- 1 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.
- 3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture
- 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name.
- 5 For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures for ever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Theme:

God is the source of our healing. Heal comes when we depend on God for our needs. God is the only one who has brought us where we are. In bad times he is our strength.

"My country, Liberia, has been damaged – physically, morally, people are traumatized. But we still have courage that we can overcome our difficulties. Every day, since 2002, women go on the streets, wearing white t-shirts, demonstrating for peace. We need to forgive one another, fighters and civilians. However, emotional, psychological healing will need years and we will only succeed with God's help. Please, accompany us with your support, your prayers."

Ellen M. Gbanlon

Prayer:

Song

Lord thank you that you are God who is able to solve our problems. May you continue to guide us, protect us and teach us. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Thuma Mina 168 "Masithi Amen/Sing Amen"

Rites de Passage

Nina Dürr

Presenting traditions from our cultures means showing each other the differences. But we have one thing in common:

Rites de Passage – Venture of Different Stages in Life; big events in life – birth, marriage, death – are protected by rituals.

Every culture shapes stages of life:

≻ Birth

- ► Passing on knowledge
- Crucial events due to instructions by society
- ► Being grown-up
- ► Marriage
- ► Family
- ► Withdrawal from responsibility (retirement)
- ► Death

Reason for this:

- ► Helps to overcome the fear of the unknown
- ► Gives each stage a meaning, protection, dignity
- Makes society share the responsibility (church, congregation)

Imagine life as a walk on a path. The path might be blocked, may be by a river or a stream. How can the blockage be overcome? Fears rise – the river might be too deep, running too fast or there might be animals like crocodiles who could kill me. What about the other side? Will I be able to reach it, to walk there properly? Will the ground carry me? Nobody seems to really know.

Happenings that can cause fears:

- ► Giving birth
- ► Starting an education
- Sickness without apparent reason, may be declared as guilt or witch craft
- Change in government, a new chief or any other leader
- Puberty and changes in the body which result in a different position in society
- ► The last passage with an open end. Death.

Rites de Passage are like bridges over the water. ► To overcome fear of the unknown Now I hand over to you:

Take a piece of paper and draw two lines. One in the upper half – stages in the life of your culture. The other in the lower half – your own life and the Rites de Passages your have experienced yourself. May be there are differences because you married a man from another culture. And what about the people around you? Did they offer you help in the time of need?

Do not hesitate to draw – everybody is an artist in one way or another. The simpler your drawing is, the better everybody can understand it. We will share our drawings later.



Sharing of Experiences about Traditions in our Life

I. An Ethiopian Perspective

Bekure Dhaba

I am greatly thrilled to participate in this International Women's Consultation here in Neuendettelsau on behalf of my National Church, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY).

I would like to present briefly the challenges facing Ethiopia in general and EECMY in particular on the issue of harmful traditional practices and HIV/ AIDS. The policy decision on women's ministry and ordination of women in the EECMY will be discussed briefly.

However, I would like to start with good versus harmful traditional practices in Ethiopia and relate the effect of the later to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the country.

Good versus harmful traditional practices in Ethiopia

African societies have good as well as bad or harmful traditional practices. Ethiopia being one of the African countries exhibits these practices as well.

Good traditional practices in Ethiopia

Ethiopia consists of more than 80 ethnic groups each having their own cultures and traditions. In fact when it comes to the situation of women in this country, Ethiopian society is a traditional society. In this country there are good as well as bad cultures depending on the various ethnic groups who practice them. The good practices are: hospitality to guests; care for the ill and sick, elderly, the needy people; breast feeding over a long period of time; feeding the household and the community; community support system on building huts or houses, agricultural field, during delivery, wedding, funeral, bereavement, carrying the seriously sick person or woman in labour pain to the hospital or clinic. In all these the rural people support each other through contributing money, labour, food, etc. Respect and love for human beings in general and for the foreigners are the best culture of the Ethiopians. The promoters of these good practices are women In the Arsi Oromo culture, women used to have a special stick called "Singee" which they carried along where ever they went. The community respected women carrying that stick. No man would dare to do any harm to those women. If he did, the community would punish him without any mercy. Women used to protect themselves from violence even the domestic one. I think it is necessary to conduct research in the country and promote such kind of good culture.

Harmful traditional practices in Ethiopia

Women and children in Ethiopia, similar to those of other African countries, suffer from harmful traditional practices. These practices are female genital mutilation, uvulectomy, tonsillectomy, and milk teeth extraction, body image alteration. All these contribute a lot to the transmission of HIV/AIDS, because the sharp materials cause bleeding and wounds and are unsafe for the health of those on whom they are practiced. "When a girl is circumcised she is supposed not to cry. But if she does, her aunt puts an axe in her mouth, no matter what might happen to her tongue. Circumcision is still very common in Ethiopia. It is done by women, attended by women, suffered by women."

Bekure Dhaba

On top of these, other practices such as abduction, early marriage, rape exacerbate the problems. In abduction a girl is taken by force; early marriage is determined by parents; rape is forced sexual intercourse. These unlawful actions can be performed by anybody. Yet, there is a great risk to women and girl children to acquire HIV/AIDS in time. The offenders do not produce a health certificate; so women and girl children are being victimized.

Most of the Ethiopian women are powerless and voiceless. In some ethnic groups they are considered as properties. Therefore, they could not stand up for themselves to claim their rights. Furthermore, they are illiterate and do not have access to information. They are still under the bondage of harmful traditional practices and backward culture.

In EECMY, up to the year 2001, raising awareness on harmful traditional practices had been conducted for 3.000 people (males, females, clergy, pastors, laymen), especially on female genital mutilation in 20 Church Units all over the country. This figure is like a drop of salt in an ocean when compared to 4 million members of EECMY and 70 million of Ethiopian population. There is a huge task ahead of us to avoid harmful traditional practices. Nevertheless, it is a very big challenge to Gimbi Jorgo Synod, a newly established Church Unit, due to lack of resources.

HIV/AIDS Pandemic

It is known to the whole world that the pandemic of HIV/AIDS is a devastating blow to the lives of nations and brings various crises to social and economic resources of citizens and nations. This calamity is still escalating over many Sub-Sahara countries amongst which my homeland, Ethiopia, is placed 2nd in the continent of Africa and where the disease is widely spread with its underlying various negative effects.

In Ethiopia, about 1.2 million people are HIV/ AIDS positive and about 1.2 million children have

lost both or either of their parents. My Church, the EECMY is one of the first religious organizations in the country that has embarked upon the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Program in 1988 at central office and extended her work to the 20 Church Units all over the country. She totally integrated the activities of the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Program into her existing work and life in the year 1998.

In the implementation process, she again revitalized the system and redesigned the objectives, strategies and approaches in conducting consultation with all pertinent parties including the government organization, non-government organizations, international organizations, donor agencies and resource persons from abroad, Uganda for experience sharing.

The Consultation on the Integration of HIV/AIDS interventions into the life and work of the EECMY was to position the Church Leaders for an impact so that they would be able to effectively participate in the realization of the program. To this end, mechanisms and strategies were set for the Church Leaders to play a leading and an active role in the integration process.

They are:

➤ Use every opportunity that brings the Church Leaders in contact with the communities (Congregation members, Youths, Women, Sunday Schools, Devotion and Praying sessions, Development projects/Program Beneficiaries, etc.) for raising awareness on HIV/AIDS.

The following are identified as Church Leaders:

- Church Elders
- Priests
- Evangelists
- Leaders of Congregations
- Leaders of Parishes
- Leaders of Districts
- Leaders of Synods/Area works
- Department/Section Heads
- Program/Project Coordinators
- Joint Program Leaders at various levels
- Management Committee Members
- Youth and Women Leaders
- Institution Leaders
- Relief and Development Co-ordinators
- Organize Meetings, Workshops and Seminars for raising awareness at all levels on prevalence, impacts and challenges of HIV/AIDS

- ➤ Produce and disseminate different IEC materials in local languages that facilitate openness in teaching and preaching at the Church, household level and office level which would help in "Breaking the silence"
- ► Include and integrate HIV/AIDS in schools and theological seminary curriculum, personal life and all Church activities
- ► Training of Trainers at all levels and in all units and strengthen the existing plans
- Strengthen counselling to address family breakdown and other related issues and to give sufficient care for the victims
- Strengthen community and Church based social groups like Afooshaa, Iddir, Quuqubee and Iqqub to strengthen a culture of mutual help, care and support for persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), orphans and their families
- ► Provide care and love for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, avoid stigmatization and moral breakdown resulting from such action
- ► Measure achievements using indicators of success
- ➤Use peer to peer methods of communication to communicate messages. This refers to transfer of messages from youth to youth, women to women, elders to elders. This mainly implies the establishment of clubs to mobilize the youth and promote peers learning and education
- ➤ Include an integration policy in the Church rules, regulations, bylaws and constitution, and inform pastors about these improvements/changes
- ► Involve Church Leaders in all committee work in the Church structure and integrate HIV/AIDS activities
- ➤ Make use of experiences in Uganda and other countries and organizations for the integration of HIV/AIDS intervention activities in the life and work of the Church and mobilization of the Church resources for averting the spread of the deadly disease
- ► Reach the countryside and upgrade the prevention capacity of rural clinics midwives, etc.
- ► Regular presence of the Church Leaders and

higher positions at the grassroots level to help the Church Leaders monitor, motivate and understand the activities at the grassroots level

- Mobilize resources (e.g. financial, human, material resources as well as time) from the community and other sources including the Government, for prevention, care and support of the affected and infected people by HIV/AIDS with no segregation of victims
- ► Availing options to high-risk groups (e.g. sex workers)
- ► Implementing the integration process
- ► Use decent clothing in order to combat situations conductive to temptations and leading to unwanted sexual desires and acts
- ► Lobby for media access for religious organizations to provide ethical and moral education
- Lobby for the Churches to have access to schools to conduct moral education
- ► In the following strategies there is a central "HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Program Coordination Office" under the Church's Development and Social Services Commission
- ► At all Units and Synods and area works the Coordination Office was structured and there is a assigned Social Health Coordinator

The Gimbii Jorgo Synod, the church unit I come from, is a newly established church unit. In this unit, every endeavour is being made in this regard. The main objective is targeted to bring on behavioural change. In order to bring on behavioural change it is greatly decisive to raise awareness. Towards this goal teaching the people, training the trainers and conducting seminars and courses were the main activities undertaken with great emphasis.

With regard to raising awareness on HIV/AIDS, 165.443 females and 120.888 males (in total 286.331 people) have been reached in the year 2003. Five workshops were conducted last year, in which 51 female and 283 males (in total 334 persons) were trained as trainers. Various seminars were conducted in which 93 females and 134 males (in total 227 people) participated. Through mass mobilization activities, 12.300 females and 9.300 males (in total 21.600 people) benefited. 23.700

materials with information, education and communication about the epidemic disease of HIV/AIDS were distributed.

About four anti HIV/AIDS clubs were organized and 119 active members were embraced. Different efforts were made to provide counselling services; home based care and support for the infected and affected groups.

In another approach, shelters made of iron sheet were constructed and distributed to orphan or semi orphan students involved in shoes shining as income generating. The children were taught all about HIV/AIDS and its prevention. And they in turn teach their peers and their passers-by about the disease.

Despite the effort made so far, there are limitations to address the problem properly and intervene effectively and efficiently. This is due to the prevailing intensification of poverty, harmful traditional practices and fund constraints.

> "Our problem is that we are not educated yet – men and women." Bekure Dhaba

Policy Decision regarding Women's Ministry of the EECMY

The General Assembly is the highest decision making body of EECMY. The body has been discussing about participation of women in the EEC-MY's ministry since its 3rd meeting. During its 8th meeting, in 1973, at Yirgalem, it gave the policy decision to enhance women's participation, to conduct study on "The role of women in the Church" and submit it to the Central Office (GA-8-86-73). Following that, in 1976 the assembly which met at Nedjo elected the first woman, the late Mrs Elizabeth Karorsa as a member of Church Officers for four years (GA-9-99-76'2'). There was a time of silence until 14th General Assembly where the issue was raised and after purposeful deliberation the 14th General assembly passed the policy decision (GA-14-35-93'D') to enable 25 to 50 percent of women to participate in decision-making position.

The full text of the decision is:

- 1. The resolution of the 9th General Assembly are starting points:
 - the administrative committee of the presbyteries

- the executive committees of the synods
- the synods boards and assemblies
- the synods executive meetings
- the meetings of commissions
- the Church Officer meetings
- the EECMY Executive Committee meetings
- EECMY Councils
- and EECMY General Assemblies shall have voting delegates with women up to 25 to 50 percent so that they will have a vote on policy matters
- 2. That the women will be given priority in hiring people for full participation in the Church and its branches according to the above stated percentage
- 3. The constitution, bylaws and guidelines of the EECMY Central Office, joint programs, synods, Presbyteries and Area Works shall be quickly and essentially revised so that directives will be made to ensure that women will be chosen or appointed for positions of authority and leader-ship in the various areas of the Church
- 4. That women will be given priority for basic, higher and special education opportunities
- 5. That the EECMY synods, Presbyteries and Area Work Constitutions shall be revised to ensure that at least 50 percent of the full members are women in all Church decision making meetings, so that women will be able to speak for themselves and present appropriate resolutions
- 6. That appropriate conditions shall be arranged when women travel to meetings with regard to transport, food and sleeping quarters and that the Synods, Presbyteries and Work Areas designates office, budget, workers and transport to encourage and speed up women's participation in Church

Gimbi Jorgo Synod has tried its best to implement the resolutions. Hence, the Executive Committee of the Synod recommended promoting the Women's Ministry Coordination Office to department level to promote the full participation of women in decision making. But due to lack of resources (budget, human power) the Executive Committee resolved that the Coordination Office is run under the Executive Secretary of the synod. It is my hope and belief that in future the office will be promoted to department, provided the resources are made available.

The issue of women's ordination

The issue of women's ordination was raised in the 1980's when two women theologians (Bekure Dhaba - now Rev. - and Tenagne Nigusie) graduated from Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary. It took the EECMY about 17 years to come to a final decision and in 1997 the 15th General Assembly passed the policy decision that women can be called to administer the Word and the Sacrament (GA-15-6297'8'). Since 1997 three women were ordained, two of them (Rev. Bekure Dhaba und Rev. Hirut Magarsaa) in the year 2000, and Rev. Akwata Okeng in the year 2001. Since this number is much smaller than the number of male pastors (over 1.000) there is a huge task ahead of us to facilitate conditions for women to attend theological seminaries and to be ordained as ministers. The EECMY has put much effort into the empowerment of women compared to the Evangelical and other churches in Ethiopia.

In April 2004, EECMY Women's Ministry Coordination Office/Women in the Evangelism section conducted a four days workshop at national level on promoting the ordination of women. The participants of the workshop were the Women's Ministry Coordinator, Presidents and the Evangelism Department heads of the EECMY that in the nearest future women will be called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. More women will be getting a theological education. The awareness raising workshops will be conducted at all levels, synod, district, parish and congregation levels. However, to conduct all these workshops and also to train women theologians funds are needed. The challenge is to raise the funds both for the training in the seminaries and for the workshops. Being a newly established Synod, Gimbii Jorgo Synod is also facing this challenge.

2. A Papua New Guinean Perspective

Lakele Tetac

Papua New Guinea is a country lying in the North of Australia; a country of black people. It is a Christian country with five million inhabitants. About one million are Lutherans but the Catholic denomination is the largest in the country and the Lutheran Church is the second largest.

We gained our independence from Australia back in 1975, September 16th. The country is divided into halves and the West of Papua is governed by the Indonesian government. The first Lutheran missionary arrived in our country back in 1886. He was Johann Flierl from Neuendettelsau in Germany. We are now 117 years past that date. That year the Gospel was introduced in our country. We are also delighted that we will have with us the General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation on this very special day.

With regard to the topic of our consultation which is: "Tradition, when does it aid and when prevent healing" and with regard to the theme of the day "Traditions in our Lives", I will now focus my reflections on the context of my country, Papua New Guinea. I will speak about one of our traditions and how it affects peoples' life. In this context, I will emphasize the tradition of the "bride price".

Papua New Guinea is a male dominated country based on its culture and many different languages. Women are still regarded in many areas as second class members. We have over 850 languages with their own different cultures. We also have two common languages spoken in the whole country. Pidgin is spoken everywhere and English is spoken in schools and work places. I will also say something about violence which is affecting women very badly in daily life. Whether educated or uneducated women, Christian family violence is found in all of them.

> "Violence is a badly disease which women face daily in Papua New Guinea." Lakele Tetac

I will speak mainly about the various forms of violence and how we tried to overcome violence. Within Papua New Guinea today, these are:

I. Physical Violence:

Domestic violence by husbands and male relatives.

2. Emotional Violence:

Thoughts and feelings of many women are not respected. Some are respected by their husbands and families, but not all. It all depends on the woman and how she reacts towards them.

3. Sexual Violence:

Women are raped when they are away from others. Nowadays for many women it is not safe to be on their own, by themselves in a place or move around by themselves. Both, young and old.

4. Economic Violence:

Most women are not financially supported by their husbands. Most husbands work but don't support their wife properly. So the women find their own ways to earn money, either good or bad ways.

5. Social Violence:

Drugs and alcohol abuse by men results in daily violence against women and children. Men get drunk and beat up wives in front of children; one of the more obvious consequences is that they are afraid. In Papua New Guinea it is even usual to beat up women in public places.

Most women are ashamed, afraid and don't have the courage to speak up against their husbands when violence arises in their life. They are afraid if they speak up they might be beaten again, and it may be worse than before. Many times the family and the extended family see the situation and the problem of the married couples by talking with them. Others seek advice from pastors and counsellors about their problems, but many times it's the wife being active or taking the initiative, and not the husband.

Regarding the "bride price": In a lot of cultures many women are paid for by their husbands and his family, this we call a bride price. According to the different cultures, the woman is paid for with so much money; even pigs and other valuable things are given to the wife's family. They receive them with joy but the woman suffers because of this joy, while she is with the husband's family. The husband and his family pay a lot of money for the woman's bride price. Therefore they have many rights over the woman. The husband, when anger arises, beats the woman. She has to do all the hard work in her family and the extended family who contributed to pay for her bride price. Most women are mistreated most of their lives.

> "We have to educate our women to understand themselves and to escape the violence. At the same time we have to train men – to understand their wives and to make them speak up and to also talk about feelings." Lakele Tetac

In the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea there is a history of the "Decade to overcome violence against women". We are a member of the Lutheran Word Federation and we fully support the idea of the subsequent "Decade to Overcome Violence" (DOV) which was launched by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1999. One of our women leaders, Martha Aisi Eliasa, is a member and a representative of the WCC. When she first returned from the WCC meeting in 1999, we launched the decade soon after because we acknowledged it as a very serious problem. In 2001, Martha and her two co-workers started to develop the so called DOV-Training-Materials in our National Women Training Centre. Since then they have been conducting workshops for women to overcome personal experience in violence. The outcome of the workshops was touching and painful at the same time.

There was also another meeting between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea and their Lutheran Overseas Partner Churches (LOPC) in September 2002. A special presentation was organized by the three women from our training centre with other women leaders. During that time the decision was made to develop further strategies within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea to work on this very important issue over the next years.

Also, in October 2003 the campaign "Say no to violence against women" of the church was formed to coordinate the existing program and to plan and monitor new activities within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea. It is presented by our Nation Youth Director and our National Women's Director (myself) and we are assisted by our Project Office as well as the three women from our training centre. We are to work together with our Government Organizations and our Non-Government-Organization-groups who strive to overcome violence and also with other denominations who are also working on this topic. Our first training of trainers was conducted in May 2004 – the outcome was nice, but very painful.

> "It's a challenge for me to work against men and painful traditions." Lakele Tetac

We are looking forward to strive for a better life for many women in Papua New Guinea. We also will be writing Bible Studies on this topic for men and women in 2005. To conclude, women are the victims of violence but are the committed and faithful workers in all levels of the growing church. They live with violence but commit themselves to God and the service to the church in silence.

We are striving for peace in our families and are looking forward to launch the first outcome of our work in September this year during our National Women's Conference.

Please pray for the women of Papua New Guinea and especially for the newly elected DOV-Committees. We want peace and harmony in our families and NOT VIOLENCE.

Poem

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

When I came out of my mother's womb Everybody in my family, Laughing and shouting, Why? Because I am a woman

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

I will care for my family, The country and the world I will help my mother I will cook for my family I will do most of the work for My family

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

I will help my mother clean the garden I will keep my home and village clean. I will carry heavy string bags on my little solid head. I will wash my family's clothes

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

I am the flower and the beauty of my family My father is very proud when he walks beside me

My brothers and sisters are also proud of me My mother is even more proud than then all, of them,But she remains quiet because she is. a woman

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

My extended families are proud of me

I will go to school and earn money for everyone

They are proud that when I get married, I will combine two different families together

My uncle is the happiest person Because he will get a bride price out of me.

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

A woman! A Child of God A woman! God's Image A woman! I am created out of man's bone A woman! Man's partner forever A woman! God's spirit dwells in me

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

- A woman! Not to be mistreated
- A woman! Not to be sold on the market
- A woman! Man have no right to beat me up

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

A woman! I bring joy to the whole family A woman! I give birth to new life and life continues A woman! I am proud of myself, God created me A woman

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

I will remain a woman forever

WHO AM I?

A WOMAN.....WOMAN.....WOMAN







3. A German Perspective

Nina Dürr

Traditions in our lives can be a hindrance, but they can also promote us, be of help to us. How do we decide if a particular tradition is a hindrance or helping us? On which background do we decide? Let our background be a life with the gospel.

I would like to start with an example of my own culture in Germany: Easter Sunday we celebrate with the service, but beforehand we colour and decorate eggs in our houses. They look fantastic. We hang them into bushes and we eat them with delight. There are also chocolate eggs which we hide in the house and in the garden. Our children then search for them and they can keep the ones they find.

What does this tradition or culture mean? Is it suitable to support our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ? In my opinion it is not. I rather see it as a festival of the animal's fruitfulness in springtime.

In March 2004, I went to Mabel Madinga's country, Malawi. In a village near the Lake Malawi – in Mua – we, a group of women from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi (ELCM,) visited a Convert and Art Centre of the so called "White Fathers" – now many are brown-white fathers. We met a monk who originally was from the Republic of Congo. He told us that he was very hurt when in the beginning of the Endless War he saw that congregation members and also priests put their bible aside, took weapons and restarted the old tradition to prepare as fighters.

They used this old ritual to overcome fear and danger, did it for their own sake because they wanted to survive. "Loving enemy" or Mt 5 was not a word which could help them in the situation they found themselves in. So the old tradition was revived, now for guidance and help. Full of sadness the monk asked: "Is our faith just on the surface, a cover on top of our culture which can easily be lost or taken off?"

This seems to have been the case sixty years ago in our country, Germany, when the Nazi Regime started. As you know, in their traditional opinion the German race "Arier" was worth more than other people. This attitude made it possible for the genocide of the Jewish citizens in our country to happen. The monk from the Congo asked for a transfer to Mua. He knew that there Father Boucher had started to collect all experiences and rituals from three groups: the Checheva, the Ngoni and also the Yao. Then he asked wood carvers to take their knowledge of carving masks and sculptures and to use their art to make church pictures and facilities.

Look at the sculpture of the crucified and risen God, coming out of a maize plant. The posture and gesture of the risen Lord is very much like the famous Rain God of the Chechewa Culture is pictured whilst praying for rain in a dried out lake.



I am telling you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces grains.

John 12:24

Seeing this, every person who knows the old faith will realize immediately that this is the posture which rescued us from death years ago. In our group of visitors from Ethiopia, Malawi and Germany some did not agree with this and called it "syncretism" – you have to cut away completely what might suggest that the old faith is still possible. But the White Fathers named this the "Baptised Culture". How can we find out what really helps us to understand the gospel and what hinders us?

Just one more word about what impressed me: The monk told us, the decision which part of the culture can bring a deep insight of the gospel and which part is just a hindrance, can only be made by the people themselves and not by the missionaries. Not by the ones from the West and not by the ones from another African or Asian country. Missionaries can preach the gospel, but have to be aware of the fact that their preaching is tinted by their own culture.

It is not up to others to decide what causes fear and leads to a faith against the way of the Lord. But how this decision is being made might be a question for our groups.

Groups:

For the daily working sessions participants were split into permanent groups to ensure an ongoing working process and to promote an atmosphere of trust and collaboration.

1. Group

Bärbel Fünfsinn (Germany) Ieda Radünz (Brazil) Lakele Tetac (Papua New Guinea) Bekure Dhaba (Ethiopia) Leonore Landmann (Germany) Rabeca Garinosse Olices (Mozambique)

3. Group

Gabriele Mayer (Germany) Ellen M. Gbanlon (Liberia) Esther Milandu Mundemba (Zambia) Rita Fikele Phaswana (South Africa) Sonia Parera Hummel (Indonesia/Germany)

2. Group

Cornelia Schattat (Germany) Marieta N. G. Sahertian (Indonesia) Nina Dürr (Germany) Vilma Rodriguez (El Salvador) Elisabeth Haganda Jilo (Kenia) Nashilongo Shivute (Namibia)

4. Group

Gabi Hettler/Ulrike Hansen (Germany) Mary Purti (India) Kathrin Skriewe (Germany) Mabel Madinga (Malawi) Anneth Munga (Tanzania) Graciela Chamorro (Brazil/Germany)

Excursion Day

Sunday, May 23rd, 2004



"The decision to rebuild all those destroyed buildings after World War II is like a sign of hope to me, expressing: Life continues and the process of healing can commence."

Nashilongo Shivute, Namibia

Experiencing Tradition A Visit to the City of Nuremberg



"Those ruins have been done by God my grandmother said, but now I experienced that it was made by men." Rabeca Garinosse Olices (second left), Mozambique



"When visiting the house of Albrecht Dürer, I experienced what God gives to everybody. We all have gifts, it's a resource." Bekure Dhaba (second left), Ethiopia



"When I saw St. Lorenz church and the amount of strength they have put in to build it – to me it reflected the character of that man who brought reformation, Martin Luther. It made me see the vision that he had. In the wake of the work that he has started people were able to build up strong and living structures. So to me he is really still alive." Esther Milandu Mundemba, Zambia



"How they constructed civilization in this country; even in Agnes Dürer's times there was a heated room for women and children – to make them comfortable. So I asked myself: How does a state construct structures and institutions? There are so many internally displaced people in my country."

Marieta N. G. Saghertian (right), Indonesia



"Our guide, she really made Agnes Dürer visible, her life full of work and burden – just like us today. But Agnes life was more than that, she also was a capable and efficient business woman and thus went beyond the average woman's life at those times. We can go and make changes as well, I know we can – especially us women in Africa."

Elizabeth Haganda Jilo, Kenya



"The Holy Communion in St. Lorenz church was a very moving moment to me. Jesus invited us to be one family." Esther Milandu Mundemba, Zambia



"You Germans, you didn't see what we saw. But we will tell you and you will say what you see in us – life is an ecumenical community." Lakele Tetac, Papua New Guinea

Myths and Legends

Tarasque the dragon

Once upon a time there was a huge blue water dragon who lived in a large lake in the south of France. His body was covered with scales of shining steel and his name was Tarasque. The population of a village by this lake lived in great fear of him, because Tarasque had a habit of coming up out of the lake and stepping ashore to snatch and devour a young maid.

The village people wanted to get rid of the beast, but they had no idea what to do and none of them was brave enough to go near the dragon. They were so desperate they decided to appeal to the King of



Nuremberg - St. Lorenz - St. Marthe-Altar, 1517; Master of the St. Marthe Altar. St. Marthe chaining up the dragon.

France for help. The king, however, was not interested in the troubles of people living far away in a small village on the border. The knights of the court were not interested either, because the dragon was neither guarding a treasure which held the promise of riches or gold, nor holding prisoner a princess they could rescue to achieve honour and fame. These noble lords were so proud that they preferred fighting for honour and fame at tournaments to wasting their time fighting a dragon which was devouring nothing but silly, dirty peasants.

> The village people were so desperate that many of them were seriously thinking about leaving their homes. At this moment St. Marthe came to the little village. She was a very beautiful young maid known all over the country for her kindness, and many people adored her. The village council saw her appearance as a sign of heaven and pleaded with her to help. Brave Marthe felt sorry for them and consented to capture the dragon. She did, however, lay down one condition: the village people were to pray to God for three days that He might help her to overcome the dragon. They gladly complied with her wish and waited full of hope for the miracle which would free them of the wicked dragon.

> After the three days of prayer, Marthe went to the lake to capture Tarasque. She knew that in spite of his savageness and all his cunning he was a great lover of music. So the young lady stood near the lake and began singing beautiful songs with her clear and sweet voice. Tarasque stepped out of the water, enchanted by the purity of these melodies and their wonderful sound, and lay down at her feet. Marthe quickly looped a rope around his neck and led him to the village, where he was killed by the peasants. In remembrance of this story the town which grew from the village is still called Tarascon.

> > Translation:

Evening Prayer "We are here to get our spiritual food"

Lakele Tetac

Margrit Gerlach/Maureen Trott

Heavenly father, we would like to thank you and praise you for your protection and guidance through the day from all harm and danger. Especially thanking you for bringing us together here in Germany from different countries with our own culture and background. We are united in you, our Lord Jesus Christ. May you lead us in spirit through this consultation until we all return back to our own countries.

We also like to thank you for the journey around the city of Nuremberg. We thank you for our driver and also not forgetting the ladies who showed us around in the house of the ancient painter Albrecht Dürer and the castle. Thank you for their commitment and time with us. It was a very educational, a historical day.

Myself – and I think I am speaking for my fellow sisters as well – have learned a lot, even though it is not possible to keep everything in mind. But that day in Nuremberg gave me an idea why the Germans are like they are – moving busily around in the city streets and from one room to the other, as I observed during our visit to the castle.

Nuremberg is a very historic place, and visiting it offers the opportunity of learning a lot. It is a gift for the Germans to have these historic sites and I think they are very grateful for how creative their ancestors have been – we don't have that in Papua New Guinea.

Heavenly father, we also commit our organizing committee for the consultation unto you. We pray for wisdom, courage and guidance over them. Give them courage each day as they plan and guide the consultation so that it can be a blessing for us all. We all have come from different countries, we are all so different, for example different in colors.

Heavenly father you will lead and guide us. We are here to get our spiritual food.

We pray this all in Jesus name.

Amen. **Song:** Father bless us as we go, Jesus walk beside us,

holy spirit guide us.

Prayer:

Leader: We begin this evening prayer in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Amen. (may we all read Psalm 100 responsibly)

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Leader: v-l-Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the lands!

Congregation: v-2-

Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!

Leader: v-3-

Know that the Lord is God! It is he that made us, and we are his, we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Congregation: v-4-

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him, bless his name!

All (together): u-s-

For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations.

Leader:

Glory to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Congregation:

As it was in the beginning, is now and forever more.

All (together):

Amen.

Blessing:

May the peace of God which passes all human understanding keep our hearts and mind in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen. Monday, May 24th, 2004

Morning Prayer "The Lord is my shepherd"

Mary Purti

Psalm 23, I-6 "A Psalm for David"

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me besides still waters; 3 he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me and all the days of my life, and shall I dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for this wonderful morning. I pray that you will be with us the whole day and guide us in every program. Heavenly Father, I pray for all participants whom you have helped to come into this fellowship. I believe that the blood of Jesus will reunion us to establish peace, harmony and justice in our own countries. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Song:

(in Hindi, by Mary Purti) Uske phatkon mein stuti karunga dhanyabad ke saath Uske aangon mein stuti karunga mein kahunga ye din yehowa ne banaya mein khus hua ki miyhe anandit kiya anadit kiya miyhe anadit kiya mein khus hua ki miyhe anadit kiya.



उसके फाटकों में प्रवेश करुंगा उसके फाटका म प्राय गरणा, व्यन्यबाद के साथू उसके क्षांजने में स्तुरात्र करुंगा, मैं कहुंगा ये दिन सहीता के बनाया, मैं जुडा हुआ कि अुके खानादेत किया, अगानान्दित नेकेया जुके आनन्दत निक्या में रुपुरा हुका कि जुके आनन्दत निक्या

I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart,

I will enter his courts with praise.

I will say this is the day that the Lord has made,

I will rejoice for he has made me glad.

He has made me glad, he has made me glad. I will rejoice for he has made me glad. Ich werde einziehen durch das Tor mit dem Herzen voller Dank;

ich werde eintreten in sein Reich mit Lobpreis!

Denn ich weiß, dies ist der Tag den der HERR gemacht. Ich werde mich freuen, denn Er hat mich froh gemacht.

Er hat mich froh gemacht, Er hat mich froh gemacht. Ich werde mich freuen, denn Er hat mich froh gemacht.

Er hat mich froh gemacht ...

Inheriting Our Mothers' Strength to Resist Violence

Rose Wu

"I always feel that mission should be localized, contextualized. I was born in Hong Kong, my life is there, I feel so committed, that's were my home is." Rose Wu, Hong Kong



In declaring the Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace (2001 - 2010),the World Council of Churches has called on churches, ecumenical organizations and all people of goodwill to work

together to overcome violence through peace and justice.

To many women, however, our encounter of God emerges from our suffering as victims of violence. The list of abuse is endless: witch-burning, wifebattering, mothers suffering from the disappearance of their children because of their threat to those in power, female circumcision, incest and sexual abuse, HIV infection through husbands, dowry deaths, torture, forced prostitution, poverty and homelessness. Because of these experiences, we are forced to raise critical questions about the traditional image of God the Father who righteously demands total obedience of "his" son – even obedience to death. Many feminist theologians challenge this image, maintaining that until this image is shattered it will be almost impossible to create a just and safer society for women and children.

My presentation today will begin with the stories of three mothers who suffered from violence but yet did not give up their efforts to resist and overcome violence. Their strength inspires us to rediscover our Christian spirituality of overcoming violence expands our imagination to reach out to a mother God who is full of mercy and compassion.

The first woman is Mary, the mother of Jesus.

At the trial of Jesus and during the last days of his life, Mary and several women were following him. She was very aware of the torture inflicted on her son Jesus and of the unjust and unfair trial to which he was subjected. The night of the imprisonment and torture of Jesus must have been a terrible night for Mary. Her helplessness before the imperial rulers of her day, their native collaborators and the religious leadership must have caused much distress to her. She experienced the powerlessness which is the lot of the majority of the exploited and marginalized people in almost all countries of the world. There have been hundreds and thousands of mothers, wives, sisters and daughters who have suffered like her in the past and still do so today.

The second woman is Ding Zilin,

a professor at People's University in Beijing, the mother of a victim of the June 4th, 1989, massacre who suffered from the loss of her only son, Jiang Jielian, a 17-year-old student when he was killed at Muxudi.

In an article which Ding wrote in 1994, Ding

shared her agony: "Whenever memories of my dead son return to haunt me, I pray for release, for a sudden affliction of amnesia to erase those nightmares. I wish my life could regain some semblance of normality, like some happy people around me.

What I can't do is to avert my gaze from the pain of those who suffered the same fate as mine. In this ungenerous and uncaring world, these people are languishing in their silent grief. Because even though they've lost their beloved ones, they cannot even make that fact known and seek support from any source. And nobody is able to offer help of any kind. Now they're left behind in our society, forgotten and forsaken, While other people may be able to adopt a see-nothing, saynothing attitude toward this cruel situation, I can't."¹

For the last ten years, Ding has been at the forefront of a network of people who have worked to document this brutal crackdown in a systematic fashion by collecting the names of victims who died in the massacre of 1989 and recording their individual stories. Because of these efforts to seek the truth, she has been subjected to persistent persecution and has endured interrogation, threats of violence, a period of detention and frequent house arrest. She refuses, however, to give up her fight.

For the victims' families, the suffering of June 4th is not just an unpleasant memory from the past: it is the suffering they have carried within themselves for the past 15 years, an anguish that still resides deep inside them. With the Chinese government's denial of its bloody crackdown of the people's peaceful movement on June 4th, victims' families have not only suffered from the loss of their loved ones; they have also lost their right to live a normal life, including the right to disclose to the world their woes and torments, the right to openly mourn the deaths of their family members, the right to put forward their views and express their feelings and finally the right to seek justice, that is, to hold the murderers accountable for the violence they have done.

As a mother of the June 4th massacre, Ding shared her reflection and deep love for her son: "I'm not a very strong mother. After my son's death on Chang'an Avenue, several times I hovered between life and death myself. Somehow it became clear to me that my son died for the future of China and the only choice left for me is to live for the future of China." In 1994, Prof. Ding began to document the deaths of those who died in the massacre of 1989 because she does not want those victims to die an anonymous death in unknown circumstances. She also does not want the victims' surviving families to suffer mistreatment and humiliation anonymously. More importantly, she believes that unless the truth is disclosed and the murderers are charged we will not be able to prevent such a tragedy from happening again in China.

> "China is a country with a one party rule. Hong Kong people have a lot of fear, they have been colonized for about 150 years and the scar is deep." Rose Wu

The third woman is Kam Suk-ying.

She and her six-year-old twin daughters Li Yinli and Li Tsz-wan were stabbed to death in their Tin Shui Wai public housing flat in Hong Kong on April 11th this year. Her husband, Li Pak-sum, 44, was the only suspect in the killings and was found in the flat with three knife wounds to his stomach but died in the hospital after twelve days in a coma. The death of Kam clearly illustrates that domestic violence not only includes the traditional issue of male power and control over women and children but also exposes prejudice in Hong Kong's legal and social systems towards new immigrant mothers, like Kam.

Kam, a Sichuan native on the mainland, married her husband in 1999. The two children to whom she gave birth were allowed to settle in Hong Kong but not Kam. Her husband became fully dependant on welfare because his wife was not allowed to come to Hong Kong at the same time. Such a policy of splitting a mother and her children has long been blamed for aggravating the social problems spawned by cross-border marriages. After Kam was finally allowed to settle in Hong Kong in January 2004, in addition to being totally isolated form any social network, she was jobless and faced the added burden of being ineligible for welfare as a result of the change in the government's population policy announced last year that came into effect in January this year. This recently introduced policy prevents new arrivals from the mainland from claiming welfare payments until they have lived in Hong Kong for seven years while previously they could claim welfare benefits after twelfth month. As the Hong Kong Christian Institute (HKCI) and many women's organizations have noted, it is a shortHading Colonial Serves

Healing Colonial Scares We are the wounded body of God. Under colonialism, we became non-human. Our women were violently abused. You took away our names, our faces, our history, our feeling. Our culture is nowhere to be found. Our raped body becomes your victory and sexual pleasure. We are the broken body of God. Under colonialism, we became homeless. You came and conquered our land. Our land is exploited and devoured. Our ocean disappears with reclaimed land. We are dispossessed like snails with no shells. We are the divided body of God. Under colonialism, we became a money-making machine. Our goal is to complete and beat other people down. With no time to listen, To share, to complain, to grieve, or to care, "Everybody for themselves" became our survival skill. We have no community, no identity. Yet as we touch our wounds, We encounter God's tenderness flowing in us, through us. With reverence, We name our pain. We resist colonialism. We weave dreams and hope. We build community. We create new relationships, Neither dominant nor hierarchical In our new home of love. We are connected. We are healed. We are whole. We are the Temple of God. In God's image, we are created With different colors, different shapes, and Different personalities and different cultures, And yet, we are bound together as one humanity. (Reprinted from "Unleashing the Power within Us: Meditations for Asian Women", published by the Asian Women Resource Center and others in 2001.)

sighted and discriminating measure which places a terrible burden on their families and helps to foster an environment in which serious problems are bound to arise.

Even though Kam repeatedly sought help form the police and social workers, she was not able to avoid death. Why? Because the police did not trust her and take her situation seriously. She returned home because her husband said she might not see her children again if she did not come and get them.

Although the violence that killed Jesus, Jaing Jielian and Kam Suk-yin and her daughters took place at different times in different contexts and through different circumstances, their ultimate manifestation is the same: an abuse of power and domination over another human being.

From a feminist perspective, personal and national power is expressed through control and violence against women, children, migrant workers, sexual and ethic minorities, disabled people and the elderly, who all are united in their powerlessness and weakness. By using violence, those who hold power not only want to crush any oppositional force, they also want to create a culture of fear that silences dissident voices who question their position of power.

> "What is wrong with women that they are challenging the will of God, for example with regard to property rights and family laws? That's an often heard question. I say: Men, they have fear." Nashilongo Shivute

Overt physical violence and sexual violence must not be seen as isolated incidents or perverse behavior but must be explored as structural normative practice. In many contexts, violence is sustained by multiplicative structures of control, exploitation and dehumanization. In today's world, the powers of oppression are multiplied by patriarchalism, racism, poverty, cultural imperialism, war and militarism, globalization, homophobia and religious fundamentalism.

What theological implications though can we learn form the suffering stories of the three mothers and their children's victimization through violence?

Christians are often taught to believe that Jesus' violent death is the will of God. Christianity tends to glorify the death of Jesus as God's sacrificial gift to a sinful humanity without condemning the brutal violence as unjust und unacceptable. The promises of resurrection persuades us to endure pain, humiliation and the violation of our sacred rights to self-determination, wholeness and freedom.

"Jesus death and resurrection wasn't something magic. Every moment he went through was very brutal, very violent, we should not glorify it. But he did go through all this suffering and we should look at it as a resistant power, his defending life, not death. Jesus gospel is to bring life back to this violent reality." Rose Wu

Feminist theologian Rita Nakashima Brock critically points out that when divine power is defined as the control of sinfulness and evil the response of many faithful people when they encounter violence it to deny the tragedy of what happens to them and to accept brutality passively. The danger is that such an ideology reinforces a belief in the need for control and obedience and prevents us from being fully engaged in resisting abuse, taking responsibility for ethical discernment and working for justice.²

According to Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, a Sri Lankan Catholic priest, there have been two major interpretations of the human situation, of the understanding of God and of the significance of Jesus' death for redeeming humanity in Christian traditions. The first interpretation begins with a theological assumption concerning life in the pre-historical Garden of Eden and of original sin as alienating the whole human race from God and requiring a divine-human redeemer. The concept of God in this perspective is an angry God who judges and punishes the whole of humanity for the sins of the first parents. Love in this interpretation demands or flows from the sacrifice paid by Jesus. Redemption is realized through Jesus taking on the sins of humanity and atoning for them. It is a theology of a "descending Christology", that is, one derived more from dogmatic affirmations than from the life story as narrated in the Gospels.

In addition, classical orthodox theology usually presents Mary as the obedient, docile, faithful virgin mother, a belief which has encouraged a certain sense of weakness, dependency and powerlessness among humans. Mary is said to accept this suffering because she was aware that this pain was for the divine redemption of humanity. This view was especially effective in subordinating women to patriarchal power, such as state authorities, a maledominated clergy and abusive husbands. Much of traditional spirituality was based on the view that obedience was the most important virtue for holiness as well as for social harmony. Mary thus becomes a symbol of women's subordination and submission.

The second interpretation maintains that Jesus was killed due to his commitment to a cause that had political implications. Because he opted to stand with the oppressed, he had political implications. Because he opted to stand with the oppressed, he therefore took a position against the oppressors of the poor and the weak, against the hypocrites, such as those who wanted a woman stoned for adultery. His whole life and message were a contestation of the falsehood founding the dominant religious and social order of the day. The Gospel stories tell us that the Romans, the Jewish leaders and all those who were against the genuine liberation of the marginalized joined hands to exterminate him.

Based on this interpretation, Jesus' crucifixion is a political assassination that Christians must condemn and reject. The redemptive function of Jesus thus includes both the conversion of people to unselfish love and the changing of social structure to be bearers of the values of the kingdom of love, truth, justice and peace. Jesus was not neutral to the social evils of his time. In this view, God is love and justice. God's plan for humanity, revealed in Jesus, is the building of the Kingdom of God on earth by human effort. It was God's love and care which inspired Jesus' commitment to resist an unjust empire and made him part of a long legacy of resistance and hope. Christianity then is not asocial and apolitical but deeply committed to the integral liberation of humans.³

For many Third World Christians, the model of Mary is more closely related to humanity's struggle for justice and peace and is inspired by the vision implied in the Magnificat of feeding the hungry and exalting the humble. Marian spirituality should therefore inspire the disciples of Jesus today to bring about cultural, political and economic chances.

Minjung feminist theologians in Korea recognize *han* in the individual and collective expression of people's sorrow and anger but also in their resistance to unjust suffering. They seek to convert this resistance into constructive power to protest injustice and to engage in struggle to change it. For them, the cross of Jesus is an expression of sin. That is, the evil of the dominant powers who seek to perpetuate their power by silencing the one who calls for conversion. Thus, true redemption occurs not in the midst of suffering; rather, it takes place in the continual resurgence of power and hope for

abundant life that sustains the struggle against the system of death.⁴

European feminist Dorothee Sölle sees the traditional Christian message of we are powerless sinners who can only passively receive our redemption from above as reinforcing a spirituality and ethic of passive collaboration with the powers of violence and oppression. For her, Jesus reveals the true God as one who unmasks the systems of evil and announces the true God who is on the side of the poor and the victimized of an oppressive society. The Resurrection means that they did not succeed in silencing him. Resurrection is victory over the cross, but this does not mean that the cross itself was necessary nor is it in itself redemptive. Rather, redemption happens whenever we resist and reject collaboration with injustice and begin to taste the joys of true well-being in mutual service and a shared life.5

Feminist theologians Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker have critically observed that the classical atonement theories encourage an abusive theology that glorifies suffering. If Christianity is to be a liberating force from violence, it must itself be liberated from the "divine child abuse" notion of theology, for Jesus' death was an unjust act. Jesus did not choose the cross but chose integrity and faithfulness, refusing to compromise because of threats to his life. Therefore, suffering is never redemptive, and suffering cannot be redeemed. The cross is a sign of tragedy. To be a Christian means keeping faith with those who have heard and lived God's call for justice, radical love and liberation, that is, to refuse to be victims of violence suffering and death.⁶

Mary, Ding Zilin and Kam Suk-Yin's courageous actions to resist and overcome violence have provided us with a new lens of faith to make a radical departure form traditional views of the atonement. The core message of Christianity is justice, radical love and liberation. Jesus chose to live a life in opposition to unjust and oppressive structures and cultures. Jesus did not want to die on a cross, but he did want to remain faithful. We must constantly remind ourselves that Jesus' death was an unjust act, done by humans who chose to reject his way of life and message and who sought to silence him through nailing him to a cross.

Thus, the cross should not just be glorified; instead, it should be condemned for the violent form of death it was. God's grief is revealed there and also every time life is threatened by violence. God's grief and pain, like the three mothers' grief and pain, is as ultimate as God's love – every tragedy eternally remembered and eternally mourned.

As a Church, we are called to break the cycle of violence and stand with those who are its victims and to support their journey to safety and healing. To make a difference, we must find the courage and commitment to overcome violence, not with our words or theories alone, but with our lives, our integrity and the hope gleaned in the "struggle against it".

Today women around the globe are seeing full humanity, justice and peace. Under the banner of the Tiananmen Mothers, a group of courageous family members of victims of the Beijing massacre have banded together to challenge the official claims of what happened. Those in this network provide support to each other and work together to gather information about what actually occurred in those tragic days at the beginning of June in 1989. In addition, they collect and distribute humanitarian funds that have been donated to assist the injured and the families of those who died.

Years after the massacre a student who participated in the 1989 demonstrations posted a message on the internet explaining her ritual of gathering a June 4th bouquet (six white roses and four red roses) to mark each anniversary. Her dream is to place such a bouquet in Tiananmen Square, publicly commemorating the massacre victims without fear of a government reprisal. Until that time comes, www.FillTheSquare.org allows all supporters to realize this dream in cyberspace.

"Don't take violence so light, that we just assess it as God's plan. The core message of the Gospel is mercy and justice." Rose Wu

In Hong Kong, the women's rights groups held a blue ribbon campaign on Mother's Day, May 9th this year, outside the Cultural Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui to invite the public to show their respect to Kam suk-Yin, the mother who bravely sought help from the police and social workers in order to rescue her daughters as well as herself but failed. They also invited the public to tie a blue ribbon in their window as a symbol of solidarity with abused women and children in our community and to make every home a safe place for everyone.

I have lifted up the stories of these mothers, not

because they were victims of violence, but rather because I am convinced that we should re-inherit the spirituality of these mothers and re-imagine our Christian God as a Mother God who not only gives birth to new life but uses all her love and strength to resist violence and to nurture and defend life for all. In this mother's garden, we not only inherit the beauty of God's Creation, we also learn how to become a strong woman who dares to struggle passionately and to dream courageously in order to bring new hope and transformation of this world and the world to come. These mothers are people of Notes:

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- 3.Tissa Balasuriya, "Mary and Human Liberation", Logos 29, no. 1 and 2 (1990).
- 4.Rosemary R. Ruether, Introducing Redemption in Christian Feminism (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1998), 102.

5.Ibid., 104.

- 6.Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker, "For God So Loved the World?" in Violence against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook, ed. Carol J. Adams and Marie M. Fortune (New York: Continuum, 1995), 36-59.
- 7.Huang Xiang, "The Power of a Red Rose: A Poetic Oration", China Rights Forum, no. 1 (2004): 62-65.

"My understanding of Christianity is much wider than the institution church. My boundary is not if somebody is Christian or not. It's keeping on the faith to striving on for justice and peace for everyone, beyond being Christian or not. I am an ecumenical Christian anyhow – I carry Buddhist and Daoist elements as part of my tradition." Rose Wu



s.a. Rose Wu: "A Dissenting Church" Hong Kong Christian Institute/ Hong Kong Women Christian Council Hong Kong 2003 www.hkci.org.hk

The Power of a Red Rose

One red rose is hundreds and thousands of red roses; it is millions of acutely silent Chinese people! A red rose is a bomb, a grenade, a machine gun, a ballot, a pen, a torch of enlightenment and self-awakening; a spaceship cruising through the universe; the all-conquering and unconquerable power of collective humanity.

If a dictator dares to trample the people underfoot and tolerates allegiance to himself alone, The people will rise as one and tower above him. If a dictator dares to shoot a bullet into the crowd, The people in their collective authority will declare him on public trial. Raise the red rose! Raise the red rose! Raise the red rose!

This world does not answer to one man, but to each and every one. This world does not allow anyone to dictate to others, And the people, made up of individuals, can reply with ten million cries of "No!" Everyone has an equal right to participate in elections, Everyone is subject to the same conditions and rules of power.

One person is a red rose, petals unfurling free beneath the blue sky; independent petals, democratic petals. Raise the red rose on Tiananmen Square, on Tiananmen Tower; Across the vast landscape of China, raise the red rose!

Let's turn the thousand years' ocean of blood into an ocean of flowers, into a heaving, howling ocean of sunlight! A red rose is a kind of power. Ten million red roses are ten million people living under ten million free choices.

People of China, raise the red roses of your lives! For as long as you raise the courage,

Brute force will falter, tyranny will shrivel, darkness will pale and retreat. As long as you can raise the faith, this world will not fall to the bayonets and lies of dictators.

Why is there dictatorship in this world? Because you consent to it and become its accomplice. Why is there totalitarianism in this world? Because you recognize it and

become its coconspirator.

Raise the red rose! Raise the red rose! Raise the red rose!

While living, let's live in the spirit of the red rose. Bow to the red rose, pay homage to the red rose. Whoever draws near to the red rose draws nearest to God. Whoever believes in the red rose believes in love and kindness. Whoever raises the red rose raises the sword of justice, raises the scepter of human conscience, and becomes a pillar supporting the paradise to which mankind has aspired throughout the ages. The red rose blooms in our hearts; It is the smile of God in our hearts, the opening of the Gospel in our bodies. Each one of us is a red rose, a red rose bursting through flesh and blood.

A red rose is a tender and peaceful power; It is a fragrant rejection, resistance and destruction; It is beauty's contempt and transcendence of darkness; it is the eternal blue dream of humanity that floats between the sea, the sky and the vast land . . .⁷

Composed by Huang Xiang, Dec. 2003, translated by Yunshan Ye.



Morning meditation and evening leisure: enjoying community, celebrating life.

Song: "Sister, carry on"



passion, living fully, suffering deeply. Only in such a spirit might we proceed towards becoming liberating churches with a genuinely sacramental presence among the vast majority of the world's people – the poor and oppressed who inhabit this earth.

1. Sister, carry on. Sister, carry on

It may be rocky and it may be rough, but sister, carry on.

2. Sister, don't lose the dream, sister, don't lose the dream.

Don't sell out for no short time gain, sister, don't lose the dream.

- Sister, don't settle too soon, sister, don't settle too soon.
 Till everybody's got their rights. Sister, don't settle too soon.
- 4. Sister, we share the way, sister, we share the way. Heart to heart and hand to hand, sister, we share the way.
- 5. Stand in solidarity, stand in solidarity. Together bring a brand new day, stand in solidarity.
- 6. Sister, don't lose the dream, sister, don't lose the dream.

Don't sell out for no short time gain, sister, don't lose the dream.

Tradition and Hierarchy in our Churches

I. A Kenyan Perspective

Elizabeth Haganda Jilo

Verse 2-5: Texte rhythmisch frei gestalten. Text und Melodie: Carolyn Dade. © Europäische Frauensynode, A-1090 Wien

The Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church (KELC) as a religious body has a vision of having one percent of Kenya's population to become members of the Church by 2007. The Church has also a mission of enabling people within the Church and those outside the Church to have life in its fullness (John 10.10b). Guided by the word of God, the Church also has a mandatory obligation of proclaiming the Good News of Salvation which is obtained through Jesus Christ to all people so that they may have life and have it to the full. Further on, considering the Church as described by Paul and also referred to as "The household of God" (Eph. 2:19), "household of faith" (Gal. 6.10) and as "adopted Son" (Rom. 8:15-17) is from its beginning regarding itself as a family whose identity is based not only on biological relation but on faith in Jesus Christ. In this aspect the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church regarded as a Spiritual entity has therefore her own spiritual norms and practice (tradition) which governs her own society and which in turn is passed from one generation to another generation. This too is considered as part of the Church style of life to cherish its own heritage as well as its own glory; and at the same time, working for her greater unity.

The Role and Structure of the Church

The role set up and responsibility of the Church in achieving its mission objective is mainly done through nurturing her Church members by the word of God so that their faith may be strengthened and their way of life may bear witness to the Lord. They are nurturing the children and youth to grow in faith, as well as do Christian teaching and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people and to some greater extent, serving their physical and spiritual needs. Finally establishing polices and procedure for doing the work of the Church and also working with other Churches, government sectors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and



stakeholders for common interest without interference of her own faith. Enhancement has also resulted from her own internal structure, at congregational level to a higher level (Head Office).

Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church Advocacy Organs

It is best for each Church to cherish its own tradition in which it stands by a combination of destiny and free choice. On the other hand, a Church is a dutiful servant of all, subject to all. Believing in the doctrine affirms that all Christians become priests to their neighbours.

In this regard therefore, the Church being constituted by all people of all ages, color and race, believes in sharing from one another's God given gifts and potentials.

Position and Role of Women in the Church

The Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church Women desk which stands as a co-ordination tool has a
major aim in bringing women together for the purpose of collaborating and networking. Her main objective is specific to nurturing women's faith and creating a time in which women learn and experience Christian way of living as well as fostering ecumenism with other Churches.

As an abridging tool, it sensitizes and encourages women in the great commission of going to the world for witnessing (Math. 28:19) in order to bring other women to Jesus. The Church also creates a forum to women to use their potentials both for the benefit of others and the Church. Further on, the Church is keener in educating her own women aiming at building spiritual ethics.

Finally this initiative creates a forum for women to invent and be creative enough for contemporary Church development. In this regard, women in the Parishes and Mission areas are considered the most active, initiator, participatory and development conscious characters as well as great Church transformers. This is seen during Sunday's Church attendants where the majority of those who attend services are women; as well as responsibilities partaken by them at congregational level Parish and Mission level.

Women who have been fully incorporated in the Church activities and programs have reflected their experience in the light of the Gospel Message. They hold high Church positions and considered to be decision makers in policies in the Church as well as in secular world. Their power of advocacy and full participation in issues affecting the Church has greatly inspired and enhanced Church development through their small income generating projects found at Parish level as well as Mission areas.

However, most of the women in certain societies are still looked upon as perpetually dependent beings that always must be under direction and protection of men; and to some extent they are referred to as objects of abuse and exploitation and source of wealth to men who handle them like personal properties. In this juncture some even find it hard to accept Church roles and participate fully. However, those who are given responsibilities without interferences and have accepted responsibilities fully are rediscovering new images in the Bible, which are based on partnership and mutual relationship amongst other women. This has greatly transformed the Church and has made a response to contemporary needs and visions of the Church Ministry.

"Unless we women understand the structures of our churches, we will not

be able to change or influence them. And we need to put women in decision making positions and committees. We have to strategize where to put an input and make a change."

Nashilongo Shivute

The youth whose objective does not differ much from the women's, are considered as the Church of today and that of tomorrow. The church also aims at touching the youth's cognitive, emotion, moral and faith dimensions as young as they seem, are highly influenced by personal issues. They would wish to discover more about themselves as well as their roles in the Church. The Church has therefore thrown its concern to them by preparing them to be responsible and ready to take over Church responsibilities as well as to use their potentials.

Organs Assisting Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church

As Christians acknowledge only 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism', the Church puts no bounds around where God may be graciously active. Being loved by Jesus, the Church is compelled to share love with others, providing care and support to People Living with AIDS (PLWA), HIV/AIDS, orphans and widows as a venture undertaken by the Church at grassroots level. This is steered up by the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church HIV/AIDS Desk. In this trend four main strategies are punt in the priority of consideration and action being:

- Prevention and control of HIV/AIDS transmission by the promotion of primary and secondary abstinence and encouraging faithful marriages
- Addressing cultural practices and lifestyles which seem to increase risks and transmission of HIV/AIDS infection as well as reaching people who engage in sex with multiple partners including commercial sex workers.
- Prevention of parents to child transmission
- Providing of care and support to orphans, PLWA and widows whose objectives are
 - (i) Peer Counselling and education as well as promotion of Voluntary Counselling and testing (V.C.T.)
 - (ii)Reducing stigma and discrimination against PLWA and encouraging people to break the silence and adhere to live positively.

The Church and Tradition Transformation

Discussing about the Church and tradition this is also to discuss the Church as people who are "called to be Saints" (1 Cor. 1:2) "called into the communion of the Son of God" (1 Cor. 1:9) and their tradition. This may therefore mean God's society in possession of their own tradition or more to say, it means speaking to man and his way of living.

Tradition is therefore more emphasized as a system which customs and beliefs are handed over from one generation to another generation. This is usually habitual practice, which by a long established usage has come to have the force of law in the existing societies. Tradition seems to play a very big role in governing and binding the African communities together. Mentioning a few specific traditions, which the Church stand to challenge are such as wife inheritance, poly-gamy and female circumcision.

a) Polygamy

To date, in some of the Kenyan communities, polygamy co-exists. It is a custom which marriage is of one husband with more than one wife (spouse). It was regarded to fit well in the past in the social structure of the traditional life.

It was meant to raise the social status of the family hence meaning, a big family earns its head great respect in the eyes of the community and the more productive a person is, the more he contributes to the existence of society at large. Also in times of needs there will always be someone (wife) to be around to help.

This was also considered as a means of extending domestic duties to women and reduces men's promiscuity. It was thought and regarded as a means of relieving one wife especially when birth takes place.

Polygamy was also constituted by wife inheritance, which was a fairly common practice in use. To date in some Kenyan communities, this is still regarded as a sacred tradition in practice. Inheriting a wife of the deceased was considered worthwhile and this goes with performing all the duties of a husband and father. It aimed at extending the chain of life from the dead man, which are rather more a mystic link and not a biological one.

b) Female Circumcision

This practice has some space in some of our societies. It is regarded as sacred and going against is to break the society taboos though this is practiced secretly. This rite is considered as maturation stage to adulthood and regarded as a revolution of mind, body and spirit. In some societies it is believed that if a girl does not undergo this initiation, children born out of them would become abnormal. It is believed by some communities that "the sex organ is the symbol of life; and cutting it is like unlocking the issues of life, so that thereafter there may be an unblocked floor of life". As a sacred act, then there is survival of the society; this however is regarded as one of the Rite de Passage.

> "What disturbs me most is when we women are involved in this 'evil'. If we didn't circumcise our girls, our daughters I doubt that men would take the razor and do it themselves." Anneth Munga

The Impact

Though polygamy, wife inheritance and female circumcision were seen as a tradition governing such communities this had also negative impact. Jealousies and quarrels seem to prevent harmonious life for parents and children alike. The mystery of love loses its meaning or cannot be found easily especially in polygamy and wife inheritance. More to say so, this may be regarded as a stat or an act of dehumanizing someone (women) and greatly intimidating women especially the act of circumcision. Apart from violating human dignity, it is considering women as a personal property. Worst of all, this is seen and considered as the direct avenue to HIV/AIDS transmission.

The Church as a Healing Agent

In such situations, the Church has to fit in and act as a place of healing and not remaining neutral, silent or taking traditional sides. The church has to take action.

The Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church hasn't kept quiet but is greatly advocating against such tradition. It has sensitized women to take initiative roles in making others make informed choices.

Women have been made to realize their roles and have been given chances to advocate for their personal rights in regard to vague traditions; sex life should not be regarded as domination rather than that of mutual sharing among the persons.

The Church as an agent of liberation and healing is raising a new consciousness to remove silence, receptiveness, passiveness and conservativeness among such existing traditions.

As nations are advanced also their women are advanced and advancing. The Church in solidarity has to foster improving the status of women. It has to be made clear through Church advocacy, that men's rights are based on God's righteousness and not a social control.

The Gospel stands to be the only liberator and healer to all human kind. Gal. 3:28 "In Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither man nor woman. " Here the Gospel does not only offer liberation but also healing and reconciliation.

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2. A Brazilian Perspective

Ieda Radünz

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Every human being has got some kind of tradition which is first of all a complex of habits that we have due to

the way we were brought up. If the principles are well based then they can help us to lead our lives well and to keep in touch with other traditions.

It is good to mention that tradition of any kind is changeable, even the best one. Let me put you in the picture: Someone that moves to the capital coming from the countryside has to change one's tradition or habits. One had a good tradition but now has to get used to the new kind of life.

Church has its tradition as well. Nowadays we are living in a different age, with different habits, in a different way.

Our church was established 180 years ago when the first Germans arrived in Brazil. Thanks to these people we have the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil. During decades the Lutheran Church was only the Church of the Germans and for them. Those who didn't speak German couldn't take part in it.

Time passed by and traditions began to be "bad" when the church started to open up for those of non German origin in our community. If we had stayed only with the Germans today we would be a smaller church and spiritually poorer. We keep the German tradition but we look for something more up to date; even the groups are not the same anymore. Any tradition is good as long as it helps us to cope with the world we live in and from which we can not run away. It is bad when we are obliged to do things and just keep on repeating what we did in the past - that is the old concept of tradition.

> "Those Germans in Namibia they still remain separated, they have their own churches, their clubs, their Bierfest, Bratwurst and Kuchen. But those things that are separating us are somehow artificial, we have to go for a process of unity."

> > Nashilongo Shivute

Hierarchy

Hierarchy is a vertical structure from the top to the bottom. The army for example has its hierarchy structure. For a long time we have been told a noncommissioned can not disagree with his superior. The Catholic Church has got a vertical hierarchy. The Pope's decrees are followed all over the world by the Roman Catholics and these decrees can not be questioned. The Bishop has autonomy towards his community and a priest can be sent to another community even if that community hasn't been questioned before.

Actually, every institution has some kind of hierarchy, but this hierarchy doesn't need to be strict, actually it can be opened.

In the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil anyone can get in touch with the Synodal Priest, and in any case. Even when someone disagrees with the priest's point of view the person is welcome by the priest to talk about the subject. In our church there is the President Priest as there are Synodal Priests in every community. There is a rule to allow space, time and opportunity for everyone in the church. We know that this is not a perfect model.

Now let's turn to the family as an example. It can have a closed hierarchy. In this specific case, what your parents or grandfather say, no-one can disagree with or act in a different way. We know that this kind of behavior has affected families so much. The parents decided about their son's and daughter's marriage and they weren't asked about their desire. So things were decided from the top to the bottom. But of course, there are ways to cope with it and live well so the parents and the eldest authority won't be refused. We look for dialogue and we discuss the subject and reasonable arguments can be given before coming to a decision. Most of the time this is the longest and hardest way but for sure the more sensible one.

Igreja Evangèlica de Confissao Lutherana no Brasil (IECLB) - current structure



Cultural **Evening** Sister, carry on ΕЬ A journey through continents and cultures: Welcoming spring. (Germany) car - ry EЪ ro - cky and be it ΒЬ rough, bu s - ter, ca EЪ Time for a chat. (Africa) A song from Central America. ro - cky and it lt may be B۶ A dance ceremony from Asia-Pacific. ∇ ut sis-ter, ____ car - ry on.

Tradition and Religion



Enjoying diversity, celebrating community on stopover in Neuendettelsau.

Tuesday, May 25th, 2004

Bible Sharing "Building a House of God"

Rita Fikele Phaswana

Phase I: Book of the Prophet Haggai Chapter I, Verse 8

'Go up the hills and bring wood and build the house that I may take pleasure in it and that I may appear in my glory' says the Lord'

'Going up the hill' may not be easy as the path may be slippery, full of stones, too steep, full of thorny bushes and there maybe no path at all.

'Bring wool' in order to finish the house quickly, you will have to carry more than one log. The log may have scorpions, snakes or wet. Scorpions and snakes are poisonous. Wet log is heavy to carry. When I was a young girl I experienced this. I carried a number of log without knowing that they have scorpions.

'Build the house': Building a house needs a plan, finance, organization, and to follow municipality rules. It needs a ground to build on, windows, roofing materials and material that are needed to make a house a home. Building a good house is an investment.

'That I may take pleasure in it': A house should be homely. Should have warmth; should be comfortably; should have trust, hope and love.

What has the above business to do with empowerment? Let us look at the explanation.

Phase 2: Empowerment

According to P.D. Gerber, P.S. Nel, P.S. van Dyk empowerment is an action of investment in the allocation of authority through which organizations and people are able to reach their goals – involving power sharing; carrying out responsibilities, re-



moving factors that hamper personal and organizational development and allowing people to think and take decisions. There is social empowerment, economic empowerment and political empowerment. Although these three types of empowerment interact with each other, we are going to talk more about social empowerment which also includes religious empowerment.

Action

When we talk about empowerment this implies that there must be activity to be taken. There must be physical movement, verbal activity and listening. Physical movement includes taking part in practical teaching skills and financial support. Verbal activity will be explaining, conducting workshops and mobilizing people to understand empowerment in order to prevent misunderstanding. When building the house to take action means collecting the necessary materials. We become practically involved in the whole process.

Investment

Investment is saving for the future. Whatever we do must be a contribution towards building human beings, especially women. If we teach women, we are teaching the nation. We must build the house of

him to present the two guests so

that the men could get to

them. This is frequently

preted as a desire to gang

the visitors although oth-

terpretations are possi-

gave two of his virgin

to be raped instead. Yet

ter this despicable act, he

still regarded as an hon-

to be sexually assaulted

multiple rapist appears to

treated as a minor transbecause of the low status

young women.

She could be dismissed when no

two concubines, Rehoboam 60,

longer needed. Abraham had

Allowing one's

the Lord in such a way that it will be investment for us and the nation.

Responsibility

Responsibility means to be accountable for what one is doing or saying. Women should be taught that the responsibility for their lives is in them. They are responsible for their future. They are responsible for their families as men are also responsible for their families. If we are teaching our children that boys and girls are not the same, we are not responsible to the nation. We are not responsible for the empowerment of women.

Removing stumbling blocks

The main stumbling block in the empowerment of women is the culture and fear of the unknown. Our respective cultures have to be studied before they are modified because there are good things in our cultures as well. The results should be explained to the society.

Phase 3: What the Old Testament says about Women

Genesis 1:27 to Genesis 3:24)	In the first creation story, it is stated that God cre-	Exodus 21:22-25)	describes a situation in v two men are fighting and
ated both same preted equal.	male and female at the time. This may be inter- that the two genders are		doing so, hitting a pregn woman. If the woman ha miscarriage because of the blow, the men must pay act. The payment is made
	The second story informs us that God realized that a man		husband.
	needs a helper. He marched all the animals past Adam (Genesis 2:19-20) looking for a suitable animal. There was none. God then created Eve out of one of Adam's ribs.	Numbers 27:8-11)	Moses describes the rules heritance. If a man dies, inherits the state, and th daughter gets nothing. T still being practiced in se countries.
Genesis 16)	Sara gave permission to her husband Abraham to engage in sexual intercourse with her maid, Hagar. Presumably this was done without the consent of Hagar who had such a low status in the society of the day.	Numbers 30)	describes that a vow take man is binding but a vow by a woman can be nulli her father, if she is still li her family of origin or h band's familiy if she is n
Genesis 19)	The men of Sodom gathered around Lot's houses and asked	Deuteronomy 25:5-10)	states that if a woman is widowed, her former bro

Healing and our Traditions

'know' inter rape er in ble. Lot daughters even af was orable daughters by be gression of the Genesis 21:10)

Solomon 300. Pharaoh ordered the midwives *Exodus* 1:15-16) to kill Jewish boys because of the threat that they might pose to the kingdom. Girls were con sidered less important, were not seen as a threat, they were al lowed to live.

man.

which d whilst nant ias a the to their de to her

es on in , his son he This is some

> ken by a w taken lified by living in her hus married.

is otherin-law would normally marry her. This was called a levitate marriage. Their first born would be considered to the son of the deceased husband. Women were not given a choice in the matter.

Phase 4: Women who broke the Practice

- *Exodus 1:17-21)* Hebrew midwives were able to outsmart the Pharaoh and save lives of the Jewish baby boys.
- *Exodus 2)* The birth mother of Moses was able to circumvent the Pharaoh's order to kill all baby boys and thus saved her child.
- Joshua 2:1-16) describes how Rahab, a prostitute, hid two Israelite spies and saved lives by misdirecting the soldiers.
- *Judges 5 and 5)* Deborah is described as both a Judge of Israel and as the leader of the army.

During the Old Testament Times Women's Behaviour and their Status of Freedom was extremely limited:

- Unmarried women were not allowed to leave the home of their father;
- Married women were not allowed to leave the home of their husband;
- they were normally restricted to roles of little or no authority;
- they could not testify in court;
- they could not appear in public venues;
- they were not allowed to talk to the public gatherings;
- they had to be doubly veiled when they left their homes;
- they were largely confirmed to their father's or husband's home;
- they were considered to be inferior to men.

Phase 5: Jesus' radical Treatment of Women

Christ overthrew many centuries of Jewish law and custom. He consistently treated women and men as equals. He violated numerous Old Testament regulations which specified gender inequalities.

- He ignored ritual impurity laws: Mark 5:25-34 describes Jesus' cure of a women who suffered from menstrual bleeding for twelve years. In Judean society of the day, it was a major transgression for a man to talk to a woman other than his wife or children.
- He talked to foreign women: John 4:7-5:30 describes Jesus' conversation with a woman of Samaria. She was doubly ritually unclean since she was both a foreigner and a woman.

Phase 6: Jesus treated Women as equal to Men:

- Luke 13:16 describes how Jesus cured a woman from an indwelling satanic spirit. He called her a daughter of Abraham thus implying that she had equal status with sons of Abraham.
- He accepted women in his inner circle (Luke 8:1-3). On top of his twelve male disciples, he had an unspecified number of female supporters (Mary Magdalena, Joanna ...).
- He first appeared to a woman after his resurrection (Matthew 28:9-10).
- Women were present at the time of his crucifixion.
- He told parallel stories: one relation to a woman and the other to a man, for example
 - Simeon and Hannah in Luke 2:25-38;
 - Widow of Sarepta and Naaman in Luke 4:25-38;
 - The woman who had lived a sinful life in Luke 7:36;
 - A man and a woman sleeping together in Luke 17:34.
- Jesus expressed concern of widows, he emphasized the importance of supporting widows throughout his ministry. The Gospel of Luke alone contains six references to widows (Luke 4:26, 7:11, 18:1, 20:47 and 21:1).

Phase 7: Let us look at our Logs

For our Bible Study, we have to compare the church of God to our churches. These churches are comprised of human beings or us which can be compared to the logs. God is saying to the people of Judah: 'You have time for yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, while this house lies in ruins.' When God comes down now, what will He find us doing? Will He find us building His house or will He find us building our own houses?

Each one of us has to silently take a moment to think about ones life and what she is doing for the house of the Lord. Think of that neighbour of yours. There are a large number of logs that are supposed to be collected from the hills. Some of this logs, they have snakes or scorpions which are drugs, alcohol, poor education, poor homes or none, lack of skills, lack of clothing, lack of knowledge about their rights and some logs have not heard or accepted the word of God.

Rights of Women

As we can see from the history in the Bible that women for many years were in the shadows of their husbands and fathers. There were things that they were not supposed to do or they had not the rights to do. It was accepted by most men and women. They were seen as weak, physical and in decisionmaking. Some women are still in the same situation. Those that are not happy with the way the culture is, had to die in silence. While struggling with the reality of being a human, the strong woman dies. She dies in silence because screaming about the pain may inconvenience her. She may loose her husband or her children. It is for you sister who is here today, to stand up, go to the mountain, look for those logs that are getting rotten. Revive them by talking to them. Sharing your knowledge about their rights as the children of God. Tell them as children of God, they have to stand up and be strong. God is there for them.

In African Countries women did not participate in decision-making and they had to get authorization from their husbands if they wanted to buy on credit. Even if the husband is not working and is not going to pay for a cent. This still happens even at present days in some institutions. It is for you sister to share your experiences with these sisters. Some young people who are working, cannot buy houses because their mothers tell them that girls are not supposed to have homes. Only men are supposed to buy homes. It is also us women who are supposed to be educated about our rights so that we do not pass wrong thoughts to our daughters. Who can do that if it isn't us who are here today who stand up and talk?

HIV/AIDS

The other scorpion which makes our logs not of any value to build a strong house is HIV/AIDS. Most young girls are being raped by their relatives or someone they know. Some men believe that if they have sex with a virgin, they will be cured of AIDS. Some of these children get infected and when they are sick it is the duty of the mother to wash them, feed them and give them all what they need. Men when they are sick are taken care of by women. When a woman is sick it is difficult to get someone to take care of her. One woman was taken out of the tin house by her husband because she was sick. He left her under the tree to die. There is a need for us sisters to support those homes that are caring for the victims of AIDS.

Some families are taken care of by the young children because both parents have been killed by the disease. Some are taken care by their grand parents who are getting less than a 100 Euros a month. Some children they leave on an allowance that is given by government which is about 20 Euros. These children need someone to pay their education so that they can have a brighter future. They need someone to feed them as sometimes they sleep without having something to eat.

Drugs

Most of the young generation, especially the middle class groups, are targeted by the drug dealers. They give them drugs for free at first. When they are used to them, they teach them to steal from their parents. When they no longer bring enough money, they encourage killing their parents so that they can inherit some money. We have to remember those mothers who are widows or who have lost their children because of drugs. As mothers we carry these children for nine months, we breast-feed them and they speak the first words under our care. Women need to be taught how to handle the situation so that they are able to know the signs when their children are affected. Who can do that if it isn't us who are here today who stand up and talk?

Skills

Most women who did not get formal education are old and cannot go to school. They need to be taught some skills which will enable them to take care of themselves and their families. They need money for equipment and material and for payment for the trainer. Who can help them? It is us who are here today.

Houses

Some people live in tinned houses. These houses, they are hot in summer and too cold in winter. As mothers we cannot build houses for the whole world but we can do something. Organize women through churches, buy equipment to make bricks, teach these groups of women to make bricks and build houses for themselves. Then God will be happy that the logs of His house are taken care of and they will be of value for building a strong house of the Lord.

Clothing

While we are still watering forests to grow up, we need to cloth our logs. When winter comes most children they shiver because they do not have warm clothes. Although handouts are not encouraged but while we are thinking of something permanent for those in need to support themselves, we need to take out those clothes that we no longer need and give them to those who need them most. God will be happy that His house has been clothed.

Phase 8: Thinking and Taking a Decision

Every human being is capable of thinking and taking a decision. It is only to teach ourselves to listen to each other's thinking and supporting good decisions. Before helping someone, it is better to know that person or the problem that one is phased with. In order to take the right decision in every situation we have to look at this decision from all points off view. We can do this by using the 'Six Thinking Hats' tool.

White Hat

With this thinking hat you focus on the data available. Look at the information you have, and see what you can learn from it. Look for gaps in your knowledge and either fill them or take account of them. This is where you analyse pat trends, and try to extrapolate from historical data.

Red Hat

Wearing the Red Hat, you look at problems using intuition, gut reaction and emotion. Also try to think how other people will react emotionally. Try to understand the responses of people who do not fully know your reasoning.

Black Hat

Using Black Hat thinking, you look at all the bad points of the decision. Look at it cautiously and defensively. Try to see why it might not work. This is important because it highlights the weak points of the plan. It allows you to eliminate them, alter them, or prepare contingency plans to counter them.

Black Hat thinking helps to make your plans tougher and more resilient. It can also help you to spot fatal flaws and risks before you embark on a course of action. Black Hat thinking is one of the real benefits of this technique, as many successful people get so used to thinking positively that often they cannot see problems in advance. This leaves them under-prepared for difficulties.

Yellow Hat

The Yellow Hat helps you to think positively. It is the optimistic viewpoint that helps you to see all the benefits of the decision and the value in it. Yellow Hat thinking helps you to keep going when everything looks gloomy and difficult.

Green Hat

The Green Hat stands for creativity. This is where you can develop creative solutions to a problem. It is a freewheeling way of thinking, in which there is little criticism of ideas. A whole rage of creativity tools can help you here.

Blue Hat

The Blue Hat stands for process control. This is the hat worn by people chairing meetings. When running into difficulties because ideas are running dry, they may direct activity into Green Hat thinking. When contingency plans are needed, they will ask for Black Hat thinking.

Six Thinking Hats is a good technique for looking at the effects of a decision from a number of different points of view.

It allows necessary emotions and scepticism to be brought into what would otherwise be purely rational decision. It opens up the opportunity for creativity within decision-making. The technique also helps, for example, persistently pessimistic people to be positive and creative.

Plans developed using the 'Six Thinking Hats' technique will be sounder and more resilient than would otherwise be the case. It may also help you to avoid public relations mistakes, and spot good reasons not to follow a course of action before you have committed to it.

Various Methods How To Do Bible-Study

I. Bible-Study developed in South-Africa

(see next page)

- Prayer
- Reading the text

Silence - Everyone is looking for the most im-

portant verse for her

Everyone is reading/telling her sentence

Why is this verse important for me? Everyone tells the others

Prayer – everyone says a short Prayer Blessing of the Lord/Song

- II. Reading the text then playing a drama
- I. Reading the text
- 2. Informations about the text (by the leader)
 - Persons in the story
 - Situation
 - Scenes
- 3. The leader tells the important message
- 4. Decision: Who wants to play whom?
- 5. The drama
- 6. Concluding decision
- 7. Blessing of the Lord/Prayers/Song

- III. Reading the text answering questions
- I. Reading the text
- 2. Informations by the leader
 - Persons in the story
 - The place
 - The situation
- 3. Prepared questions are:
 - \cdot Who is acting? Why?
 - \cdot What is important?
 - \cdot What do you like in the text?
 - What is the message? What does God say to you?

IV. Playing a drama - then reading the text

- I. Drama-prepared before by some of the group
- 2. Reading the text
- 3. Comparing the text with the drama
- 4.What did you as players feel? What did you like/ not like?
- 5. What is the message for us?

For bible-studies in women's groups take stories in which persons are acting. Perhaps take the texts, which are proposed for the Sunday-School. These are important to know – and you can play them.

Bible-sharing in 7 steps

A method developed in South-Africa

5. Share
Share with each other what becomes impor- tant to you when your read this text. Share
what you think and what you feel about the
text. Share your experiences with this text.
Don't discuss but share!
If there are any questions about the text,
ask the person of the group, who prepared
the bible-study.
6. Ask for the Lords will
What does the Lord wants us to do? What are relations between the text and our experiences/work/family/church?
7. Prayer/ Song
We tell the Lord our praise thanks, re-
quests, questions in a short loud our silent
prayer.
Finish with the Lords Prayer or a song.

How to strengthen Women –

(in my working context)

Anneth Munga

"If you educate one man, you have educated himself. If you educate a woman, you have educated a whole society." Julius Nyerere, 1st President of Tanzania

1. One way to empower women is to unite them in mixed groups. This, as a consequence, enriches themselves as it brings together a richness of experience as well as a richness of life knowledge. But just by being women does not mean that you can get along.

In Eastern Africa the basic dish is called Ugali. It is a commeal mush, cooked with water to a thick consistency and poured out onto a board or plate for everyone to eat from. Beef broth with vegetables can be poured over it, and on special occasions chunks of meat are added to the broth.

Eating Ugali gives strength for the whole day and when people from Eastern Africa come to Europe they often get the impression that Europeans are in need of Ugali.

There are three rules how to eat Ugali:

- → Harmony rule means that you eat Ugali at the same time, e.g. the whole family.
- → Solidarity rule means to form small pieces for everybody.
- Empathy rule means not to eat to quick and to eat as much as you can but to take care that everybody is getting his or her share, e.g. elderly.

For me, this is a very strong picture how to enable each others to strengthen our gifts.

- 2. Creating awareness amongst both women and men:
 - → help women with small achievements e.g. making a woman read a bible text in church (who is not used to it)



→ counselling

e.g. for single women who are exposed to gossip ("doesn't she have a vagina?"); this easily happens in my society as women are called by the name of their first born son. Myself, for example, I am called Mama Immanuel. If people called me by my first name Anneth, which I like very much, this would indicate that I do not have children and lead to gossip, even discrimination immediately;

- → seminars concerning laws and rights e.g. land, property, inheritance rights; to advice women what steps to take and to safeguard them and their children;
- → educate women e.g. to not accept violence neither for themselves nor for their children nor anybody else;e.g. handicapped children and to help women to accept their handicapped children;
- *ifting up the positive values we have* e.g. hospitality, generosity, etc. – these make our societies warmer.

Exercise: Gender Scale

Gabriele Mayer

We are approaching one topic through different angles. But before presenting Expert Reports on various fields – how gender perspectives are applied – I want to ask you to participate in an experiment, an exercise concerning our perception:

Exercise:

- → See the black cross and the black spot below,
- \rightarrow take the sheet of paper in your right hand,
- → hold it right in front of you,
- \rightarrow at eye level and at arm's length,
- \rightarrow now keep your left eye closed

- → and focus your right eye on the cross
- → while slowly moving the sheet of paper towards your eyes.
- → What happens?



Questions:

- → With which eyes do we look at the world?
- → Experiment Biology: We don't know that we don't see!Where are the blind spots in our world view?
- → New born babies blue/red frames
- → Gender roles are constructed can we deconstruct them?
- → How can we deconstruct unequal gender roles?



Expert Reports on various fields – How gender perspectives are applied

I. Family

Esther Milandu Mundemba, Zambia

My husband grew up in a context where a strict segregation between men and women did not exist, which is very remarkable against the background that this was common rule in his tribe. When it was time for me to go to hospital to give birth to our first child, my husband carried both my suitcases, the small one and the large one. This immediately attracted the attention of one of his cousins, who happened to be present and he asked: "Why are you carrying both the suitcases and your wife does not carry anything?" "I can do what I think is correct", my husband replied, "besides she is carrying my baby and I do not want her to carry an extra load." Again the cousin intervened: "Later on you will regret that you are spoiling her now."

2. Professional Level Wai Ching Mühlhaus, Hong Kong

I've been serving full-time in a congregation for five years (the other three years I was helping there on a voluntary basis). As I was invited to work part-time in the same congregation, we planned to look for a full-time minister. We then had a male pastor and one half-time male evangelist, too.

The conflict arose between the new pastor and me, because we had different leading styles and ideas towards the church plan. We sometimes discussed the problem or different ideas in the pastor's committee (together with an honorary senior pastor and the half-time evangelist). But it seemed to me that the new pastor was somehow quite defending in his own viewpoints instead of finding the better solution in seeing the differences.

Of course, I had more experiences in leading this church and church planning, but also took into account that it might not be easy for a new pastor to take up this job as a leader in such a situation. And, furthermore, if it does not do any good to the congregation, the new pastor and me, it might even be the good time for me to withdraw from the leading position. So I went to study again for a Masters program. In our tradition, it may sometimes be the female withdrawing from a conflict with others (perhaps with man, too). But it also depends on the individuals and the actual situations. For me, I tried to consider all the other aspects of this situation and found the best solution for all. Sometimes I even thought that my reaction may be regarded as a kind of 'empowering to the other genders', too.

3. Non-Governmental-Organizations

Marieta N. G. Saghertian, Indonesia

Some examples:

- To implement gender policy on community health development as required:
 - to involve men on health reproduction educa tion
 - interfaith advocacy on gender sensitivity to give the rights of husband in preparing deliv-

- ery of his wife (one month be fore baby birth);

- Human reproduction education of Theological seminary students;
- To promote men's concern on gender sensitivity through:
 - writing articles about women
 - conducting workshops;
- Gender policy on political events
 - as voter education for general elections,
 quota of women representatives by legislation.

4. Political sphere

Nashilongo Shivute, Namibia

The Namibian Government at independence created a conductive environment for the promotion of equality between men and women. The Namibian constitution has in it built a Bill of Rights in which Namibia recognises the importance of promoting women to an equal status to men in society. Article 10 provides that at all levels effort must be made to ensure that women are accorded equal status, opportunities and access to resources.

So in 1990 the Department of Women Affairs (DWA) in the Office of the President was established. The DWA was tasked to ensure that the constitutional provisions are made alive and transform into programme and activities that improve the situation of women.

The process involves three main stages

Development of a communication strategy: This stage was mainly to do an assessment and review to establish what the status of women was in the country with regard to gender equality. Secondly, we looked at the views of the public and perceptions on relations between women and men in society.

Messages and perceptions from various interest groups were collected from men, women, church, youth, political leaders and so forth. The emerging themes were collected in a manual that is titled "The Namibian Communication Strategy on Gender Equality (1992-1994)".

The strategy served to help decide what level of intervention and targets were to be selected and focussed on. The emerging targets included education, economic development, health, rural development, Tradition/Culture and Law.

Subsequently consultations were held to verify these priorities with the communities, interest groups at local, regional and national levels. The process took account of locational, traditional, cultural and language diversity. Hence, translation of materials, use of pictures and visuals that had to be representative and relevant in a very broad sense.

Preliminary Process to Design Gender Policy

The next stage was to establish gender sector committees at national level consisting of government, non governmental organizations, churches and civil society. The gender committees were in the following categories:

- a) Education and Training
- b) Information
- c) Rural Development
- d) Economic Empowerment
- e) Women in Decision-making
- f) Women and Health
- g) Culture and Tradition
- h) Law

The chairpersons were designated by the line

ministries that deal with the specific issues outlined above. Further, the thrust of the committees was to integrate messages and perspectives from the communities into the national Gender Policy.

The Department of Women Affairs then acted as a central coordinating agency and secretariat to this process to ensure continuity and sustainability. A calendar of events was held to monitor and receive progress on the work of the committees. The Department also provided training in gender related matters for members of the committees on a continuous level.

Following the above process, a gender policy was developed and presented to the nation in the year 1999/2000.

The main lesson learned is that the process of developing a gender policy has to provide a broad forum for consultation and it must consider a broad spectrum of views.

5. Church awareness

Lakele Tetac, Papua New Guinea

Gender is very important but hasn't been considered at all within Papua New Guinea organizations and within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea.

All Gender Trainings have been imposed by other donor agencies, nothing much has been developed in Papua New Guinea itself. There is no home grown Gender Awareness. A Gender Training within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea is planned as a first step in order to be clear about the Gender Concept. The Gender Business within Papua New Guinea is looked upon as women's business, which got nothing to do with men. Therefore the Gender Training which is already planned with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea for 2005 is expected to assist the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea staff - men and women. To develop further strategies on how to overcome violence against women is the sensitive issue in our church today.

Even though we didn't talk about Gender issues within our church, there have been some happenings which we belief is our starting point. Here I would like to show some of the points:

1. Our Bishop, Rev. Dr. Wesley Kigasung, nominat-

ed a woman to represent the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea on the council of the Lutheran World Federation. Her name is Mrs Nakei Siloi.

- 2. One of our women leaders, the coordinator of our National Women's Centre, Mrs Martha Aisi Eliasa, represents the whole country in the World Council of Churches.
- 3. Our church now agrees to women being trained in the seminary for four years to get their diploma in Theology, but not to be pastors.
- 4. In our synod 2004 our church agreed to have our women representatives in all decision making of our church.

We women see this as a good start for us and a bright future for our women.

6. Church policy *Bekure Dhaba, Ethiopia*

Women's development, called women's work for a longer time, has been carried out through out the church for many years. Nevertheless, the EECMY Development Department (now called DASSC) has established the Women's/Gender Desk in 1996 in a more organized manner. One "Training and Gender Unit Coordinator" is coordinating the work. She was mainly responsible for the strengthening and further promotion of gender sensitive issues in the development activities of the church. Under this activity, due attention was given to raising awareness on the concept of gender and gender in development, practical training on credit, nutrition, etc.

Currently, in all integrated rural development projects, women's development is included as one of the components. Under women's development the activities such as vegetable gardening, small scale credit scheme (in cash or kind), reducing women's work load (planting mills, introducing ensete processor), home economics etc. have been carried out. All these activities have brought many positive changes in the nutritional and economic improvement of the household due to the women's development component as well as to the support they got from their husbands (men). It is true that women's development and other project components such as health and education addressed the practical needs of women. The challenges in the area of meeting the strategic needs such as woman's participation in decision making and women's human rights are not yet tackled. The challenge is to meet the change agents, the church, the community and the women themselves.

> "Eighty percent of the work load in Ethiopia, you could even say in Africa, is done by women. But they are not the ones to decide, neither on financial affairs, nor the economy."

> > Bekure Dhaba

The EECMY has a policy of Holistic Ministry (serving the spiritual and physical needs of people), its Development and Social Service wing has a vision of seeing "a society that is reconciled to God and its neighbours; and were all its spiritual, physical, socio cultural needs are met and where all people are living in harmony, solidarity, equality, justice and peace"¹.

In order to promote gender issues dissemination in all its project's operational areas, and realize gender mainstreaming, DASSC has clearly stated in its strategic plan of 2004-2007 the goal, objectives and output² of GAD.

Goal:

To materialize equity and equality of men and women in decision-making and leadership of the church units and the society.

Objectives:

To address effectively gender and development issues in all social services and development works of the church units.

OUT PUT:

- 1. Enhance capacity of church units gender and development
- 2. Increased women access to adoptable technologies
- 3. Increased economic power for women
- 4. Functional networks established
- 5. Enhanced availability of reliable data/information bases

References

- ¹ DASSC SP Document 2003.
- 2 Ibid
- "EECMY's HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Programme": Training Manual 2002
- Megersa Guta: "The progress of women's ministry in the EECMY", delivered in a National

Workshop on promoting the ordination of women in the EECMY

7. Partnership Relations

Bärbel Fünfsinn, Germany

A Gender-Analysis for partnership groups who want to contribute to gender-justice:

Why a gender lens

The goal of using gender as a lens to look at different programs work is a great challenge for ecumenical institutions. NMZ's commitment to gender is rooted in our faith. As Christians, we affirm that all people are created in the divine image, and that women and men, girls and boys, are equally valued and loved by God. As children of God, we are all called to do God's work.

Looking at development programs (or NMZ overseas programs) through the lens of gender means that we will become aware of the different roles of men and women in the contexts in which we work, consciously focusing on the relationships between men and women and asking how our decisions and our actions will impact both women and men in each setting. This will help us to better understand the contexts and communities in which we work, and to hear all voices in those communities. It will help us ensure that our involvements contribute to greater justice and participation for those who are marginalized.

What do we mean by gender?

Gender refers to the roles of women and men in a given culture and their relationship to each other. In most societies, women and men have different roles which result in their having different needs and interests. Awareness of these differences helps us to understand the relative position of women and men in a society, in the division of responsibilities and resources, benefits and rights, power and privilege. A gender perspective assumes that the roles of women and men are interdependent, so that one does not change without changing the other. Roles of women and men will look different in different places and cultures, and over time. They are affected by context, and by which women and men we are talking about (class, age, caste, religion, ethnicity, etc.).

A gender guide

The following set of questions is designed to be used by NMZ overseas programs and workers in thinking about our work. The questions help us to understand the context in which we work, and to make decisions which take gender into account in all of our involvements, regardless of whether or not some involvements target only men or only women. They will guide program planning and provide a focus for discussion and reflections within NMZ and in our relationships with local partners and advisors.

In asking these questions, we need to be aware of how the information is obtained and from whom. Consultation with both men and women representing a diversity of perspectives is essential to gain a full picture. References to men and women should be read to include boys ad girls, as appropriate.

The first questions refer to the context in which the ecumenical partner organization is situated.

The questions of the second part refer to the German church organization, community, institution which is in contact and supporting a partner organization in a foreign country.

A) Who does what kind of work?

Categories of work:

- productive work production of goods and services for subsistence, trade and wage earning (paid work)
- reproductive work all work dealing with the care and maintenance of the household and its members (care of the family, children's education, care of ill people etc./ mostly unpaid work)
- social work on behalf of the community, including involvement in political organizations, places of worship, community associations (voluntary work)

Context – for the partnership program in the foreign country:

- 1. What work do women and girls do in their local setting? How much time do they spend working per day/per week?
- 2. What work do men and boys do in their settings and how much time do they spend working per day/per week?
- 3. How are various kinds of work rated? How is each kind of work paid and what is its social standing?

For the German organization:

1. Does your involvement have an impact on the workload of women, of men? How does your involvement affect the existing division of labour? Does it reinforce or change existing patterns positively or negatively? 2. How can your involvement help to positively distribute the work among men and women?

B) Who can meet practical needs?

Practical needs refer to general living conditions. The following are necessary: Access to food and water, health care, housing, income, elementary schools, kindergarden, public transportation These public institutions and services make everyday life easier for women and men.

Context – for the partnership program:

- 1. Which practical needs do women, do men have?
- 2. Which practical needs can be met by women, by men?

For the German organization:

- 1.Do your activities take the practical needs of women, of men into consideration?
- 2. How can your involvement help both women and men to deal with their practical needs?
- C) Who has got what kind of access and control over resources?

Resources (material and non-material), which improve daily and social life and make it easier, include e.g.: ownership (land, money), creditworthiness, water, paid labour, training and skills, equipment and tools, animals, media communications (phone, radio, TV, computer), information, time, social contacts e.g. neighbourhood help, etc.

Context – for the partnership program:

- 1. What resources do women and men each have access to and the ability to use?
- 2. What are the resources they each have control over? When do women decide, when do men decide and how?
- 3. What benefits do women and men each receive from using these resources?

For the German organization:

- 1. How does your involvement take into account women's and men's access to different resources?
- 2. Does your involvement improve women's and men's access to different resources? Are the benefits of your involvement fairly distributed among your programme partners?
- 3. How can your involvement help to overcome the unequal distribution of resources?
- D) How can strategic interests be met and by whom?

Strategic interests refer to the making of conditions which enable women and men to improve their quality of life. Strategic interests arise from role allocation, division of labour and balance of power. They refer to the legal status of women and men, the freedom and ability to organize themselves, income, possibilities to decide for themselves, their families, in public, etc.

Context – for the partnership program:

- 1. What strategic interests do men and women have in the different social contexts?
- 2. Which gender role expectations exist for men and women?
- 3. What are the rights of men and women?
- 4. Do women, do men have the possibility to organize themselves? Where? When? And how?
- 5. When do women, when do men participate in decision making? How relevant are the decisions for the social and economic life of women, of men?

For the German organization:

- 1. To what extent does your involvement effect strategic interests of women/of men? What kind of interests?
- 2. How can your involvement help women and men to fight for and express their interests better and more clearly?
- 3. Do your activities help women and men to stand up for their interests?
- 4. Does your involvement have any impact on the changing of roles of women and men? Does it contribute to a more just cooperation of women and men?

Only for the foreign applicant organization:

E) Who participated in doing the application?

- 1. Who decided to make the application? Were women and men asked separately about their interests and priorities? Whom do these women and men represent in the community?
- 2. Do women and men participate equally in planning, managing and implementing the project? Do they share equally in the benefits?

Core questions

(for all the expert reports and working fields): Who might be partners in our struggle towards gender justice?

- Whom we may connect and collaborate with?
- family level
- work/organizational level
- non governmental level
- political level

Evening Prayer "Footprints"

Marieta N. G. Saghertian

- -

Song: Thuma Mina 24 "God gave us breath"

Psalm 119, 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Song: Thuma Mina 191 "O Lord, God, set my feet on the way"

Poem:

"Footprints"

One night a man had a dream.

He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonged to him, and the other to the Lord. When the last scene of his life flashed before him. he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life. This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand and why when I needed you most you would leave me." The Lord replied: "My precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, It was then that I carried you." Author unknown



Wednesday, May 26th, 2004

Morning Prayer "Consecration of Healers"

Nashilongo Shivute

Song:

Wind Wind Set Me Free, Wind Wind Set Me Free, Wind My Father Send, The Blessed Holy Spirit.

Devotion: Consecration of Healers

The trees are swaying with the wind, Swaying all the way back to the beginning, and forth to the Kingdom of God.

ALL:

There were no grasses, plants, or trees growing anywhere

When God created the heavens and the earth, Only streams which rippled up to water the parched ground.

Eventually God planted a garden full of trees. In the middle, stood two fruit trees – One which nourished life and the other which imparted wisdom.

Standing before the trees, she considered that the fruits looked juicy and ripe. As his companion, she had always made choices that included him.

ALL:

How could she resist to taste of wisdom? He was equally curious, and quickly accepted the fruit she shared with him.

The effect was instant: the naked couple sewed clothes form fig leaves

And ran to hide from God behind the trees in the garden.

Yet, no foliage was thick enough to disguise their fear,

And no vegetation was over-grown enough to conceal their guilt.

Together they paid the price of knowing.

The rivers became polluted, and they flooded the banks of the world With poverty disease, violence, hate, injustice, fear and loneliness. Families died of starvation while diseases flourished: Trees withered, no longer able to support fruit. Violence destroyed and consumed every last forest: Weapons were hewn from the most delicate branches. Hate grew stronger than the oldest tree trunks, Forming ring after ring of prejudice overtime. People divided themselves by differences gender, race, class, and sexual orientation -And the disadvantaged groups were pushed aside to plead, beg, and bargain for life.

In fear, people became more and more isolated from each other.

Hunger and loneliness set in and creation gasped for breath.

ALL:

And God responded with new life: A single tree grew up from the desert floor, Each branch bowed low with harvest offerings, Extending the fruit of its branches to those Who could no longer pluck sustenance for themselves The scent of the blossoms was strong enough

to reconcile every broken bond, Even the bond between women and men.

Some people were skeptical of this tree in the desert

How was it able to take root and bloom in the scoring sand?

They ventured forth with frustrated rage. They stripped its branches, chopped it down, And dragged it all the way to Jerusalem.

ALL:

As they drove the nails in, the wood splintered and creaked,

Convincing them they had taken life. Jesus' mother stood beside the cross with her sister.

Tears burned down her cheeks as the ground shook.

She beheld her son, the miracle baby, surrendered to that distorted tree.

Trembling and hopeless, she turned away.

Searching for meaning in a world which had never been her own,

She remembered his words – words of hope, life, and love.

They would not abandon her.

ALL:

After some time the angel brought her back to the garden

And showed her a river that was as clear as the truth, whose waters imparted life.

At the mouth of the river were seated God and the Lamb.

In the other direction, the waters flowed down the middle of the city's highway.

On either side of the river stood trees which grew a different kind of fruit

During every month of the year

In order to satisfy the hunger of the world. Like the water, the fruit of the trees gave life And the leaves were collected and used to heal the wounds of every nation (Rev. 22:1-2)

Standing on the banks of the river, Watching her reflection in the water and smelling the thick nectar, She could still feel the pangs of his birth,

The torment of his rejection, The fringes of his hem between her fingers His hand helping up to life, And her burning tears at his death. Wading up the river to meet with him again, She accepted his invitation to be whole.

All:

The worlds and actions of Jesus empowered her, "Take heart, daughter, your faith has made you well".

This he meant for she who had once wandered into the middle of Eden, She who had given birth to him, she who had rejected him, She who had touched the fringes of his clothing, She who had been brought back to life, And every she who identifies with him And is made whole through his healing power.

All:

Jesus' love empowers her to hope for the healing of all of creation.

The tree that she ate from in the beginning is the same tree

That will provide the fruit to heal the nations. Having returned to Eden, she is busy planting.

The trees are swaying with the wind, Swaying all die way back to the beginning, and forth to the Kingdom of God.

All:

Amen.

(by: Kathryn Lohre/ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, (LWF-Women Magazin, No. 56', JuIy 2003)

"We are all affected" - the Challenge of HIV/AIDS

Dr. Sonja Weinreich (German Institute for Medical Mission)



Total: 34 – 46 million

HIV prevalence among pregnant women at antenatal clinics in South Africa, by age group, 1991-2002



ever Department of Health, South Shite

New infections, 1980 to 1999



Proportion of females among PWA PWA (adults and children) % women of PWA

Region	1997	2890	2902	1997	2089	2892
Sub-saharan Africa	20.5 m	25.3 m	28.5 m	50%	55%	5816
South Asin & southeast Asia	6 m	5.8 m	5.6 m	25%	35%	3756
Western Europe, US	14	1.4 m	14 m	2016	20-25%	20-26%
Eastern Europe	150,000	700,000	1.0	25%	25%	2616
Total	29 m	36,1 m	40 m	41%	47%	50%6



HIV antibody tests

- Detect antibodies, not the virus itself
- · 6-8 weeks window period: test negative, person infected
- Rapid tests: results within minutes, cheaper
 ELISA, Western Blot: for confirmation
- Less than 5% of all people know their HIV status
 Sigma
 - Stigma
 Availability
- Costs
- It is always advisable to know one's status

"If I was HIV-infected, I wouldn't like to be called so. I am Sonja. Being called infected leads to stigmatization. So the term ,people living with HIV and AIDS' is not only more correct, but also stresses the positive aspect of being able to live with the virus – if you do have access to proper and adequate treatment."

Antiretroviral drugs

- R Prolong lives
- Combination therapy since 1996
- 80% reduction death rates
- Reduce social costs: orphans, loss of labour etc
- & Decrease stigma, enhance HIV prevention



Antiretroviral therapy in Africa

- > 29m live with HIV/AI
- >20m deaths
- >6m need ARV
- >1% have access



"The disease is the same all over the world, but people are suffering differently. If you are poorer, malnourished, without access to health care, you suffer more, you die earlier."

Monitoring of antiretroviral therapy

CD4 cells

- · Subgroup of white blood cells
- cellular immune reaction
- targeted by HIV

Viral load Number of viruses in the blood



"If we declare that healing has destroyed the virus, that a person is HIV-negative again – this is not only false, but restricting God to our definition of health implicating to get rid of a disease."

Mother-to-child HIV transmission



- 2.4 m children in Africa
- Risk 30%: during pregnancy, delivery, breastfeeding
 - Reduction through Nevirapine by 50% Boehringer Ingelheim: free of charge Requires counselling and testing
- breastfeeding
 - Stigma
 - Risk of death through malnutrition

Development

- 8 Botswana: national programme since 2002
- South Africa: planning to roll out
- 🞗 Kenya, Namibia: started

Multinational companies reduced prices Generic drugs available

- Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
 WHO 2 x 5 initiative: 2 million people on
- WHO 3 x 5 initiative: 3 million people on ARVup to 2005
- President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)
- Clinton Foundation

Gender inequity drives HIV epidemic

- No say in sexual relations
- Socioeconomic dependence
- X Young girls and older men
- X Women infected through their partners
- Sexual violence
- Physiological





"Churches say: We do (home-)care. But actually it is the girls, the women worldwide who are doing homecare."



"Prevalence amongst younger women is always higher, anywhere. This is a striking fact, something we have to be concerned about, this is a gender issue."



"Working with women only is an imbalance, we also need to work with men. However, it is not mainly the women's task, it is the churches, the governments task. That's the one side of the question, but who's life is it, you might die, that's the question on the other."



"The church by its nature is a missionary church, so we are all affected, we all have to take action."



"We have to reflect our own role in the churches with regard to HIV/AIDS. What are actually our advantages? What are our obstacles? What can we do?"



Groupwork

The premiss to work in constant and mixed groups throughout the consultation was interrupted for the study- and group work on HIV/AIDS to promote exchange amongst women of one region and thus their further coordination and cooperation on the issue.

- 1. Is your church involved in the fight against HIV/ AIDS? And how?
- 2. Please identify the problems your church has in addressing HIV/AIDS?
- 3. Are gender-issues being considered in the HIV/ AIDS work of your church?



- 1. Yes!!!
 - <u>Brazil:</u>
 - Government:
 - Material
 - Ambulances
 - Medicine

Churches:

- Personnel
- Human resources

Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB) and Council for Mission among Indians (COMIN) - Prevention programs to Indigenous people

Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB) and Support Group for the Prevention of AIDS in Bahia (GAPA-BA) - Pastoral care, education, accompaniment

- <u>El Salvador</u>
 - Therapy group to people living with HIV/AIDS
 - Information, campaigns, accompaniment
 - Workshops to sensitize and to give input and knowledge to lay-people and pastors
- 2. Taboo, Prejudice, Homosexuality Issue, Drugs
- 3. Yes: Test ELISA, Women Counselling, Solidarity

II. East-Africa Regional Group

- 1. YES!!!
- a) HIV/AIDS issue has <u>high priority</u> on the church agenda.
- b) Empowering the capacity at <u>all church levels</u> to fight HIV/AIDS.
- c) Breaking the silence and affirming the human value among HIV infected people.
- 2. YES
- a) Limited Resources (especially financial ones)
 - Not able to afford ARV drugs
 - Orphans who need support are many
- b) Poverty
 - Prostitution is a judge problem
 - c) VIPs, Educated People
 - Fail to be models.
- d) IgnoranceThere are still many people who
 - don't have adequate knowledge of HIV/AIDS
- e) Peer Pressure
 Lead to use of drugs, etc.



- 3. YES!
 - Awareness creation is strong in women groups
 - Encouraging women to talk to/to educate their husbands
 - Advocating against harmful customs e.g. levirate marriages, female genital mutilation
 - Family to talk about HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS PREVENTION in Liberia

HIV/AIDS prevention effort in Liberia is mainly geared at awareness formed decision. The practices for HIV/AIDS prevention in my country includes:

- I. Mass awareness and sensitization programs through mass media: radio, television, newspapers, posters, leaflets, drama, songs, etc. Schools are now incorporating AIDS education in their syllabuses, health social clubs in getting active in most non-governmental-organizations (NGOs) sponsored school, friends reaching friends in Peer Education Programs, churches and social organizations are also sharing AIDS awareness information.
- 2. Young people are encouraged to check their HIV status before marriage.
- 3. Avoiding the sharing of skin piercing and cutting instruments.
- 4. Encouraging both HIV free partners to remain faithful to one another.
- 5. Screening of blood and blood products before transfusion.
- 6. Use of condom before sex with a partner of unknown HIV status.
- 7. Prenatal screening of expectant mothers is now the concern of most people.
- 8. Reinforcement of policies against rape crime.
- 9. Avoidance of risk-behaviours, e.g. substance abuse, alcoholism, drugs pushing, etc.
- 10. Education of HIV victims on how to prevent the spread of the virus.
- II. Public education to prevent stigmatization of HIV positive victims.
- 12. The training of health workers to disseminate HIV information to people.
- 13. There is still difficulty in abolishing traditional practices that have high potentials of exposing one to contracting the disease, e.g. traditional male circumcision, female genital mutilation, and other initiation rites to secret society.
- 14. Discouraging wet nursing from a mother of an unknown HIV status.

Ellen M. Gbanlon

III. German Regional Group

- 1. All mission societies are members of the national AIDS-campaign (*Action against AIDS*), but much more has to be done. HIV/AIDS is also a taboo within our churches.
- 2. We are concerned that our churches do not feel involved.



3. Not at all sufficiently!

IV. Asia-Pacific Regional Group

1. Yes!

But we are still in the starting stage compare to the NGO's in our countries.

2. For churches, using condom is still a controversial issue

- HIV/PWA are isolated and stigmatized as sinners and cursed/punished by God. There is no significant effort to offer pastoral counselling and care to PWA.

- HIV/AIDS is a taboo theme to be addressed in the church gatherings.

4. Not yet!



HIV/AIDS in Papua New Guinea

The first cases of HIV/AIDS were detected in Papua New Guinea (PNG) in 1987. This implies that HIV/ AIDS was in the country before 1987. After 13 years, the number of cases are increasing exponentially. The statistics as of June, 2003 is 8.000 plus. These are cases presented at the hospital for testing and confirmation. The exact figure in the country is under reported. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated in 1998 that there are 16.000 to 32.000 cases in PNG. The epidemic is generalized amongst the population whether educated or uneducated, urban or rural. The majority of reported cases are spread by heterosexual relationships besides mother to child modes and by blood.

PNG has the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence in the pacific and also has the highest rate of sexually transmitted infections, namely Chlamydia, Gonor-rhea and Syphilis. This increases the risk of HIV infections among the population.

Response to date:

In response to the epidemic, the government of PNG had established the National AIDS Council in early 1990. After the formation of the council, a National Medium Plan was formulated to respond to the AIDS problem. The document was formulated to respond multi-sectorally, everyone was to play a part in responding to the epidemic. The Medium Term Plan was to be used from 1998 to 2002.

Currently the document is under review and is called National Strategic Plan HIV/AIDS in PNG.

Under the policy, provincial offices in every province are set up to coordinate and facilitate AIDS response efforts in the provinces by various organizations.

The program areas of the medium plan have six components.

- I. Education, information and media
- 2. Counselling, community care and support
- 3. Legal and ethical issues
- 4. Social and economic impact
- 5. Monitoring, surveillance, evaluation and research
- 6. Medical and Laboratory

Stakeholder in the Response:

There are a lot of groups involved in the response to HIV/AIDS in the country. These include individuals, individual families, faith based organizations (FBOs), churches and government institutions like the health services. Concerning FBOs and HIV/AIDS: The Catholic church has a national program, the Salvation Army maintains a national HIV/AIDS response program.

Lakele Tetac

V. Southern Africa Regional Group

1. Most of our churches are doing a lot of activities on HIV/AIDS at different levels.



2.

- Large numbers of people infected and affected, the church is unable to cope, because of lack of funds and untrained personnel
- Most people do not come for testing because fear of stigma
- The gap between the church, national coordinator and the congregations
- Voluntary Testing Centres are not easily accessible
- 3. Church considers gender issues in HIV/AIDS work though we feel there is room for improvement.

Evening Prayer "Overcoming Violence"

Bärbel Fünfsinn, Graciela Chamorro

Song:

You are collecting our tears God in your pot God and transforming them

Turn around woman, turn around woman and look from death to life!

Ritual for overcoming violence – including some stories of violence

We have heard much about violence against women, terrible stories and facts. It is hard to face such reality. There were different emotions in us, in our hearts and our bodies – astonishment, fear, horror, anger, rage and fury, even the readiness to kill someone who does crimes to the own child/daughter

All these emotions are allowed. They are human feelings. Not to feel, not to be touched by this kind of violence means to be dead. We are still alive and we want to fight for a better life for our daughters, our sisters – in the wide world.

What do we do with our emotions, with these terror stories?

Graciela and I prepared this ritual. We have had some experiences with so called "psalm-service"; on Friday afternoons, especially for women. We think that psalms can lead us, can show us a way to handle the violence-stories. In the Psalms are collected many experiences of men and women thousand years ago. These experiences are for most of us well known ones – experiences of loneliness, of fear, of big problems. The people thousand years ago wrote songs, in which they told about how they had managed their difficulties, which ways they had taken to find a solution, to find a better and a good life.

They speak of their deep trust in God, of their faith – and they don't hide their feelings – all kind of feelings All this they brought to God.

For this afternoon we chose Psalm 55 because in this text a person speaks of her experience of violence. Many theologians are convinced that the speaker is a woman. She doesn't keep silent! Now she speaks out in public about her sad experience. It was not an enemy who battered or abused her – no, it was a man like her, a companion, her close friend. Perhaps her husband was violent with her. It could be a woman among us. She doesn't shut her mouth and keep silent, she criticizes men's violence, she condemns it and wants that violence to stop.

Psalm 55

Give ear to my prayer, o God: Do not ignore my plea; hear me and answer me.

My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death assail me. Fear and trembling have beset me, horror has overwhelmed me.

I said: "O, that I had wings of a dove!" I would fly away and be at rest – I would flee far away and stay in the desert.

> If an enemy was insulting me, I could endure it. If there are adversaries who deal insolently with me, I could hide from them.

But it is you, a man like myself, my friend, with whom I kept pleasant company; with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship.

Let death come to him (them), Let him (them) go down alive to the grave!

But I call to God, and God saves me. Evening, morning and noon I cry in distress, and God hears my voice. God will never let the righteous fall.

But you, o God, will bring down the wicked into the lowest pit; the bloodthirsty men will not live out the half their days.

But as for me, I trust in you.

I. Psalm-reading and Psalm-walking

In our psalm-services we take the text of the psalm and go walking with it. We walk in the church with the psalm, several times, and read it aloud. So we will do now

(1. step, 5 minutes).

2. Our own psalms/experiences

We invite you now to think of one woman who suffered violence and to write her story on a paper in a few words.

(2. step, 15 minutes)

3. Complaining to God

"List my tears in your scroll." (Psalm 56.9)

In Psalm 56 in our Bible the prayer says: "List my tears in your scroll." He or she hopes that God sees all her tears and her distress and listens to all her complaints and her pains. She is sure that God will list all tears in one place, in a scroll like this one in the centre of our circle.

I would like to invite you to share the story you wrote down about a woman who had to endure violence. You can read it aloud or put it in a scroll in silence. God allows us to complain and to tell him our painful experiences. God can stand it. We invite now four or five persons to read their stories to us

(3. step, 15 min.).

After every story we will sing together the song: You're collecting our tears, God, in your pot, God, and transform them. Turn around woman and look from death to life!

4. Our rage and God

I wonder if you noticed that the author of the psalm wishes death to her enemy/enemies. The evil shall find ... Death shall take them – they shouldn't live out half of their days." I was educated in the way that it is forbidden to us as Christians to speak out these wishes and bring them to God.

What about you? What do you think about these verses in our psalm?

Do you allow yourself feelings of anger, of rage – do you allow yourself to talk to God in this way? Is it a way to handle violence for you? Please gather in small groups and discuss these questions (20 minutes).

In the plenary again: Does somebody want to tell us what you said in your groups?

My impression is that the author of the psalm expresses her deepest feelings – anger, rage, her wish to kill – in the presence of God. On one hand, it shows her desperation and her wounds, one the other, it shows her faith in God. She trusts God – God will lead her to full Shalom. She doesn't kill, she doesn't murder.

God is seen and regarded as a lawyer; God has an option for the powerless, the violated women. Violence should not be the last word. Therefore the female author cries for God's justice. She wants violence to stop and that nobody can harm her anymore.

To speak about the experienced violence, to tell the truth, name it and to express our own emotions linked to it – these are steps towards finding wellbeing and salvation. This is the beginning of overcoming violence.

Let us form a circle, feel our whole body going forward and shouting:

We say no, no to violence!

We say no, no to violence!

In between this shout we enumerate those acts of violence which shall stop.

5. Healing-Ceremony

Experiences of violence destroy women as long as they are hidden behind a wall of silence. But when we share our experiences as we are doing now, when we break the silence and name the various faces of violence then we are taking the first step towards changing it. We share it with others, we are no longer alone. And this is a great deal. But: Where does my strength and my courage come from, to live my life with the scars of violence on my body or in my soul?

"But, as for me, I trust in you", says the prayer of the psalm.

I am deeply moved by her great trust in God. Her pain is overwhelming but she is convinced that her tormentor will be punished by God. God is the one who sustains her. Violence is not the last word. It is possible, our wounds can be healed.

I want to invite you to participate in a small action or ritual.

I have brought this little bottle of oil, well-smelling oil. It is close to the pot in a small bottle. Each of us can take some of the oil and salve another woman on her hands or arms or her face. Ask her what she wants. And bless her with the words: God saves you!

(by: Bärbel Fünfsinn, Irmgard Nauck, NMZ-Women's Consultation 2001: Living a meaningful life)

Thursday, May 27th, 2004

Morning Prayer "I do choose"

Anneth Munga

Song:

Thuma Mina 221 "God calls his people"

Reading:

Matthew 8.17:1-3

- 1 When Jesus had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him.
- 2 And there was a leaper who came to him and knelt before him, saying,

'Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean.'

3 He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying,

'I do choose. Be made clean!'

Reflection:

In Africa we say, I am because I belong to a family, a community. Being cut off from a community is like being dead. When it comes to HIV/AIDS there is a quite common understanding of: 'When we are not infected, we are all affected.' People living with HIV/AIDS, however, are exposed to even more sickness than there can be depicted on a physical level. Worst punch is being excluded from communal life and by people saying: 'He/she is not clean.' HIV/AIDS is sometimes called the leprosy of today. Those HIV-infected are often socially dead, they are regarded as untouchables. And if it is known that they have contracted the virus due to sexual contact, they are often put ashamed.

But Jesus also heals from the sickness to be separated from God. So the healing also meant, being in the right relation with God. Healing of Jesus has been handed over to the church; we are called to be his followers. So I put the question: Where is the church of Christ today? Where are we, when discrimination, stigmatization and alienation go on? What people living with HIV/AIDS want – what they need – is to live life complete, as a community member.

> "When Jesus talks about healing it often means whole – to guide, to reconcile, to care and to forgive. May be we can start from this philosophy." Marieta N. G. Saghertian

But it has already been there before HIV/AIDS came in. Let us e.g. look at handicapped people. Often laughed at, ridiculed, discriminated, even kept away from public life. That's the same as being excluded from a community. How often do we see posters on the street showing handicapped people?

Maybe healing has to start with the church itself. When the church itself is wounded, it needs help again and again. We are Lutherans, so what does reformation mean? We in a church live in forgiveness. Let us give forth the power of reconciliation.

> "We as church are not perfect, we are suffering, e.g. from being divided, even amongst Lutherans. If we are wounded, we need healing to be able to convey healing to others."

> > Graciela Chamorro

Recalling the past days – Identifying the group topics:

Recommendations of the Women's Consultation of the Evangelical Mission Departments in Germany and the Partner Churches

PREAMBLE

We, women from 16 different countries and Churches from Africa, Latin America, Asia-Pacific and Europe have been meeting for eight days from May 21st to May 28th, 2004, at the Division for World Mission of the Bavarian Lutheran Church in Neuendettelsau, Germany, discussing the theme *Tradition – When Does it Aid and When Prevent Healing*?

This is the first endeavour of mission societies in Germany (MWB, EMS, UEM, ELM, BMW, NMZ, Gossner Mission) under the auspices of the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany (EMW) to work together with our partner Churches in other countries to deal with the issues which are vital to all of us. The uniting basis of our discussions was the faith in the truth of the message of the Holy Bible: God created both men and women according to God's image (Genesis 1: 26-27).

Having identified with concern that practices and teachings in our Churches discriminate against women not only through biblical interpretation but also through liturgical, musical and hierarchical structures, we feel that in times when traditions in most of our countries are on the brink of loosing their meaning, traditions have to be evaluated for their relevance to healing in our societies. Having reflected on the above mentioned theme under four sub-themes, namely *Tradition in Our Lives, Tradition and Religion, Empowerment of Women and Sickness and Healing*, we recommend:

TRADITION IN OUR LIFES

Our Convictions

Tradition belongs to our life and it forms the identity of our society. However, we realize that certain traditions need to be transformed, others need to be abolished. On the other hand, e.g. substituting indigenous languages and neglecting local wisdom is a new way of colonializing mind and soul.

Our Recommendations

- Churches have to assess the positive components of traditions, develop them in the Churches – such as *rites de passage* – and transform them into the core values of society based on gender sensitivity, e.g. caring and compassion in traditional communities, mediation and conflict solution.
- Churches should be healing agents and thus welcoming everybody regardless of race, gender, age and ability.

• Churches should develop cooperation with other partners, e.g. governments, NGOs, and other religious communities, to establish policies and laws that foster education for women and the right of property.

Actions to be taken

- Changes need to be initiated on all levels of society, but it is especially important to involve our leaders, e.g. bishops, pastors, Church elders and community leaders so that they will be promoters of change.
- Men and women need to be equally represented on all decision making levels and in decision making committees.
- The leadership of the Churches should promote inclusive participation and dialogue with all groups within their Churches.

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Our Convictions

- We believe that the biblical message is true: God created both men and women according to God's image (Gen. 1: 26-27).
- Even more so, our Lord Jesus Christ entrusted the message of resurrection to women. Therefore, men and women alike are called to share the good news to all. The resurrection of Jesus helps all human beings to overcome violence and empowers them to live in a just and healing community.
- However, we realize that our Churches often have selective and patriarchal interpretations of the Bible. These interpretations often discriminate against women in Church, in family and in society.
- We have identified internalized social pressure and role patterns as hindrances for women's liberation and personal growing. Thus, role patterns have to be addressed and changed.

Our Recommendations

- Churches need to use and interpret the Bible with gender sensitivity.
- The Churches should promote equal partnership

between men and women in all their programs and structures as well as in laws and bylaws.

- Churches should seek cooperation with other partners, e.g. governments, NGO's, traditional leaders and other religious communities to establish policies and laws that foster women's rights, e.g. elimination of female genital mutilation, eliminating property grabbing from widows and domestic violence.
- Churches should promote more education and awareness building for women and girls to develop their self-esteem.
- Churches have to invite men to reflect their masculinity and develop a new gender role.

Actions to be taken

- Establishing women centres.
- Training for Pastoral counselling.
- Conducting sex/gender education.
- Offering group discussions and Bible study on gender issues.
- Starting income generating and community development programs to enable women to be economically independent.
- Involving Churches in national and international networking to promote gender justice.

ON SICKNESS & HEALING regarding HIV/AIDS

Our Convictions

HIV/AIDS is a global pandemic. It affects people of all races and classes, adults and children. In relation to men and women, it is known that the number of women who are infected is higher than the number of men. We affirm the conviction of the World Council of Churches that HIV/AIDS is not a curse of God. Yet we are aware of the fact that many people who are known to be HIV infected are subjected to alienation and rejection. We therefore urge our Churches to be agents of healing by working actively against the stigmatisation of HIV infected people.

Our Recommendations

• All Churches should formulate an HIV/AIDS

policy by including people living with HIV/ AIDS in a participatory way.

- All Churches should implement HIV/AIDS policies. More action is needed.
- Churches need to develop peer-group education on gender and HIV/AIDS. Men and women need to be involved.
- Mass media often portraits HIV/AIDS as an African problem. But HIV/AIDS is a global issue. Therefore we object the racist manner in talking about HIV/AIDS.

Actions to be taken

 In each congregation there should be an action group to reach out to people living with HIV/ AIDS in order to include them in congregational life as well as on all levels of Church hierarchy.

- Education about HIV/AIDS should be part of congregation's daily life. Education about sexuality needs to be included.
- Churches need to promote more education and awareness building for women and girls to develop their self-esteem.
- Couples should be supported in order to strengthen their relationship, e.g. special counselling for marriage.

CONCLUSION

This consultation has been a strong inspiration and we are committing ourselves to continue the linkages that have been established at national, regional and international level.

Neundettelsau, May 27th, 2004.

PARTICIPANTS:

Ieda Radünz Vilma Rodriguez Bekure Dhaba Katrin Striewe Wai Ching Mühlhaus Mary Purti Marieta N. G. Saghertian Elizabeth Haganda Jilo Ellen M. Gbanlon Mabel Madinga **Rabeca Garinosse Olices** Dr. Nashilongo Shivute Lakele Tetac Rita Fikele Phaswana Dr. Anette Munga Esther Milandu Mundemba Brazil El Salvador Ethiopia Germany Hong Kong India Indonesia Kenia Liberia Malawi Mozambique Namibia Papua New Guinea South Africa Tanzania Zambia

TEAM MEMBERS:

Karin Bräuer Graciela Chamorro Nina Dürr Bärbel Fünfsinn Ulrike Hansen Gabi Hettler Sonia Parera Hummel Dr. Gabriele Mayer Cornelia Schattat Alice Strittmatter

LECTURES:

Leonore Landmann Dr. Sonja Weinreich Dr. Rose Wu Germany Germany Germany Germany Germany Germany Germany Germany

Germany Germany Hong Kong

Evening Prayer "Our commitment"

Vilma Rodriguez

L:

Dear sisters, we have met to celebrate our faith in community in the name of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C:

Amen.

Song:

Thuma Mina 221 "God calls his people"

Reading:

Matthew 15:21-28

- 21 And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon.
- 22 And behold, a Ca'naanite woman from that region came out and cried, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon.
- 23 But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying: 'Send her away, for she is crying after us.'
- 24 He answered: 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'
- 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying: Lord, help me.'
- 26 And he answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.
- 27 She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.'
- 28 Then Jesus answered her, 'O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

Reflection:

Breaking the silence is the theme of this day.

I invite all of you to come and bring to the altar something,

a symbol, that represents

what will be your commitment after this consultation,

to accompany women in you church and society, as their healing process.

Please explain the meaning of your symbol chosen and the reason why;

what is the significance of that symbol for yourself as well as for the healing of women according to your reflection.

Come to the altar, one after the other.

Song:

Thuma Mina 221 "God calls his people" (singing and dancing in a circle).

L:

Let us pray the Lord's Prayer, each in her own language Amen.

L:

And to close our Evening Prayer give an embrace of peace to one another, singing

Song:

Thuma Mina 187 "The peace of our God"



Celebrating a spirit of commitment.

Friday, May 28th, 2004

Consultation Evaluation

- 1. About the aims and the contents, I want to comment ...
 - Could create ongoing cooperation
 - Could give new future
 - Theme: Globel or cross-cultural learning and understanding including man and women, all the continents
 - Could bring this unity to continue for many years to come, Amen
 - It was not very clear to me, so as to be able to explain to other people
- 2. About the methods and the follow up, I want to comment ...
 - The schedule was too strong
 - I liked so much the methodology used in this consultation
 - The methodology was lesson giving
 - They were good and easy to understand
 - The methodology was very good and very educative to me
 - The method was good and follow up is necessary for assessment and evaluation of our ef forts
 - It was very good appropriated for a intercultural group
- 3. To each participant, I want to comment ...
 - Thank for showing team work
 - Continue with the same spirit
 - Thank for new inputs for my work
 - Thank you for your sharing
 - Excuse me, not having contributed more
 - Thanks for your patience with my English
 - Thank you so much, you have been wonder ful, I will remember your lovely faces and smiles
 - Many thanks for the warm fellowship and love shared
 - Thank you for the pool of resource that I was able to tap from each one of you
 - To meet and part is the way of life... but part and then meet is the hope of life
 - We are wonderful women
 - Anneth's contributions are very deep
- 4. To the teamers (organizing team), I want to ...
 - Thank you for your good cooperation, professionalism and hospitality

- Good work, keep it up
- You have shown: Unity is power, welldone!!
- Bravo! For building the capacity of women from many cultures and continents
- Thank you for being willing to share with us your great insight on the subject you pre sented to us
- Thank you very much
- Thanking you all, God bless your work
- The 1st time cooperation among all Mission Institutes has been a success, praise God
- Strong work excellent result, thank
- You worked really in team
- 5. To our hosts (MWB) and to all their staff, especially to the ladies in the kitchen, I want to add
 - Grateful thank you for your healthy food
 - Many thanks for your thoughtfulness and hard work
 - Thank you so much for your bright face and love
 - Thank you for all that you have done to make our stay conducive
 - Thank you very much for everything doing for all of us
 - Danke schön !!!

- May the Lord give you harmony and strength so that you can do even more for others, thank you

- Thank you
- I experienced the hospitality here and the "warm atmosphere", thanks
- They were always nice, and "bereit"
- 6. The best idea I will take up is ...
 - Sacred dance
 - Bible study
 - Methodology of Gender sensitivity
 - The meditation form
 - Meditation (dance)
 - New way of Bible Study and meditation through songs and dancings
 - Meditation and my role in the advocacy of gender issues in the church and society
 Meditation dance
 - The dramas
 - Dance dramas, evaluation method
 - Meditation dance and full participations of all participants

- Simple drama for quicker effective communication in rural communities
- 7. The most difficult issue to me was ...
 - Language
 - Not being able to speak other languages
 - How to transform tradition to be part of our believe/faiths
 - Balancing time, needs and contents
- 8. What I would like to add ...
 - The translation needs improvement, all learn English
 - That we should try to learn other languages to improve our communication skills
- We Germans need more patience (we are pro- ceeding too fast)
 - We need more voices from Asian issues and German issues and groups for contribution (besides the coordination of Mission In stitutes)
 - It seems the issue is focusing in certain continents without more participation from other parts (like Europe)
 - Systematic report from each group work
 - More songs from other participants they can bring and share
- 9. My highlight of the week was
 - Mrs. Agnes Dürer

- Our "old women" group, meaning group 2
- Our ecumenical/international holy community
- All of you, Amen
- Rose Wu
- Our group 2 (healing group)
- United sisters in Christ for one goal
- The togetherness in Christ we had as sisters in Christ
- The sharing together of our deep insights on the various topics, group discussion
- Marieta
- 10. Which churches, missions and groups do I imagine to inform on this conference/recom mendations
 - ELM and all my woman supporting groups
 - UEM member churches, women's Depart ments in three continents
 - To ELCHK
 - To ELCN and its ecumenical links
 - ELC-PNG as a whole and ecumenical women's group in my church
 - Women Desk on National Council of Church es (Indonesia)
 - KELC, Women Desk, women and men, youth groups, church elders
 - Synod and all church courts



To meet and part is the way of life ... to part and then meet is the hope of life.

Closing Service

Candles of Hope

Africa for Latin America (Mabel Madinga) singing: Thuma Mina 154 "Kindle a flame"

Latin America for Germany (Vilma Rodriguez) singing: Thuma Mina 154 "Kindle a flame"

Germany for Asia (Karin Bräuer) singing: Thuma Mina 154 "Kindle a flame"

Asia for Africa (Mary Purti) singing: Thuma Mina 154 "Kindle a flame"

Opening Prayer

(Nina Dürr)

- **L:** Jesus, you came into the world as a light in the darkness.
- **C:** And the darkness could not put it out.
- L: You enter into the lives of the people and become one with them, their joys, their pain and their sorrows.



You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Rom. 8 PRAISE AND ADORATION : THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **C:** We walk in Your footsteps and follow in your way.
- **L:** Through your death and your resurrection, hope entered into the World.
- **C:** Thanks and praise be to God!
- L: The flame of hope continues to burn in the darkness; bringing hope into scenes of decay and despair, lives of pain and agony.
- **C:** May its glow enter the hearts of women caught within this suffering.
- L: It is the task of the community of faith to keep the flame burning, sending forth its light of hope into all of life. If we do not full fil this task, our silence will be known.
- **C:** Fill us, Loving God, fill us with your Spirit.

Song: Spirit Song



Bible Reading: Mark 14:1-9

Rabeca Garinosse Olices

- It was now two days before the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread.
 And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth, and kill him;
- 2 for they said, 'Not during the feast, lest there be a tumult of the people.'
- 3 And while he was at Beth'any in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head.
- 4 But there were some who said to themselves in dignantly, 'Why was the ointment thus wasted?
- 5 For this ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and given to the poor.' And they reproached her.
- 6 But Jesus said, 'Let her alone; why do you trou ble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.
- 7 For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you will, you can do good to them; but you will not always have me.
- 8 She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burying.
- 9 And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.'

Song:

Thuma Mina 69:3 "Praise, I will praise you Lord"

Biblical Reflection :

Wai Ching Mühlhaus

Song:

Thuma Mina 69:3 "Praise, I will praise you Lord"

Confession of Faith

(standing)

We are not alone; We live in God's world.

We believe in God, Who has created and is creating.

Who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make us new.

We trust in God. We are called to be the Church. To love and serve others. To seek justice and resist evil.

We proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen. Our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death.

God is with us; We are not alone.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Sister Carry On Holy Communion

Prayer

Lakele Tetac

- L: God of life, we rejoice in you. You give us bread:
 - The fruit of the earth worked with human hands.

You make it into the bread of life.

- **C:** God, we thank you.
- L: God of life, we rejoice in you. You give us wine:

The fruit of the vine tended with daily care. You put the flavor of your new world into it.

- **C:** God, we thank you.
- L: As the wheat and grapes are joined on this table in bread, and wine into a visual symbol for us join our church together into a visual symbol for the entire world.
- **C:** God, we thank you for uniting us here.
- L: As we gather to celebrate this Holy Com-
- munion, we bow down and pray:
- L+C: Loving God, you know our weakness and the extend of our failure to love you, and one another. You see the sincerity of our efforts as well. Look upon us who have given of fence and help us heal the hurt we have caused. As we willingly, with your help, for give one another, we ask you to forgive us and fill us with your healing power and grace. Amen.

Song:

Thuma Mina 112 "Let us break bread together"

Prayer

- (Graciela Chamorro)
- **L:** The Lord be with you
- **C:** And with your spirit
- **L:** Lift up your hearts
- **C:** We lift up our hearts to God
- L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
- **C:** Who is worthy of our praise
- L: God we thank you for your covenant, sealed in bread and wine, and reaching deeper than human disagreements. Your covenant ties us together and binds up our wounds. We thank you for this ritual signifying your founda-
- tion under our feet and the expression of our hope.

Song:

Thuma Mina 75:1, 3 "Santo, santo" **Words of the Institution** (Anneth Munga)

- **L+C:** Your death, o Lord, we proclaim; your resurrection we celebrate; and your coming in Glory we wait.
- L: Let us join hands and pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us: The *Lord's Prayer*

Distribution of Bread and Wine Song: Thuma Mina 137 "Let us talents and tongues employ" Intercession (Rita Fikele Phaswana, Nina Dürr, Wai Ching Mühlhaus) in between we sing: Thuma Mina 156 "Oh Lord hear my prayer"

Anointing and Blessing

one another (Ulrike Hansen)

Closing Song:

Thuma Mina 166 "Thuma Mina"

Blessing



Togetherness in Christ as sisters in Christ.

Dokume ntati 0



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