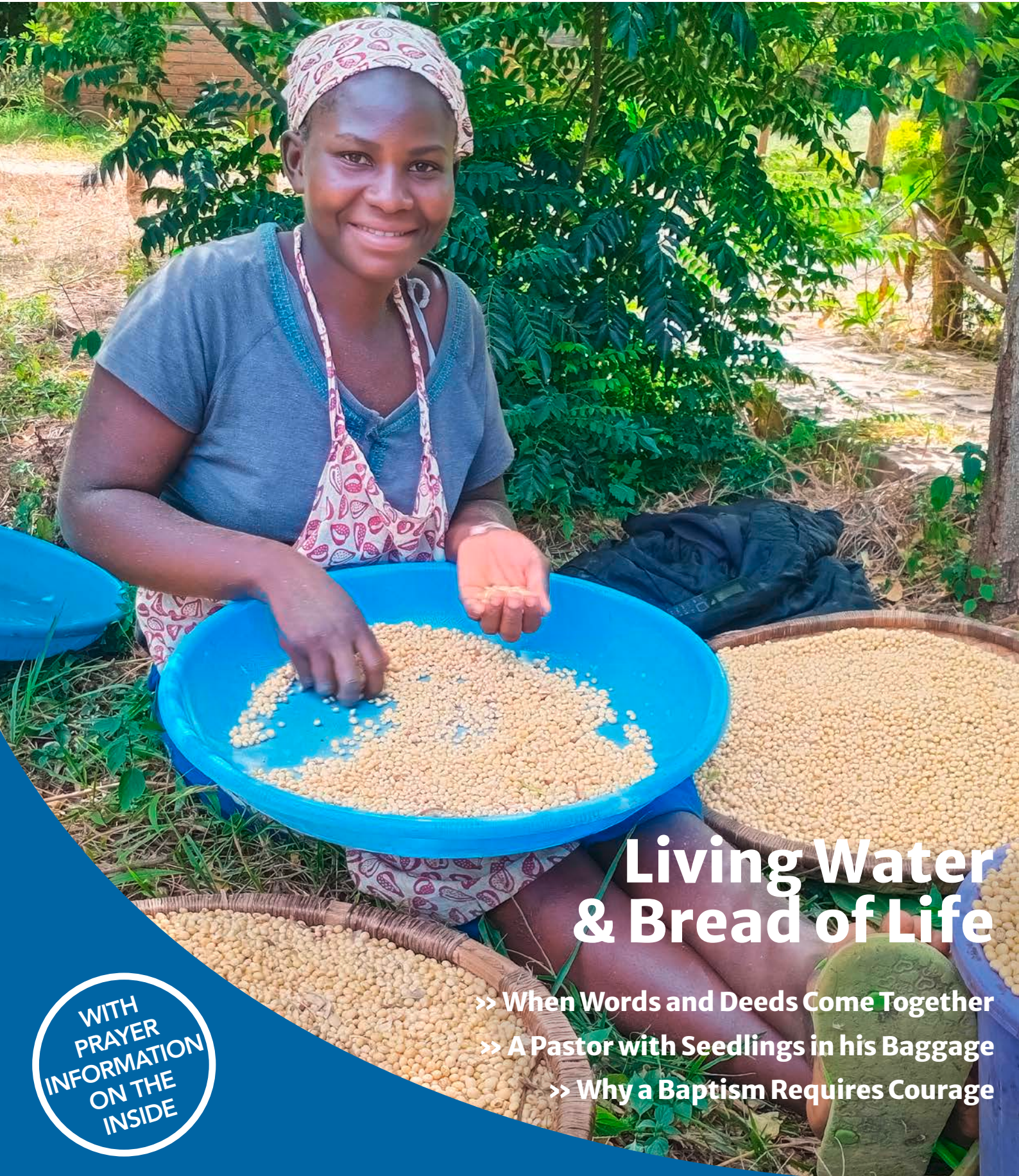




Living Water & Bread of Life

- >> When Words and Deeds Come Together
- >> A Pastor with Seedlings in his Baggage
- >> Why a Baptism Requires Courage

WITH
PRAYER
INFORMATION
ON THE
INSIDE

IMPRINT

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In this magazine, we have used artificial intelligence to translate foreign-language reports and improve texts editorially.

In order to protect children or brothers and sisters in the faith who may be at risk, we have changed the names of people in this magazine without further indication.



Cover photo: Young woman at the Balaka Farm in Malawi

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*But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.
I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger.*

*John 4:14
John 6:35*

Dear Reader!



When Jesus speaks of living water and the bread of life, he is referring to more than just quenching thirst and satisfying hunger. He himself understands these basic needs. Without water and food, we cannot survive. But Jesus wants to care not only for our bodies, but also for our souls. That is why he calls people—then and now—into a relationship with him that gives new life.

Thanksgiving reminds us of God's provision of water and food. In places where people still go hungry or thirsty, churches involved in our mission work help address these needs and offer practical assistance. This ministry is always accompanied by an invitation to enter into a relationship with Jesus, who gives new life.

In this issue, we highlight projects that help people meet their daily needs for water and food: in Peru through water pipelines (page 4), in Cameroon through agricultural training (page 12), and in India through assistance in times of storms and destruction (page 8). All these initiatives are connected to a church congregation which invite people to get to know Jesus Christ—the living water and the bread of life. Those who choose to live with him often profess their faith through baptism. We describe what this means for someone in Türkiye on page 17.

At harvest festival we celebrate God's provision in the here and now and His gift of new, eternal life. I invite you to support our campaign through your prayers and donations. Be a part of providing the essentials of life in Jesus' name and reaching people with the liberating message of the Gospel.

Thank you very much for all your prayers and financial support!

I sincerely hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Michael Fischbeck

Team Leader, Public Relations and Fundraising



Please feel free to send us your feedback, suggestions or requests regarding the current magazine: www.ebm-international.org/feedback



WHO WE ARE

EBM INTERNATIONAL, founded in 1954 as the European Baptist Mission, works with 30 Baptist member unions and partners on four continents. As a mission organization, we share God's transforming love in about 300 projects so that people can live in hope.

In our global partnership with local Baptist churches, together we call upon Christ to bring

justice, renewal and hope to the world. We are committed to achieving this goal on the basis of equality through sharing and learning, giving and receiving.

More information on our website:
www.ebm-international.org/en/about-us

When Words and Deeds Come Together

Where water does not flow, life is limited—and often even impossible. In many regions of the world, people must get by without clean drinking water, resulting in disease, crop failures, and daily hardship. But there are ways to improve these circumstances—through the help of churches, including new ones that emerge through missionary work. They proclaim the Gospel not only with words but also by visibly living it out in their actions. For example, this is the case in the mission among the Quechua in Peru.

Life in the Highlands

In the highlands of Apurímac and Cusco, at over 3,000 meters above sea level, the Quechua people grow potatoes, quinoa, and corn—often on narrow fields on the mountainsides. Some families raise sheep or llamas. The dry season lasts from April to October: It doesn't rain for weeks on end, the soil becomes hard and cracked, and the young crops are in danger of drying up. Without irrigation, the harvest remains meager—and hunger becomes a real threat for the coming months. For the people here, fetching water usually means walks to distant springs. Because there are hardly any trees left in the region, the soil cannot store rainwater. Climate change is further exacerbating the situation: periods of

drought are increasing, while sudden heavy rains threaten the harvest just as much as the drought itself.

The Response of the Church

The young churches in the Quechua villages see and understand this need. And they take action: on one hand, out of their social responsibility, for Christ calls us to love in deed and in truth. On the other hand, the Gospel itself speaks of “living water” that quenches the soul's thirst. Thus, projects were launched: pipes were laid, tanks were built, and wells were drilled. This practical help became a testimony of faith. It is precisely through such initiatives that EBMI's vision is being realized: “Sharing God's transforming love that people may live in hope.” In so many

places across the 16 countries where EBMI supports missionary projects, this is a central factor.

Water Tanks for Apurímac and Cusco

In Apurímac and Cusco, it was Adrián Campero—who has been our missionary to the Quechua people in Peru for 42 years—who first brought this need to the attention of EBMI years ago. Thanks to his advocacy, churches worked together with the local population to build large water tanks with support from EBM INTERNATIONAL. During dry seasons, the fields could be irrigated, yields increased, the food situation improved, and social stability grew as a result. The people also learned to farm their land sustainably. Through the provision of water, the →



The pipes carry fresh water over many kilometers

“ But whoever drinks the water
I give him will never thirst again. “
John 4:14





Blessing of the Water Supply in Miraflores with Carlos Waldow (left)

→ spiritual message of living water became truly tangible.

Water Pipelines for the Jimbe Region

In northern Peru, in the villages of Canchas and Miraflores, pipelines six and ten kilometers long were laid—fed by high-altitude springs in the mountains. For many years, people across the country had appealed to the authorities for help, but always in vain. When despair was at its

peak, missionaries Hugo and Carlota Mondoñedo brought new hope. Hugo promised to approach EBMI to see if there was a way to help. The approval came quickly—because it was clear that these people could no longer carry on living in this way.

After many years, the local people finally received clean drinking water. The work was dangerous and arduous, but the villagers themselves laid the pipes across steep slopes and through rugged terrain: 59 villagers, along with their families, worked tirelessly for nine days. The resources for this came from EBMI donations. With the installation of the pipes, clean water reached the villages, and illnesses caused by contaminated water declined. The joy and gratitude of the villagers were immeasurable.

Parallel to this construction work, home groups and worship services began to form. New churches grew out of this practical assistance—church planting and social ministry went hand in hand.

Sustainable change

Today, years after the initiative was implemented, the churches have grown. Small groups have become

stable communities that not only hold worship services but also exert a social influence. They are seen as beacons of hope because they demonstrate that the Gospel is not just words, but also deeds. People understand that faith in Christ is a source that never runs dry—like a pipe that continuously supplies water.

“Living Water”

Jesus says: “But whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst.” (John 4:14). Just as water pipes transformed people’s lives, so the Gospel transforms hearts and communities. Church planting and social ministry are two sides of the same coin: the living water of faith and the water essential for daily life flow together and make visible what Christ promises.

According to a report by Carlos Waldow—Regional Representative for Latin America



Finally, fresh water can flow

Living Water & Bread of Life

Harvest Thanksgiving reminds us that God is the giver of all good gifts. Water quenches our thirst; food satisfies our hunger. Yet in many places, people lack both: clean drinking water and a reliable supply of food. Together with our partner churches, we are committed to ensuring that people have access to clean water, can secure their food supply in the long term, and come to know the liberating message of the Gospel. This is happening, for example, here:

Peru – Water That Changes Lives

Churches in the Peruvian Andes serve the Quechua people holistically: They invite them to worship services, pray for their needs, and provide assistance in the form of seeds or food. Thanks to the support of Christians, some villages even received a water pipe, providing clean drinking water for the first time. Such efforts show that God cares and open people's hearts to faith. In this way, "living water" not only changes external circumstances but also gives new life.

Cameroon – Food That Stills Hunger

In northern Cameroon, many people suffer from drought, soil erosion, and the effects of climate change. The Christian project "Sahel Vert" helps families secure their livelihoods

in a sustainable way. Trees are planted, fish ponds are created, and agricultural training is provided. This improves crop yields and ensures families' long-term food security.

Türkiye—Faith That Gives New Life

In Türkiye, Christians often live out their faith as a small minority. Nevertheless, churches are actively involved in their neighborhoods, supporting those in need and accompanying people through difficult life situations. Through this love in action, many come to know Jesus Christ for the first time. Those who choose to live a life with Him often profess their faith through baptism—a visible sign that a person has found new life, hope, and a home in the faith.



Clean Water for the Quechua People in Peru



Reforestation and Food Security in Cameroon



Baptism in Türkiye—A Sign of New Life

Sharing Living Water and Bread of Life Together

These projects exemplify the holistic mission work of EBM INTERNATIONAL. Your donation helps create the foundations for life and invite people to faith in Jesus Christ—the living water and the bread of life:

**30
EUROS**

covers the cost of an aid package that allows a Turkish church to provide for a family and give them hope.

**75
EUROS**

helps a church in Peru reach people with "living water" and practical assistance.

**150
EUROS**

funds 150 saplings for climate protection and improves the long-term quality of life for people in northern Cameroon.

Your donation gives new life:

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On our website, you can make quick and secure online donations, for example via PayPal, direct debit, or credit card:

www.ebm-international.org/spenden

Thank you for your donations and your prayers!

Between Faith, Resilience, and the Uncertain Future of the Ocean

When water—a vital resource for life—is lost or polluted, the lives of people, animals, and plants are all threatened. The danger posed by flood disasters is also immense—both on land and for fishermen at sea. In an interview with Julia-Kathrin Raddek, Pastor Samarpana Kumar, pastor of Bethel Baptist Church and director of Jesus Loves Ministries (JLM), discusses how people are coping with all of this and how he is supporting them.

Julia-Kathrin Raddek (JKR): Samarpana, you live with your family in Uppada, a village in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, right on the coast of the Bay of Bengal. What does the ocean water mean to you and the people there, and what challenges does it present?

Samarpana Kumar (SK): To us, the water is like a mother—a source of life and livelihood. In our village's local culture, some even worship it as a deity. Most of our villagers depend on the sea, either directly or indirectly, for their livelihood. But sometimes the sea turns into a life-threatening danger, especially during cyclones, typhoons, and tsunamis. People view this as a kind of divine punishment.

The ocean is considered to be under God's control, as is all life within it. Therefore, people pray for safety, well-being, and God's blessing at sea. We pray for success before going out to fish, and for God's protection during cyclones and typhoons.

JKR: What kind of relationship do you have with the people in the fishing community? Even in your role as a pastor?

SK: My family has had close ties to the fishing community since the time of my grandfather, who was a missionary. In our church and community, we're like one big family, regardless of caste or class differences. Although there are 14 or 15 different caste groups, to us we're always one. Today, I feel closer to the fishermen more than just as a pastor; we share in their daily lives. My role as a pastor is to care for their needs: during poor fishing seasons, when they're in debt, in times of illness, death, weddings, and on every other occasion. I'm there for them. We've shared in the struggles of the fishing community. Now we'd like to launch a special program for the fishermen and their livelihoods, since there are 25,000 fishing families living in our region.

JKR: In your reports, we repeatedly read about children whose fathers work as fishermen and lose their lives at sea. What makes this profession so dangerous?

SK: The life of a fisherman and father is marked by great vulnerability.

Fishermen in the Uppada region catch shrimp, fish, and crabs. Shrimp are caught with nets within a radius of up to eight kilometers off the coast, while catching crabs and fish requires a voyage across the sea lasting up to 15 days.

To catch tuna and similar species, the fishermen must venture far out to sea—about 600 to 800 kilometers from the coast—all the way to the borders of the Andaman Islands. This means an absence of 15 to 20 days with a crew of about 25 men. There is no cell phone reception in these areas—and GPS devices are also lacking—and at the time of departure, they have no way of being warned of impending disasters. Sometimes they cannot return because they encounter cyclones, strong winds, and extreme tides on the open sea.

Furthermore, fishing is not always successful. Sometimes, after weeks of hard work, they return empty-handed and have also lost their investment—diesel and provisions for the entire crew. Several consecutive unsuccessful seasons can strip a family of all its possessions. The recent establishment of several industrial complexes in our region, which discharge their wastewater directly into the sea, has made coastal fishing impossible for months.



"We pray for success before
we go fishing, and for God's
protection during cyclones
and typhoons."

Samarpana Kumar





JKR: How does this affect the fishing community? Can you give us an example?

SK: Yes. Raghu Dasu, a 48-year-old fisherman, makes his living from the sea with his wife and three sons (ages 23, 21, and 19). When asked about his sons' future, Dasu simply replied, "Even though my sons went to college, hunger has forced them all to go out fishing every day."

The extended family invested everything in fishing: two boats, huge nets a kilometer long, and tons of diesel for trips lasting several days. But two years ago, the sea fell silent. Industrial chemical waste transformed what had once been their source of sustenance into a barren wasteland; marine life floated dead and bloated on the surface. The years 2024 and 2025 brought them ruin—as they did for many other fishermen. Fishing trips to more distant parts off the coast of India were unsuccessful; they only added to their debts. The despair was so great that the entire community, including the church, took to the streets to protest against those responsible and to pray for a miracle. On October 15, 2025, the state government made an empty promise to solve the problem within 100 days, but to this day, nothing has happened. The people are going through very difficult times.

Thanks to the church's help—which initially provided for the children and later raised start-up capital to repair the nets—a glimmer of hope returned. Dasu and his men are catching fish again, but the ocean has not yet recovered. While the women are now learning to sew to create an alternative for the future, the family's survival remains a daily balancing act between faith, resilience, and the uncertain future of the ocean.

JKR: How do people cope with this unpredictability, and how does JLM support them?

SK: In fishing villages the ocean becomes a threat when water floods into the villages and homes during cyclones and typhoons, destroying them. During storms, we evacuate the homes and villages and provide shelter, food, drinking water, and sanitation facilities—such as toilets and washing areas—in schools and churches. During disasters like these, people often lose all their possessions. One of our churches is located right on the shore. The sea has already come so close that more than 300 square meters of the property have been swallowed up by the ocean. It is now so close that the church could be completely submerged during the next cyclone.

In our Chintoor catchment area, the Godavari and Sabhari rivers overflow their banks from July to September. The consequences are drastic: the villages often do not have time to be fully evacuated. Every flood claims the lives of many animals, creates very unsanitary living conditions for the people in the area, and disrupts the water supply for nearly a month.

JKR: What hope or wish do you have for yourself and the people you live and work with?

SK: I hope and wish to continue serving the fishing community to meet people's daily needs—both their livelihoods and life itself. My goal is to establish a cyclone shelter, as well as a center where training programs for fishermen of all generations can take place, to develop alternative livelihoods for adults and youth, to open up other employment opportunities for them, and to provide free education for the children.

JKR: Thank you very much for your personal insights and background information!

NEWS

News, dates, and information about our mission work



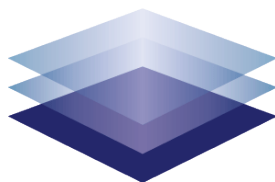
Sharing the Gospel – 2025 Annual Report

If you'd like to know how many people our projects have reached, how many aid packages have been packed, and how many students attend EBM INTERNATIONAL's schools, please take a look at our annual report. There you'll find selected project descriptions, profiles, and statistics on our diverse projects.

If you're interested, we'll send you a free copy, or you can read it online at: www.ebm-international.org/jahresbericht

Transparency is important to us

Together with more than 2,000 organizations, we have joined the Transparent Civil Society Initiative. We publish ten key pieces of information, including our bylaws, the names of key decision-makers, the sources of our funding, how our funds are used, and our staffing structure. The audit report from the auditing firm is also available there. Feel free to take a look:



Initiative
Transparente
Zivilgesellschaft

www.ebm-international.org/transparenz

Service: Create a Will Template

A bequest to EBM INTERNATIONAL has an impact that extends beyond one's own lifetime. It helps secure missionary work for the long term and spread hope. Once your own family and the people you care about are provided for, a bequest in your will can continue to be a blessing. However, drafting your last will and testament often raises questions or uncertainties. We're here to help: online, with just a few clicks, and can be adapted to suit your own personal wishes. On our website, you can create a will template for free and find some initial guidance on the topic:

www.ebm-international.org/testament



A Pastor with Seedlings in His Baggage

A small seed grows into a tree where birds can nest—that’s how Jesus tells it in the parable of the mustard seed. In northern Cameroon, where drought and insecurity shape everyday life, this is long since far more than just a pious story. Pastor Lucas Mana Sama has seen how, with a few seedlings, a good dose of faith, and a great deal of perseverance, entire villages have gained a new quality of life.

When the midday sun hangs directly overhead in Dagaï—a village in the far north of Cameroon—you long for a cool spot in the shade. It is dusty, the ground is cracked, and the air shimmers with heat. Anyone walking through the savanna here usually sees only scattered thorny bushes—until they come upon the tree-lined avenue of Dagaï. Trees stand close together, their crowns casting shade over the path, beneath which goats, children, women and men gather. It is the only avenue of its kind in the region—a small green oasis in a region where not much else grows anymore.

When the Habitat Dies

For decades, the Sahara has been expanding southward. Northern Cameroon is among the areas hardest hit by soil erosion, deforestation, and a changing climate. Rainy seasons are becoming more unpredictable, with

droughts and sudden floods alternating. Those who make their living from agriculture and livestock farming here—and that is most inhabitants of this multireligious and multicultural region—are losing more than just their crops. For when the land can no longer feed the people and water sources dry up, tensions rise in the struggle for the few remaining resources. In a region where violent attacks by “Boko Haram” occur time and time again—thereby endangering the peaceful coexistence of Christians and Muslims—this can further destabilize the social fabric. Everyone lives on the same piece of land and depends on it to provide an environment that nourishes and protects them.

This is precisely where the “Sahel Vert” project has been making a difference for over 40 years—with an idea as simple as it gets: planting trees. In

2025 alone, more than 31,500 seedlings were planted. The project’s driving force and point of origin are not primarily government agencies, but rather the Baptist churches of the Cameroonian Baptist Union (UEBC).

In his parable of the mustard seed, Jesus describes how a small seed grows into a large tree that provides shade and a habitat for many birds. This image comes to life in the churches participating in “Sahel Vert.” For they are the true nurseries of this project—both in the literal and spiritual sense.

From Pastor to Tree Nursery Expert

Lucas Mana Sama knows this dual meaning well. As pastor of the Mayo Oulo church, he trained to become a tree nursery expert in 2021 when the project began there. He learned how to grow seedlings, how to care for them, and how to inspire an entire church to



Livestock farming further ensures a stable supply



Pastor Lucas became a tree nursery expert through Sahel Vert

take a chance on something new in the dry soil. When he was transferred to the church in the village of Tam a year later, he simply took his new knowledge with him. He asked project coordinator Jonathan Woukam to include this village in the planting initiatives as well—Tam had plenty of open space and hardly any trees. The request was granted.

For Lucas, one thing has been clear ever since: wherever he is assigned as a pastor in the future, he will plant trees. For him, founding a church means not only winning people for the faith, but also preparing the ground on which they live. For him, the two go hand in hand.

This connection is both a matter close to his heart and a deliberate strategy: Local churches serve as centres where training takes place, from which planting campaigns are launched, and where knowledge multiplies across generations and village boundaries. A seed planted in one church bears fruit in the next.

Water for Trees, Fish, and Vegetables

At the Tchévi Training Center—which has been expanded in recent years into



The young plants are carefully tended

a regional advisory center for agriculture and fisheries—it's clear just how far this initiative has come. In 2024, a solar-powered borehole was installed here. This is a deep well from which groundwater is brought to the surface using a solar-powered submersible pump. This finally provided a reliable supply of water—for the tree nurseries, for vegetable beds with okra, eggplant, and moringa (drumstick trees), and for fish ponds with hardy catfish. In 2025, 22 young women and men completed a three-month training program in Tchévi on vegetable cultivation, animal husbandry, and basic bookkeeping. The special incentive: Those who performed particularly well were loaned a goat or a pair of chickens. After the first litter or the first brood, the graduates return a portion of them to the center so that the next generation can also get started. Multiplication, in a very practical sense.

Lydia Massa, who was trained here, is delighted that she is achieving higher yields with her new knowledge. She is grateful that the expanded center is helping many people practice a more effective form of agriculture that makes good use of the limited water available and improves the quality of

horticulture and animal husbandry.

More Than Just Crops and Water Sources

What is growing through “Sahel Vert” and the participating churches is more than just food. It brings stability to families who would otherwise have to migrate. It provides shade in a landscape that otherwise knows only heat. It fosters new trust among neighbours of different faiths who share water and exchange seedlings.

Pastor Lucas prays that the project will reach many more villages. It is a prayer that is both ecological and spiritual. For with every church that becomes part of “Sahel Vert,” with every patch of dry soil that is greened, northern Cameroon becomes a more livable place, much like the shade-giving mustard tree that Jesus describes in his parable.

Based on reports by Jonathan Woukam, project manager of “Sahel Vert” in Cameroon

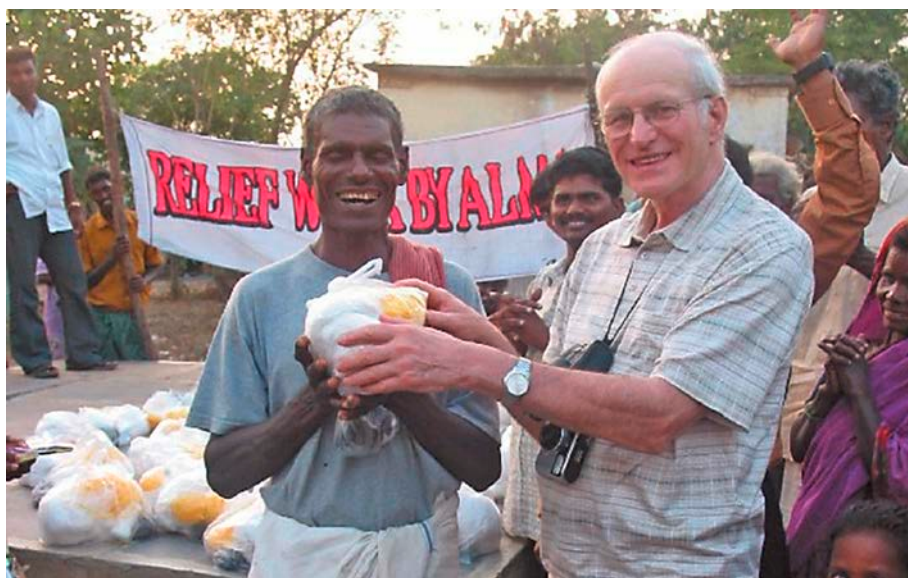
Walter Herter—A Life Devoted to Compassion

On April 2, 2026, Dr. Walter Herter passed away at the age of 94. His life was a powerful testimony to Christian love and tireless service to the Christian churches and their spiritually oriented social projects in India.

His father, Hans Herter, had also been active in India: In 1960, he founded a social fund for the Christian hospital in Ludhiana, in northern India. The goal was to provide medical care to patients in need. This gave rise to the “Hans-Herter-Indienhilfe.” (Hans-Herter-Help for India)

After his father’s death, Dr. Walter Herter took over the leadership of this organization—and made it his life’s work. In the years that followed, the organization grew into a comprehensive aid organization. For over 40 years, he led this organization on a volunteer basis—and even full-time after his retirement. In 1997, Dr. Walter Herter was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit on Ribbon for his dedication.

When the organization was transferred to EBM INTERNATIONAL in 2010, it included 60 individual projects and had an annual budget of half a million euros—funded entirely by donations.



Dr. Walter Herter

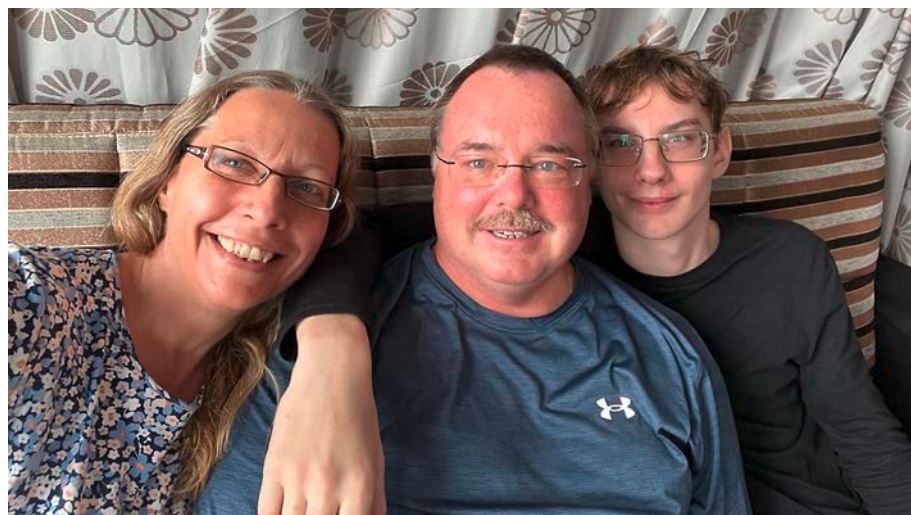
Until his death he remained a reliable partner, advising the EBMI Secretary General, maintaining contact with partners in India, and supporting many projects from his own personal funds.

The news of Dr. Walter Herter’s death has filled the 15 partner organizations in India with deep sorrow. Dr. Anil Benjamin (Bridge of Hope India) writes: “Dr. Walter Herter played a key role in the founding of Bridge of Hope India—with a clear and compassionate vision to strengthen and support local village communities. His sincere

concern for people shaped everything he did. His life was a testament to selfless service.”

EBM INTERNATIONAL and the Baptist Union of Germany are deeply grateful for the life and ministry of Dr. Walter Herter and the profound impact he had on the lives of countless people—in India as well as in Germany.

Ralf Döhring—an encouraging mentor and loyal companion



The unexpected decease of Pastor Ralf Döhring at the age of 59 occurred on February 23, 2026. He had been living with his family in Jui, Sierra Leone, since 2022, where his wife, Pastor Christina Döhring, served as a missionary with EBM INTERNATIONAL where she was involved in theological education until the summer of 2026. His ministry there provided selfless and devoted support for his family: He cared for their son Nathanael and attended to countless needs on the

Christina, Ralf, and Nathanael Döhring

campus of the Evangelical College of Theology (TECT).

Dr. Michael Kisskalt, General Secretary of EBM INTERNATIONAL, writes: “I’ve always been impressed by how deeply committed Ralf was to provide practical help to the poor in his community: He provided food for students and their families, clothing, school supplies, and even a motorcycle for a church planter—Ralf was focused on people and their specific needs. He helped wherever he could.”

He had previously served as a pastor together with Christina at the Baptist Church in Siegburg, and before that as a youth pastor at the Baptist Churches in Oberhausen and Bad Oeynhausen. Many who had accompanied him at various stages describe Ralf Döhring as a cheerful, warm-hearted, and caring person and as a “true friend.”

For Natalie Georgi, president of the German Baptist Union, Ralf Döhring—who baptized and ordained her—was also a companion and mentor: “Ralf

was a man of great faith. His trust in God’s power was contagious. In his own unique and unmistakable way, he challenged people in their faith, encouraged them to serve in God’s kingdom, and nurtured their gifts.”

Vumthang Sitlhou—A Peacemaker Through and Through

On May 13, 2026, Pastor Vumthang was murdered along with two young fellow pastors with whom he led the “Thadou Baptist Convention.” On the way back from a church service for peace in Manipur, a state ravaged by civil wars, his car was forced off the road. The three pastors were shot and killed; the driver survived but was injured. Vumthang led the COMPASSION children’s home, located in a small village in northeastern India, which has been part of EBM INTERNATIONAL for 17 years.

Former EBMI General Secretary Christoph Haus described Vumthang as a “gifted preacher, mediator, and

peacemaker.” Peace and reconciliation were the causes closest to his heart.

Throughout his life he advocated for peace talks between the warring tribes in Manipur. As a result, he was repeatedly called upon by Indian governors to serve as a mediator.

Children were the ones who suffered the most from this violent situation. They were traumatized and left behind as orphans or half-orphans, with no prospect of a dignified life. He increasingly took in such children at the children’s home, which was registered by the Indian government in 2003 as

the COMPASSION Children’s Home. In recent years, the number of children grew so large that he built additional houses on his property to accommodate them—including a school building.

At COMPASSION, everyone lived together as one big family. Furthermore, the children’s home serves as an all-embracing school of life: this includes devotions, worship services, plenty of singing and dancing, sport, vegetable gardening, livestock farming, fish farming, homework help, and other supportive programmes.

EBMI General Secretary Dr. Michael Kisskalt wrote about his visit to the site in January 2026: “I was deeply impressed by Vumthang’s attitude, which radiated calm, gratitude, and strength, despite the threatening situation and the ailments of old age. He spoke of the death threats, but also of his trust that everything is in God’s hands. — Thank you, Brother Vumthang, for being such an inspiration.”

Even though Vumthang’s life has now come to a violent end, God’s reconciling power cannot be stopped. His daughter will continue to run the children’s home in his spirit.



Vumthang Sitlhou with his wife Kim

NEWS

News, dates, and information about our mission work



Farewell, dear Gabi!

Earlier this year, we bid farewell to our long-time and loyal colleague Gabriele (Gabi) Neubauer when she retired after 28 years of service.

Her primary focus was accounting—but she was also an important point of contact for donors and churches, especially regarding donation receipts, sponsorships, event donations, and project information, and she was always a warm and welcoming person to turn to with any concern. She also accompanied supporters on mission trips. The entire EBMI team and all our partners have always benefited from her extensive experience. We wholeheartedly wish her God's blessings for this new chapter in her life!

A Warm Welcome, Namibia!

Since 2024, the National Baptist Convention of Namibia (NBCN) and the German Baptist Union have been working together in partnership to learn from each other and give support.

EBM INTERNATIONAL has encouraged and backed this partnership and invited Namibia to become a guest member of the missionary society.

At the Mission Council meeting in Norderstedt this past May, they were formally welcomed as full members into the EBMI family. We are filled with joy and are already very excited to see what projects we will undertake together to shape the mission in Namibia and beyond.

The vast country of Namibia has a population of only about 3.3 million. The NBCN consists of approximately 100 churches and 19,000 members and its leaders are volunteers. The current General Secretary is Rev. Lukas Ndjamba. The photo shows the welcome ceremony with the Namibian flag: Dr. Michael Kisskalt with Namibian delegate Jonas Kakenge Mbwenja and EBMI President Emma Mabidilala.

For more information on the partnership with the German Baptist Union, visit:

www.befg.de/namibia



Why a Baptism Requires Courage

Anyone who is baptised in Türkiye today is usually making a decision with far-reaching consequences. Christians are a small minority. Many new converts are the only Christians in their families. Some celebrate their baptism with their relatives, while others keep it a secret for fear of rejection. Nevertheless, they take this step.

Understand First, Then Decide

In Türkiye, baptism—just as in the early Christian era—takes place after attending baptismal classes. During this time, participants attend 24 lessons and regular church services to get to know the church and build relationships. Baptism candidates' knowledge of Christianity is often limited or inaccurate. From a Muslim perspective, Christianity and the Gospel have been distorted: Jesus Christ is merely a prophet, Christians believe in three gods, and the Gospel foretells the coming of Muhammad. That is why it is important to allow time for questions and to clear up misunderstandings. Each week, a lesson is covered during a one-hour discussion. This time is dedicated to the mutual exchange of ideas and allows a personal relationship to develop. Those who have reliably attended all the discussions are admitted to baptism.

Baptism in the Baptistry or in the Sea

Our church in Izmir-Buca has a baptismal pool. Sometimes baptisms also take

place by the sea or on the grounds where we hold a retreat once a year with all the Turkish churches. For baptisms in the sea, it is important to choose a location where there are no onlookers or strangers—out of consideration for those being baptized, who do not want to make their decision public unintentionally.

The baptism ceremony proceeds as follows: The person being baptized shares their personal story of faith in Jesus Christ, we sing and pray together, and finally, the baptism is performed.

Curiosity Becomes Faith

A young man moved from Adana to Izmir to attend college. There, he visited our church for the first time. Curiosity turned into interest. Interest led to faith. He faithfully attended baptism classes, asked many questions, and studied the Bible intensively. Finally, he publicly professed his faith in Jesus Christ and wanted to be baptised. We began preparing him for baptism. He participated very conscientiously in

the lessons, completed his homework, and was a good student. He learned a great deal about the Christian faith not only through the baptism classes but also through his own efforts. After the classes were completed, the congregation voted on his request for baptism. Everyone voted in favour.

His friends from the university also attended the baptism. For some of them, it was their first time they had witnessed a Christian baptism.

Time and time again, we see how God transforms people—and how a courageous step of faith gives rise to new questions and encounters. We are very grateful for this.

According to a report by Hürrem Carolin Keskin, a member of the executive board of EBM INTERNATIONAL



Baptism in the Sea

“That they rise up and find their purpose in life”

In just three weeks, Spanish photographer Eli Padilla finished shooting her first film. It portrays daily life at the Macia Social Center in Mozambique in a very sensitive and authentic way. The EBM INTERNATIONAL project is titled “Sekeleka” (“Get up” in Shangana). Viewers are immersed in the compassionate work of Spanish missionary Sara Marcos and her team. The film shows how dignified life and work can be when shared with children with physical disabilities and their families, and emphasizes how closely vulnerability and strength are linked. We spoke with the artist.

EBM INTERNATIONAL: How did the idea to make a documentary film originate?

Eli Padilla (EP): It happened more by chance. At first I wanted to do a photography project. The idea to expand the project into a documentary film came from suggestions made by other people. They said my camera was well-suited for video recording, too...

So I took a video course and developed an initial narrative structure. It was meant to be a kind of travel diary. During the course, my teacher, José Andrés, offered to handle the editing and post-production. Both Sara Marcos and José were crucial to the film’s direction. Sara, because she knew from the very beginning what the film should convey, and José, because his sensitivity and skill needed no words to produce a film full of dignity and joy. Without him, the film wouldn’t have turned out the same—or perhaps it wouldn’t have been made at all.

EBMI: The film does not just shed light on the issues of poverty and disability. It also conveys dignity, joy, and closeness. Why was it important to you to show these perspectives?

EP: That was important to me above all because dignity, joy, and closeness are a reality in Sekeleka’s everyday life—not just a forced pose. That however, is not the whole reality. There are moments when you aren’t there in time to act and you experience the helplessness of being “too late.” Or there are other moments when there was simply nothing you could do. Dealing with this requires composure and strength for which everyone needs divine help. It was important to us to show as many facets as possible within the limited time we had.

EBMI: Which encounter made a particular impression on you personally?

EP: It was an incident at the local hospital. We drove to visit a family that

Sekeleka supports and encountered a situation that required immediate hospitalization due to severe malnutrition. The next day, we visited the boy and his mother. Based on his physical development, you would have thought he was eight or ten years old. It turned out he was over 20.

I remember seeing the young man lying in bed, barely having the strength to move a single muscle or open his eyes. Sara knelt on the floor next to the bed and rested her head on the boy’s pillow, just a few centimeters away from him.

She began to pray softly. Nothing could be heard. It seemed as though the whisper of her words reached only him. Silence reigned in the room. Little by little, the boy began to respond. He opened his eyes, and they began to move, seeking Sara’s gaze. The two of them remained like that for quite a while. It was obvious that something very special was happening there.

Even today, I get goose pimples when I remember that scene. I witnessed a unique moment that left a deep impression on me. But that scene isn’t part of the film because it was so very intimate.

EBMI: Which scene should viewers pay special attention to, even if it may seem insignificant?

EP: I’m always deeply moved when Sara says, “Sekeleka’s vision is for people to rise up, find meaning in their lives, feel loved and valued, and have a purpose in life.” Isn’t that exactly what we’re all looking for? No matter what continent we’re on or what limitations



Learning to Walk with Patient Guidance

and obstacles we face in our lives—the search for the meaning of life is a universal experience—and finding it is a huge thing.

EBMI: What is your personal hope for this project?

EP: That this film will help make Sara's two dreams come true: She dreams that Sekeleka will be able to support

itself financially, so that the necessary funds are available for the work in the various aspects. And she dreams of a Sekeleka II or III in northern Mozambique—a big dream. I think the idea of bringing inclusion to northern Mozambique is very bold and ambitious—one of the regions where children, and especially women, are in the greatest need of protection and support. Personally, it would make me very happy if I could help ensure that these children feel loved and find their own path in life.



Physical Therapy at the Social Center



Ana Leyda (left), Sara Marcos (center), and Eli Padilla (right)

“Sekeleka – Stand Up” in your church?

Are you curious? Eli Padilla is making her film available to churches free of charge, and we invite you to take advantage of this offer. Immerse yourselves in the moving scenes, let yourselves be touched by the stories of the people at the Macia Social Center, and start a conversation about the film's diverse themes. Organise a movie night or mission day. Show it at your church retreat or at a neighbourhood café. Host an open house or screen it at interchurch events. Get creative! It's worth it.

Film Details::

Runtime: 57 minutes

Languages: Spanish, Portuguese, and Shangana with German (or English) subtitles.

Year of Release: Filmed in 2025 in Mozambique; produced and released in Spain the same year.

Director: Eli Padilla

Producer: José Andrés

Technical requirements: Projector, screen (16:9), audio equipment, seating, a darkened room.



You can find more information and ideas about the film screening here:

www.ebm-international.org/film-macia



Mission Council of EBM INTERNATIONAL

The God Who Provides

114 participants (53 delegates and 61 guests) from 26 countries gathered at the Kreuzkirche in Norderstedt from May 6. –9. 2026. They met there for the annual Mission Council of EBM INTERNATIONAL to discuss their joint mission work, elect new members to the Executive Board, and approve the budget. The Conference theme was “The God Who Provides.” Through Bible studies, worship services, and inspirational workshops, it became clear that God calls, sends, and provides.

Trusting in God's Provision

Guest speaker Pastor Kehinde Ojo from Nigeria provided essential impulses for the conference theme. The coach, trainer, and mentor has been working for the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) for many years and is an expert in fundraising and mobilizing local resources. Ojo encouraged the participants not to rely first on other people when finances or resources are scarce, but on God. The God who provided for Hagar and Ishmael in the desert, who gave Elijah and the widow food, and who nourished the people of Israel with manna and quail, still provides today: God provides for His Church and His mission with gifts, finances, time, and the opportunity to share His blessings with others. Ojo rejected the notion that there is nobody who has nothing to give. Because of God's provision, everyone can draw from sufficient resources—not only for themselves but also for others.

Changes in Staff and on the Board

Elizabeth Mvula (Malawi), Marc Deroeux (France), and César Sotomayor (Austria) stepped down from their honorary roles on the board. They did not stand for reelection. Stefanie Fischer-Desamours (Germany) and Lise Kyllingstad (Norway) ran for another term. Both were reelected; Lise Kyllingstad remains Vice President of EBMI. Barbara Paolucci (Italy), Hervé Turquais (France), and Yosvany Pa-drón (Cuba) were newly elected to the Board of Directors.



The newly formed EBMI Executive Board

The successors to two regional representatives who will retire in the coming years were unanimously confirmed. Rufus Kamalakar (India) will succeed Dr. Judson Pothuraju (India) starting in January 2026. Dr. Claiton Kunz (Brazil) will replace the current regional representative for Latin America, Carlos Waldow (Brazil), in January 2028.

The former missionary Sarah Bosniakowski, who had already concluded her eight-year service at the Hospital of Hope in Garoua, Cameroon, in 2025, was also bid farewell.

A Community That Inspires

General Secretary Michael Kisskalt expressed his deep gratitude for the wonderful hospitality of the Baptist church in Norderstedt and its outstanding organisation. “I was once again impressed by the strong atmosphere that developed during these days: in our fellowship, in our conversations, and in our shared singing and prayer.”



www.ebm-international.org