



# COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUND

Financial and operational evaluation



emmaus

INTERNATIONAL

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

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**Patrick Atohoun**  
Chair of Emmaus International

For almost a year, the world has been in the throes of an extremely serious health, economic and social crisis. The end of this crisis is far from being in sight, but the time has already come to evaluate our initial solidarity response. Indeed, on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the Emmaus International Executive Committee decided to set up the Covid-19 emergency fund to meet the most pressing needs of our member groups, along with those of the vulnerable populations with whom we live and work on a daily basis. After almost 7 months in operation, the Executive Committee decided to close this fund. Not because the needs have disappeared; rather, we now no longer feel it is necessary to be operating in emergency mode, and long-term actions are needed to respond to the consequences of the crisis. Therefore, we present the evaluation of this emergency fund which, despite contributions not reaching the estimated amount needed, nevertheless enabled us to support 65 groups. Contributions to this fund came from 47 groups, 4 national organisations and 2 foundations, one of which is a member of our movement. This result demonstrates the Emmaus movement's capacity to mobilise and put into practice the values of solidarity and sharing that we inherited from our founder. It must be said that although only some of our 410 groups contributed to this solidarity mechanism, by no means did the other groups remain idle! All the Emmaus groups rallied at a local level to do what they could to help the most excluded. Thank you all for your sense of sharing and solidarity, thank you for your actions and, lastly, thank you for standing together in these difficult times!

## Covid-19 emergency fund: a vital force of international solidarity

Faced by the severe consequences of the health crisis, the elected members of Emmaus International immediately wanted to help the groups who had been forced to suspend their work and were unable to receive any public aid from their national or local authorities. These groups were primarily located outside of Europe.

Lockdowns and other restrictive measures directly threatened the very existence of many groups and the circumstances of vulnerable people living with, and being supported by, the groups. In mid-March a decision was made, together with the regions, to make available an exceptional emergency fund comprised of three key provisions:

- **“Critical emergency”** intended to cover operating costs for groups to ensure their survival: food, water, healthcare, electricity, sometimes staff wages, etc.
- **“Post-lockdown recovery”** to enable groups to restart their solidarity initiatives with vulnerable groups of people thanks to expenses, such as administrative fees, being covered by this provision.
- **“Support for mutual health organisations”** for groups or countries that manage an Emmaus International mutual health organisation.

With around 90 groups in the world identified as priority groups, the needs were estimated at over 1.5 million euros, of which 79% was raised thanks to Emmaus International's reserves, support from the San Zeno and Abbé Pierre Foundations, and the broad solidarity appeal to the movement's European groups.

*A novel approach breathing life into essential acts of solidarity.*



# Financial evaluation

In total, €1,199,036 was raised for the Covid-19 emergency fund, of which only 3.1% was drawn from our reserves. Contributions from Emmaus groups, national organisations and foundations, who committed alongside us, have secured the future of our financial resources for international solidarity. All the funds were used during the year, entirely to support the groups and their needs.

Over two thirds of the funds used (67.4%) were provided by 47 Emmaus groups and 4 national organisations. In the context of a global health and economic crisis, which paralysed the activities of all of our groups for at least 2 months, this demonstrates the Emmaus movement's capacity to show solidarity. Two foundations also contributed significantly (28.6%) to this emergency fund: the Abbé Pierre Foundation and the San Zeno Foundation. Their support avoided us having to use Emmaus International reserves excessively (which accounted for only 3.1% of the fund), and therefore enabled us to save resources which will be allocated to international solidarity actions in 2021. Lastly, it is important to note that 67 artists got involved and the proceeds from the sale of their street artworks were donated to the emergency fund (approximately 1% of the resources).

Source of funds:

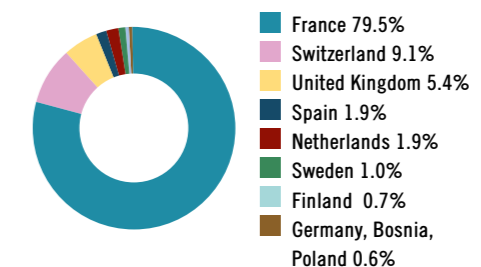


Distribution of food items by Emmaus Pag-la-Yiri, Burkina Faso

The distribution per country of contributions from member groups and national organisations indicates the over-representation of France (almost 80% of the resources), with half the remaining 20% donated by Switzerland, and the other half from the United Kingdom and 7 other European countries.

Contributions from member groups and national organisations per country:

It is important to note that Emmaus Italy made a significant contribution, following this appeal, to support the Emmaus International programme in 2021.



This breakdown is bound to raise questions about the economic balance and international solidarity within the Emmaus movement. Indeed, it does not reflect the presence of our groups in the most economically advantaged countries, and ultimately, only 11% of groups contributed to this fund. There will be a need to evaluate its innovative approaches and also its shortcomings; the preparation of the next World Assembly will be an appropriate time for this.

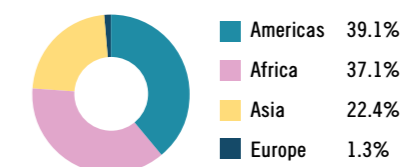
## USE OF FUND

These funds have largely contributed to financing the "Critical emergency" provision (58.1%), i.e. immediate help for people living in the most precarious conditions, or survival of the Emmaus groups deprived of their income due to lockdown measures. From September, this support evolved to include increasing activities under "Post-lockdown recovery" (35.6%). Lastly, specific aid (6.3%) was provided to the mutual health organisations run by Emmaus groups, to cover exceptional expenses beyond the financial means of mutual health members, or to run prevention and awareness-raising activities with the public.

Use of the fund per provision:

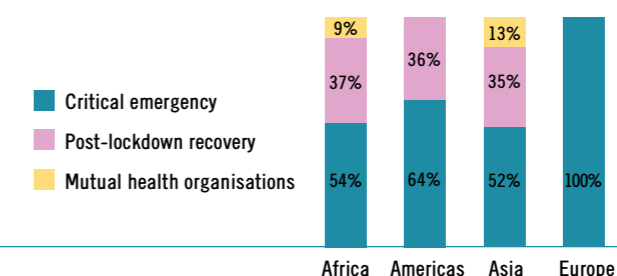


Use of the fund per region:



Apart from the particular case of Europe, where almost all groups were able to benefit from support set up by the governments or inter-European solidarity, the breakdown of support between these three provisions is almost the same across all the regions. The higher proportion of Americas groups accessing the "Critical emergency" provision is due to the fact that total lockdown periods were a lot longer in most countries in the region than in the rest of the world (over six months of lockdown in most countries in the Americas). It is also of note that there is no mutual health organisation in the Americas region.

Distribution of fund per provision in the regions:

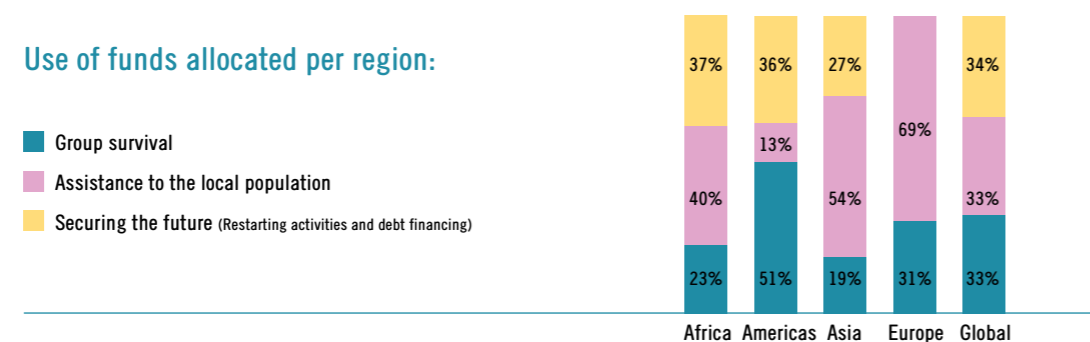


# Use and results

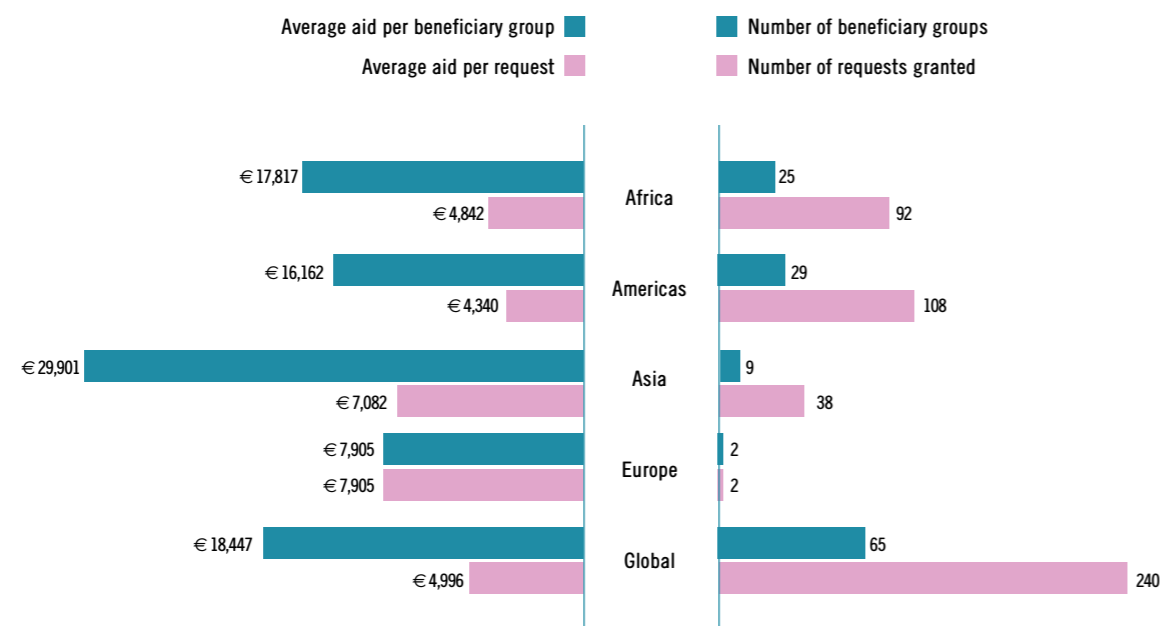
Of the 410 member groups of Emmaus International, 65 received financial aid from the Covid-19 emergency fund, by means of 240 requests for support. The average amount allocated was €4 996 per request and €18 447 per beneficiary group.

The use of this aid can be divided into 3 categories: "Group survival" permitting Emmaus groups lacking resources to cope with this crisis, "Assistance to the local population" for solidarity initiatives with the most vulnerable people outside of our groups, and "Securing the future" for aid transferred to Emmaus groups in order for them to restart their activities or to finance the debts accrued during the crisis. The distribution of the Covid-19 emergency fund between these different activities is balanced at the global level, but significant differences can be observed between the regions according to their socio-economic contexts and the health measures taken.

Use of funds allocated per region:



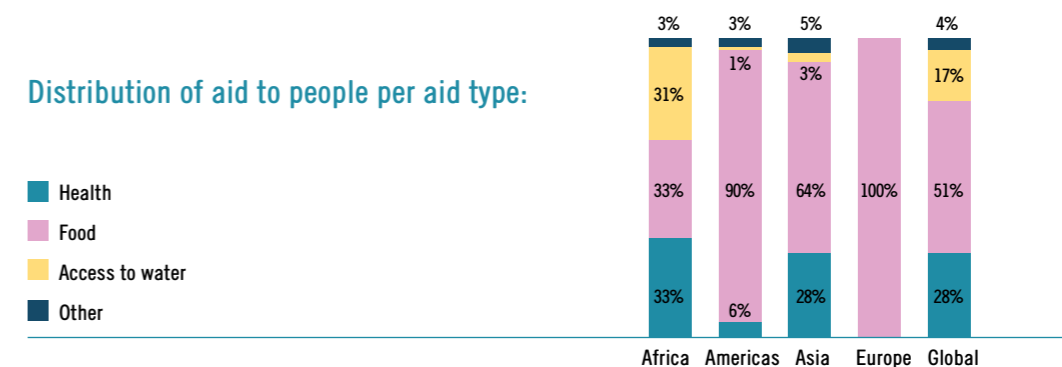
Average aid per region and per group/request:



## VITAL ASSISTANCE TO THE POPULATION GROUPS

Based on the evaluations sent by each group, **we estimate that over 160,000 people received help from the Emmaus movement** through the Covid-19 emergency fund. Primarily food aid (51%), but also health-related aid (28%) and access to drinking water (17%). This aid is modest, at around €2.50 per person, but it was essential - and even vital - in many cases.

Distribution of aid to people per aid type:



This is especially the case in the Asia region, where the funds allocated to helping local people were particularly important. In this region, where a significant proportion of the population depends on the informal economy, the effects during periods of lockdown have been particularly severe. It is important to note that specific aid was allocated to our group in Lebanon following the explosion in the port of Beirut in August 2020. This blast affected many beneficiaries of our group in the country. Around 25% of the people benefiting from Emmaus' actions using this emergency fund have received food aid in the Asia region.



Distribution of food items by Emmaus Kudumbam, India



The world over, Emmaus groups have mobilised to cope with this crisis and help the most excluded. Here are some examples of these actions financed by the Covid-19 emergency fund.

# Overview of the actions

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

### One meal per day for those most in need - without fail

Since 2016, the Bosnian Emmaus group 'International Forum of Solidarity' (IFS) has been working in partnership with local social services to provide one full meal every day to the most disadvantaged people in the municipalities of Dobol, Istok, Grananica, Srebrenica, Zvornik, Bratunac and Tuzla.

Thanks to an amount of €10,830 received from the Covid-19 emergency fund, 722 people were able to continue receiving this quality nutritional meal, without interruption, during two weeks which were particularly critical in October 2020. This support is even more important for those people facing grave social, economic and health difficulties as this is often their only meal in the day. This food aid also enables IFS to make contact with groups of people in great distress that would not have been identified otherwise, in order to be able to direct them to other types of support.

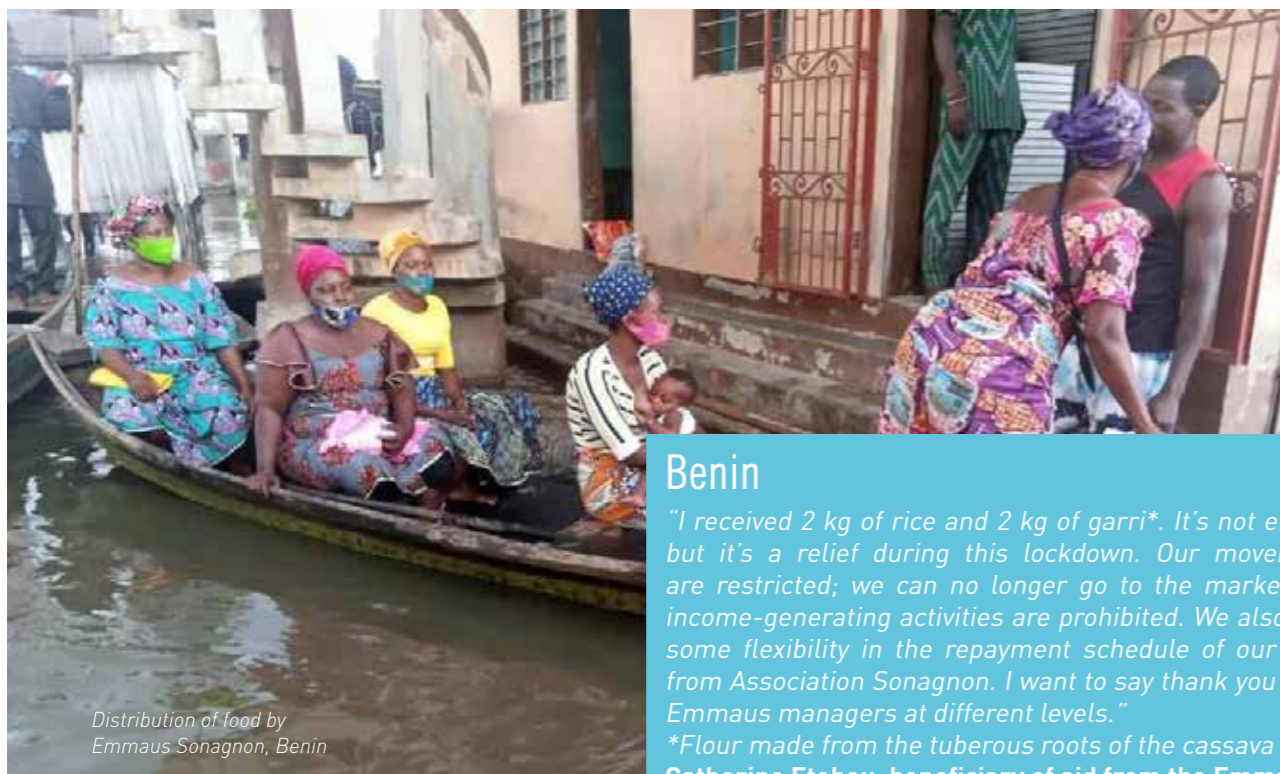
*"As we are there on the ground every day, it's important to see that this aid is going to those who really need it. When we see how appreciative they are and how important these meals are to them, it motivates us even more to continue this work. The roads leading to the villages where we deliver food are mostly destroyed, dangerous, particularly during rainy periods and in winter. However, this does not stop us from reaching and delivering hot meals to almost all the beneficiaries every day."*  
Doboj Istok, member of the IFS-Emmaus group in Bosnia and Herzegovina



## Colombia

### Helping the companions

Located one hour by plane from Bogota, the Emmaus Pereira community collects, restores and resells reusable materials and objects from private individuals and companies. This activity provides an income to support 22 companions, who also organise many social initiatives to help those most in need. During the hardest days of the health crisis, the Covid-19 emergency fund from Emmaus International meant that these companions could stay at home, alone or with their families, without losing their income while waiting to go back to work.



Distribution of food by Emmaus Sonagnon, Benin

### Benin

*"I received 2 kg of rice and 2 kg of garri\*. It's not enough but it's a relief during this lockdown. Our movements are restricted; we can no longer go to the market. Our income-generating activities are prohibited. We also want some flexibility in the repayment schedule of our loans from Association Sonagnon. I want to say thank you to the Emmaus managers at different levels."*

*\*Flour made from the tuberous roots of the cassava plant.*  
**Catherine Etehou, beneficiary of aid from the Emmaus Sonagnon group**

## India

### Wage support to maintain our organic farming activities

As a member of the LEISA\* network for the defence of organic farming, the Kudumbam NGO, created almost 40 years ago in the former state of Madras, has developed many actions around its large organic farm: training landless farmers in agroecology (70% of whom are women) and micro-loans to help them set up, and welcome orphaned children, who have lost one or both parents.

Thanks to aid from Emmaus International when the health crisis was at its worst, Kudumbam was able to pay wages to 51 workers on the organic farm - or rather, 60% of their wages - from April to September 2020. This support enabled them to continue working and helping 1,112 vulnerable families by distributing hygiene kits and food items, including milk to over 4,000 children.

\* Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA)

## Angola

### Support to over 100 families

Faced by the food crisis as a result of lockdown, the Emmaus Luanda association took action to help the most disadvantaged families and the elderly, sick and disabled. The Emmaus International emergency fund contributed to distributing food, medicine and hygiene products to over 100 families. The distribution of items was accompanied by awareness-raising on hygiene measures in order to help reduce the spread of the virus.

*"If you hadn't come to our aid, my children and I would have had nothing to eat. The rations that Emmaus just gave me will cover our food needs for 6 or 7 days."*

Judith C., food aid beneficiary

## Uruguay

### Maintaining activities before all else

Located in Montevideo, the Grupo Aportes community runs a shop and proceeds from sales enable them to respond to the urgent needs of families living in extreme poverty. However, the shop closed due to lockdown, and winter in the southern hemisphere exacerbated hardships suffered by the poor. The Emmaus International Covid-19 emergency fund helped to offset the loss of income so that companions could continue helping those in need, by donating food, warm clothes and even bed covers. The community has also provided metal beds to a hospital to cope with the influx of patients.

## Brazil

### Emergency health for companions in Sao Paulo

In March 2020, the closure of non-essential businesses did not spare the solidarity shop at the Emmaus Igualdade community in Cachoeira Paulista, in Sao Paulo state. Deprived of their income, its 33 companions applied to Emmaus International's Covid-19 emergency fund. The aid granted to them compensated for the lack of resources and enabled them to implement a "recovery plan", including the restarting of workshop activities, household collections and sorting of items for sale, but also preparations for the opening of a new sales outlet.

This new shop was able to open gradually from 12<sup>th</sup> August, and after three months, the community was debt-free and able to operate normally again.

*"Emmaus provided us with security, well-being, and the chance to be in a safe space to avoid infection. We need to continue developing and improving a little more every day."*

Emerson Rodrigues, community member

## Solidarity with former child soldiers

In Goma (North Kivu), Emmaus C.A.J.E.D runs two large, front-line missions with young people: education initiatives mostly through the Saint-Michel school group and looking after children who have been exploited as soldiers until their families can be traced. The health crisis led to travel restrictions, and C.A.J.E.D called on temporary foster families to provide a home to these former child soldiers. Thanks to aid from Emmaus International, these families were able to receive food items, masks and hygiene products. The emergency fund also enabled us to provide aid to association volunteers and staff from the school group.

## Coping and preparing for the recovery

During the lockdown in May 2020, 25 companions from the self-help community Emmaus Oselya, in Lviv, received food and items they needed in order to stay, continue their collection and distribution work, and prepare for the reopening of the shops. Above all, the companions were able to help the homeless in the city by providing food, water, hygiene products, clothing, masks, information and medical support.



Masks being made by Emmaus PUP, Bangladesh

## Bangladesh

*"My name is Lucky Begum, I'm 32 years old. My husband and I have two children. I am part of a group of artisan producers at Pollee Unnyon Prokolpo (PUP), doing hand embroidery. My husband has a tea stand at the side of the road. During the lockdown period, we all suffered greatly from a serious food crisis, as we no longer had any way of earning money to buy food. In this extreme situation, food aid was provided by PUP, financed by Emmaus International. I express my sincere thanks to PUP and Emmaus International for having given us this great support during the crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic."*

**Lucky Begum, beneficiary of help from the PUP group**

## Raising awareness to combat the spread of the disease

In 2002 in Burkina Faso and Benin, and in 2009 in India and Bangladesh, the Emmaus groups set up mutual health funds offering their members access to quality basic healthcare, in countries where public health policies are failing. All these mutual health organisations quickly mobilised to raise awareness, not only for their members, but also among the local population, about the dangers of Covid-19 and protective measures.

In Burkina Faso, the mutual health organisation used radio spots, created posters, distributed hygiene products and set up discussion workshops directly in communities or meeting places. These actions were particularly important for reaching segments of the population who are sceptical of information given by official authorities, and for whom social rules of community life are contrary to preventive hygiene measures. This initiative enabled them to directly reach almost 2,000 people, although many more have benefitted from this information.

## Emergency aid following the explosion

In a country already severely weakened by a financial and political crisis, with a 50% poverty rate and many months coping with the pandemic, the explosion that hit Beirut on 4 August 2020 plunged the population into a severe emergency. The local Emmaus group, Association Entraide Professionnelle (AEP), identified hundreds of families in need and immediately took action to help them, thanks to support from Emmaus International and the Abbé Pierre Foundation. AEP was able to ensure food security for almost 2,000 people in Beirut, but also in Tripoli, Saida, Akkar and several rural areas hit by these multiple crises, by distributing food parcels containing a 2-month supply of food.

## Peru

*"My name is Juan Pablo, I am one of the companions in charge of distributing food to the most vulnerable people and I also went to areas, with other companions, where there are high-levels of poverty. Sometimes I had to carry packages on foot to reach the houses, but I feel happy to be able to help, it comforts me. I am grateful to the Abbé Pierre Foundation and Emmaus International for having given my group this aid and we hope there will be more support so we can continue helping even more people in need."*

**Juan Pablo, member of the Emaús Solidaridad y Apoyo group in Peru**



Companion at work in the Emmaus Piura community, Peru

# Acknowledgements...

Emmaus International would like to thank all individuals and all member groups, national organisations, foundations and artists who responded in the spirit of sharing and solidarity and made this action possible.

## Contribution from member groups and national organisations

### Germany

Emmaus Cologne

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

IFS

### Spain

Emaús Fundación Social San Sebastian  
Fundación Traperos de Emaús

### Finland

Emmaus Åland  
Emmaus Helsinki  
Emmaus Westervik

### France

A.C.E  
Emmaus Périgueux  
Emmaus Annemasse  
Emmaus Ariège/Pamier  
Emmaus Bogy  
Emmaus Bourgoin  
Emmaus Cernay  
Emmaus Chambéry  
Emmaus Dijon  
Emmaus France  
Emmaus Metz  
Emmaus Nantes  
Emmaus Paron  
Emmaus Rédéné  
Emmaus Rhône-Alpes  
Emmaus Rochefort/Saint-Agnan  
Emmaus Sarthe  
Emmaus Sète-Frontignan  
Emmaus Thonon  
Emmaus Touraine  
Fripe Emmaus

### Netherlands

Emmaus Haarzuilens

### Poland

Emmaus Rzeszow

### United Kingdom

Emmaus Dover  
Emmaus Hampshire  
Emmaus Hertfordshire  
Emmaus Leeds  
Emmaus Mossley  
Emmaus Norfolk  
Emmaus UK

### Sweden

Brödet Och Fiskarna  
Emmaus Stockholm  
Emmaus Sweden  
Emmaus Umea

### Switzerland

Emmaus Bern  
Emmaus Carouge  
Emmaus Etagnières  
Emmaus Fribourg  
Emmaus Jura  
Emmaus La Chaux de Fonds  
Emmaus Rivera  
Emmaus Sion  
Emmaus Switzerland  
Emmaus Zurich

### List of foundations

Abbé Pierre Foundation (France)  
Fondazione San Zeno (Italy)

# ... and feedback

## “In this fight we must all be on the same side”

At a time when all of humanity is confronted by great challenges, our aim is to strengthen empathy and care towards others. In this crisis situation, we want to encourage members of the community to get involved in developing solidarity and sharing positive values.

Emmaus’ fundamental values are solidarity, humanity and unity and the fact that they stand out in such situations gives us hope and optimism that a better society will emerge from this crisis.

**Sabina Arnaut Jahić,**  
**IFS-Emmaus, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

## “Serve first those who suffer most”

Abbé Pierre’s motto is a fundamental value of our movement. This is why we responded to the appeal launched by Emmaus for groups in France, but also those across the world, who should not be relegated to second place. Everywhere in the world groups are still in extremely difficult situations and it would be shocking not to show openness in our solidarity.

**Solidarity committee,**  
**Emmaus Chambéry, France**



Solidarity committee at the Emmaus  
Chambéry community, France



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