



Felm Annual Report 2025



Felm

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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.

Matthew 28:18–20

Hope springs from action

The year 2025 was characterised by an international operating environment with multiple ongoing crises. Prolonged conflicts, increasing humanitarian needs and tensions in the international cooperation system were directly reflected in the operations, collective functional capacity and growing needs of Felm, its partners and communities. The war in the Middle East, in particular, influenced programme activities, and the overall uncertainty surrounding the work increased. International law and the multilateral system as well as human rights and equality policies were questioned, and international commitments were undermined. Development funding was cut both in Finland and internationally. Europe's security was of particular interest in Finland, and many felt uncertain about the future.

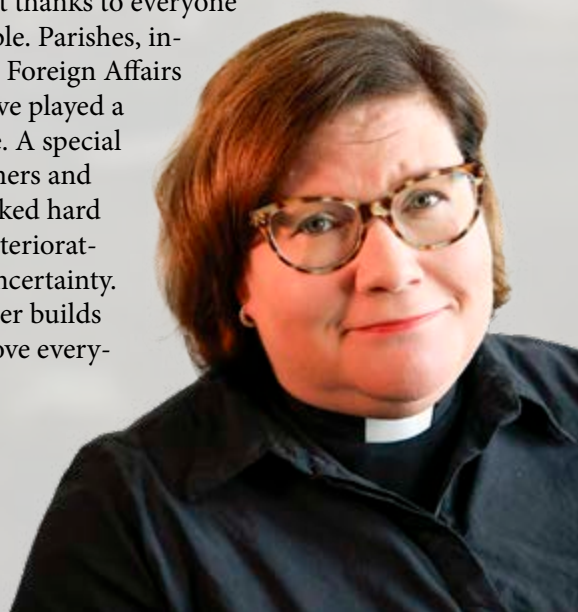
The work continued even under the more difficult circumstances. The strong commitment of parishes to international cooperation remained, with actors in international ecumenical cooperation increasingly seeking common operational solutions. Felm's four-year programme period ended with good results. Felm's new strategy was implemented and the stabilisation of finances continued. Felm's work was supported by new donors.

The impact of the work and the strong cooperation networks in Finland and internationally have bolstered hope in the work. We insist on indivisible human dignity, justice and the protection of our neighbours even when these values are being threatened. As a result of the expertise of churches and non-governmental organisations, local leadership, the support of partners and efficient cooperation, the agency of the people and communities we work with was boosted in the past year. This work we do together is making the world a better place every day.

God is a good and loving God. He is the God of hope. God is present in the world He has created, even at times when we live in uncertainty or with many simultaneous problems. Our mission is to bear witness to God's love at all times. Our hope does not emerge unaided. God's perfect love is an invitation to freedom and courageous agency in the world. Our mission is to play our part in revealing God's love to our neighbours and to the whole of creation. We are making a difference in the world. Our mission is to pray, to work for justice, to help the disadvantaged, and to build peace always and everywhere.

I would like to extend my warmest thanks to everyone who has made our joint efforts possible. Parishes, international partners, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, donors and volunteers have played a key role in making this work possible. A special thanks goes to the international partners and the personnel of Felm, who have worked hard to achieve good results despite the deteriorating security situation and financial uncertainty. Action inspires hope, working together builds courage and ultimately strengthens love everywhere.

Pauliina Parhiala
Executive Director





Board members elected by the annual general meeting of 30 August 2025:

Bishop
Mari Parkkinen
Chair
Mikkeli Diocese

Doctor of Science
(Agriculture and Forestry)
Pentti Aspila
Espoo Diocese

Vicar
Leena Kairavuo
Vice chair
Turku Archdiocese

Vicar
Pia Kummel-Myrskog
Porvoo Diocese

Sales support person,
IT specialist, theology undergraduate
Ami Lainela
Helsinki Diocese

Entrepreneur, consultant
Aleksi Murtojärvi
The Finnish Association for
Children and Youth

Senior specialist in financial
management
Juha Nivala
Oulu Diocese and
Herättäjä-Yhdistys association

Master of Theology, Master of Health
Sciences, deaconess
Terttu Pohjolainen
Mikkeli Diocese

Master of Social Sciences,
policy planner
Sampo Untamala
Helsinki Diocese

Specialist in guidance
and development
Sakari Vanhanen
Tampere Diocese

Professor
Mika Vähäkangas
Helsinki Diocese

Vicar
Tiina Wiberg
Kuopio Diocese

Members of the International
Advisory Board (FIAB) 2025–2027:

Co-chair, pastor
Bruk Ayele
Ethiopian Evangelical Church
Mekane Yesus

Co-chair, bishop
Mari Parkkinen
Chair of Felm's Board of Directors

Leading pastor
Selma Chen
Lutheran Church of Taiwan

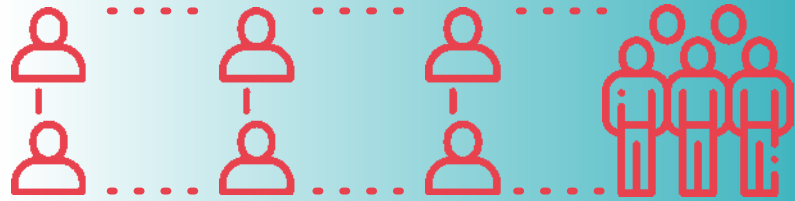
Country director
Sokny Onn
Epic Arts, Cambodia

Bishop
Gerardo A. Hands
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela

Director of Education
Eva Azar
Evangelical Lutheran Church in
Jordan and the Holy Land

Director
Admire Mutizwa
Zimbabwe Council of Churches

Project manager
Sarah Sigdel
Sahas, Nepal



86
employees
in Finland

47
overseas
employees

34
local
employees in
country offices

703
local
project
employees



431,371
people benefited directly
from Felm's work, of whom
228,850 were within the
scope of development
cooperation



2,968,906
people in total were within
the scope of the work, of whom
2,238,672 were within the
scope of development
cooperation *

* People within the scope of the work refers to both people who directly benefit from the project as well as people, groups or organisations with no direct connection to the project but who are affected by it, such as family members of beneficiaries, members of the community, school staff and students.



I was able to listen to people's life changing stories – and it made me completely speechless. I felt even more proud, thinking that I can work as a part of such organization that uplifts lives of those vulnerable and marginalized people of Nepal.

Anil Bashyal
Admin Officer at
Felm Nepal



BHARATEE CHAUDHARY

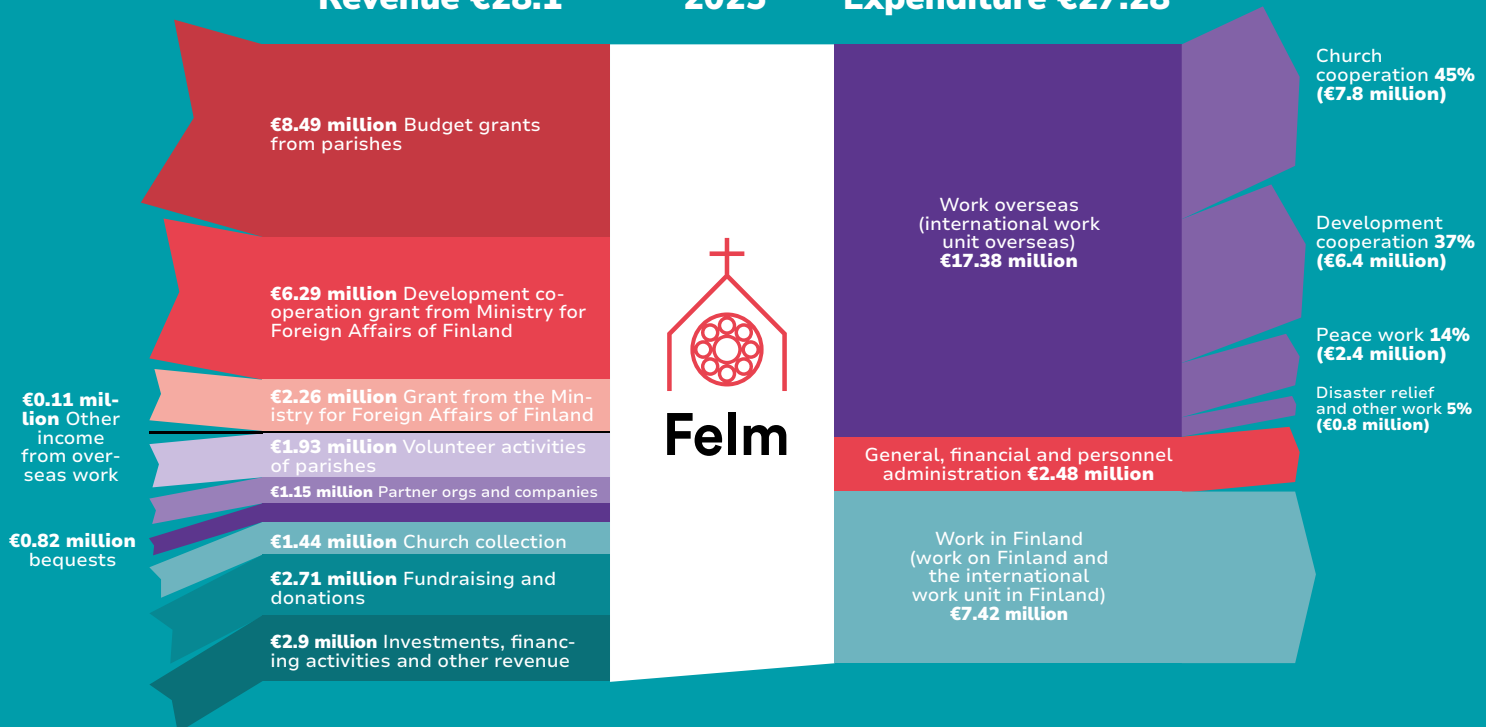
Regions where Felm worked in 2025



Revenue €28.1

2025

Expenditure €27.28



“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

John 14:26

754

students received
theological education
with Felm's
support

11,525

children, young people or adults
received Christian education
with Felm's support



SUPPORTING LOCAL CHURCHES

"The church should be a place where love and fellowship are visible in everyday life," says Yuk Cheung.

PARITI PHOTOGRAPHER

Asia: Faith, hope and love are strengthened by small everyday encounters

How can you tell about Jesus in a way that will touch people in their everyday lives? Launched in 2025, the work done by Felm supports learning among churches in Asia and the development of outreach work.

Lutheran churches in Asia often work in circumstances where open evangelism is not possible. In many countries, Christianity is seen as a foreign religion, and church workers have to build trust subtly. Outreach work does not have to mean big campaigns or spectacular events: it can mean home visits, remedial teaching for children and praying for the sick.

LEENA HELLE



Feng Yen-Yang

PARITI PHOTOGRAPHER



Joseph Keo Thuy

Understanding the local culture and finding ways to root the Gospel in people's lives are important. The Gospel should not be an external message, but hope that grows from fellowship and grace.

"The church should be a place where love and fellowship are visible in everyday life," says evangelist **Yuk Cheung** from Hong Kong. According to Cheung, it is the experience of a loving community that has a profound effect on people.

One concrete example of this is the work done by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong to support children's schooling. Long-term remedial teaching has opened doors to families, and whole families have joined the church.

Work done in Myanmar has also improved children's rights and trust, as well as created the prerequisites for a long-term connection between families and the church. The Lutheran Church of Myanmar is doing outreach work especially in rural areas where the level of education is low.

"We provide education for children from poor families, regardless of their background: Muslim, Buddhist and other non-Christian chil-

dren are involved. With their parents' consent, we also share the Christian message with these families," says mission director **Mary** (surnames are not used in Myanmar).

In many partner churches, home visits have become a key way of building trust and understanding the real daily lives and needs of families.

"Especially in rural areas, people value social relationships and feel meaningful when someone shows that they care," says evangelist **Feng Yen-Yang** from Taiwan Lutheran Church.

According to **Joseph Keo Thuy**, the family work coordinator of the Lutheran Church in Cambodia, the opportunity to tell people about Christianity opens up as friendships and trust are formed:

"A long-term connection has been the key to success."

In addition to successes, churches continue to face challenges in reaching people. For example, people in Hong Kong and Taiwan work all the time and have no time to come to church.

"We need new energy and the revitalisation of parish activities," says Yen-Yang. His next goal is to launch a programme for lower secondary school students to reach young people.

Thuy, for his part, recognises how men have fallen through the cracks in terms of the activities of the Lutheran Church in Cambodia:

"I want to start working to reach men aged 40 to 60. Many of them suffer from post-war trauma and withdraw from their families."

In many places, social tensions and conflicts also make it difficult for churches to function. For example, moving from one region to another is difficult in the civil war-torn Myanmar, which restricts the work. Despite the difficult circumstances, the church continues its mission to reach new people.

"If we give ourselves more deeply to the work and prayer, it will bear fruit in the future," says Mary.

LEENA HELLE



Mary, mission director of the Lutheran Church of Myanmar, is inspired by the devotion of the early Christians.

LINDA JUNTUNEN



Finnish bishops visited the church in Olukonda and participated in its joint renovation campaign.

Namibia: **Raising funds** **to renovate an** **iconic church**

IN 2025, Felm launched a fundraising campaign to save the Olukonda church in northern Namibia. Built in 1889 on the initiative of missionary Martti Rautanen, the church was the first in the region and the symbolic starting point of Finnish missionary work. The building has fallen into disrepair, however: the thatched roof is leaking, termites have destroyed wooden parts and the foundations need to be reinforced. The clay walls, windows and doors are also in need of repairs, and the whole area has to be fenced to prevent damage caused by animals.

The Olukonda church and mission station is a Namibian national heritage site and still in active use. Both the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia and Felm consider renovation necessary to preserve cultural history. Without urgent action, the deterioration will pick up speed.

The renovation will be carried out using traditional materials and local labour, providing work for young Namibians. The cost estimate for the renovation is approximately €75,800.

456

employees and
volunteers received
diaconal education
or mentoring

Colombia: “Thanks to Felm’s support, we have been able to improve our skills”

John Henry Rojas Torres became the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia in March 2025. A father of two adult children, he has been serving the church as a pastor for almost 20 years.

What three things are you grateful for in your church? I am grateful for the holistic training provided by the church, which has been crucial in my various leadership roles – including my current role as a bishop. I have had the opportunity to work with many charismatic and highly professional colleagues who have supported my vocation.

Secondly, I value our church’s commitment to people. A church is a community that walks alongside people, takes responsibility for them and looks for concrete ways to respond to the needs of its environment. For me, this human approach is living proof of faith that transforms and builds a community.

Thirdly, I thank God for the way He works in the daily life of the church. I see clear signs of God’s presence, and I feel great pride in being part of a church that knows its identity and its role in society.

What is your approach to missionary work?

The church’s missionary plan is built around three strategic priority areas: evangelism and mission, diaconry, and education and Christian leadership. These three areas are intertwined and must permeate all the activities of the church. In our church, mission is not limited to the church building, but extends to wherever the community is encountered and supported. We are a church in the middle of the world.

Please name three challenges your church is facing right now. The first major challenge is the decline in pastoral calling. At present, we lack an active breeding platform for new spiritual leaders to grow from. Another challenge is a change of generation. Less and less children and young people participate in church life. The third challenge is financial sustainability. Many parishes are struggling with financial challenges.

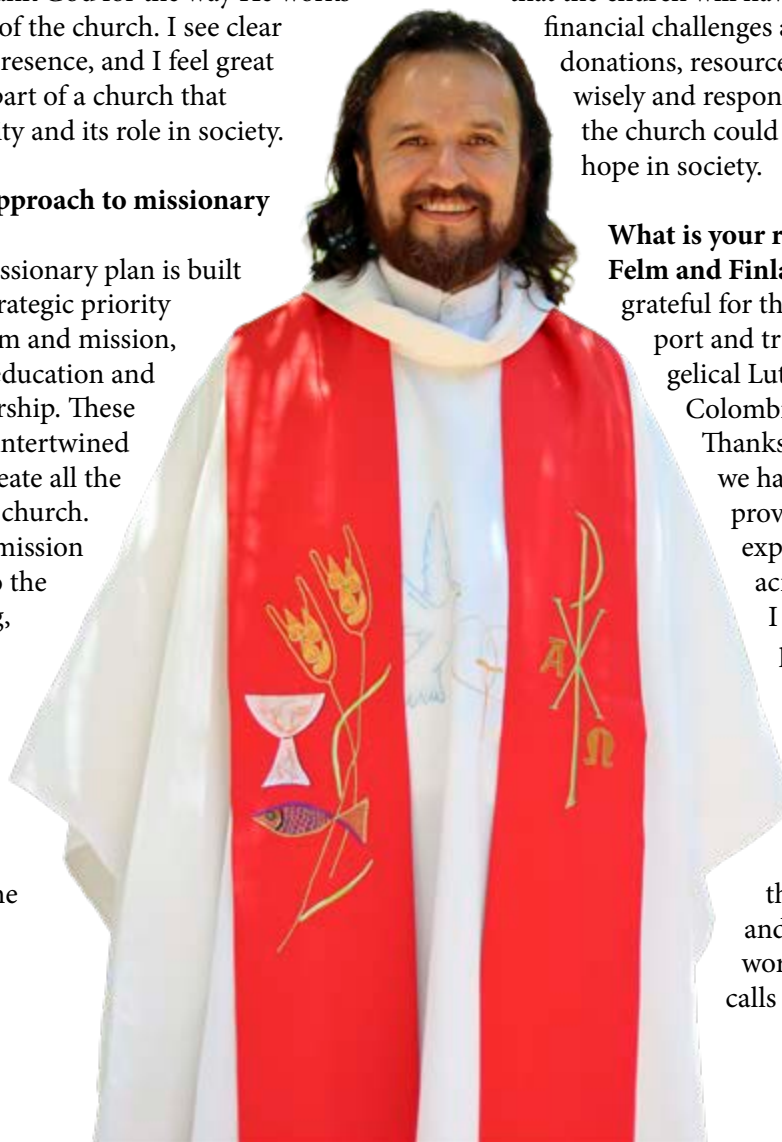
What would you like your church to look like five years from now? I dream of a church that defends human dignity, promotes the rights of individuals and communities, and continues its determined work for peace in Colombia. I hope that the church will have overcome its

financial challenges and manages its donations, resources and expertise wisely and responsibly. This way, the church could act as a beacon of hope in society.

What is your relationship with Felm and Finland like? I am grateful for the continued support and trust that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia has received.

Thanks to Felm’s support, we have been able to improve our expertise and expand our activities across the country.

I carry Felm in my prayers. For my part, my doors and heart are always open to a journey together – to proclaim the holistic gospel that crosses borders and transforms the world wherever God calls us.



Bishop John Rojas

Tanzania: “The task of pastors is to prepare lay people for the frontline work”

EVERY CHRISTIAN is called to be a witness. What do you witness? Do you witness the power of God that offers salvation? Isn't this news worth telling everyone? Do you have the courage to do it?”

These were the questions posed by pastor **Lazaro Rohho** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania when he was a guest speaker at the annual general meeting of Felm in August.

Rohho is responsible for evangelism in his church. In his speech, he discussed the reasons why the church in Tanzania is growing. According to him, the main reason is that it is not just priests who spread the gospel, but all Christians. Parishioners are taught to do this.

“This is a war where ordinary people are on the front line. The task of pastors is to prepare lay people for the frontline work.”

In the 1960s, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania had around 500,000 members. Now, the church

has 28 dioceses and around 8.5 million members. It is the second largest Lutheran church in the world after Ethiopia's Mekane Yesus.

The church is striving for financial independence, but many dioceses still need support in the training of workers, for example. Felm also supports its partner dioceses' work on the young, women and children, as well as the missionary work.

According to Rohho, the church in Tanzania is growing because the state is secular and people are allowed to believe in what they want. You can talk about God anywhere, meaning you are free to evangelise in the streets and villages, or organise spiritual movie nights.

The church having made mission one of its top priorities and that parishes organising events and providing services for the communities is also important. For example, church choirs travel to hospitals and even to small villages.

Jenifer Mathias, 36, is the lead singer of the Nehemiah parish choir.



**“Love your neighbour as yourself.
There is no commandment greater than these.”**

Mark 12:31

25,260
people received
emergency relief

People queueing with their pots to get food in Jabalia, northern Gaza, in May 2025.

Angola: Relief for the child malnutrition crisis

ACCORDING to the World Hunger Index published in 2025, around half of children under the age of five in Angola suffer from severe malnutrition, which is directly reflected in their growth and development.

The situation has been exacerbated by the aftermath of the oil crisis, rising prices, drought due

to climate change and the withdrawal of USAID.

At the end of November 2025, Felm allocated €30,000 from its disaster fund to its partner organisation Criança Feliz (Happy Child) for food aid and nutritional counselling to alleviate child malnutrition. Aid has been delivered since early 2026.

HAPPY CHILD





5,096

children received emergency relief



HUMANITARIAN AID

Gaza: Humanitarian aid in Gaza and the West Bank

The war in Gaza, which has lasted for more than two years, has led to a massive humanitarian crisis. People are still living in the rubble without proper medical care and basic everyday necessities despite the fragile ceasefire between Hamas and Israel that was signed in October 2025.

Felm supported the humanitarian work of two church partners in Gaza in 2025 with €200,000. Ordinary families affected by the war benefited from this support in the form of cash grants, for example. The funds were distributed by the humanitarian aid organisation HEKS/EPER of the Protestant Church in Switzerland.

“The cash grants enabled families to buy essential supplies at a time when prices had multiplied and markets had been seriously disrupted. Cash donations are also favoured under circumstances where it is difficult to distribute aid in compliance with good practice,” explains **Riina Isotalo**, a specialist in humanitarian aid.

Cancer patients from Gaza received treatment and accommodation at the Lutheran World Federation hospital in East Jerusalem with the support of Felm. The hospital also has a team specialising in the treatment of cancer patients in Gaza. The team has the only working CAT scanner

in northern Gaza, serving trauma and cancer patients.

A total of 985 people in Gaza benefited from Felm’s support.

The effects of the war extend to the West Bank, where the economy has collapsed, violence has increased and hundreds of roadblocks prevent free movement. A large number of families have lost their livelihood due to restrictions on movement and the end of tourism. Calls for help are flooding into the diaconal centre of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

Felm supported the church’s relief aid efforts with €43,000 in 2025. The support focused on the distribution of food vouchers and hot meals, but psychosocial support was also offered. Around 1,000 people in the West Bank benefited from the relief aid. The church estimates that the aid indirectly improved the lives of at least 4,000 people in different families and communities.

**“God saw all that he had made,
and it was very good.”**

Genesis 1:31

SIMON CHAMBERS/ACT



ACT Uganda Forum's Irene Anena and Christian Aid's Baishali Chatterjee, as well as Felm's Rosa Puhakainen spoke at the report publication event.

Advocacy for women's rights in the UN

THE report *30 Years On from The Beijing Platform for Action: Faith-Based Actors as Catalyst Towards Positive Norm Change* was launched in connection with a session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March. The report highlights the role of religious actors in changing gender equality and social norms that affect the status of women. Felm was one of the publishers and producers of the report.

The report focuses on the promotion of gender equality by faith-based actors, recognising the fact that faith-based actors have also maintained patriarchal systems and practices. As religious leaders and organisations have close links with communities, they are in a unique position to mobilise the change towards equality. The religious framework can be used to challenge harmful gender norms in relation to matters such as girls' access to education, child marriages and forced marriages, sexual and reproductive rights, and female genital mutilation.

In June, Felm was also involved in the organisation of a discussion on women's rights in the connection with a session of the UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva.

"Faith-based actors can contribute to the creation of new opportunities and the breaking down of existing barriers by boldly advocating equality and promoting the rights of all women and girls," said **Anjeline Okolan**, a representative of Felm's partner EDAN who spoke at the event.

At the Transforming Taboos: *How to Change a Social Norm* event in New York, attendees raised their hands in a show of unity and a desire to promote women's rights.

6,932

people from discriminated groups
received diaconal help



EQUALITY

SIMON CHAMBERS/ACT

South Africa: End to violence against women

Felm supports the work of the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) on the promotion of gender equality and the prevention of violence.

LUCSA organised a training session for South African priests on violence against women. LUCSA's HIV/AIDS coordinator **Musa Dlamini** presented the theological premise of the training: everyone is created in the image of God.

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Remember the example of Jesus: how he conversed and shared meals with women, healed them and commissioned them as witnesses."

Violence against women is one of South Africa's most pressing issues. Almost one in two men have used physical violence against their spouse, with around a quarter admitting to rape.

LUCSA's efforts strengthens the ability of churches to address injustice in the male-dominated culture. The aim is to break down patriarchal attitudes and norms that lead to violence and the denigration and exploitation of girls.

"Pastors are the best lobbyists in their communities," noted **Morwaeng Motswasele**, LUCSA's Christian Education Program Coordinator. Priests can change both people's minds and church practices, and there is a need for such change.

"Too often, a woman who gets pregnant out of wedlock is disciplined by her parish and banned from coming to church, while nothing happens to the man."

Efforts are also being made to influence the way women dress. In some parishes, women are forbidden to wear trousers.

Itumeleng Khunou, who was ordained as a priest in Klerksdorp parish, says he learned a lot during the training.

"We priests are the protectors of our community.

We need to tell men that violence against women is not okay. In my opinion, me as a man keeping quiet is tantamount to saying that it's okay. And it's not."



Itumeleng Khunou

LINDA JUNTUNEN

“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”

Psalms 139:14

HELI VUOHELAINEN



Mirvat Hilal and Sanaá Kokaly discuss while removing candles from their moulds.

Palestinian territories: Candles being made while signing

HANDS ARE QUICK as a group of deaf people catches up at the diaconal centre of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land in the Bethlehem region. The group meets weekly. Today, they are having breakfast and making candles.

The group members are removing the candles they made last time from their moulds to sell them. After that, they start to place the wicks in place, melting stearin and brushing decorative glitter onto the moulds. Soon the moulds are full of candle wax again, waiting for the next meeting. The conversation alongside the work is lively – in sign language, of course.

The aim of the group for the deaf is to increase the participants' self-confidence and inclusion. There is little such activities available in the Palestinian territories.

The group has experimented with making pickles and sushi, tying Christmas wreaths, various physical activities, dealing with emotions and stress management, among other things. The meetings also include a shared meal and prayers.

Deaconry specialist **Sari-Johanna Kuittilo** has been delighted to see the changes that have taken place in the group over time.

“At first, many were very timid, not having much contact outside the family. Now the people in the group are friends, keep in touch with each other, and have grown a lot in terms of self-esteem and respect.”

The group's activities are hampered by checkpoints and movement restrictions on the West Bank due to the occupation. The whole group rarely makes it, as there are people coming from as far away as Ramallah.



102
schools were modified
to suit people with
disabilities*

* The impact of the projects is measured cumulatively throughout the programme period. The figure indicates the number of beneficiaries in 2022–2025.

1,016
persons with disabilities
received peer group support



WORK WITH

Sraynit dancing at Epic Arts activity centre. Epic Arts is Felm's development cooperation partner in Cambodia.

SOKHENG KONG

Asia: Equality is based on cooperation

Felm offers its partners working with persons with disabilities an opportunity for peer learning and networking.

In many developing countries, people with disabilities face many types of discrimination in their daily lives. Prejudice and beliefs associated with disability limit their opportunities to receive education and work, and to participate in society. Impeded environments, inadequate learning materials and lack of support exclude children and young people with disabilities from the school pathway. This translates to poorer income opportunities in adulthood.

Felm and its partners in Asia are working to improve equality. The work focuses on influencing attitudes, providing peer support, empowering people with disabilities and improving their ability to influence matters. The partners support the schooling of children with disabilities by training teachers, making learning environments more accessible, and creating new opportunities for education and employment. Some projects focus on

identifying mental health challenges and strengthening psychosocial support.

In 2025, a new regional disability network for Asia was established to support the partners' work. It offers Felm's partners the opportunity to learn from each other and build a foundation for closer cooperation across borders.

The first network meeting was organised in Cambodia, attended by partners from Cambodia, Myanmar and Nepal. The cooperation will continue with regular meetings, and the next regional meeting is planned for Nepal. Peer learning and communication between the partners will also be developed in between meetings to ensure that the lessons learned and good practices are embedded in daily work. The cooperation improves the quality and effectiveness of the work and supports the role of local actors as agents of change.

“Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.” Proverbs 3:13–14

Mauritania: Many parents do not know how to read

IN MAURITANIA, only 58% of children pass primary school and 37% lower secondary school. Public schools are free for pupils, but many still underachieve or drop out. Children often have to earn money or buy food for their families, either by begging or by working. In addition, girls' school path is often interrupted by a child marriage.

Felm's sponsorship work in Mauritania started in 2009. Together with Bienfaisance sans frontières (BSF), Felm has supported the education of children living in the poor neighbourhoods of Nouakchott. The parents of many families are former slaves and their descendants. Many parents are illiterate, which highlights the role of remedial teaching for the children.

With the support of their Finnish sponsors, the children have received remedial teaching, a school supply kit, a health check, financial support for their family, and health insurance for the pupil and the family members. Breakfast has been provided for pupils, and security walls have been built for schools, for example.

In addition to the children who have graduated from school, a key result of the work has been the activation of parents' associations. Information about children's rights and the importance of education has been communicated to the parents, and this information has also spread more widely in the communities. The school enrolment rate has increased from 47% to 90%.

2025 was the last full year of the project, and Felm's work in Mauritania will end in the spring of 2026. The aim is to transfer knowledge and skills to parents' associations, schools and local authorities at the end of the sponsorship project.

Shafiya joined the sponsorship project at the age of 10. Shafiya is now 13, and after her final exams, she will have completed primary school.



School drop-out rates and mental health problems among children have decreased at a school in Kalikot in Nepal.



3,848

teachers and teacher students received training on inclusive and child-friendly teaching methods.

* The impact of the projects is measured cumulatively throughout the programme period. The figure indicates the number of beneficiaries in 2022–2025.

1,661

children received support
for moving to the next grade



EDUCATION

BRIZENDRA BHATTARAI

Nepal: Coming to school is nice now

Corporal punishment, fear and loneliness. These are the emotions of children in western Nepal on their way to school. A small public school has been able to turn the tide with the help of development cooperation.

Rugged hill and mountain landscapes rise up around a valley in the Kalikot district in northwestern Nepal. Despite the natural beauty of the school environment, there is an urgent need for work to support pupils' well-being: school-age children from poor families and children with disabilities are at especially high risk of developing psychosocial problems.

The public school in Kalikot is one of the 60 schools developing school mental health work with the support of Felm. Principal **Dhira Bahadur Shahi** says that this school has been working with Felm and its local partner Centre for Mental Health & Counselling Nepal (CMC Nepal) for three years.

"The school drop-out rate and mental health issues among children have decreased," says Shahi.

The school has over 380 pupils and 12 classes and teachers. There are only ten classrooms in the modest school building, and school supplies

and furniture are in short supply as well. In Nepalese schools, a bigger problem than the lack of resources is the traditional, harsh teaching methods which were the bane of pupils in Finland a couple of decades ago.

“Before the project, pupils came to school afraid. There was no school social worker, teachers physically punished the pupils and did not listen to their feelings,” the principal recalls.

Teacher **Jivan Bahadur Shahi** was trained as a school social worker with Felm’s support.

“Since the training, I have also shared the information with other teachers in our school. Now we spend time educating the children, and their parents are proud when their children are encouraged. I’m pleased that we are able to help our pupils.”

Pupils at the school also report positive changes. Both parents of **Rekha**, aged 16, are away from home a great deal because of their jobs.

“That’s why I used to feel lonely and even angry. I didn’t talk to my friends or be social,” says Rekha.

Rekha recalls how the school social worker visited classrooms, telling the pupils that anyone could meet with him.

“So I went to see the school social worker as well. I learned breathing and relaxation exercises during the meetings. Music also helped me to calm down and concentrate.”

Rekha was able to tell the school social worker about the problems at home. Improvements in classrooms have also made school attendance more enjoyable.

“We do more group work. We have learned to keep things tidy. Creativity and performances have also become more common. Our school has become the best in the region,” says Rekha proudly and continues: “There used to be more discipline, but now we get more encouragement.”

Ashmita, 16, explains how the activities brought into classrooms by the project have improved the well-being of the pupils. For example, pupils can draw or write poems on creativity boards.

“I’ve noticed that in the past many pupils were absent from school. Now people want to come to school, and the level of learning has gone up. I like coming to school,” says Ashmita with a smile.

• **Between 2022 and 2025, more than 2,000 teachers have received training on non-discriminatory and child-centred teaching methods through Felm and the CMC Nepal project.**

• **Before, school drop-out rates in the project schools were around 20% to 25%. In 2025, almost 93% of pupils will completed their primary and lower secondary education.**



MIMOSA HEDBERG

This project is supported from Finland’s development cooperation funds.

Rekha, 16, has received support from the school social worker.

Colombia: The church promotes education for indigenous peoples

The Evangelical Lutheran Church has become a key player in promoting literacy among indigenous peoples in Colombia. Together with Felm, the church has developed a model where teaching takes place in people’s native languages.

According to **Marian Coy**, a teacher and church coordinator who visited Finland in 2025, it is difficult for the Colombian State to reach the areas where the church works with indigenous peoples. For example, to reach a village in the Santa Marta region, you have to hike for seven hours up the slopes of the Sierra Nevada.

“No one else supports these people,” she says.

Now, girls in the region start school at the same age as boys, which improves equality. Education also prevents child marriages. The children receive nutritious food in addition to teaching.

Marian remembers in particular one meeting in a Kogi village’s women’s hut.

“The women told us how literacy had changed their families’ lives. They said, ‘Thanks to your help, we can study. Now I can go to the doctor and tell them where my baby hurts. I can sign documents and understand what they say. I know maths.’



With the support of the project, the Kogi have developed teaching based on their own culture and language.

When I exchange food, I'm no longer cheated and overcharged."

Women from the indigenous peoples of Colombia have been excluded from education for decades. Marian says that women now want to take on leadership roles, such as teach in their own communities.

"They know best what works and what families need. Together, we have developed a teaching model where the whole mountain is a classroom: children learn by farming, cooking and building houses. Learning is more effective when you can use your body. We practise maths by dividing the fields and calculating how many plants we can fit in them."

The new education model has proven both effective and highly appreciated. In the coming years, the focus will shift from teaching children to adult literacy. The work will simultaneously be extended to more language groups with the help of expert support from the church.

The State of Colombia and the Ministry of National Education have approved an education model for indigenous peoples, developed by the church in collaboration with the Kogi

people and other indigenous peoples.

"Thirty years of advocacy have finally paid off," says Marian.

All indigenous communities are now expected to self-manage their education pedagogically, in line with both their ancestral culture and the Ministry's requirements.



JOANNA LINDÉN-MONTES

"We remain in contact with the principals and teachers of the Kogi, Emberá, Arhuaco and Wiwa peoples. As a church, we empower them so that they can start to manage themselves and keep in contact with the different state institutions."

The project operates in four regions in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountain range, the Antioquia region and the City of Medellín. Going forward, the project will involve at least 11 indigenous peoples in the Cauca region in eastern Colombia. Six communities in Antioquia have also expressed an interest in the cooperation.

Marian says she has already trained 140 teachers from 87 indigenous schools. Together, they have developed six education plans.

"We have also met with more than 300 local leaders who have helped to draft the documents. This has allowed us to preserve their indigenous cultures, knowledge and understanding of life and the world."

This project is supported from Finland's development cooperation funds.

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”

Genesis 2:15

M'LUP RUSSEY



A bridge destroyed by a flood was rebuilt in cooperation with villagers and local decision-makers in north-west Cambodia.

Cambodia: Communities support people when structures fail

EXTREME WEATHER and resulting natural disasters are particularly taxing on rural communities in Cambodia. Floods, droughts and changes in the living environment undermine livelihoods and increase insecurity. The state's crisis response resources are inadequate in many places, and aid is often slow to reach the most vulnerable. This is where the role of local actors is crucial.

M'lup Russey, Felm's local partner organisation, acts as a rallying force in areas where people face environmental and livelihood challenges. Together with local churches, it supports village communities in preparing for environmental risks and finding solutions that boost livelihoods, inclusion and a sense of community.

Felm's partnership with M'lup Russey enables long-term work in areas where public structures alone are not enough. Local knowledge and extensive networks ensure that the support is appropriately targeted and meets the needs of local communities. The work emphasises local ownership: the communities are not targets to be assisted, but active agents who improve their own resilience and preparedness.



Felm has been awarded the Finnish Church Environmental Diploma for the period 2024–2028.

Karen Huaylluco and Eduarda Rojas in the Senkata Alta community.



23,945
people received training
on disaster risks*



**CLIMATE
ACTION**

MARIO PAAVOLA

30,353
smallholder farmers received support
for sustainable agricultural production
and the sale of products*

* The impact of the projects
is measured cumulatively throughout
the programme period.
The figure indicates the number
of beneficiaries in 2022-2025.

Bolivia: Underground farming brought vegetables to people's plates

A partially underground walipini greenhouse improves food security of families living in the mountains. The humidity and temperature inside the greenhouse are suitable for growing plants, while the outside air it is too dry and cold for cultivation.

Felm supports the work of the Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church to improve the food security and livelihoods of people living in hard-to-reach areas with poor transport connections. Many such communities live in extreme poverty without adequate education and healthcare.

Traditionally, it has not been possible to grow vegetables in the mountains. Vegetables are also expensive for the communities to buy. People's diet has consisted mainly of dried potatoes and meat. The partially underground walipinis are an innovation that now allows families to get fruit and vegetables on their plates.



448
people attended
environmental training
organised by the church

Wilson Calle Mamani (front) and Cleto Condori in an underground walipini greenhouse.

“We build greenhouses together with local communities and municipalities. The project provides the roof, windows and doors for the greenhouse, as well as seeds, tools and advice on how to build and operate the greenhouse. The municipalities are responsible for digging the hole needed for the greenhouse. Meanwhile, the families build the walls of the greenhouse, using materials found in the area, such as stones and clay. In walipinis, families can grow crops such as tomato, carrot and cauliflower. This diversifies their diet. The families also earn money from selling vegetables,” says project coordinator **Karen Huaylluco**.

In 2025, walipinis were built for 26 families. Half of these families included people with disabilities. A total of 86 greenhouses have been built between 2023 and 2025.

“We have noticed that in addition to nutritional diversification, the greenhouses provide people with disabilities vocational rehabilitation not unlike occupational therapy.”

Families sign an agreement to take care of the walipini and use it for at least five years.

The project also builds drinking water systems, including household networks and taps for communities. The project provides the materials and technical support for construction and maintenance. Municipalities also contribute by providing building materials. Communities build

their own water systems. A prerequisite is that there are a water pump and a reservoir in the municipality, and that the water has been found fit for drinking. The communities are educated on sustainable use of water and maintenance of the system.

In 2025, 82 families got a tap in their homes. During the project period, the homes of 454 families have been received a clean water connection.

“What particularly touches me about the 2025 results is that clean drinking water has been brought to remote and isolated communities. These people did not believe at the beginning of the project that they would actually get water points. Many families had never even seen a tap. This also shows the work of God in the lives of these people,” Huaylluco says.

Huaylluco considers the fact that she is the first woman to coordinate the project an important achievement. Many were sceptical about a woman managing the project and its male workers.

According to Huaylluco, Bolivia has experienced the effects of the climate crisis more intensely in the last couple of years. There are floods and drought. Rivers and lakes are drying up. Growing seasons do not follow the same schedule as before. When it is time to sow, it's so dry that the seed don't grow.

Ethiopia: Solutions are created in communities

Climate specialist Endeshaw Kassa of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus participated in a panel discussion at the Africa Climate Summit in the autumn of 2025.

Held in Addis Ababa, the event brought together African governments, civil society, the private sector and religious communities to discuss the impact of climate change and the solutions to it.

According to Endeshaw, the rainy seasons in Ethiopia have both become shorter and intensified, making both the regeneration of felled forests and cultivation more difficult. Mountain forests have been felled to the

extent that erosion is continuous. The reduction in rainfall has led to biodiversity loss. Some traditional cereals no longer thrive because of drought.

The Africa Climate Summit discussed locally-led adaptation to climate change. According to Endeshaw, the most challenging and also the most crucial issue is for both African governments and local people taking responsibility for the fight against and adaptation to climate change.

Endeshaw's aim is to get both investors and local people – from children to grandparents – involved in taking responsibility for the fight against the climate crisis. Women play a particularly crucial role here, as they remain the primary educators in Ethiopia.

“Once women learn about climate change, they will pass on the information to their children.”

Endeshaw believes that transparency and responsibility must be increased so that funds will go where they are most needed.

“The voice

of the local people must be heard and they must be allowed to be involved. Development projects must not be mere top-down solutions, but communities, meaning local women, men, children, persons with disabilities and elderly people, must be able to determine their own needs, participate in planning, implementation and monitoring, and take responsibility.”

Felm supports the climate work of Mekane Yesus, which promotes adaptation to climate change by restoring degraded land, teaching better cultivation methods and supporting the use of biogas, for example.

“Biogas plants have become an important part of our climate effort. They are being built in partnership with the local communities, with local people contributing both funds and labour. This strengthens ownership and commitment to climate action. The use of biogas reduces the need to burn wood, which in turn curbs deforestation. It also provides families with cleaner and more sustainable energy for their everyday needs,” says Endeshaw.

After the Africa Climate Summit, Endeshaw is hopeful but realistic.

“The challenges posed by climate change are daunting and constantly growing, but the commitment of the communities and the solutions we have developed together give cause for optimism. The people themselves are willing and able to be part of the solution, and that is what fosters hope.”

This project is supported from Finland's development cooperation funds.

Endeshaw Kassa at the new water point of the village of Deko.

LINDA JUNTUNEN



11,717

households participated
in using climate change
mitigation technologies,
including solar panels*

* The impact of the projects is measured cumulatively throughout the programme period. The figure indicates the number of beneficiaries in 2022–2025.

**“When you enter a house, first say,
‘Peace to this house.’”**

Luke 10:5

Colombia: Psychosocial support is part of peace work

Kamila Buitrago Guerra, who worked as a psychosocial support specialist in peace work done by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia, supported by Felm, visited Finland in January 2025.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia has been providing psychosocial support for 30 years. One of Buitrago Guerra's work duties has been the coordination of the church's psychosocial support and the creation of clearer shared procedures. The church considers psychosocial support an essential part of peace work.

“War leaves scars on the body, soul and life. Peace cannot be built without psychosocial support,” says Buitrago Guerra.

“We go to communities affected by conflicts and ask what has happened to them. Together with the community, we will consider what resources they have to deal with the situation. We also talk about anger and how to deal with it. Our role is to facilitate discussion in the communities.”

According to Buitrago Guerra, many people do not know what psychosocial support means. They may think it's something that only psychologists can provide. However, many people are able to provide psychosocial support after a short training course.

According to Buitrago Guerra, Jesus was a pacifist and peacemaker.

“Faith is trying to follow the example set by Jesus. It's not just about praying, but also about acting for peace,” she says.

Summer campers Lucy and Narod in the yard area of the Felm Center's Upper House in the summer of 2025.



SEEDS OF PEACE JERUSALEM

644

children and young people
participated in peace education



PEACE WORK

Jerusalem: Seeds of peace grow at the Felm Center

In Jerusalem, young people from different backgrounds grow up very much separated from each other – with different education systems and different understandings of history.

“We really like meeting at the Felm Center because it’s a neutral place. It’s neither Israeli nor Palestinian,” says **Ittay Flescher**. He is the Director of Education at the Seeds of Peace Jerusalem programme. The idea behind the programme is to bring young Israelis and Palestinians together for interfaith dialogue.

Seeds of Peace organises regular meetings for young people at the Felm Center. The center’s facilities and the expertise of its staff are also utilised by many other parties working in the field of peacebuilding and interfaith dialogue.

Flescher points out that peace education is essential in Jerusalem.

“We are a highly divided city. Israelis, Palestinians, Jews, Muslims, Christians – they all go to different schools with different curricula in different languages. They learn different histories, and there is very little mixing between the different groups. Added to that, there is the fact that we have been fighting over this land for generations.”

Those involved in Seeds of Peace Jerusalem believe that children and young people need to come together – not to change their opinions, but to see that the person on the other side is, after all, a human being with similar interests, hopes and dreams as themselves.

“We are trying to find young people who want to create a different future for this city. We want to give them the opportunity to talk about their school and their culture, share the meaning of Ramadan, talk about Christmas, light Hanukkah candles. Allow them to share how their faith gives meaning to their lives. This way others can understand that the fact that there are many religions and cultures in this city is not a curse, it’s actually a blessing,” says Flescher.

In the summer of 2025, Seeds of Peace organised a camp at the Felm Center, which was in danger of not taking place at all. The sudden shut-down of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) caused Seeds of Peace Jerusalem to lose a lion’s share of its funding. The camp was made possible with support from the Felm Center.

The camp participants were young people from the Jerusalem area, representing all of the region’s religious communities. The four-day camp included peace education skills training and dialogue, for example.

Risto Heikkinen, a peace education specialist from Felm, was also involved in the organisation of the camp. He points out that if we do not teach children about peace, someone else will teach them about violence and conflict.



“...for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”

Ephesians 1:22–23

Tampere residents were active in missionary work both in Finland and abroad

FELM organised a “Lähde liikkeelle” missionary work training course for parishes in Tampere in the autumn. During the course, 31 parish workers and members were introduced to holistic missionary work and cultural encounters. One of the participants was **Oiva Hynninen**.

“What I remember about the training is how extensive the activity is, but how little it is talked about,” says Hynninen.

Paula Härkönen heard about the course from a friend. Prior to the training, she knew nothing about missionary work.

“I’m surprised at the diversity of the work that churches do. I thought that the parish mainly does things that happen within the church. I look forward to future opportunities to explore missionary work.”

Some of the course participants went on a study trip to a Felm working area, after which they will advocate missionary work in their parishes.

Lähde liikkeelle courses were also organised in Helsinki and Iisalmi in 2025. The first Swedish-speaking Min Mission course organised using a whole new model took place in Helsinki in the autumn.

Volunteers get tips from their network

THE VOLUNTEER NETWORK was launched in May 2025. Three idea cards were sent to volunteers during the year. They were about evangelism in Tanzania, teaching in one’s native language and how to tell children about the global church. The cards contained activity tips and recipes to use at home or in your parish.

Reconciliation spread through simulation

AT THE WORLD VILLAGE FESTIVAL, Felm organised mediation simulations together with the Change-maker network of Finn Church Aid. They allowed visitors to learn about the principles of restorative mediation through imaginary scenarios.

The restorative approach emphasises a positive process based on encounters, discussion and co-operation. There were numerous discussions about the approach and how it differs from traditional conflict resolution.

Tero Matero, an education specialist from Felm, was the sparring partner in the mediation simulation.

More than
90%

Finnish- and Swedish-speaking
parishes have signed a
service agreement
with Felm



**WORK IN
FINLAND**

Internationality enriched the confirmation camp experience

Confirmands from France, Luxembourg and from as far the United Arab Emirates. Such was the group that Johannes Namuhuya joined last summer in Päiväkumpu. He had some kind of an idea of what was to come, because his older sister had attended a confirmation camp five years earlier in the same place.



“I messaged a lot with my sister at the camp,” Namuhuya says.

Some things had changed in five years: the grass on the beach had grown so tall that you could no longer run straight into the water like his sister could during her confirmation camp. The biggest change was with the attendees, as the camps were not international five years ago. Namuhuya praises the internationality.

“I didn’t know anyone beforehand, but in the end we had a great group. People from different countries all brought their different life experiences to the table.”

Namuhuya remembers the Bible lessons well, because the peer leaders sometimes asked questions so difficult that it was almost impossible to come up with any answers. The long and intense days were also challenging.

“There was not too much free time. At leisure, I sometimes played beach volleyball, but often I just went to my room to rest. There was so much to learn,” says Namuhuya. Many of the topics were familiar, however, as he has been attending church with his parents since he was very young.

Four international confirmation camps were organised in the summer in Päiväkumpu in cooperation with the Finnish Association for Children and Youth. In August, the main event for

young people in Päiväkumpu, Riihisleiri, attracted 150 young people and young adults. There were also four other camps in Päiväkumpu during the year, one of which combined a spring camp for young people and a camp for young adult volunteers.

The confirmation camp was such a good experience that Johannes Namuhuya decided to start peer leader training in his municipality of residence, Tornio. Namuhuya will be a peer leader in Päiväkumpu.

“I’d like to be a relaxed peer leader, but one who makes sure that the tasks get done and is fair. I’ll be there for everyone and help them as needed.”

“Everything was just right at the confirmation camp,” Johannes Namuhuya summarises.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHANNES NAMUHUYA

Visibility and media impact

In 2025, Felm's media visibility increased both in terms of quantity and reach. Cuts in development cooperation and the Greatest Christmas Carols campaign sparked public discussion about Felm.

Felm's communication made its work visible in a world where crises, development cooperation funding decisions and the global responsibility of the church were strongly highlighted in public. Communication emphasised timeliness, impact and cooperation with different actors.

Development communication sought to highlight structural issues and the impact of funding decisions. Personal stories were used to tell about the results of the work. The communication combined fact-based expertise with a human-centred narrative. The aim was to help Finns understand the importance of global phenomena also at home.

Felm was featured in the digital news media with a total of 340 articles. The potential reach of these news articles was 207 million readers. Visibility in digital media increased compared to the previous year.

In April, news broke about cuts in development cooperation funding, and Felm's specialists highlighted the impact of the cuts on the poorest. In December, visibility was boosted by the Greatest Christmas Carols campaign and, in particular, the fact that Sylvian joululaulu was not included in the song booklet.

Almost half of the new articles about Felm (148) were published by Christian

media. Cooperation with Radio Dei continued with the Kirkko maailmalla (Church in the World) podcast, for example. Of national media outlets, the publications by Yle, Helsingin Sanomat and Hufvudstadsbladet reached the most people. The tone of the news coverage was mostly neutral (94%). The share of positive articles was clearly higher than that of negative ones.

The media reputation index remained at a good level throughout the year. In the media, Felm was also seen as a reliable and competent source when dealing with socially sensitive or polarising issues.

"The year 2025 showed that Felm's voice is heard when it comes to global justice, the status of the poorest and values that affect Finns on a broad scale. The increase in media visibility shows that our work and expertise are perceived as socially relevant," says Communications Manager **Mervi Viuhko**.

In 2025, social media presence focused on Facebook and Instagram. On Facebook, Felm's content was viewed more than 10 million times during the year. Coverage was around 1.5 million, i.e. clearly more than in the previous year. The coverage on Instagram increased compared to the previous year. The channel had some 3,900 followers at the end of the year. Paid social media advertising supported communication in a cost-effective way.



Kauneimmat JOULULAULUT

A mega event was organised in Espoo

PARISHES IN ESPOO organised in collaboration with Felm an exceptionally large Greatest Christmas Carols event at Metro Areena in Espoo the day before Christmas Eve.

The event was fully booked. More than 6,000 tickets were available for the stands, plus box seats. The sing-along event received plenty of attention on social media.

The live coverage on TV1 had an average of 453,000 viewers. During the live broadcast, nearly €40,000 was raised for the work of Felm to help children and their families around the world.

Sum collected by the Greatest Christmas Carols events increased

ACCORDING TO Felm's Fund-raising Manager **Hanna Kalanne**, seeing no vacant seats at the Greatest Christmas Carols events was delightful.

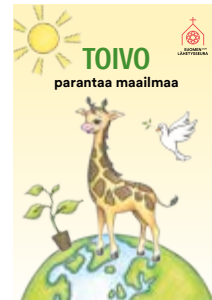
"Traditions create security and a sense of belonging, and people want to do good for their neighbours. That was concretely evident this time as well."

Last Christmas, almost €1.1 million was raised with the Greatest Christmas Carols. The result topped the previous year.

"I'm confused and grateful that so many people were still able to help during these uncertain times. It was particularly good to see that church collections increased," says Kalanne.

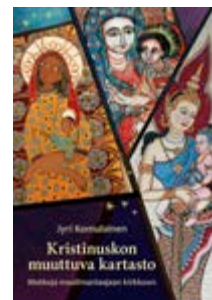
Books:

Hope for children, perspectives on the global church and Christmas stories



Toivo parantaa maailmaa

A COLOURING BOOK which allows your child to discover the important work done by Toivo the Giraffe and learn how we can make the world a better place together.



Kristinuskon muuttuva kartasto – Matkoja maailmanlaajaan kirkkoon

DOCENT Jyri Komulainen opens windows on global Christianity and considers how faith and theology are changing in the new environment.



Elämäni joululaulu

THE BOOK takes its readers on a journey through 21 fascinating, well-known Finnish Christmas traditions, accompanied by stunning art photographs.



Bishop Gerardo Hands of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela was a guest at the Swedish-speaking mission festival in Helsinki.

Mission festivals in Loimaa, Joensuu and Helsinki

THE LOIMAA MISSION FESTIVAL was organised on 17 May together with Loimaa parish. More than 300 friends of missionary work were present. Member of Parliament **Annika Saariko** was one of the speakers.

A Swedish-speaking mission festival took place on 24 May in Helsinki in cooperation with the Matteus församling parish. There were some 220 attendees. The international guest was Bishop **Gerardo Hands** from Venezuela.

"Just like the old days." These were the words used by visitors to describe the third mission festival of the year, which took place in October in Joensuu. The festival was organised together with the parishes of Joensuu. Around 350 people were present on a Saturday. The festival included a concert by Jakaranda and stories of the Christian path in Bolivia, Tanzania, Norway and Palestine.

Symposium: The Crisis of Ecology and Ego

FELM ORGANISED a missiological symposium on the theme of The Crisis of Ecology and Ego in January 2025. The event was organised in cooperation with Karjalan Teologinen Seura (the Karelian Theological Society) at the University of Eastern Finland in Joensuu.

Experts called for a paradigm shift in both theology and the idea of man. For example, according to Dr **Louk Andrianos**, a doctor in sustainable development, air pollution is an example of how humanity's greed, or ego crisis, is causing an ecological or environmental crisis.

"We focus on people's physical needs but abandon their spiritual needs," Andrianos said in his speech.

The work is now divided into themes

THE BIGGEST CHANGE OF THE YEAR was a move to a thematic service model, which gave parishes the opportunity to support specific themes rather than individual projects. The themes are Strong and Effective Churches; Children and Young People; Crises and Disasters; Theological Education and Leadership; and Diaconal Work and Healthy Families. A parish can also choose the General Basket, in which case aid will be directed to where it is needed most.

The change gives parishes new perspectives on missionary work, diversifies communication materials and streamlines contract management.

312
parish visits and
meetings

Finances: Felm's financial situation continues to be stable

Jaana Seppänen, Felm's Director of Finance and Administration, tells the latest news about the finances and administration of the organisation.

What was the financial year 2025 like for Felm? "Our result was a surplus of €800,000, so we can be satisfied with our finances. The year progressed according to plan, with continued economic stability despite the challenging situation in several of our target countries due to natural disasters and uprisings. We sold one property in Jerusalem and at the same time wrote off the value of a few properties in Finland. Our cash flow and solvency remained at a good level."

What contributed to the result? "A heartfelt thanks for it goes to our supporters. The fund-raising result was at around the same level as in 2024. We have a broad funding base: parishes, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and other supporters. This means that we are not reliant on just one source of revenue. Forecasting our financial figures and resources on a monthly basis and monitoring these trends systematically is also important. Our investment returns were good despite a rather turbulent investment year."

What are your expectations for the financial year 2026? "We expect the financial stability to continue. Of course, we live in the shadow of the news: the war in Iran, for example, affects the global economy as a whole."

How did Felm take care of its personnel in 2025? "Our goal is the well-being of our employees. We have carried out a study on the competitiveness of our employee benefits. We use pulse surveys to monitor staff sentiment several times a year. No major variation was observed during the

year, and the employees were feeling relatively well."

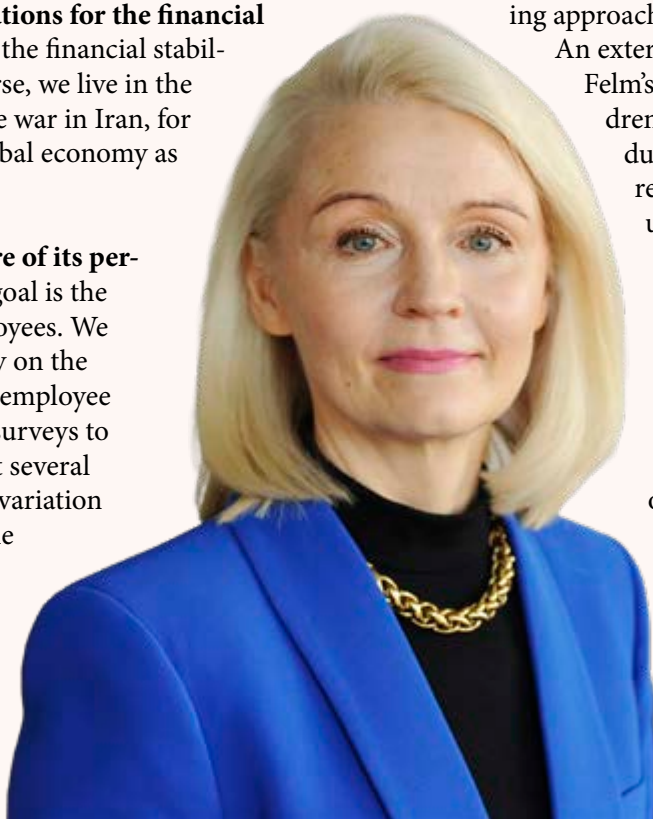
How does Felm use AI? "Felm considers AI important, and it is part of our strategy and present in our annual planning. The management supports the use of AI, and we constantly monitor its progress. Personnel training has been organised, and all employees have access to an AI app. We are currently on a good path from which we can easily move on to the next level."

How has Felm developed its safety and safeguarding measures? "We have invested in the safety of our workers around the world with even more rigorous safety processes and more training. We have introduced new tools and are working with a new partner, International SOS."

In 2025, we provided our partners training on safety and safeguarding. The courses have been praised by the partners, many of whom have also updated their own safeguarding policies. We have also strengthened the safeguarding approach in project planning.

An external assessment of Felm's safeguarding of children was also completed during the year, and its recommendations were used to further develop the activities.

We prepared an ethical code of conduct for short-term visitors to projects. Training on the code of conduct has been organised for visitor groups."



Jaana Seppänen

“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” Ephesians 4:16

Felm Fellowship provides a pathway to peer learning

BEST IDEAS should be shared as widely as possible. That is why Felm set up the Felm Fellowship network with its partners. The network enables peer learning and cross-border working relationships. The aim is to improve networking between the partners and support mutual spiritual fellowship.

The activities include thematic and ecumenical cooperation, advocacy clinics and theological seminars. Workshops on topics such as diaconal work and the inclusion of young people are in the works.

Communication in Felm Fellowship is coordinated by Felm, but the network itself is managed by the Felm International Advisory Board (FIAB). The network operates through digital platforms and partner newsletters.

Strengthening the strategic partnership

THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA (ELCT) and Felm strengthened their long-term partnership at a leadership forum in Arusha. The event was chaired by ELCT's Archbishop **Alex Malasusa** and the President of Felm's Board of Directors, Bishop **Mari Parkkinen**. The forum provided an opportunity for strategic reflection on the changing global context, organisational development, and shared mission and ministries.

Bishop Mari Parkkinen and Bishop Alex Malasusa of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

Preparation of new programme period

FELM'S new programme for 2026–2029 was prepared with partners in 2025. The programme focuses on Christian witness and theological education, church leadership, diaconal work, inclusive education, peace and reconciliation, climate resilience and humanitarian work. The programme has two overarching goals: inclusion of persons with disabilities and gender equality. The preparations laid a strong foundation for partnerships and for Felm as an international actor.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland supports new development cooperation programme

AT THE END OF THE YEAR, THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS granted a government grant of €23 million for development cooperation by Felm and its partners between 2026 and 2029. The new development cooperation programme focuses on inclusive education, climate resilience and peace. Humanitarian preparedness will also be developed and local advocacy strengthened.

Independent evaluation of the programme period

A FINAL ASSESSMENT of Felm's four-year development cooperation programme which ended in 2025 highlights concrete results in food security, education, the rights of persons with disabilities and climate resilience. Partners describe cooperation with Felm as their single most important success factor. The assessment was carried out by independent experts. The assessment results show that communities have moved from being recipients of aid to active players.

30 years of Christian media work in the Middle East

SAT-7 WAS ESTABLISHED in November 1995, and Felm was one of its founding members. The first weekly two-hour broadcast in Arabic started in the spring of 1996. Over the past 30 years, the operations have grown tremendously, with programmes in Farsi and Turkish in addition to Arabic.



PAULINA PARHIALA

74

international
partner churches
and organisations



PARTNERSHIP

Representatives of FIAB met in Päiväkumpu in May 2025. From top left, Admire Mutizwa (Zimbabwe), Bruk Ayele (Ethiopia), Sarah Sigdel (Nepal), Sokny Onn (Cambodia), Gerardo Hands (Venezuela) and Selma Chen (Taiwan). Eva Azar (Israel) is not included in the photo.



International group influences the planning of Felm's work

IN 2025, FELM assembled a seven-person International Advisory Board (FIAB) consisting of its international partners. It made Felm's activities more partner-oriented. FIAB meets twice a year: once remotely and once in person.

Felm always consults its partners during the programme planning process, and representatives of all partners are invited to a partnership consultation at least once every five years. FIAB provides a new channel for advocacy that has been praised by the partners.

Appendix 1.

Overseas work in 2025, gross figures

	Number of projects in 2024	Number of projects in 2025	Expenditure 2024 €1,000	Expenditure 2025 €1,000	Employees 31 Dec 2024	Employees 31 Dec 2025
Church work	108	105	7603	7842	*)55	**) 47
Development cooperation	35	35	6323	6374		
Peace and reconciliation, advocacy	2	2	1458	2363		
Disaster work	10	10	697	803		
Total	155	152	16081	17382	55	47

Region	2024 Programme expenditure €1,000	2025 Programme expenditure €1,000	2024 Administrative expenditure €1,000	2025 Administrative expenditure €1,000	Employees 31 Dec 2024	Employees 31 Dec 2025
Southern Africa ¹	1,169	1,094	6	14	8	5
Eastern and Central Africa ²	3,500	3,464	102	102	12	11
Western Africa ³	1,122	1,159	16	13	4	3
Mekong region and Oceania ⁴	3,466	4,202	56	128	16	11
China ⁵	622	366	69	4	1	1
Middle East ⁶	1,403	1,573	128	174	6	5
Nepal and Pakistan ⁷	1,605	1,863	99	59	3	3
Latin America ⁸	1,561	1,874	7	10	3	3
Europe ⁹	100	50	0	0	0	1
Global cooperation and shared ¹⁰	1,137	1,193	-87	40	2	4
Total	15,685	16,838	396	544	55	47

1 Angola, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe

2 Ethiopia, Tanzania

3 Mauritania, Senegal

4 Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar

5 China, Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan

6 Israel, Palestine, Cyprus, Syria, Oman

7 Nepal, Pakistan

8 Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela

9 Ukraine

10 Global cooperation and shared

*) **) The total number of employees is on the rows for 2024 and 2025.

Appendix 2.

Partners 2025

Region/ country	Partner churches	Partner organisations
Southern Africa		
Angola	The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Angola (IELA)	- United Bible Societies of Angola (UBS)/Bible Societies of Angola and Namibia - Criança Feliz (Happy Child)
Botswana	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Botswana (ELCB)	
South Africa		Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA)
Namibia	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN)	Girl Guides Association of Northern Namibia, Northern Region
Zimbabwe		- Gwai Grandmothers Group (GGG) - Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC)
Eastern and Central Africa		
Ethiopia	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)	- Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Development and Social Services Commission (EECMY/DASSC) - Lutheran World Federation - Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development (ECDD)
Tanzania	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT)	- Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (TCRS) - Tumaini University Makumira (TUMA) - Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN)
Western Africa		
Mauritania		- Bienfaisance Sans Frontières (BSF) - ONG-ACTION
Senegal	Lutheran Church of Senegal (ELS)	- World Council of Churches (WCC) - Eglise Evangélique Luthérienne du Sénégal EELS, mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) - Lutheran Communion in Central and Western Africa (LUCCWA)
Mekong region and Oceania		
Cambodia	Lutheran Church in Cambodia (LCC)	- Integral Cooperation Cambodia (ICC) - Epic Arts - Morodok - M'lup Russey (MRO) - First Step Cambodia (FSC) - Continuing Learning Organization (CLO)
Thailand	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thailand (ELCT)	- SIL International - Lutheran Mission in Thailand (LMT) - Mekong Mission Forum (MMF)
Myanmar	- Myanmar Lutheran Church (MLC) - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Myanmar (ELCM) - Mara Evangelical Church - Lutheran Church of Myanmar (LCM)	- Euro-Burma Office (EBO) - Federation of the Lutheran Churches in Myanmar - Eden Centre for Disabled Children (ECDC) - Language and Social Development Organization (LSDO)

Region/ country	Partner churches	Partner organisations
China, Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan		
China	China Christian Council (CCC)	
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong (ELCHK)	- Institute of Sino-Christian Studies (ISCS) - Lutheran Theological Seminar (LTS) - Hong Kong Christian Council (HKCC)
Taiwan	Lutheran Church of Taiwan (LCT)	
Middle East		
Cyprus		SAT-7
Israel		- International Christian Committee in Israel (MECC-DSPR-ICCI) - Rossing Center - Musalaha - Baladna - MECC-DSPR - Lutheran World Federation
Autonomous territories of Palestine	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL)	East Jerusalem YMCA
Oman		Al Amana Centre
Nepal and Pakistan		
Nepal	Nepal Evangelical Lutheran Church (NELC)	- Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD) - Centre for Mental Health and Counselling (CMC-Nepal) - Group of Helping Hands (SAHAS Nepal) - KOSHISH - Leadership Training Department/National Churches Fellowship of Nepal (LTD/NCF-N) - Nepal Ebenezer Theological Seminary (NETS) - Forward Looking (FL) - United Mission to Nepal (UMN)
Pakistan	Church of Pakistan/Diocese of Peshawar (DOP)	- Pakistan Bible Correspondence School (PBCS) - Christian Study Centre (CSC)
Latin America		
Bolivia	Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELB)	
Colombia	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO)	Lutheran World Federation
Venezuela	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela (IELV)	

Region/ country	Partner churches	Partner organisations
Multilateral cooperation		
		• ACT Alliance • Euro-Burma Office (EBO) • Church of Pakistan Mission Partners Forum (CPMPF) • Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) • Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) • Joint Christian Ministry in West Africa (JCMWA) • World Council of Churches (WCC) • Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) • Lutheran World Federation (LWF) • Mekong Mission Forum (MMF) • Project for Christian Muslim Relation in Africa (PROCMURA) • Wycliffe Bible Translators • SAT-7 • Common Space Initiative (CSI) • United Mission to Nepal (UMN)

Toward deepening the joint mission

Since its launch as a collaborative initiative between Felm and its partners, FIAB (Felm International Advisory Board) has marked a meaningful step toward deepening shared mission and mutual accountability. Over this past year, Felm has been able to articulate and reshape its vision and mission with greater clarity, grounded more intentionally in the realities and voices of its global partners.

One of the most encouraging developments has been the growing sense of partnership and fellowship. FIAB has created a space where relationships are not merely formal but increasingly practical and authentic. Partners have been given genuine room to express their needs, concerns, and aspirations, and it has been evident that Felm has taken these voices seriously in both reflection and action.

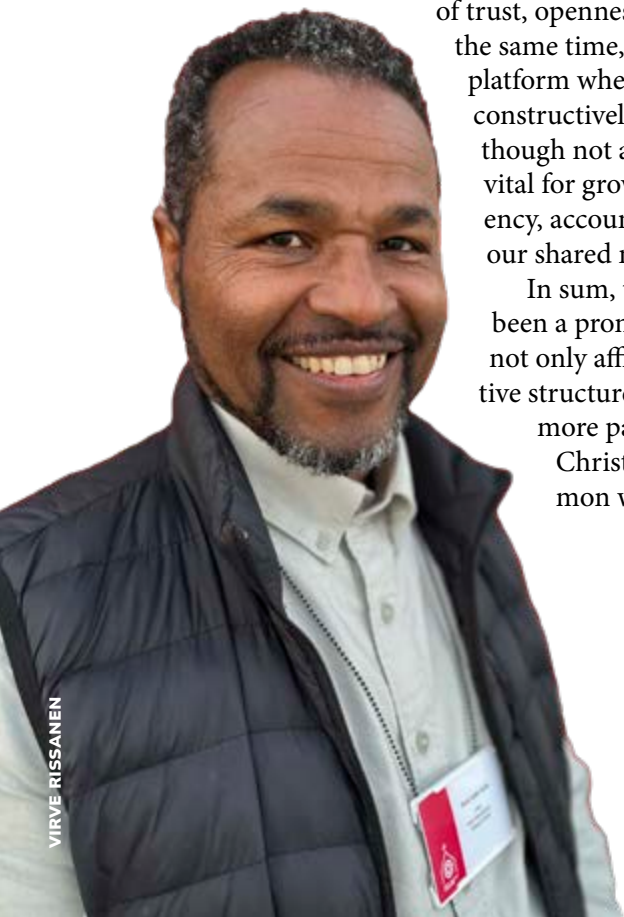
At the heart of this journey has been a shared commitment to Christ-like love, which continues to guide our interactions and discernment. This has fostered an atmosphere of trust, openness, and mutual respect. At the same time, FIAB has also provided a platform where Felm can be openly and constructively challenged. Such moments, though not always easy, have proven to be vital for growth, strengthening transparency, accountability, and the integrity of our shared mission.

In sum, the first year of FIAB has been a promising beginning—one that not only affirms the value of collaborative structures but also points toward a more participatory, responsive, and Christ-centered future for our common work.

Bruk Ayele Asale

Pastor, PhD

Co-chairman of Felm
International Advisory Board
(FIAB)



VIRVE RISSANEN



Tadelech Weld Senbet from Ethiopia has received seedlings with Felm's support. She has also learned how to build a compost. A compost helps vegetables produce a bigger harvest.

ANNA SUOHEIMO