

# Storybook



Missionaries, volunteers and co-workers tell their stories



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Today, many churches are still being planted in Cameroon. EBM INTERNATIONAL is no longer needed as a "midwife". Instead, we now train new leaders.

30 houses and 30 baptized people – this was the phat result at the end of a year spent in the church at Dondo.

In one afternoon, I, the missionary, learned from a 12-year-old boy what it means to love unconditionally, beyond your limits.

As a volunteer, I learned to bake a cake on a fire pit.

Many doors and inner battles later, I am now sitting here, having a key chain without any keys of our own. In a few days, we are off to Africa.

# Things are moving



Dear readers,

The statements opposite, which are taken from texts in this book, are evidence that things are moving.

This book will try to enhance our understanding of Africa through stories from the Continent which is known for its tradition of story-telling. Stories are the lifeblood of missions. This was also my experience during five years of mission service in Africa. Africa has taught me that stories move people. This is why people tell their stories in this book. I am convinced that these stories will bring a piece of Africa to us, to Europe.

At this point, I would first like to thank the people who tell their stories in this book – you have one thing in common: In your lives, you have followed God's calling. For this, my hat is off to you. This is not always easy, yet it is exciting and enriching, as we can read in almost each one of the following lines. I thank you, dear missionaries, national co-workers and volunteers, for being at work and for writing. You are the ones standing for our mission. You are EBM INTERNATIONAL. I sincerely mean this.

Therefore I'd like to say again: Thank you.

I am especially pleased with the fantastic photos by Matthias Steinbach ([www.matthiassteinbach.com](http://www.matthiassteinbach.com)) that have been included in this book. Great that you came to see us in Africa.

Here I would also like to thank the people who have contributed so much to this book: Jutta Krebs, Charly Schneider and, last but not least, Carola Streubel.

And a thank you to you who are reading this book! We would also like to ask you to keep sharing with us. EBM INTERNATIONAL depends on that.

With this in mind: Have fun reading!

*Matze Dichristin*

„Poverty is a question of definition. Misery, however, needn't exist among Christians if we help one another.“

MARTIN PUSCH

## We help people in

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, India, Malawi, Mozambique, Peru, Portugal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Turkey.

Our work is funded exclusively by voluntary donations. This is why we are dependent on your support. Stories such as the ones in this book can only be told if there are people here in Europe who provide for the setting. Please support us by passing these stories on to others – you can do so very practically by giving them this book. And please tell other people about the work of EBM INTERNATIONAL.

We kindly ask you to support our work by donating.

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## Sermon on Romans 12:3-6a given while on home assignment 2012

By Martin Pusch, Missionary in Maroua, Cameroon



Our willingness to leave for a foreign country when God sent us was triggered by a quite well-known text at the end of the gospel according to Matthew (Mt. 28:18-20). There, Jesus says:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

We were ready to go. We set off. We took one step after another, were guided time and again until we have now found our place of work in Maroua, Cameroon. When we are to take another step and where to go – the Lord will tell us in His time.

With reference to this text at the end of the gospel according to Matthew, we are sometimes asked why we work in Cameroon, of all places. After all, the gospel has already been preached there, they say, and there are already many Christians in North Cameroon.

Well, having a closer look at these verses, you will realize that they are not only about preaching the

gospel. They are also about making disciples, who then fully commit their lives to Jesus.

Such life starts at their conversion, marked by baptism. But this is only the beginning, for they are to learn everything that Jesus also taught his disciples.

Unfortunately, there is no detailed curriculum about the things Jesus taught his disciples. Besides, Jesus' disciples probably knew „the Law and the Prophets“, which we here know as the Old Testament. Jesus' disciples thus had a background knowledge which the people in North Cameroon do not necessarily have.

In the Old Testament, there are already many pointers to Jesus. These were explained to his disciples by Jesus himself, so they should understand the history of salvation. He also explained to them the new covenant, which is no longer governed by the Law but by God's love towards man and by the love of people towards one another.

Now, we have come to the point where we realize that our task in North Cameroon has not been completed yet. Many Christians have only a fragmentary understanding of

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salvation history; they read the Bible without being aware that there is a difference between the Law and the Gospel. They think they have to somehow do and keep everything. Even though the gospel has now been proclaimed in North Cameroon for 50 to 60 years, and even though there is now a great number of Christians and congregations, there are still some tribes and villages where there aren't practically any Christians. This means that „all the nations“ have not been disciplined yet, that Jesus' Commandment has not yet been accomplished there.

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Concerning EBM work in North Cameroon, the time has now come to completely hand over responsibility for the various areas of work to national staff. In the schools, this has been the case for quite some time. In summer 2012, a Cameroonian took over responsibility also for the medical ministry – an area of work with over one hundred staff workers. More areas will soon follow.

As responsibility for more and more fields of work in Cameroon is being turned over to local workers, this, however, does not mean that there are no tasks left for us Europeans. We can go on working there if we are ready to integrate into the local structures. Let me quote a few verses from Romans 12, Verse 3 and following:

„For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself

with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.“

In several passages of his letters, Paul uses the human body as an analogy to explain something (further examples are I Cor. 12:12ff; Eph. 4:4ff; Col. 2:19). The different parts forming our body have different functions and thus serve the whole, i.e. body function. Taken on its own, any part of our body is a comic figure; only through meaningful interaction of its parts does our body make itself useful.

Paul compares the local congregation, and the worldwide church as well, to a human body. Jesus is the head of the body, and we, his disciples, are the various parts of the body.

On ground of this argument, Paul, in verse 3, points out that nobody is to pride himself or herself on his role or task. As it is, we do have different tasks, but we also depend on one another. And, most important, we all depend on Christ. No one is by himself.

This insight should keep us from thinking too highly of ourselves, let



alone from looking down on others. Despite all our differences, we belong to one body. And this body, the church, is closely bound together the world over.

This is the reason why we should be interested in the situation of Christians in other countries and cultures. The point is not only whether the gospel has been preached to every nation and culture, allowing us to stay at home when it has. No, the point is that not all the people in the world enjoy the same standards of living, and Christians are no exception to this.

In North Cameroon, the living conditions of people are difficult. The average longevity is considerably lower than in Germany. The reasons are manifold. If someone falls ill, e.g., and must go to hospital, he has to pay for everything in cash on admission, or he gets no treatment,

not even in an emergency. Under these circumstances, a disease or an accident may easily lead to death, especially so in destitute families.

In our schools, we notice that about the same number of boys and girls attend the lower forms. The higher the forms, the fewer the girls who attend. They have to do chores at home. So, on the whole, girls have worse access to education.

Such are the conditions for Christians in Cameroon. Many of them have to struggle through bread-and-butter difficulties in order to master life.

It is with these Christians that we are linked and form one body. And just in the same way as we care about our own body, we invest in the one body in Christ.

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And for this investment, we have been given resources. We have received various gifts from God, which we can and are to use for the benefit of the whole. Paul lists some of these gifts. Each gift must be matched with the right attitude. The right use of our gifts creates relationships which hold the body of the church together.

The verses we are talking about in Romans especially refer to the gifts serving the local congregation: prophesying, serving and leading, teaching and encouraging. But giving and compassion are mentioned as well.

What will a person do who has the gift of giving and compassion? Well, he or she will have an eye for people in distress, and they will probably have something they can give or put to use. At first, they may allocate time in order to attend to another person and to care about his or her situation. And it may mean that I take something God has given me and give it to the one person who badly needs it in this very moment. For this does not mean that I will suffer any need; tomorrow, this same God can again give me the things I will then need.

The body of Christ, the worldwide Church of God, is not held together primarily through prophesying, through leading and serving, nor necessarily through teaching and encouragement. It is the gifts of giving and showing mercy which

truly reveal the way we are linked to the other parts of the body. And it is also these very gifts of giving and showing mercy which will be noticed by others and have an impact. For when we put these gifts to good use, other people will see that we mean well towards them and that we, as much as it depends on us, want to live at peace with everyone. (Verse 17f.)

Peace is a valued commodity. In North Cameroon, we are close neighbours to two of the biggest flashpoints in Africa. Maroua is not far from the borders with Nigeria and Chad. And those conflicts keep spilling over the border. In Maroua, however, Christians and Muslims still live largely at peace. In this situation, we wish to go on accomplishing our dual mission. We would like to contribute to people becoming disciples and learning all the things Jesus has commanded. But we would also like to make the Christians in North Cameroon feel that they form part of the worldwide body, from which they receive support in their situation.

And we would also like to remind the churches in Europe that it is worth attending to the people around us. God has given us gifts which help us to build local churches and to structure them. This should not make us proud, for anything we have ultimately comes from God. We depend on Christ, who is the head. And he will provide for us, his body, in future also. Therefore, we

need not stick to false securities and insurances. Rather, we can use the assurance God gives to develop the gift of compassion and of giving. For, if we generously invest our time and our possessions for the people around us, positive developments will be the result. Within the church, locally and universally, solidarity will be enhanced by mutual assistance. And to the outside world, the church will become hospitable and attractive, friendly and helpful – an outpost of God's kingdom, his love and peace.

We have been called on to withstand this complicated and evil world: It is our mandate to overcome the evil in this world with good (v. 21). This God-given mandate first applies to relating to our immediate and personal environment. At the same time, it has become easy today to support Christians and churches elsewhere in this mission. Always, Christians have

been able to pray for one another and for other people, but never before have we been so well up-to-date and fully informed as we are today, and so we can share with those who are in need in other places (v. 13). When we do so, we should not be guided by news about disasters. More important is building true and helpful friendships with people in our environment, in order to find a way to make them familiar with God's love. God's love is then associated with a face!

It is also important to support other Christians in their respective situation. They must be able to realize that they belong to a greater whole, despite all their difficulties and apparent hopelessness. Poverty is an issue of definition. Misery, however, need not be present among Christians if we help one another. For God has given us gifts which we can and are to put to good use for the benefit of the whole body.

Missionaries and  
volunteers tell  
their stories

EQUATORIAL GUINEA





# Equatorial Guinea

In Equatorial Guinea, EBM INTERNATIONAL supports two schools and some local church ministries.



## Equatorial Guinea

<b>Capital:</b>	Malabo
<b>Area:</b>	28,051 sq km
<b>Population:</b>	1.2 million
<b>Religions:</b>	Christian: 92 %, Natural religions
<b>Languages:</b>	Spanish, French, as well as 10 further languages (e.g. Bantu languages such as Fang and Bube)
<b>Education:</b>	Literacy rate: 93 %
<b>Government:</b>	Presidential Republic
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Coffee, cocoa, rice, coconuts, bananas, yams, tropical fruit, wood; cattle breeding
<b>Industries:</b>	Petrochemical industry, fishing, wood processing
<b>Mineral resources:</b>	Crude oil, wood, gold, magnesium, uranium
<b>Resources:</b>	Hydro-power
<b>Challenges:</b>	Poverty and corruption



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“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55:8-9)

From childhood, we all have had our dreams and ideas. There are things and emotions which give rise to longings within us. Longings that are far beyond what we can reach. I started dreaming about missions early on, reading about missions and asking questions. But, as is

often the case, it was only a dream. I served God and worked, all the while following my own ways.

Today, I am volunteering in Equatorial Guinea and serving the Lord in missions. Since I came here, I have come to acknowledge that the Lord’s ways for us are far higher than what we can ever imagine or grasp.

Equatorial Guinea is a small country compared to many other African countries; its wealth lies in the beauty of its countryside, its soil,

its people, and all that makes it specific. When I arrived here, I was overwhelmed by everything. Everything was new. I enjoyed living in the culture, detecting differences, trying new foodstuffs which I had never seen before, and having to ask about everything. In many instances, I also felt challenged. Every morning, when I get up, I wonder what surprises I am going to discover. In everything we can see the mighty hand of God, holding and protecting us at all times.

The mission runs two schools here. One is located in the small village of Evinayong. This school has been built of wood planks and is surrounded by green countryside. There is lots of space for the children to play and run. Every day, they receive a plate of food and a glass of milk.

I work at the other school, „El Buen Pastor – The Good Shepherd“. It is in Malabo, the country’s capital, on Bioko Island. This school is not as spacious; it is situated in the city centre – surrounded by noise and cars. With 700 pupils attending, it is much bigger though. The work pace is tough here, and it is difficult to get some rest and peace – which at times is so much needed. But still: From the moment you open your eyes in the morning, you may see God’s blessings everywhere. If there is something I have fallen in love with in Equatorial Guinea, it is the children. They seem serious, yet time and again, there is this smile in their faces, which

## Our missionaries on site:



Julio Cháfer & Damaris Juárez



Sara Marcos Velert

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changes everything. When you approach them, they run towards you to hug you or to hold out their hand to greet you. Every day starts with these broad smiles, and when you come to think about the difficult situations these children live in, then these small greeting gestures make you have a laugh on your own face.

When the youngest children finish their classes, the older ones arrive, clad in their white polo shirts, nurturing their dreams and illusions that



make them want to study despite their difficult environment. Many do not have electric light at home and do their homework right in the main street, under a streetlamp. The girls especially have a great deal of responsibility for the family at home, and yet they motivate themselves to learn, day in, day out. When I hear them talking about the many things they have to cope with in their lives, I ask myself how I can help them. Then I remember situations before some decisions I had to make in my life and how God reminded me that his thoughts and ways for me have been far better than I could ever have imagined. And then it becomes clear to me what I can offer these children: There is a God who loves them, who does everything for them, and who is at their side despite their difficult lives. Every time I start teaching, they ask me to pray for them, and can see God's blessing on them, and I realize how much they are already aware that God's blessings are the best thing there is for them. There is no one who does not know that every day is a gift of God's to be grateful for. True all the more here, where death is such a normal thing even in the lives of very young children.

The mission has three churches here, as well as two mission stations. The people interact lovingly with me and are very generous with the things they can share. Every Sunday service is a celebration with praise

and dances. Even the offering is joyful, since, after all, God is the ultimate giver of whatever we may share – no matter whether much or little.

As soon as we in Europe lack any material things, we usually think that we should ask them from God right away. But should we not be so much more thankful for things that we take for granted, and appreciate them so much more: water running when we open a tap, lights we can turn on, food to fill our plates with? We really should appreciate all these things much more, because we cannot take them for granted.

I do not know yet what the Lord has in store for me – even though I would like to know. But I am certain that it will be best for me. And I have absolutely no doubt about this: What I have learned in mission service, with God transforming my heart – all this has brought about changes in my life that were necessary. For this, I am immensely grateful to him. Today I can say with assurance that missions – be it in Africa or in your own church – must always be based on love. In whatever way we may serve people, whatever sacrifices we may make, however much we pray – it will be worthless if we are not driven by love for the people we serve. This is the one great lesson God teaches us.

MARTA NOMBELA





The school "Talita Cum" is located inland, in Evinayong, a nice place with green countryside, red earth and a blue sky. To get to school, many children have to walk quite far, with empty stomachs. For 350 children, classes start at 8 a.m. The youngest are sent to school at age four, and elementary school ends after sixth grade. The children receive a meal, and the gospel is part of their education so they have a chance of getting to know God.

Sara Marcos, EBM missionary, has been head of the school for ten years. She is a wonderful illustration of God's ministry in this village. A new room built of concrete has considerably improved teaching facilities, and the school has been blessed with a well providing drinking water.

The second school, "El Buen Pastor – The Good Shepherd", has a pre-school, a primary and a secondary school. For the nearly 100 children attending pre-school, we could set up a second room and can now teach them in parallel groups. Before, we had to teach reading and writing to the children in two groups, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Playing with modelling clay is the favourite activity of the children – and of the teachers, too: It is fantastic to see the shapes modelled from the clay as well as the laughter brought about on the children's faces.

Something very special has happened to Juan Carlos: The boy was born with a back injury and was handicapped. With the assistance of another organization, he could be flown to Spain and have surgery there. Now, he can run again – with some difficulty though, but nothing can stop him.

The secondary schools are each attended by about 300 children. The primary school classes are taught in the morning, and the older children use the same rooms in the after-



noon. Despite its tangible challenges, our school is renowned for its good education, because we are able to rouse the children's interest. This justifies the effort. In classes and in the services the children learn a lot about God so that they may get to know him and become disciples to serve him.

These schools are ours. We are, all of us, responsible to support this work of God's, by giving and by praying.

JULIO CHÁFER





CAMEROON



# Cameroon

In Cameroon, EBM INTERNATIONAL sponsors several schools, and trains pastors and evangelists. Besides, EBM INTERNATIONAL supports many medical facilities and vocational training centres.

## Cameroon

<b>Capital:</b>	Yaoundé
<b>Area:</b>	475,442 sq km
<b>Population:</b>	19.7 million
<b>Religions:</b>	Christian: 67 %, Muslim: 28 %, Natural religions: 5 %
<b>Languages:</b>	French, English, 230 local languages
<b>Education:</b>	Literacy rate: 75 %
<b>Government:</b>	Presidential republic
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Maize, coffee, cotton, caoutchouc, bananas, wheat, wood, cattle breeding
<b>Industries:</b>	Petrochemicals, textiles, consumer goods, wood processing
<b>Mineral resources:</b>	Crude oil, wood, bauxite, iron ore
<b>Resources:</b>	Hydro-power
<b>Challenges:</b>	Corruption, unemployment, labour legislation



„I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds.“  
Psalm 77:12

When I am travelling around North Cameroon in order to visit churches, hold trainings or to preach, I often think of the people who worked here before me and took the same routes, in order to proclaim the same gospel. By now, I have come to know some of my predecessors, and from them, I have heard many things about the earlier times. It moves my heart to see pictures

from the beginnings and to visit the places where everything started. It is moving although at the beginning of EBM mission work, there was a failure: Meri mission station, built in 1956 by the missionary couple Maurice and Madeleine Farelly had to be abandoned soon again owing to difficulties with the local king. It was only the second attempt, this time with Rudolph and Ingeborg Kassühlke in Dagai, which marked the successful beginning of our mission work. Visiting former missionaries to Cameroon Artur and Gerti

Gerdawischke in Bremerhaven, and talking to them, helped me understand how the first churches were founded. Work was arduous, there were hardly any roads, and the mission society itself was still in its infancy and at some loss about what course to take in their work. Most of the first Christians could neither read nor write and needed intense attention. There were hostilities, churches were torched, and many villages rejected the mission and its commitment. The missionaries were no supermen (in those times no more than today) and had to cope with many personal problems and disappointments.

So I am all the more astonished to see what has become out of those small beginnings. With a great deal of patience, I have listed all the churches of the Cameroonian Baptist Union in past years and analyzed the figures. According to these, there are 360 churches in North Cameroon alone (considering all of Cameroon, there are considerably more than 500 of them). Who would have dreamt of this when in 1960, the first six people went into the water to be baptized, witnessing to their faith in Christ Jesus? This number has grown to considerably more than 40,000 people, who gather in the churches of North Cameroon to praise and worship God, Sunday after Sunday.

What are God's plans for these churches? We still cannot foresee the future. Many things have

## Our missionaries on site:



Cristel & Martin Pusch



Hanna & Dirk Pusch

changed. Not all of what has been set up by the mission and the missionaries as a visible sign of God's love will remain in place. But one thing is for certain: There is a future for the Church of Jesus Christ here in Cameroon. The gospel is being taken to unreached villages and urban districts by many Cameroonians, which sometimes requires great commitment and sacrifices. This resulted in 32 new churches in North Cameroon between 2007 and 2011 alone. Today, the Church in Cameroon is independent and has been able to manage for a very





long time without the mission as a "midwife". This, however, does not mean that our mission work has been completed altogether. The training of leaders for these numerous churches, e.g., is linked to enormous challenges today. Moreover, it holds true for the future as well that we as churches in Europe and Cameroon belong together, as we have the same Lord and a common history. We also have a common concern: preaching the gospel of Christ Jesus to the whole world. This, of course, also means that men and women leave for countries the world over (including Cameroon!), demonstrating the solidarity of the one Church of Jesus Christ. They do so by living out their faith with the local people here and by witnessing to the miracles God

still works and to the liberating and renewing power of the gospel. It seems as if though in our churches in Europe there are fewer and fewer people who are willing to carry out the mission. The fact is that fewer missionaries from Europe serve with EBM INTERNATIONAL now than in the early sixties, shortly after its foundation. And it is also a fact that missionaries are the only indispensable ingredient in a mission society. Jesus' words spoken to his disciples 2,000 years ago are most relevant today: "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." God still wants to do great things and show his power. What a privilege for us to partake and then to witness to what God is doing.

DIRK PUSCH

**Looking** back on my nine months in Cameroon, I am quite confused. Confused, because there was such an abundance of experiences, adventures, things I saw and smelt, of people, ways of behaving and problems – none of which I had ever come across here before. And I am also confused now, as I am back in the familiar part of the planet. For this is the reality: Cameroon is a different world; you can never really convey with words or even photos what life feels like there; you have to learn it the hard way, and then it really gets under your skin.

But let me get more specific now: Why was I there? Sent by EBM INTERNATIONAL, I did nine months' volunteering in the healthcare service of the Cameroonian Baptist Union in North Cameroon. As I am a graduate in pharmacology, I worked in their central pharmacy, which caters to the two hospitals and three healthcare centres. Among my duties were the logistics and storage in the pharmacy. But the procedure there is quite different from the one we are used to in Germany. Whereas here we have got a delivery service which brings everything that is needed to the pharmacy, you have to make your own tracks there and go to the nearest big city. There you go from one dealer to the next till you have collected what you need. There is, admittedly, a pharmaceutical wholesale dealer, but he practically never has everything in stock and is pretty expensive, too.

Buying from retail dealers, on the other hand, brings with it the risk of getting counterfeit medicine. The danger of getting adulterated medicine in African countries is very real, indeed. So you have to opt between two evils, adulterated medicine or no medicine at all. Together with my colleague, I did some research on where to get quality medicine, bearing in mind that it must be as reasonably priced as possible so the local people can afford it. For many do not even have enough money to buy the bare necessities. So, despite serious illness, they do not come to the hospital because they want to save the money or simply because they do not have it. They do not realize that this just makes everything worse. During our research, we tried to resort to medicine produced in the country in order to bolster Cameroon's economy. Yet often, production is just too small so there

### Our missionaries on site:



**Dr. Timothée Bouba Mbima & Djoda Dama Jacqueline Mbima**

are bottlenecks. This is why we were also forced to search the European market.

Besides, my colleague and I held a training course on running a pharmacy for those working in the respective pharmacies of the Oeuvre médicale. We also told them what drugs really are, how they are classified and correctly stored, how they can find out the right amount to be ordered, and we also addressed their questions. All of them were very glad to get such training, for some of them, it was actually their first training. Before the course, I was quite nervous and felt quite challenged, because the whole thing, of course, was to be in French. and ... well ... I had not given any training in the Cameroonian context, of course. But then, it was actually great fun, and I was glad that most of them really profited from it.

In my leisure time, I attended the women's group of the church in my village. The women there did not stop dancing and singing. I could not swing my hips like they could, and most of the time could not understand much of what they were saying since most of them can only speak their ethnic language Fulfulde; yet it was simply nice to be with them and to enjoy the atmosphere. It was always very funny; the women laugh so much. Besides, I also enjoyed watching them in their colourful wrap-around skirts, which they wore together with football

shirts whose colours did not really match. Every second woman has a child on her back, which does not keep her from dancing. No wonder they are all so good dancers as they get a feeling for rhythm even when still babies.

Now, these nine months are over – what remains? I did this volunteer service because, before starting my profession, I wanted to look beyond the rim of my teacup and see how pharmaceutical work is done overseas. Also, I had read a great deal about development aid and wanted to see with my own eyes what is really going on there. While I was there, I intensely experienced how important it is to see other parts of this world, and since then, I have kept my eyes more open. Sometimes I can't help laughing when I imagine Cameroon and Germany on one and the same planet. And in the same moment, I could also start crying when I realize how privileged we are here, often without appreciating it. I am torn within myself because on the one hand, as an industrialized nation, we bear some responsibility for disadvantaged people like those in Cameroon. On the other hand, I sometimes think they could also themselves contribute something towards improving the quality of life in their country. In Cameroon, I left part of my heart, but precisely because I do love the people there I take a critical view of many things. Rather at the beginning of my stay there, I was asked why things in Africa didn't function as smoothly



as in Europe. I did not know what to answer. And even after volunteering there, I have not found any satisfactory answers. What struck me was that people there take it very easy when there are problems – yet, if nothing bothers you, nothing will change. Dissatisfaction is a motor for change

At any rate, I can better empathize with people when they think, e.g., that in Europe, there are only rich people. They can come to no

other conclusion when they see the pictures of any malls and high-rise buildings on TV. I will go on poring over this topic and certainly return to Cameroon some day. And I hope I can retain some of the equanimity I have adopted in North Cameroon.

DOROTHEA TER HASEBORG



**There** are so many people who back us – by praying for us and donating!

I remember the times when I myself was a missionary child. Every year, an elderly lady wrote me on my birthday: “It makes me happy and grateful that when praying, I can bring every day of your life to God.” To be honest, I was quite amused when I realized that the

me, even if there was quite a distance between us. I realized that she and many others prayed as did Jesus in Luke 22: “I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail”! Similarly, my husband and I are still thankful for our baptism mentors, who, after some 30 years, still take their commitment seriously and are at our side with their prayers, thus backing us.

Since 1997, we have been in Maroua, North Cameroon, as missionaries with EBM INTERNATIONAL. It’s a long way to go there. We live in a foreign culture, or, to put it more precisely, between two different cultures. What do our children have to cope with as a consequence? We have witnessed that the Lord protects them, too, and has them grow up in good emotional and physical health. Here I would especially like to thank the sisters of the German Baptists’ Women Department, who take a lively interest in the well-being of the missionary children and who support them in prayer.

In my day-to-day life, I often reach my limits, and I am so happy that in these very moments I may discern God’s wonderful ways of acting. When I am on my way to meet people, I like singing the following song to myself (TN: there is a German version of this song)

*When the weight of this world  
crashes down on you  
God will listen to you*

*When the sky turns black  
and your thoughts turn blue  
He will listen to you*

*He will listen to you  
Always listen to you  
He understands  
how His children feel  
He will listen to you*

*When the river of tears  
cannot be contained  
He will listen to you  
Like a drowning man  
in the pouring rain  
God will listen to you*

*He will listen to you ...*

*When the light explodes  
in a world gone wrong  
He will listen to you  
When your heart beats strong  
with a grateful song  
God will listen to you*

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My days are full of encounters: People asking for some advice, or friends needing assistance. These encounters challenge me to back others in turn. In all of this, I am fully aware that ultimately it is Jesus who has the right answer for the situation I am faced with.

I like reading the kind of things Moses experienced. He had a family giving him support. His wife travelled with him, the children accepted the ever new situations, too, his father-in-law stood by his side giving advice, and he could look back on an intact home. In Ex-

odus 17 we read about yet another fight his people had to fight. This time Moses retires and goes onto a mountain. The first verses of this chapter show him very discouraged. He feels so much alone that he is even afraid of being stoned by his own people. Encouraged by God’s presence, he seizes “God’s staff” and does not go out alone; his brother Aaron and also Hur go with him. Moses prays and brings the people’s distress before the Lord. I can vividly imagine how his arms get tired, how he gets pins and needles in his arms and how they sink. “Lord, I ought to pray more. Don’t you see we are losing again?” Then, Aaron and Hur come along. Moses, the great leader, may avail himself of their services and sit down on a rock. And then he realizes how the two men on his right and his left hold up his arms and support him. As he is serving God, he is not alone.

I know that many people pray for us, the missionaries, backing us, supporting our arms in prayer. It does me good when I find some mail and read that someone has been thinking of us. Even in the internet age it is nice to get a real paper letter from time to time. A dear friend of ours regularly encourages us on receiving our circular letter by sending a personal letter by return mail. Those of you who have not yet had the habit of backing others in prayer should think about for whom they can intercede with God.

CHRISTEL PUSCH



### Garoua Hospital

Garoua, a city in North Cameroon, has more than 500,000 inhabitants but only few hospitals. In 2006, the Medical Ministry of the Baptist Union of Cameroon founded a clinic with an emphasis on AIDS; with the support from EED (Church Development Service in Germany) and EBM INTERNATIONAL. 4.9 acres of land could be purchased, and the first building was inaugurated in May, 2006. In order to avoid stigmatizing AIDS patients, however, the AIDS Clinic has been open to all patients irrespective of their diseases. A maternity ward was also set up. Right from the beginning, we had many patients, and the initial number of staff (nine) had to be doubled within the first year.

In 2009, the clinic was upgraded to hospital status by the health ministry. Currently, 32 employees work there, including two doctors. A ward block with 40 beds was then erected, as well as an operating theatre suite, a large lab and an X-ray and ultrasound unit. The operating theatre suite still lacks many instruments and appliances. In January 2012 the new X-ray unit was inaugurated. In the whole of Garoua and its surroundings, there are only three working X-ray machines. The one at Garoua hospital is in daily use.

The hospital still lacks many units, and Sali Bigouala, who is in charge of the hospital, very much wishes that funds will become available in order to extend the hospital.

This newly founded hospital attaches great importance to holistic care: pastoral counselling and prayer form an integral part of everyday hospital work.

Three volunteer workers from the Garoua Baptist church also assist in the individual counselling and mentoring of HIV-infected people.

### Zidim Hospital

Zidim Hospital, another facility run by the Medical Ministry of the Cameroonian Baptist Union, is situated in a rural region, at 50 km from Maroua. It has 180 beds and serves as the referral hospital to a population of nearly 400,000. The nearest hospitals to the north are 50 km away, and to the south 80 km away. Most of the patients come walking, riding a bicycle or motorbike, a donkey or are brought in a wheelbarrow; some few come by car.

When the missionaries arrived at Zidim in 1960, they built, among other things, a one-building clinic. Over the years, the services increased and more buildings were added. By 1999, the number of patients had reached such proportions that the clinic was upgraded to hospital status, and was inaugurated as such in 2000. Today, more than 90,000 patients are treated per year. The hospital enjoys a good reputation and over five years, it ranked among the ten best hospitals of Cameroon, according to a nation-wide quality survey. At present, there are 60 staff including two doctors, with a



third one desperately needed to strengthen the team.

The hospital seeks to put part of the receipts aside in order to treat poor, destitute people for free. Often, the need exceeds the savings. The running costs of the hospital have to be covered at 100% by receipts from patients. This is a big challenge for Mamoudou Michel, manager and coordinator of the hospital. The

difficult climatic conditions make many medical technical appliances especially prone to failure, and they need to be replaced quite often.

The hospital has committed itself to sharing God's love in word and deed. Their motto is „The Gospel for Every One“.

JUTTA KREBS

Over the past years, Jutta Krebs was in charge of the Medical Ministry, to which these two hospitals belong. She served as a missionary to Cameroon for 27 years and in July 2012 came back to Germany to stay. Mahmoudou Michel, who is mentioned in the above text, has taken over responsibility for the Medical Ministry from Jutta. This exemplifies how our mission consistently hands over responsibility to native co-workers.



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MALAWI





# Malawi

In Malawi, EBM INTERNATIONAL supports a farm project, theological education, evangelism, and church-planting.

## Malawi

<b>Capital:</b>	Lilongwe
<b>Area:</b>	118,480 sq km
<b>Population:</b>	14.2 million
<b>Religions:</b>	Christian: 80 %, Muslim: 12 %, Natural religions: 8 %
<b>Languages:</b>	Chichewa and English, as well as 13 further indigenous languages
<b>Education:</b>	Literacy rate: 64.3 %
<b>Government:</b>	Presidential republic
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Maize, cotton, tea, cane sugar, potatoes, leguminous plants, tropical fruit; cattle and goat breeding
<b>Industries:</b>	Food processing industry, cement production, consumer goods, wood processing
<b>Mineral resources:</b>	Coal, bauxite ore, uranium deposits, limestone
<b>Resources:</b>	Hydro-power, arable land
<b>Challenges:</b>	Poverty, corruption, drought, and HIV/AIDS



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It is quite crazy that from one day to the next, you find yourself in another world. This is really the way to put it when talking about the stay in an African country. It is quite another world – and does not compare with the “German world”. Not comparing with your home country will be difficult at first, but in your country of assignment, you really do have to start a new life. You learn to behave, to dress and to live in another culture. You have to learn to forget what was normal in Germa-

ny and to discover what is normal in the new culture. All of this is an incredibly exciting and, at the same time, nerve-racking process, making you discover your feelings anew.

Living in an African host family is, of course, a challenge. You encounter not only different mindsets, ways of living and traditions, but also some people who are to replace your family during the coming months. The family and you are not always on the same wavelength. Conflicts

are not resolved the way they are in Germany, and you simply have to accept that. At the beginning, I felt very much at ease in my Malawian family. Besides the parents (and, of course, the employees), three small boys lived in the household with me. After two months, every-day life set in and I got to really know the parents. The mother had not really accepted me, and so, we only said what was absolutely necessary. I got along better with the father, who, however, was the typical Malawian male who had everyone work for him. Thank God, there were also the three boys, who were a source of enrichment. They cheered me up and always made me feel that they needed me. As the parents did not take very much time for them, they always enjoyed the attention I lavished on them: They enjoyed the books I read, the stories I told, they liked dancing, singing and playing with me. I miss the boys a great deal; I have become so very fond of them. I believe we have mutually enriched our lives.

Food in Malawi is rather unvaried. In a typical household, they mostly have nsima (maize mash) and masamba (vegetables), sometimes served with fish or meat, for lunch and for supper. From time to time, there is also rice. You really have to get used to it, but the balance is provided by the formidable variety of fruit growing in the country: mangoes, bananas, pineapples, guavas (tasting much better than in Germa-

## Our missionaries on site:



Dr. Klaus & Rachel Fiedler



Fletcher & Clara Kaiya

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ny) and many kind of fruit I never saw before.

Particularly if you live in the south of Malawi, you can easily go on weekend trips. There are some national parks where you can actually see animals in the great outdoors; there is Lake Malawi and there are mountains to climb. But travelling itself is quite an experience, too, using the various ways of transport and, e.g. having a ride with 25 people and maybe also some sacks of fish, on a pick-up. I loved travelling, and it was unbelievable I could also visit some

other countries – going to Zambia and Mozambique is just a thing to do.

It always depends on where and how you live, but you must also reckon with a power blackout four times a day or with having no running water over three days. I lived in two houses, as my host family moved once. The first house was outside the town, almost in the bush. There, we had power blackouts about three times a day, but there might also have been three days in a row without any. We always had running water. The second house was closer to the city; there, it was the same with power blackouts, but sometimes we found ourselves without running water for several days. From the time we moved there, I only had cold showers and from buckets, because tap water was too precious. But we did have a water pump, so water was always available.

I loved my work; it was enriching and showed me how important I am. I worked with the Baptist Convention of Malawi (BACOMA). There, I taught the very young children and worked in the school office and in the office running the village projects. At the school, I taught the alphabet to the children, standing in front of a class of 40-55 children aged two to four. I always took the time to watch just one group of children write and draw, which allowed me to get to know each child very well. I was thrilled that

after only one month I knew all the names. This work was very strenuous but really enriching. Moreover, it was fascinating to see the children open up to me so quickly. At the beginning they looked at me with their big eyes as if I were a ghost. Only half an hour later, the first approached me and touched my skin and my hair. And after some more lessons they came toward me all in a body as soon as I entered the room; they said hello clustering around me and leaving me unable to move for several minutes. These children were so open-minded and genial, making my heart melt.

The work at the office, on the other hand, was very quiet and not as strenuous as teaching. I helped the secretary handle the computer, set up folders and sort the documents that had been piling up over years. I got along very well with all the BACOMA staff, and they were like a family to me. In their company, I could also be myself and tell them how I felt. Here, too, I have the feeling that I could achieve something.

Besides the BACOMA school, I taught computer studies at the school my church is running. Here also, my classes numbered 55 students each, aged 8-12. I had to draw up lesson plans and even write a test. When, still in Germany, I heard for the first time that I was to teach, my heart sank into my boots. Me, in my early twenties, just out of school, and now going to teach? It was an enormous challenge, but



it was the best thing as I have now come to conclude. It was so much fun – teaching the children and seeing the results. The children were very open and cordial. The nicest thing I heard from them, rather at the end, was that they enjoyed their time with me, that they learned something in my classes and that they even had fun. They said I had been their best teacher. Everyone will understand how positively moved I was. It was very difficult for me to say good-bye to the pupils and to leave the school.

Worships in the Blantyre Baptist Church were incomparably lively and motivating. Such a service may

easily last three to four hours, but it is full of love and life. In Malawi, the people very strongly hold on to God. In the streets, you can talk about God with anyone, and shops are often called e.g. "God is good – Cosmetics". It was fascinating. But it has also made me sad that Europe is about to forget God.

People in the streets of Malawi often respond to white people with enthusiasm. They ask you if you need any help, how long you have been there and how you like it, and they ask what your world is like. There is no such distance as exists in Germany.



I have learned the volunteer should not be the only one continually learning. Learning from one another has become important for me and others. For this reason you should be open to any questions and to the curiosity of your fellows. Often, you get to know your own culture even better by telling others about it while living in a completely different culture.

Volunteer service shapes you and your views. Even if you have an idea of Africa, having seen pictures in the media, it is so different once you are there. However much you may try to forget your expectations and ideas – as soon as you think of something particular, certain images suggest themselves.

I have experienced so much spiritual growth and now, I am much more outspoken about my faith. I am so grateful for my volunteer experience in Malawi. The time was challenging in every regard, and I had to reflect on myself quite a great deal. However, I was always carried through: Concerning many situations I recognize now that when there are tracks of only one person in the sand, that they are not my own.

Malawi really is the warm heart of Africa, and the most beautiful country at that. It is a wonderful country, having so many facets, great scenery and wonderful people. You have funny experiences, and you can impress family and friends at home by what you tell them. Just an example:

“Today, I have managed my personal record in the minibus – for two hours, 28 people plus four chickens were riding on a bus designed for 14, and I was sitting on an iron bar.”

I am thankful for my work and the children with whom I could work. I feel I have left part of me behind. I am grateful for every experience. Everything came to pass as God had conceived it, and it was good for me. The time spent in Malawi will always have a special place in my heart. Everything I have left behind was good and right as it was, even though in some moments I was longing for my German home, or I was bothered by something. Looking back, it was good. I trust that whatever God has in store for me is right and that he will show me my way.

Back in Germany, I had a very hard time; although I knew everything, it was as if I was discovering many things anew. The house was huge, my wardrobe and computer were still somewhat unfamiliar. The pace of life here was faster, things were clean, and there was a greater distance between people than in Malawi. I realized that I had to work hard to keep up. The worship here was very short, and, of course, lacking the liveliness I had got used to. I missed Malawi, which had become home to me, and I missed my work.

When in Germany I took the bus for the first time, the ten-minute ride cost as much as a two-hour

ride to the nearest village in Malawi. My laundry was now washed by a machine, and at the same time, another household appliance did the dishes. All of a sudden, I found myself in a huge and cuddly bed, and I enjoyed nestling in my cover instead of kicking off my blanket or taking the mosquito net off my face. I now wore sturdy shoes, which often pinched, and during the first days, my winter jacket was my constant companion. Food was again varied and in abundance. Current and tap water were available at any time. I needed no candles, and my regular walks to the water pump were no longer necessary. I often heard about things I did not know, and people had to explain to me what an “E-cigarette” was and what “wulffen” meant (TN: a new-

ly coined verb/newly coined verb describing the conduct of former German President Chr. Wulff). I have noticed that even landscapes have changed or that new shops have opened. All of this makes the months spent in Malawi seem like ages.

It may appear as if I were discovering an absolutely new world. But it is a fact that I am rediscovering my new old world – with different eyes. I can hardly believe that I was absent from life in Germany for a mere six months. In Malawi already, I had started a new life.

For me, it was the time of my life that held the most emotions, and even three months after my return, my emotions linger on. I have





learned a lot, I have laughed and cried, and have been marvelling I have found friends and have come very close to God and have built up great confidence in him. My view of the world we live in has been altered. I have experienced what poverty is like, but also that in this world, there is a wealth of quite different values. I have learned to eat

meat, and I have seen that cooking is possible without our utensils and that it is even possible to bake a cake on a fire pit.

I have learned how much "white skin" is in demand, and how readily you may be asked in marriage because of it.

I have seen elephants, giraffes and hippopotami in the great outdoors. I have learned that things that are in no way special to us are luxuries to others, and I have got to know myself better.

To subsequent volunteers I wish the very best, great encounters with people and with God, enriching

work, a caring family and, above all, moments that will be engraved in their hearts for ever.

DINA MARQUARDT



Since mid-September, I have been living on the campus of the Theological Seminary in Lilongwe, the capital of Malawi. Volunteering with EBM INTERNATIONAL, I teach Christian counselling here for six months. Besides, I offer pastoral care here and in a Baptist church.

By now, everyone on the campus has come to know me and greets me, lecturer and cook alike. The people are very friendly and call me "Mama/Madame/Sister", or simply "Margit". And they always ask: "How are you today?". As a matter of fact, it is not very difficult to know me, for I attract attention – simply

because I look different from all the people around me. This is the case not only on the campus but in the whole district, where I have not met any other white person so far.

The students know me as Margit from Germany, 52 years old, married, and they know I have got two adult daughters. Having only two children is very strange to most people here, but they like to look at my family photos and are interested in me and my life in Germany. Actually, living out relationships is very important in Malawi, and "mad rush" is a word they do not know.



The Seminary also understands itself explicitly as a Christian Fellowship, with a good balance between academic learning and hands-on implementation.

In this form, the Theological Seminary has existed since 1994. At first, there simply was a three-year basic course in theology. Now, women and men can qualify at various academic levels, even get a master's degree.

Those bearing responsibility at the Seminary are approximately in their mid-fifties; they all studied abroad. It has been their heartfelt desire that Malawian students should now be trained in their own country. At the Seminary, both lay people and full-time pastors and church leaders are trained. The Seminary provides a wide range of streams and has a holistic approach: On four days of the week, there is theoretical teaching; Monday is a day of practical work. Every weekday starts with a worship, where students and teachers preach in turns. Every student has to choose a church in Lilongwe and be involved there. There is also a

special programme for the wives of the male students, who still make up the majority.

Those studying here have to pay tuition fees of € 150 per semester, including accommodation and board. For the huge majority, this is an enormous amount of money. Normally, the students are sent to the Seminary by their churches and are also supported financially, but still, many gifted students cannot study here because they cannot afford it.

In this context, you should know that Malawi ranks among the poorest countries of the world. Average daily per capita income is less than 1 US \$.

Living conditions at the Seminary are very simple and modest. Accommodation, board and lecture rooms are minimum standard.

Yet I have adjusted to life at the Seminary as best possible. The amiability and openness of the people here make up for many challenges of every-day life. And coping with these also gives me the chance to grow.

MARGIT FROEB



MOZAMBIQUE



# Mozambique

In Mozambique, EBM INTERNATIONAL supports primary schools and pastoral training.



## Mozambique

<b>Capital:</b>	Maputo
<b>Area:</b>	801,590 sq km
<b>Population:</b>	22.9 million
<b>Religions:</b>	Traditional religions: 47 %, Christian: 35 %, Muslim: 18 %
<b>Languages:</b>	Portuguese as well as 38 further languages
<b>Education:</b>	Literacy rate: 50.4 %
<b>Government:</b>	Presidential republic
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Maize, cotton, peanuts, tea, sugar cane, rice, fruit, cattle breeding and poultry farming
<b>Industries:</b>	Food, soft drinks, chemicals, petrochemicals, textiles, glass and cement, tobacco
<b>Mineral resources:</b>	Coal, titanium ore, natural gas, gold, marble
<b>Resources:</b>	Hydro-power
<b>Challenges:</b>	Poverty, HIV/AIDS, human rights



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„For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

“Sure, spending one year in Africa will be challenging. I am bound to see a lot of suffering and poverty and to experience many things.” That’s what I thought before leaving Germany, where I spent the first 21 years of my life, in order to follow God’s call to Mozambique. Yet, what I was to experience in the following

11 months was tougher and more challenging than I could ever have imagined. If I had known what was awaiting me I would probably have stayed at home. I did not know yet that my house would burn down. I did not know that two people close to me would commit suicide. I did not know that the experience of poverty would be so very real. There were many more things I did not know yet. But over the whole period I really felt God was carrying me in a way I had never experienced before. The above Bible verse was my constant companion, in good

times as well as in difficult ones. Besides, I had the privilege of having many wonderful experiences, of experiencing beautiful things and of making friends for life. “I have plans to prosper you and not to harm you.” – It is difficult to describe such a year or to summarize it in one or two pages. However, I will try to let you have some insight here and there.

Naturally, the focus is on the work, and work in Dondo can be very disparate. I decided to get involved in several of the numerous projects. So I could teach English at our Christian primary school. On many a day, the classes numbering 40 six-year-old children were quite a challenge, yet they were still incredible fun. When I happened to arrive at school in no mood for work, my motivation came back quickly when 30 children ran towards me shouting “Teacher”, beamed at me and wanted to hug me all at once. I will really miss these sweet radiant faces. Working with children here is a privilege but also a great responsibility. The motto here is: “If you want to transform generations, you need to start with the children.” They are all children from very simple and poor backgrounds and for part of whom the only hot meal is school lunch. And I had the privilege to shape these children to some extent, convey Christian values and make them feel that they are precious.

Another project I was involved in was the “Project Life”. In this

## Our missionaries on site:



Eduardo & Isabel Melo

project, maybe the most comprehensive and exciting one, HIV patients get comprehensive support, care and mentoring. Within a radius of 15 km from Dondo, some 15 workers tend to at least 120 adults and 100 children who are HIV-infected all week long. Everyone receives the basic medicine long-term to strengthen their weak immune system. We regularly visited the people, particularly those who were ill, talked to them and prayed with them, got their medicine and helped them when they needed anything beyond that. There was also a Bible study every week in every district. In order to open up prospects for those affected, they had the opportunity of learning basket weaving and selling these products with our assistance. Another great idea: Thanks to the integrated project “Green Door”, small houses (made of stone and concrete) are built for the most destitute who have no shelter of their own. At the

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end of last year, the amazing result was: 30 houses had been built and 28 people had been baptized! "I have plans to give you hope and a future."

Life is not easy for any of these people; most of them are widows whose husbands died years ago. Now, they are alone to bear the responsibility for their children, despite their own serious illness. And yet they beam with unbelievable joy, joy only God can give. Time and again they touched my heart, but somehow, I was also ashamed. How come these people can trust God in this way whereas we in western civilizations complain about the small problems we have?

What I will probably miss most are the people here. I have made friends with amazing people within one year – something I would never have dreamed about. We do a lot of things together or simply have fun. I feel so much at ease with my friends, it is incredible how much we laugh and how much fun we have. But I can also have very profound talks about faith and live with my close friends. My best friend is a double orphan and, being the oldest now, at 18, has to care for his younger siblings, pay for his tuition and a lot more. At times, there isn't even any money for food.

This now leads me to what I have learned from this year. It is true that it is an incredible lot, but apart from trust in God there is one salient

point: I have learned to be thankful in quite a new way. Thankful that my parents are still alive. Thankful that I may live in a house of stone with running water and electricity. Thankful for getting such qualified training. Thankful that I really NEVER have to fear lack of food. This list could be extended indefinitely.

This year in Africa has transformed me. God has been working within me and allowed me to have both great and difficult experiences. But whatever happens in our lives, it is God's plan, a plan promising hope and a future.

CHRISTOPHER LAURIEN

**This** text describes our daily work. It reflects achievements and difficulties. It shows God's mercy and the manifold blessings on our ministry.

Our Bible School in Beira underwent significant change in 2010. Since then, we have also admitted non-Baptist students, who by now make up the majority. The result is that we now have problems providing a seat to everyone in our small rooms, and there is also a shortage of tables. Moreover, we lost two of our best teachers: We had to let a Brazilian couple go into church-planting work in Nampula. Therefore we had to cancel the medium complementary course because we did not have enough

teachers for all the subjects; I had to teach more subjects than usual and to develop more teaching materials for the students.

On request of the Mozambican Baptists, I now also teach Greek and introduction to scientific methods at the Sofala Bible School, courses which are compulsory for the Bachelor programme. Due to personal challenges, Isabel has reduced her workload at the bible schools. Besides Beira and Sofala, the Bible School has branches in Mafarinha and Angonia in Tete Province, which is in the north of Mozambique and not easily accessible. Total enrolment at these schools is roughly 50 students.

The Bible Schools badly need repair, such as new paint on the walls or new sanitation, new and more tables and more teaching and learning materials. All the courses at the schools have equal approbation, and we are happy there were eight graduates last year.

The training you can get at our schools is structured as follows: There is a comprehensive basic programme, continuing theological training and some complementary advanced courses in Beira. People without a school leaving certificate are delivered a certificate, students with A-levels can get a diploma. Our structures are simple, and we can hardly offer the students decent classrooms and accommodation. The focus of all of the schools is on providing sound biblical education for the many church leaders. The school in Nampula is the only one where decent structures could be built with the support of the Brazilian Baptists. Two of the Bible Schools completely depend on EBM INTERNATIONAL for their budgets.

In northern Tete Province, we have successfully relaunched a three-year training programme, which trains leaders for newly planted churches. Five local pastors teach at a mobile institute. Apart from a study bible and the materials I developed they do not have any teaching materials. They normally meet in local churches, sometimes also under a tree.

Financially, they depend on EBM INTERNATIONAL. They started their work in 2010 in various rural areas, particularly near Tete, Ulonguè, Zóbuè, and Cambambe. These regions are not easily accessible and very vast. The teachers can reach local pastors and church leaders because they speak local dialects, especially Chichewa. It is noteworthy that in these classes, there are also some women. From this group, several local leaders have been chosen to plant new churches, one of them in Zumbo on the border with Zambia.

Twice a year, I go to Angónia for two weeks to conduct training programmes. Recently, I engaged a local Mozambican teacher to assist me, Alberto Maquita. The major challenge is equipping them with a basic book stock for the library and some teaching materials. Unfortunately, the Union in Mozambique is not in a position to provide any financial support.

In 2011, an insurrection threw the area surrounding Maputo into turmoil by an insurrection for two weeks. We are glad that we, the missionaries, were kept safe during this time. It was a frightful time, but our gracious Lord protected us and absolutely nothing happened to us. In a situation like this, the trials of the people in Mozambique become clearly manifest: The prices of basic commodities – especially of food – increase so much that the average Mozambicans can no longer cope



with their daily needs. They can no longer afford staple food.

We as missionaries sometimes wonder how the people can subsist with the continually rising prices. It is also a big challenge that many members in our churches start begging for our help; however, we are not in a position to do anything about this. Maputo and Beira have fast become two of the most expensive places to live: There is a shortage of houses. Water, electricity and other utilities keep getting more expensive; this

also holds for other amenities and food. Only the prices for bread, maize flour and public transport have been kept static thanks to government subsidies. We need prayer and intercession for the people of Mozambique. May their evolution towards a nation with better living conditions, with more justice and democracy not be hindered by the problems and crises globalization has brought about.

EDUARDO MELO

May 8, 2011, a.m.

A Sunday – that is: time of worship. The habitual programme is running its course. There are songs, dances, prayers, then the sermon – bilingual as usual, in Portuguese and Sena, the local language here. All of a sudden: my name – I am to come forward!

So far, this is no surprise. I have never seen a written order of service here, and people (including the volunteer!) are spontaneously asked to say something, to greet someone or to pray. This time, the reason for my “being on-stage” is a first – my last “first”.

For the first time, it’s me who is seen off in Mozambique, and – much more difficult – I am to say “Good-bye” myself, give a résumé in front of 300 worshippers, in Portuguese.

My gift for foreign languages is not all too special, but in time, with countless contacts and encounters in Mozambique, some vocabulary has settled also in my head (including especially the slang of the streets).

So, this morning, I am standing there and realize I do not have the slightest idea of what to say when you do not see one another again the next day.

Since then, 53 days have elapsed, and I am still very cautious when it comes to big words such as résumé

or, for that matter, evaluation. I am still looking for terms and definitions in order to put my time in Africa into words and thus to convey it to others.

On the other hand, memories and impressions are no longer as real as they were a few weeks ago. My every-day life in Germany is just so very different that there are hardly any spots that rekindle pictures, smells, and emotions, so they might not get lost. This would be a pity, and so this article is a good opportunity to look back.

“Construction site” has somehow become a keyword for my stay in Africa, Mozambique, Sofala, and Dondo. The preparations in Germany were already marked by spontaneous adjustments and open questions, because due to a visa-induced change of assignment the work speed of Mozambican authorities was given a good and proper test. This uncertainty about my visa remained with EBM and me to the last moment. Time and again, we had to file new requests, prolong old ones or a new visa had to be applied for. My passport now looks accordingly, and I dare say that I have learned quite a bit as far as patient composure goes. Here I would like to mention that both the EBM Office and my contact persons on site (particularly my mentor, Rev Me-lo) were of great help and motivated me in my – sometimes – monthly dealings with the authorities.

In October 2010, I visited the many disparate areas of work and projects of the Baptist church in Dondo, and I ended up in a project standing for the practical, technical, and hands-on branch of church work, which takes care of fundamental human needs – namely the “roof over your head”.

I was there from the beginning, when houses (or rather ruins, shacks) were inspected. These belonged to people who could not repair them themselves and therefore had asked the church for help. That day really impressed me: I had already seen the small African huts accommodating whole families, but only briefly

from our moving vehicle. However, standing myself in such a hut – or not being able to stand, given my 1.97 m height – was quite another matter. As was, after getting used to the darkness, seeing all the holes in the mud-bamboo construction and then noticing that the room was just about 20 sq m. No running water, no electricity. Cooking is done over the fire in front of the door, and people sleep on the bamboo mats on the compacted reddish soil.

I am very thankful for this experience and, maybe, even more thankful for being able to help tackle this deplorable state of affairs, from that day. It was great to see







fellowship develop as time went on, between me and the other builders (brothers belonging to the church), but also between us and the people living around the construction site. We were sitting on the earth together, sharing our food and laughing a lot – not least because of my “laughable” sentences in Portuguese. Mostly we ate Maca, a maize mash, with vegetables or occasionally some dried fish, but always with a little sand crunching aloud between our teeth.

Apart from the houses, we assisted with the construction of a new church building outside of Dondo. At the church kindergarten, we added a kind of winter garden contiguous to the main building in order to provide for space outside

the muggy house during the rainy season. The little on-lookers at this site were most happy about this added entertainment, and as soon as you once put the trowel out of your hand, you found yourself with an excited boy on your arms.

Following my shower after work (advisable at temperatures above 35° C), there were always a lot of activities waiting. As I was accommodated in a pastor’s household, I was simply dragged along to most church events. In the church, I found some friends, with whom I did a lot of funny things in my free time. One of them gave me Portuguese lessons twice a week, which he turned into Sena lessons towards the end of my stay. In return, I taught him some bits of German.

Particularly the handball team of the church allowed me to have many contacts very soon. I had not had the faintest idea that they played handball in Mozambique at all, let alone in the tiny village of Dondo. When I showed up for the first time on the concrete “court” where they meet for training, I really couldn’t believe my eyes. Of course, sports differ from one continent to another, and at times

this led to funny misunderstandings. Yet on the whole, all of us thought that our time together was really enriching. Now, back in Germany, as I try to convey some of the dance-like playing of Mozambicans to my handball team, the treasure trove of experiences I could gather may have even bigger ripple effects, who knows ... that will be really funny.

JONATHAN FEHMER







SIERRA LEONE

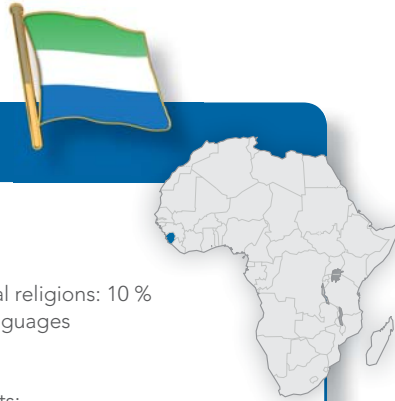


# Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, EBM INTERNATIONAL supports primary and secondary schools, a vocational training centre, medical facilities and pastoral training.

## Sierra Leone

<b>Capital:</b>	Freetown
<b>Area:</b>	71,740 sq km
<b>Population:</b>	5.3 million
<b>Religion:</b>	Muslim: 70 %, Christian: 20 %, Natural religions: 10 %
<b>Languages:</b>	English, Krio, as well as 21 further languages
<b>Education:</b>	Literacy rate: 36.3 %
<b>Government:</b>	Presidential republic
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Rice, coffee, cocoa, coconuts, peanuts; cattle breeding and sheep farming, poultry farming
<b>Industries:</b>	Mining, small-scale trade, petrochemicals
<b>Mineral resources:</b>	Gold, diamonds, titanium ore, bauxite, iron ore
<b>Challenges:</b>	Poverty, education



Three weeks ago, I left Sierra Leone. Having spent some time “at home” in Germany again, I would like to reflect on my volunteer service in this report. Talking about all the important events of the past ten months is not easy, and I am sure that I have not yet become aware of the whole impact my volunteer service will have on my life and my personality.

About a year ago, we had our preparation course in Elstal. I had just finished school and not seen really much of the world. In my former environment, I had finally

learned how best to tackle things; I had some really good friends and a wonderful family. I felt at ease. The first step out of this kind of comfort zone was attending the preparation course, where I did not know anyone, really. Some of the participants had fantastic reasons and stories making them go into missions. I sometimes wondered if I was the right person to do volunteer service, as I could not really explain why I was there. When I was younger, Africa had never been the place I really wanted to see. But somehow things fell in place, and God led me there.

In Elstal, we heard a lot about missions, former volunteers, funny and unfamiliar situations, opportunities and challenges. At the end of the two weeks, I had got to know some wonderful people. On the one hand, I felt prepared. On the other hand, I was still wondering whether I would be able to survive in Sierra Leone (physically and emotionally). Yet I was never the quitting type. Though saying good-bye was very hard for me, God gave me the strength to go. At the beginning of my journey, there was a big challenge, an unscheduled stay in the Gambia. There I realized for the first time that we cannot plan everything, especially not in Africa. This was one of the things that were difficult for me. I had to learn not to plan things and still keep calm. After all, I have learned to be more spontaneous and to improvise. I still like planning things, but now I can also make decisions and do things more spontaneously, and I am no longer so quick to feel stress when a plan does not work.

When I arrived in Sierra Leone, I realized, among other things, that I had to learn Krio. At first, I thought speaking English would do, and I might learn a little bit of Krio more or less for fun. But there I was quite mistaken. In order to interact with people, especially with children, I had to speak their language and not the official national language. At the beginning, I had my doubts that I would ever be able to speak and understand Krio properly.

## Our missionaries on site:



Hans-Willem & Aisha Oosterloo

Even though the language is much akin to English, especially as to the vocabulary, its grammar structure and sounds are quite different. But the better I could communicate in Krio, the more I felt at ease and the more I was respected. There was a situation illustrating this when I was leaving the country: Some people were checking my hand luggage rather sceptically. As soon as I started speaking Krio, they were much friendlier. By learning their language you can show people that you are not just a tourist coming for an adventure but that you take them seriously and are really interested in their lives and their culture. As I had always been interested in languages, I was happy about the opportunity to learn Krio, and I am glad I could communicate so well after ten months.

The first weeks in Sierra Leone were exciting. We saw many new things and got to know many people, who



welcomed us warmly. But it was not long before I started feeling ill at ease. I very much missed my former life in Germany as well as my family and friends. In my fancy, everything at home was nearly perfect, and had to remind myself time and again that this idea did not reflect reality. Life in Germany had not been sunshine and roses only. The days when I had to study for school were rather the contrary. Nor was the relationship with family and friends harmonious at all times. But in the new country and the new culture, I felt a stranger and often lonesome. I could hardly understand their humour. Sometimes I felt as if other people were making fun of me.

It was also a big problem for me that often I did not know what I should do. Fortunately, there were

some duties and activities structuring daily life from the beginning. There were the lessons with Anna and Paul, the missionaries Lisa and Daniel Meisinger's children; these were important as I could consider them as "work" which fitted my former definition. Yet in this task also, I had to grow, to develop new methods and ideas and to learn how to deal with the children and teach them as best possible. Another anchor was the youth meeting at church, every Thursday. But these meetings, too, were so very different from the ones in my German church that it took some time till I felt integrated in the group.

So I had to look for some work, which was not easy for me. I first needed to ask myself a few fundamental questions, such as: What

is work? May something be called work when you don't see any results? Does work always mean you have to use your brain or your body? Who was to benefit from the work?

I did not in fact note down these questions or answer them at that time of my volunteering. Somehow I had thought that at 19 and after 13 years of schooling I knew the answers, and that these would apply anywhere, in any situation. I then accepted that I had to let go of this way of thinking and change my attitude. This was also another step out of my "comfort zone". It was a hard step, but one of the most important ones. I realized that there are activities which do not seem to be work to me but which are a great blessing both to others and to myself. It is o.k. when you visit someone and just sit down with that person for one or two hours without talking much. There are people to whom this is important, and it may make you yourself happy.

I discovered more and more possibilities of how to use my time. I got more courage to get involved and to contribute my ideas. This took some time, though. I could not do a great leap but had to take many small and some bigger steps. Sometimes I think I could have done more, or done it more often or earlier. But then I realize that it was o.k. as it was. It was o.k. that I needed quite some time to get adjusted to the new environment and the cul-

ture. Often, it was just my head and my heart that were busy and I was not able to do any "effective" work. At the beginning, it was not easy either to build up close relationships with the local people. I was often too shy to approach people; besides, many of the African girls were also reserved. Most of the boys were not shy, but many first tried to build a steady relationship before they then were just good friends. All the same, I opened up and increasingly felt more at ease communicating. Most of the people began to understand that I was not there to bring them money or to become someone's wife, but rather that I was there to spend time with them and that I was really interested in their lives and their culture. Especially the young people at church were very close to me later on. I could then still feel the culture-related differences but they were no longer that important. At the end, I was really crying because I had to leave people behind who had become friends and were like a family to me, who had helped me and unwittingly taught me a lot about life.

During the whole process of getting adjusted to the culture, I always very much appreciated sharing with other missionaries. Brother Hans and Sister Aisha, missionaries, gave me some advice. My fellow volunteers Anne and Jonas experienced similar situations and feelings. Christine, a missionary from the Philippines who also lived in Jui, took me along with





her to visit people in the community. And Lisa and Daniel Meisinger increasingly were like a family to me. Although it was, of course, not always easy to be in another family, they supported, encouraged and comforted me.

Spirituality also was different from that in Germany. There were things I appreciated very much, such as the music and their openness and courage to talk about God almost

anywhere and with anyone and to witness to their faith. But there were other things which troubled me such as the many talks about money and witchcraft. What I did learn was that you can worship God together and conceive programmes even though your ways of believing are quite different. What matters in the end is that we all believe in the same God. Despite all the difficulties and challenges I was faced with, I realized that by degrees I was able to cope.

It was no big problem living with little water and electricity, and I liked most of the African food. Thank God I was never really ill during this whole period. I learned that, to a certain degree, I can fit into a culture different from my own. I felt more and more confident. Normally, I knew how best to act and behave in Sierra Leonean culture and increasingly enjoyed doing so. One year ago, I would really not have thought that I would find it so hard to leave Sierra Leone and go back to Germany. To be honest: When in late June I flew back to Hamburg, I did not only go home but I also left home, because Jui had really become home to me.

Of course, I was really happy to see my family and friends again after such a long time. Besides, it was nice having a hot shower again, wearing clothes that had been washed in a washing-machine and enjoying German food. Yet I often reflect on my volunteer service and everything I had to leave behind. Right now, my own culture is not really familiar to me. Often, I do not know how to behave, especially in the company of many people. And then, I often do not know how to share my experiences with other people. Some of them do not even ask any questions. Others say: "I have heard you were in Sierra Leone, please tell something ..." or they ask: "What was it like?" Then, I do not know where to start. I would not want people to get a wrong impression of Sierra Leone and my

time there. On the other hand, I do know that people who have not been there will never be able to understand what living in that place over a certain period of time means. I have realized that it is not like coming back from a one-week class trip when you can tell other people: "It was great", or "It was not so good", or "The weather was nice." There are events and feelings that cannot be put in words.

Moreover, I often ask myself how this volunteer service has transformed me. I know for sure that it has, but it is difficult to say how. I have learned a lot and think that I have become more self-reliant, self-assured and self-confident. At the moment, however, there are still many situations when I feel rather uncertain as I have yet to get adjusted to my former culture. But I am already realizing that I am no longer so shy and that I find it easier to get in contact with new people. One of the most important things I have learned is that there is not only the one and only way of thinking or of doing things. Of course, somehow I knew this before. But during my time in Sierra Leone, I have really made the experience. There are people who do things differently and they still manage their lives quite well. These differences are no problem – they are o.k. and important. Nobody should seek to neutralize these differences just because he cannot understand one way of thinking or another.



On the day I left Freetown, I followed the conversation of a British businessman on the ferry; he had worked in several African countries but never lived there for any extended period of time. He complained about the bad conditions in Sierra Leone. He said that in other African countries, there were already hotels run by big American or European hotel chains. And he offered his proposals of how to change all kinds of things. – No two weeks earlier, we had been up-country visiting a very small church somewhere between Makeni and Kabala. The people there did not have electricity, nor houses any bigger than huts. They led a simple life. Yet they seemed to be happy, with a strong faith in

God. If many European or American commodities had been taken there, everything would have been destroyed. It was good as it was – even though it might not have been in line with our ideas of what it should be.

In conversations I now often happen to think: This is only your way of thinking or the way you would solve this problem. I myself might find a different solution, and it would still be o.k. A Sierra Leonean would have very different ideas, and that would still be o.k. And Pa Sorie, the man in Jui, would probably not understand the problem at all, and that, too, would be o.k. There is not only the one and only way of leading a

life of fulfilment. There are many different ways. Many of these ways are at least based on one common ground: It is good to live with God. I have had the privilege of this very experience. Ultimately, my volunteer service was also a special experience with God. It not only enhanced my bible knowledge, as I listened to up to three sermons a week. My relationship with God has become more intense. I have realized that I really depend on him. When I trusted him, he showed me what I should do. And although I am repeating myself: God is the One who has seen every step in my life and can see me as

the person who I am, and who can understand me.

My time in Sierra Leone was quite tough. All the same, it was precious and gave me a great deal of joy. And I may say that I have never regretted having gone there. I always knew that God wanted me to be there, at that time. I am very grateful for the chance of doing this volunteer service and I am certain that it has transformed me, my life and my views – for today and tomorrow.

LILLI MEISSNER





When we met Rev. Foday Koroma and his team of assistant pastors in the small village of Mabettor on the outskirts of Lunsar, a large crowd of people had gathered there to greet us. The church building has only recently been erected with funds received from the USA. Besides the church people, a large number of school children received us: The area is largely dominated by Islam, and Pastor Foday promotes the establishment of Christian schools. In a neighbouring village, he has used his influence to induce a mining company to build a primary school, and Pastor Foday's firm intention is to recruit Christian

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teachers so that the gospel will be preached everywhere.

From here, we travelled to Foredu-gu. In this village, a somewhat larger one, many young women accepted Christ and were baptized a few weeks ago. The elderly find it difficult to embrace the new teaching of Christ, but they allow their children to go to church. In 2011 and 2012, Pastor Foday baptized more than 500 people. His ministry has clearly touched the hearts of the people; for although Baptists and Catholics had ministered to people for many years, the area had remained solidly Muslim.



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Pastor Foday received his theological training in Ghana at the Baptist Theological Seminary there. While he was still studying, news reached the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone about his progress and ministry. He was eager to return home after his studies and was employed by BCSL as a church planter. Pastor Foday is a natural evangelist, who travels round the villages on his motorbike and visits the churches he has planted every Sunday. Like Paul, he trains a Timothy in every church.

He asked me if I would be willing to preach on a Sunday, and when we arrived there very early, he passed the microphone on to me, jumped on his motorbike and was off to the next church. His wife Saffie works as a secretary for the Baptist Eye Hospital and also supports her hus-

band in the ministry, preaching and teaching.

On the way home to Freetown, we visited the strategic town of Rogbere. Here Pastor Foday is planning the building for a secondary school, as there is only a Muslim secondary school in the town. My wife Aisha and I were overwhelmed by the great faith of our brother. Pastor Foday did not wait for the funds to arrive, but started construction. His brother is a building contractor and has helped him to begin. When we were there, we met workmen mixing cement and laying blocks (made of mud). And as I am writing these lines, I am able to tell you that one building has been completed and roofed. Our brother, Pastor Foday, trusted in God, and God blessed his faith.

HANS-WILLEM OOSTERLOO

# SOUTH AFRICA





# South Africa

In South Africa, EBM INTERNATIONAL supports a vocational training project, medical and social work (HIV/AIDS); several church-planters are also supported.



## South Africa

<b>Capital:</b>	Pretoria
<b>Area:</b>	1.2 million sq km
<b>Population:</b>	50 million
<b>Religions:</b>	Christian : 75 %, Natural religions : 22 %, besides: Muslim, Hindu
<b>Languages:</b>	11 official languages of the main ethnic groups (English, Zulu, Xhosa ...) as well as 21 further national languages
<b>Education:</b>	Literacy rate: 87.1 %
<b>Government:</b>	Republic
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Wheat, sugar cane, fruit and vegetables, meat, wine
<b>Industries:</b>	Industrialized country and G8/G5 member Sound legal and financial systems, High inflation and unemployment rates, particularly among the black population
<b>Mineral resources:</b>	Gold, diamonds, coal, chrome, platinum, iron ore
<b>Challenges:</b>	Poverty, HIV/AIDS, crime, reconciliation between black and white people

For ten years, we have worked as a motley team of volunteers (three to six people) and have regularly organized football afternoons in the surrounding township of Mamelodi. Once a week, we have an activity there in a park with a football field. Some 100 children and young people, all from poor backgrounds, join us. First, we talk about a topic with the children; we speak about basic values and problems the children are faced with in their environment

(HIV/AIDS, poverty, unemployment, violence, crime, abuse...). In personal talks and in what we share, we seek to convey to the children hope, love, joy and Biblical basics. After the topical talk, we have a football training session, with a game following. At the end, we provide some food and drinks to the children.

## Why a football ministry?

Owing to the impoverished conditions (with more than 40% unemployed), most of the parents are forced to leave their children to themselves till late in the evening, hoping to beg or earn a little money in the city, every day anew. When school ends at around 1 p.m., the children are left on their own for the remainder of the day, without any protection or supervision; therefore, they often fall victim to drug and alcohol consumption, prostitution or gang wars. Through our programme, the children cannot only do what is fun but they are also taken away from the streets, and Christian ethical values are instilled in them. Moreover, the day-to-day lives of many children are hopeless; they do not have any self-esteem nor are they given any love from their parents (as these have very little time for them). One of our tasks is assisting these children with advice and help as much as possible. Their self-esteem grows and they quite often develop small ideas as to how they can improve their living conditions themselves.

## The beginnings:

In 2002, we went to South Africa as a family to do mission work among young people. Besides trainings for youth leaders, I, Alex, had some time at hand to get involved in a social project. But what should it be, where and with whom? One night, I had a dream: I was in a township playing football with children there. The dream very much felt like reality

## Our missionaries on site:



Johannes & Anna Meyer

to me so that the next morning, I had to ask my wife, Mirjam, if this had really happened. It made it clear to me that I wanted to reach out to children, sharing God's love through football, and so we started to pray for this vision daily. Two weeks later, I attended a conference of youth leaders. There I met a young man who introduced himself like this: „Hi, I am Trevor, I am looking for someone to help me set up a football ministry in Mamelodi (a township east of Pretoria).“ Trevor had no knowledge of my dream; marvelling, I simply answered. „Hi, I am Alex, and I have been waiting for you!“ After some meetings to plan the work, we launched the football ministry. 15 children participated in the first training session. Over 10 years, you experience many things; in the following, please read about a couple of moving events:

### The „brick experience“

Sometimes, we have to grapple with difficult situations in training. When Siphos and Victor started beating each other because of a stupid foul, I intervened. Their fight seemed to be out of control; in his hand, Siphos wielded a brick as a weapon and was ready to kill for „pride and honour’s“ sake. I was standing there, at a loss, in a foreign country, in a foreign culture – as a white foreigner, a newcomer. I felt helpless. How was I to calm down these furious boys? Besides my life, I could not give anything. No authoritarian empty talk, no friendly words, no self-assured behaviour would have convinced Siphos to let go of the brick. I was at my wits’ end. And God? Where was he? Had he not called on me to leave everything in my home coun-

try and to go abroad to serve him? Or was this just my fancy? There were so many questions buzzing in my head, and I had only a few seconds to respond properly. What should I do? Slowly, I extended my trembling hand, looking Siphos straight in the eyes, saying a silent prayer, not saying anything, keeping calm. Obviously, that was not what they had expected. All the children around us became quiet. The seconds felt like hours. All of a sudden, the wrath in Siphos’s face was gone. He started smiling, patted my shoulder and handed the brick to me. There are no words to describe my relief. That afternoon, God accomplished something special. This incident brought the young people and me closer to one another.

### Unconditional love

Once when I arrived for training, I found our footballer children, who are normally waiting for us impatiently, stuck together on one side of the field like a swarm of bees. Curious as I was, I fought my way into the middle of the group. Weinand, a white, homeless boy was sitting there. I tried to find out what was the matter, with little success though. So we started with the training. Weinand also took part in it. Soon after, Surprise, one of the boys, pulled me aside. „What in the world can I do?“ he asked. „What do you mean?“ I answered wondering, expecting him to start complaining about Weinand. Surprise continued: „Since you keep showing us that it is important to share God’s love with all people, even if they are strangers, I have allowed Weinand to spend the night with me. But now, my family is against it. What shall I do?“ Very much touched by what he said, I simply stammered: „Even if it is very hard, you are doing everything right!“ That afternoon, I learned from a twelve-year-old boy what unconditional love beyond your limits means.

### The Football World Cup

2010, South Africa was in a „state of exception“. Flags flying everywhere – in the streets, in houses and on cars. Proudly, people wore the T-shirts of their respective national teams, and tempers were at fever pitch. For the first time, Africa was host to the biggest sporting event.

In many cities, all kinds of sports and entertainment programmes were offered. We, too, were actively involved with our football project and our EBM volunteers. Over four weeks, we offered a children’s holiday programme and football camps, through which more than 40,000 children were reached with God’s love. Very special visitors were the representatives of the German Club of Football Fans, who sponsored goals, footballs and shirts for our work on site. It was an unforgettable time which God has blessed in an exceptional way.

### „So, what now?“

Most of the time, we start our training with a short devotion addressing various aspects of discipleship, because many children already have a personal relationship with Jesus. But sometimes we go back to the basics and ask children if they would like to accept Jesus as their saviour. A few months ago, we called on the children to accept Jesus. After prayers, we divided them into age groups in order to start training. Then, a small boy tugged at my sleeve and asked: „So, what now?“ A bit puzzled, I answered: „Now, we are playing football!“ But, little impressed by my answer, he asked again: „So, what now?“ I had no idea what he was driving at, so I apologized and asked for an explanation. His answer was: „You have said that when I ask Jesus to forgive me, he will forgive my sins and I am saved. But – what now?“ Now, I finally understood and tried to list





the most important points in a few minutes: reading the Bible, seeking the fellowship of other Christians... While he was running to his group, satisfied, his words kept popping up and became ingrained in my mind:

„So, what now?“ This small incident encouraged me to realize again that children, of all people, are really challenged by God to think about their faith.

ALEX STRECKER

74 **I**t is a special challenge for me to write about something which is still in the future and to which courses, conversations and travels have been geared for weeks. Everything in our present lives focuses on preparations for the fast approaching mission assignment. Church visits when people see in me someone whom I have not known myself so far. May that be the person who I will become through the duties ahead of me?

My wife and I cannot fully identify with the term “missionary”. In the first place, we do not consider ourselves as evangelists but as co-workers in missions, who invest their talents and their whole being for the benefit of people, with God’s wonderful blessings. Maybe this is the modern variety of the missionary.

We live in a world whose culture we (more or less) know – within the boundaries of Europe. Africa is a new world; the more information you have gathered, the more questions it discloses. You may read many books on ethnology, culture

and other things. Yet a sense of belonging seems to be out of reach. And it seems that it may take a lot of time till communication and understanding the culture work. In spite of this uncertainty, there are these pins and needles: Something new is ahead of us, a new world, a new task, discovering anew who we are, and the determined willingness to trust in God to guide us through whatever will be new and unfamiliar.

Why don’t African missionaries go to Africa? From one country into the neighbouring country. Wouldn’t that be a lot simpler? What were God’s thoughts when he planned to plant us into this completely different world? This question must certainly bother many people who leave for the wide world. And this is precisely where faith sets in: I think God does not necessarily shape a person for any specific plan but for many marvellous journeys through life, and we must decide on which course we take.

The story of our calling may be summarized in few words: Making a decision, seeing the open door,



75 going through it. We are not walking the path of least resistance. We listen to our feelings and longings within us and trust in God, who opens and closes doors. The hardest step is the one of putting oneself in front of the “door of decision” and admitting to oneself that control of this life is completely handed over at the moment this door opens. – Many doors and inner battles later, I am now sitting here, with a key chain without any keys of our own. Everything is packed. The excitement is at its extreme. For now, a new life is beginning!

No, not quite yet. There are still a few days left till departure. My feelings are in turmoil within me, and

they will fly away when we leave – to be replaced by new ones when we arrive. It is like living in a no-man’s land – between two countries. We have left the hugs and good-byes behind, and it seems strange how fast what used to be normal everyday life and work has become so very remote.

What will be awaiting us? I may have a faint idea when I see the eyes of seasoned missionaries. And we are looking forward to it! And what about God? God speaks the same language the world over, and this will be the key to the doors ahead of us.

JOHANNES MEYER

Since October, 2012, Anna and Johannes Meyer have lived and worked in Johannesburg; they support the Baptist Convention of South Africa in a skills training centre.

CENTRAL AFRICAN  
REPUBLIC





# Central African Republic

In the Central African Republic, EBM INTERNATIONAL supports vocational training for women and training for pastors and evangelists.

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## Central African Republic



<b>Capital:</b>	Bangui
<b>Area:</b>	622,984 sq km
<b>Population:</b>	4.95 million
<b>Religions:</b>	Christian: 80 %, Muslim: 10 %, Natural religions: 10 %
<b>Languages:</b>	French, Sango, as well as 67 further ethnic languages
<b>Education:</b>	Literacy rate: 40 %
<b>Government:</b>	Presidential republic
<b>Agriculture:</b>	Sweet potatoes, cassavas, millet, maize, cotton, coffee, tobacco
<b>Industries:</b>	The major economic sector is agriculture.
<b>Mineral resources:</b>	Wood, diamonds
<b>Challenges:</b>	Political and economic instability

Once more, we are leaving the capital Bangui, where our mission station is located, heading north. This time, we are going to Bossangoa. I have had the local police issue a secular mission order. This official permit to travel in this region will save us tedious checks and invite friendly greetings from the civil servants. In Africa, the fact of being a missionary can serve to open doors every once in a while. The checks are necessary because of the ever

present risk of rebel attacks, a reality we have to live with in the C.A.R.

As we are arriving at the premises in Bossangoa, where the training is held this time, we notice that they are situated right next to the police station and a prison. The subsoil is in bad condition, and with heavy rain, we are certain to get wet feet. Accommodation and board are simpler than we are used to – just to put it nicely.

In this area, Baptists are few and far between. The Catholic Church has far more members. Rev. Philipp is the president in this region. Together with 3,000 Christians, he left the Catholic Church in the '90s in order to found a Baptist church and to build a big community centre. An enormous foundation is all that has been left of these far-reaching plans. The now ageing pastor is considered authoritarian and so far has been trying in vain to find a successor for this important church ministry.

The fact that we, the missionaries, are coming to his region to give training has led him to call on all his church members to stay away. So it is another blessing for us that we may welcome more than 60 participants to our course. The pastors



## Our missionaries on site:



Markus & Anna-Elisabeth Maag

and deacons of the region could be rounded up all the same. Most of them can neither read nor write. So we have many talks with them, on the importance of pastoral care and visiting their church members. And against the backdrop of many an authoritarian leadership style, we also point out how important it is that cooperation of church leadership, pastors and their church members be based on mutual trust.

Time and again, the issue of church discipline is a matter for discussion. How do you deal with people who are sent back by the doormen because to these, their attire seems inappropriate for the occasion? How do they learn to handle alcohol responsibly? What are the marks of good stewardship – of one's own money as well as of that belonging to the church?

Charging their spiritual and personal batteries is always a very special concern to us during such one-week

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trainings. We always show some Christian films on a large screen. Nearly always, the absolute highlight for the participants is seeing themselves on the screen, because we show pictures we have taken with a digital camera during the course. For many of them, this is the first time in their lives that they see themselves in a picture.

This time again, we cannot but look back on the training with gratitude, realizing how important it is to set out to meet the people where they are. Our having gone there to spend these days with them must have encouraged them enormously. We have shared our lives with them: We have eaten together, lived with them and assimilated their culture. Many of the participants have told us that they have been encouraged for their ministries and that they are looking forward to continuing the work, with our Lord guiding them.

MARKUS MAAG







Native co-workers  
tell their stories



# Native co-workers tell their stories

**Soa** is a small city on the outskirts of Yaoundé, at 17 km from the city centre. When I launched the mission work, our small church did not have any members. Today, there are 54, and the services are often attended by nearly 70 people. Many of those attending are students. At present, our church focuses on two activities: the services, Bible studies and prayer meetings on the one hand, and the construction of our church and the pastor's house on the other hand. Here, we are all involved hands-on in order to reduce costs. We closely cooperate with EBM INTERNATIONAL, they support us with prayer and encouragement, and so far they have paid for more than 80% of our construction costs.

The first four months of our ministry were a big challenge. One after the other, every one of our family fell ill due to the different climate and the living conditions in this part of the country. But as if that were not enough, my wife also broke her leg and had to walk with crutches for two months.

I did not have any experience as a church-planting pioneer. Yet, I was certain that God had called me to be here. And I was very much afraid of failing. Finally, in 2006,

some doors opened slowly. In May, 8 people regularly attended the service, five of them students. When the students were gone during the semester break, there were times with just one person attending. This was very discouraging. To make up for it, we took comfort from the fact that a couple of children from the neighbourhood attended my wife's programme for children.

Living in a very thinly populated area at first, we started to pray that God should show us what to do. Soon we heard about a house closer to the city centre, and we could move there soon. Three days after moving into this new house there was a big fire spreading from the neighbours to our house. We lost many things. Not only because they were burned but also because we threw them out of the house to save them: Some people who had come to help just took them with them. After the fire, we were the number one topic of conversation in the area. I believe that God admitted that fire so that the people in our new environment should become aware of us and began to show interest in our Bible studies.

By degrees, God led people to us and in that same year, we could start with a real service. Soon the first

five members of our church were baptized. And at the end of that difficult year, God blessed us with a wonderful daughter. Thankfully, we called her Grace. I started to teach the young Christians and to prepare them to assume responsibility in the church.

In 2009, we could buy a plot of land, and in 2010 we started building on it. Even though our work has not been finished, I am very thankful that God uses me as his servant in the church He is building

KADJIO MAGLOIRE





**Our** Bible School in Mokong/ Cameroon was founded only in 2000. Since then, 66 students have finished training to become evangelists. This number is far from allowing us to meet the need for evangelists in North Cameroon

Our students come from all kinds of social backgrounds. In order to be admitted, they have to take an entrance exam. Currently, intake capacity is limited to 16 students per course. There are four teachers for our students, three working full-time and one part-time. During their entire training, the students live on

the campus of the School. Some of the married students bring their families with them. They pay small tuition fees, because they also get a scholarship from the Bible School. A married student receives 23 Euro per month, a single student 15 Euro. Besides, the Bible School pays for much of their medical treatment. The Bible School has two class rooms and a library where courses can be held. Its equipment is less than simple: a disused computer, two mechanical typewriters, an overhead projector and six sewing machines. The library has some 800 volumes.

A special feature of our school is training for the students' wives. This training corresponds to that of a home economics school. This means they will be of great help to their husbands later on. And in their churches, they can teach the women, many of whom in these rural regions have never attended school. This way, the wives at our Bible School are themselves trained and may in future offer training to people in their churches who would otherwise have no chance of finding a job.

This year, however, for reasons of rising costs and lacking resources, the courses for the women have had to be suspended. In past years, we could even give the women a sewing machine after their training. At this point, we do feel the consequences of the drop in donations in our work in Cameroon, and we very much wish that churches in Europe

would still feel called and keep on supporting this wonderful work in line with their possibilities.

Since the opening of the Bible School, EBM INTERNATIONAL pays for the bulk of running costs. The teachers' salaries are paid in part by the Baptist Union of Cameroon, and a small contribution comes from the students' tuition fees. In this way, we, the Cameroonian Baptists, try increasingly to assume responsibility for training our leaders. The Bible School is a school to master life: Joint learning, shared joy, celebrating together but also sharing suffering and grief are part of every-day life at the school. Those who complete the three-year training have learned to assume responsibility and to serve our churches in Cameroon in word and deed.

PASTOR EMMANUEL MBIENE

Since August 2012, Pastor Emmanuel Mbiene has lived in Germany, with his wife, Jutta Krebs. They have ended their ministry in Cameroon after 27 years. At this point, a giant thank you for great contributions in many areas! – Another Cameroonian pastor will be in charge of the Mokong Bible School in future.



The „Institut Baptiste de Formation Théologique de Ndiki“ (IBFTN) is a theological seminary aiming at qualifying young women and men for the pastoral ministry. Pastors are not only theologians, but at the same time teachers, counsellors, as well as church, social and development aid workers; they also take a stand on the problems of society, preach the word of God, always having a holistic view of people.

IBFTN's beginnings date back to 1925 when the mission station and a Bible school were founded in Ndiki. This latter has become today's Theological Seminary

#### Trainings offered

Three courses are offered. Our prioritized programmes prepare for a vocational diploma in theology and may then be followed by studies for a bachelor's degree – both in view of a pastoral ministry.

We are convinced of God's call for us to prepare leaders for the Church of Christ Jesus in Cameroon and in the C.A.R. From the beginning, these leaders must have the basic tools for their ministry as well as language skills, enabling them to communicate without any problems. That is why we consider bilingual teaching, which we have introduced, of utmost importance. We have (cautiously) started to use both French and English in our courses.

The programme for women is geared for the students' wives, who will later on support their pastor husbands. We aim at preparing the wives for the challenges of the pastoral ministry. These women are taught Bible knowledge, home decoration and parenting as well as the basics of economical housekeeping.

Currently, there are three women and 41 men in training. 24 women are in the programme for the wives of the future pastors. Three full-time and ten part-time lecturers teach the students. Our library only has 3,000 volumes, and for the benefit of our work, our aim is a good, useful library of at least 20,000 volumes.

Life in Cameroon is simple. Normally, the students come from self-sustaining families and do not have the means necessary to provide for themselves during their studies. When they have recognized God's calling in their lives, they come despite their economic distress – giving us reason to marvel. Quite a few come with their wives and children, and those who are single look forward to being married, too.

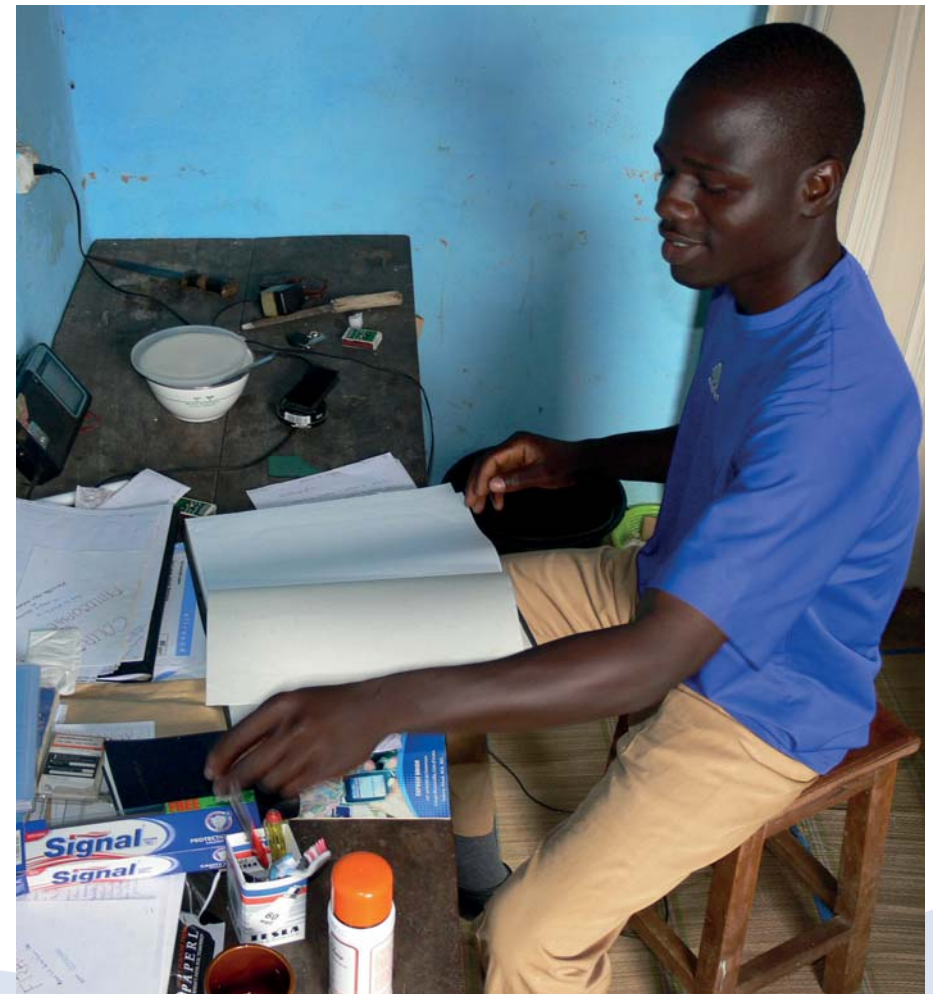
Our biggest challenge is getting really bilingual and training enough people to meet the challenges of present-day Cameroon. We need a car to visit our churches as we also work with the pastors on site. Our

old one has been out of service for quite some time.

The seminary belongs to the Baptist Union of Cameroon. The major share of our financial means comes from EBM INTERNATIONAL, another part from the Baptist Union of Cameroon and from tuition fees.

The students do pay tuition fees, but the stipends they get are almost 2.7 times that amount. Yet we ask for tuition fees in order to raise awareness that theological training is linked to costs.

DR. PIERRE NSECKÉ





The Baptist Union of Cameroon runs two primary schools in the Extreme North of the country, one in Dagai and one in Gamboura. For some years, student enrolment at our Protestant schools has been continuously declining. In Gamboura, school enrolment declined from 500 to less than 300 pupils in less than five years. In Dagai, the situation is similar: Instead of roughly 400 pupils, as five years ago, there are only some 200 of them today.

This fact is due to the following reasons: On the one hand the opening of government schools in the vicinity of our primary schools, and on the other hand the financial situation of the parents, who cannot pay for tuition fees. Fees per year at our schools are 6,100 Francs (9.30 €) as

compared to 2,500 Francs (3.80 €) at government schools. It must be mentioned, though, that our schools are among the best in our region when achievements are compared to those at government schools.

When from time to time we ask ourselves whether it is worth continuing these schools, several people usually advance the following arguments: The schools are indispensable in their respective places, since the one in Dagai – and even more so the one in Gamboura – always perform very well in the national exams. Moreover, between 90 % and 100 % of our pupils pass the entrance exams for the Collège (6th grade). The standards of children at our schools are clearly higher than those of children attending government schools (according to the parents).

Classes are taught 100 % at our schools, which is not the case elsewhere. Education is better (as to the syllabi; no cancellation of classes). The children have books at their disposal, which they can read in class. Thanks to the Bible classes given by a local chaplain, the children's spiritual needs are also addressed.

An "education in integrity" course aims at preparing the children to fight against social ills such as corruption and embezzlement of public property. The practical courses such as computer skills, sewing, agriculture and woodwork/metalwork classes have enabled the children to

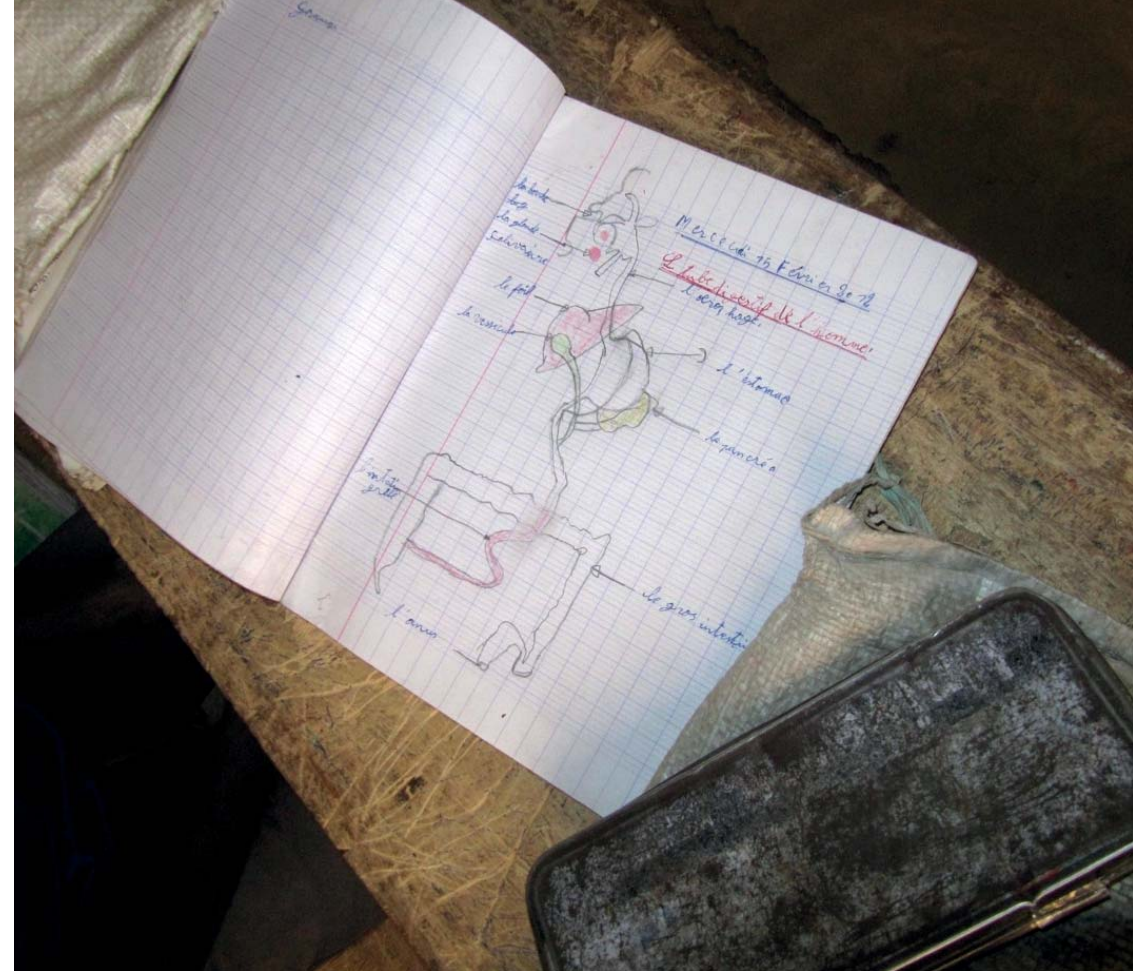
find their way at secondary schools. School discipline also raises the children's willingness to heed rules at home.

Despite the relatively high tuition fees some parents, who had taken their children from the school last year, have decided to send them to

our school again. They would rather spend more money than leave their children to their own resources at public schools. These are just a few reasons which are in favour of continuing with these schools in the impoverished rural regions.

PASTOR RAPHAËL ZILOUA

EBM INTERNATIONAL founded these schools more than 50 years ago, even before there were any churches in the region. We still support this important work today.



The rainy season is behind us. As you may know, strong winds are linked to the rain, and we had to reinforce the roof of our house to keep it from blowing away. The workers who worked here have not done a good job. Our house is still under construction, progress is bit by bit. As to our house here in Nampula (Mozambique), we still have some problems; we had to take out a loan in order to build a house as rents are exorbitant. The need to repair our vehicle, which I use on my travels, is also a cause for concern.

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As a family, we would like to thank all those who assisted us in one way or another during the grievous days when my brother and my mother died.

Our work makes good progress with the exception of the Nampula Bible School. There, the department for theological education enforced a



change of leadership. We do not know what the future will hold. We continue to cooperate and teach some subjects there; the new director will tell us whether our instruction is still welcome in future.

We support two PEPE projects with a total of 120 children, a single mother with four children, two teenagers and two university students. We provide them with rice, maize flour, beans, pasta, sugar, oil, salt, soap, vegetables and tea. I would like to point out that this assistance is the result of tips from the church.

As mentioned before, the rainy season is over, and we plan to go on visiting the mission posts in Namapa, at 200 km from Nampula. This year, we are planning five visits. The aim is improving the witness of the church through better knowledge of God's word, and we hope this work will result in correcting false teachings.

Mission work is a big challenge all over the world, and we are aware that the devil gives us no respite (1 Peter 5:7-9).

AFONSO L. MUENDANE

## THINGS ARE MOVING ...

**A young car mechanic writes about her work experience in her second year of training at the Centre Technique de Garoua (CTG):**

"At the CTG I have learned a lot about car mechanics in theory. My work experience has been extremely helpful to apply this theoretical knowledge in practice. I could do a car service check, tyre checks, change a fan belt and try out many other things. Of course, I also faced challenges, and there was prejudice because I am a woman. But I did my best and managed to assert myself in this men's world; it was difficult because they think this trade is only for men. Certain trades are taboo for women here.

I am very thankful to my parents for encouraging me to do this training. And I am so glad that the CTG made it possible for me. I would like to tell other women about my experience and encourage them. There are more than the typical women's jobs. A woman can do anything. There is a saying here: If you want to eat at dusk, you have to work in the sun."

MAILAISSO LANGOU CHARLIE

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### Some students attending the vocational training centre for women in Figuil share the following:

"I come from a poor family who does not have the money to buy a sewing machine. All the same, I learn sewing at the vocational training centre."

"We are very happy at this Centre. We learn interesting things that are useful in life and which are particu-

larly important for us girls, such as home-making, sewing, stitching, knitting or dyeing cloth."

"I attend the school to learn sewing. I must admit I can not read nor write – just my name."

ALBERTINE, GONGE ADÈLE, APOURI

### In their applications for a job at the Mokong Clinic, two young women wrote about their plans for their lives::



"I would like to find out how I can improve the living conditions of my family and environment. I would like my family to be happy. In order to get there, I attach great importance to communicating and sharing with my husband, as well as with my children. Good parenting is important to me. I want to reach out to the community and participate in the

common activities. And, last but not least, I want to find a job in order to improve the living conditions of my family. That is: to invest myself completely in order to get along well in life."

MATCHOFDAWA DIANE

"First of all it is important to stay alive, and to commit myself to fighting poverty. Of course, I also want to experience joy in life, live in peace, manage my household well and provide my family with enough food. I would also like to learn to treat diseases and care for the ill; by doing so, I would like to share God's love with them."

KATIRDEY HELENA

### A man writes how he fared after vocational training at the CTG in Garoua:

"Before training I did joinery work, but I had no certificate. Then, I had the opportunity to do two years' training as a metal worker, and I could even add a one-year work experience placement. I have learned very disparate things: making windows and doors, maize and millet mills, peanut shelling machines, manual ploughs, and many more. It is my wish to have a work-

shop of my own and to train young people. At the moment, however, I am employed at a workshop in the city. Here, I can still learn more, and I make 2,000 FCFA (3 Euro) a day. This is quite a lot, and I am grateful to the Vocational Training Centre in Garoua for the training I got there."

DENDU MANAOUA

### The following is by a student in North Cameroon holding a scholarship from EBM INTERNATIONAL. According to the director of the „Collège Protestant“ in Mokolo, she did not even have the money to buy a new ballpoint when she wrote her testimony.

"I am 19 years old, and I am from Gamboura. I attend the final year of the Collège at Mokolo. I have been at this school since sixth form. During the first years, my father supported my brothers and me. My parents separated ten years ago; we then lived with our father. He got married again, but this was the beginning of our calamity. Our stepmother did not love us and influenced him against us. Nevertheless, my father paid for my tuition till I was in 8th grade. The following year, he paid for part of it because he said his means were no longer sufficient. So no tuition has been paid yet for my 10th, 11th and now 12th form. At least, I am granted a scholarship from EBM AFRICA, which covers part of my tuition. This year, 40,000 FCFA have been paid,

but I know that another 123,500 FCFA will still have to be raised (approx. 190 Euro).

During this academic year. I had to fend for myself at the beginning. I asked my mother to help me, but she said she did not have any money. Thanks to a work experience placement during the holidays and to some money I had earned as a small trader, I was at least able to buy some exercise-books for my brothers and myself. So I could start school. My father gave me small amounts from time to time, so I could pay my rent in Mokolo, and could buy some fuel to cook. To be fair, I have to say that my father's hearing is impaired, which makes life difficult for him, for all his good will.



I study quite hard at school, but I must admit that sometimes it is difficult for me not to despair. I would really like to continue and pursue studies at the university in order to become a lawyer. But circumstances might well shatter this dream. But I am confident that my trust in God will not be shattered, whatever hindrances there may be."

MASSA CHARLOTTE

In the meantime, some sponsors have been found through EBM AFRICA to help Massa Charlotte pay for her debts to the school. She has passed her "bac" (A-levels) with good grades and thanks all those who have helped her:

"Deeply moved, I would like to share with you my joy and my gratitude. I thank the good Lord that today, I have the opportunity to write you. How else could you know about my overwhelming joy. Your support has reached me, and I have been able to pay for my tuition. Your support came quite unexpected, when I had already lost all hope. But the Lord wanted to give me my smile back, through your generosity. The director told me about this wonderful news the night before my exams. That motivated me to give my very best in the exams – even if it were only to bring joy to your lives."

MASSA CHARLOTTE

## EBM STIFTUNG

The EBM foundation pursues two goals. On the one hand, it promotes the projects supported by EBM INTERNATIONAL, and on the other hand, it seeks to support other global mission projects of groups within the German Baptist Union (BEFG), ranging from the "Maroua Club", a working group engaged in Cameroon, via German Baptist Aid, to the group supporting "Terra Nova Mondai", which is involved

in a social welfare and missionary development aid project in Brazil.

If you would like to make donations available to the EBM STIFTUNG, we will be very pleased to give you any information on our projects and on possible designations. (You may, e.g., make a contribution to the endowment fund, whose interest yields we are entitled to use for the work of EBM INTERNATIONAL.).

### EBM STIFTUNG

Spar- und Kreditbank EFG eG Bad Homburg

Account number: 12 900 02

BLZ: 500 921 00

IBAN: DE70 5009 2100 0001 2900 02

BIC Code: GENODE 51 BH2





## SERVE

### Serving God – Serving people.

The volunteer programme of EBM INTERNATIONAL.

SERVE is a voluntary service of people

- From 18 to 81
- In Africa or Latin America, South Africa, Cameroon, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Argentina
- In churches, kindergartens, construction assignments and agricultural projects, health care facilities ...
- For 3, 6, 9, or 12 months, serving God (SERVE) and people

Requirements:

- Strong interest in people and worldwide mission work
- Good foreign language skills – in line with the country of assignment
- Physical and mental resilience
- Ability to work in a team
- References by two independent persons
- Self-financing
- Certain posts are accredited and sponsored by "weltwärts"
- As the case may be, work experience placements (e.g. for doctors) may be arranged.
- Attendance of the orientation course in December

**The deadline for applications is November 15, for assignments that start the following year.**

Further information and application forms::

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