THE POWER OF THE WEAK

It goes without saying that members of Emmaus around the world are facing increasing pressure from many different directions. Lack of security, exclusion and inequality remain the terrible markers of the economic and social battlefield, breaking down the borders between rich and poor countries, yet deepening the rift between those who continue to cause destruction and to accumulate wealth as never before and the many who are entirely destitute.

In 2015 our members and our organisation have continued to make the two founding concepts of the Emmaus movement a top priority: active international solidarity and the global combat against the causes of poverty. This is illustrated in our activity report. In the months and years ahead we must use these twin values as a powerful antidote to rising fatalism and fear. Above all, we must, together with all those of good will, make them the only credible way to prevent further breakdown in society and to bring about changes full of potential to which we’re totally committed.

“The power of the weak, when it shines forth in places, is sometimes so strong that it can paralyse those considered masters of all” Abbé Pierre.

Jean Rousseau,
Chair of Emmaus International

EMMAUS INTERNATIONAL

Emmaus International coordinates the movement’s activities at global level and is governed by representatives of organisations from all four continents. Every 4 years, the 350 member organisations meet for the World Assembly to set the movement’s main policy direction. Strategic guidelines are set out by the elected governing bodies (Board, Executive Committee and regional executive committees) at the international and regional levels (Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe). They oversee their implementation with the support of staff who work at the international and regional secretariats.

ABOUT US

Emmaus International, founded in 1971 by Abbé Pierre, is a secular movement of solidarity working to combat poverty and exclusion. It brings together 350 organisations in 37 countries across 4 continents. All promote the same values of sharing, humanity and justice, in very diverse social, economic and political contexts. Their common goal is to empower the poorest in society to take control of their own lives and to show that a fairer world is possible.

Emmaus International also coordinates the collective commitments of its organisations around 6 programmes of action and engagement: the right to water, health and education, ethical finance, human trafficking and international migration. It promotes solidarity between its organisations, based on the pooling of human, material and financial resources.

As Abbé Pierre’s sole legatee, Emmaus International represents “the voice of the voiceless” all over the world.
In 2015, 1 new country, Angola, was added to the list of African countries where Emmaus has a presence. From 24 to 28 March, 3 representatives from Emmaus Africa organisations attended the Tunis World Social Forum (Tunisia) where they talked about the alternative solutions they are developing locally, above all in terms of management and community involvement.

2015 has seen political instability in several countries of the region. In Burkina Faso the chaotic situation led Emmaus International and Emmaus organisations from the country to voice their support for a peaceful return to democracy. In Burundi, the Emmaus A.L.D.P. team were confined to the organisation’s premises and gave shelter to dozens of people fleeing their homes in fear of massacres following the violent political crisis.

In January, the 9th work camp of the Americas region took place in Cachoeira (Brazil). Training was also an important element. Around a hundred participants (companions, leaders and staff) came from all over the Americas region, as well as from France, Burundi and Burkina Faso. Regional trainers led workshops on self-sufficiency, political lobbying or the life of Abbé Pierre.

A MAJOR CHALLENGE: ACHIEVING SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Self-sufficiency has been at the heart of issues and concerns in the region in 2015. Member organisations were asked to consider this issue in a work session at the Regional Assembly which took place at the end of October in Pondicherry (India). Each group gave a presentation on its income-generating activities (ecotourism, fair trade...) and considered the challenge of breaking their dependency on the solidarity of European groups.

The Emmaus organisation leaders from the Americas region, as well as from France, Burundi and Burkina Faso. Regional trainers led workshops on self-sufficiency, political lobbying or the life of Abbé Pierre.

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Water is a shared resource of mankind. Emmaus International is campaigning for the preservation and non-privatisation of this resource.

**PILOT PROJECT**
With the inauguration of the Kinto site in March, all the facilities at Lake Nokoué are now finished. Access to water and latrines has become a reality.

**CAMPAIGNING**
This successful scheme, managed jointly by the public sector and the local community, has been presented at various international forums (WSF 2015 in Tunis, 2nd Meeting “Water, Planet, Peoples”).

**A CLOSER LOOK...**
**EMMAUS PEREIRA (COLOMBIA)**
Recycling rainwater
In response to the extremely high price of water from a private company, Emmaus Pereira set up a system to recycle rainwater in 2010. The water, collected on the roofs, is filtered and used by the local community for drinking, washing, and cleaning or crop irrigation. Thanks to this system 240,000 litres of water are collected each year, representing an annual saving of 1,500 euros.

**PILOT PROJECT**
Evaluation missions took place in Benin in July, India in October and Bangladesh in January 2016 to assess the health initiatives.

**A CLOSER LOOK...**
**EMMAUS ASSOCIATIONS IN BURKINA FASO**
A health insurance scheme to facilitate access to healthcare
It was in 2013 that the constituent General Assembly of the health insurance scheme was organised in Burkina Faso. The members of the scheme take the decisions: membership fees, refunded benefits, implementation of third party payment, etc. In 2015 the scheme had 808 members, and 605 cases were taken on.

Access to health care is a fundamental right. Emmaus International is supporting mutual health schemes which make it possible for people facing social exclusion to gain access to health care.

**PILOT PROJECT**
2015 has been dedicated to rethinking the partnership with Banca Etica within the framework of the Emmaus Ethical Fund and to considering a possible expansion to include new partners.

**CAMPAIGNING**
As a founder of the Roosevelt Collective, Emmaus International campaigned against the TAFTA agreements, in particular supporting the global mobilisation on 18 April.
**EDUCATION**

Access to education is a key tool in the fight against the causes of poverty. Education empowers the least privileged in society so that they can play a part in a fairer world.

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

The fight against human trafficking is a huge social challenge for the world. Emmaus International is campaigning for legislation to be strengthened in order to protect victims and their rights.

**SURVEY ON POLICY & CAMPAIGNS AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

In 2015 Emmaus International reviewed the commitment of its member organisations with regard to policy campaigns and international solidarity. Six volunteers visited 134 Emmaus organisations in 29 countries to review their commitment.

> 73% of the organisations are committed in varying degrees to at least 4 of the 6 key areas. 85% take concrete action on the ground linked to these themes, even though proposals for social change and the move towards political campaigning still need to be developed.

**Pilot Project**

All over the world, Emmaus groups take action to give children from the poorest families access to education, to provide professionally oriented training courses for young adults, and to raise awareness through education.

**IN 2015**

The solidarity sales organised by Emmaus organisations raised €560,703 which will finance local projects in 2016.

In 2015, 52 shipping containers were sent to Emmaus organisations in Africa and Latin America by 24 Emmaus organisations.

Spontaneous acts of solidarity from Emmaus organisations totalling €27,759 helped alleviate 2 emergency situations in India and Burundi.

FINANCING LOCAL PROJECTS

Each of the movement’s groups organises a solidarity sale once a year. The proceeds from these sales are pooled into a fund and are then redistributed to support projects to finance capacity building for the weakest Emmaus organisations.

CONTAINERS

Emmaus Europe organisations send shipping containers to groups in Africa and South America to share material resources with them. It’s also an opportunity for the members from the ‘sending’ and ‘recipient’ groups to meet up.

EMERGENCY AID

When a member organisation is faced with an emergency situation and asks for support, a solidarity appeal is launched to all the groups of the movement. With the resulting aid it can then give assistance (reconstruction, distribution of survival kits, etc.).

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Solidarity is at the heart of the Emmaus movement. Through Emmaus International’s solidarity programmes, member organisations worldwide pool their resources to support member organisations with the least resources.

EMMAUS INTERNATIONAL / 9
At the beginning of 2015 Emmaus International’s new website was launched, along with its Facebook page. We hope you’ll visit the site and like our Facebook page!

New web tools

Regional assemblies

In 2015 the Emmaus organisations of each region came together for their regional assemblies. They elected international representatives, decided on priorities for their region and prepared for the 2016 World Assembly.

> Emmaus Europe: 3 to 6 September in Manchester (UK)
> Emmaus Asia: 23 to 25 October in Pondicherry (India)
> Emmaus the Americas: 28 October to 2 November in Montevideo (Uruguay)
> Emmaus Africa: 7 to 9 December in Tohouè (Benin)

Preparing for the World Assembly

2015 has been a year of preparation for the World Assembly, a focal point in the life of the movement, which takes place every 4 years. All the members of the movement will come together in Jesolo, Italy, from 18 to 23 April 2016.

Work on values

In July 2014, thinking ahead to the 2016 World Assembly, we began a wide consultation of Emmaus organisations across the world to reflect on and identify the values and guiding principles for the future. The results were compiled during 2015 and five values stood out clearly: welcome, openness, respect, solidarity and sharing. They are complemented by the respective guiding principles.

Key dates in 2015

A conference on migration

On 18 December the Organisation for Universal Citizenship organised a conference at the National Museum of Immigration in Paris, to coincide with its plea for a “change of course on migration”. Read the campaign document at www.o-c-u.org/fr/nous connaître/plaidoyer

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“The word “peace” is a terribly ambiguous word. What mankind thirsts for is combat, truth, and to keep fighting with all one’s strength against human degradation.”

Abbé Pierre

“Citizens of the world” speech, Paris, 1968