

Women's Letter

Written by women in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.



let's always take care!

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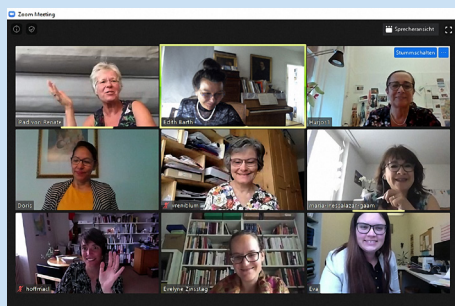


Photo: Women and Gender Special Commission's online Meeting

Mission 21



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WOMEN AND GENDER

In all its activities, Mission 21 advocates the establishment of gender equality justice. Together with women's networks, church and organizational partners, Mission 21 seeks the most appropriate paths for each local situation, aiming to abolish gender hierarchies and discrimination. **The Special Desk** offers financial support to strengthen and advance women and women's networks of church and organisational partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It also supports Gender Mainstreaming processes in development programs and facilitates spaces for exchange experiences and building knowledge.

The Women and Gender Commission accompanies the Special Desk's work throughout Switzerland and Germany, supporting as a group of experts.

Editorial

LET'S ALWAYS CARE OF OURSELVES!



Dear Readers

The Covid-19 pandemic placed the care of bodies, relationships, and environments around us at the focus of attention worldwide.

The existing inequalities in living conditions and the different care needs of the population became visible.

For those whose fundamental human rights are not guaranteed, the impact of the pandemic has led to a further worsening of their situation, as clearly stated in the message of the women delegates to the Synod of Mission 21, held virtually for the first time.

While domestic violence is on the rise, gender-based violence is evident in the daily lives of girls, women, youth, and elders.

The delegates' reports from Asia and Latin America recount harsh realities and show us concrete actions of solidarity and advocacy being carried out in their organizations and churches.

Gladys D. Mananyu from South Sudan draws our attention to the impact of gender-based violence within the context of armed conflicts. She sets out five major challenges for work on

peace and highlights five significant social impacts as a result of women's involvement in peace processes.

The economic contribution of caring for people and the environment throughout the life cycle and in the daily life of communities is still not recognized and remains invisible. The article by Ina Praetorius and Regula Grünenfelder of the Women's Synod of Switzerland reminds us that WITHOUT CARE THERE ARE NO PEOPLE and WITHOUT PEOPLE THERE IS NO ECONOMY.

In the section "Tools for Transformation and Reflection", Solveig Schrickel calls us to improve our health during the pandemic using knowledge from Mapuche traditional medicine.

We invite you to read the voices that speak in this 57th issue of the Women's Letter and discover how they echo in your own experience.

Josefina Hurtado Neira
Head of Women & Gender Desk

Impacts of the pandemic

My sister Cecilia came to visit me for a month... and had to stay for six months in total! During the time we spent together, which I received as a gift, I was able to recall the meaning of daily sharing. We shared breakfast, lunch, dinner, walks in parks, museum visits, and conversations about our childhood, about the military dictatorship in Chile, about the advantages, difficulties, and challenges of living in Switzerland.

In her luggage, Cecilia brought an arpillera (a work of art created with appliqué and embroidery on burlap) that she had started two years ago. Our conversations provided a new context for the colourful pieces of fabric, and she ended up calling it the “linyera”, a Latin American slang word that means “bundle”. During the economic depression of the 1930s, it was also the name given to people, mostly men, who went on the road in search of something to make a living. A linyera was the bundle hanging on the shoulder of itinerant workers in which they carried their few belongings. Today, this figure is represented by a woman artist, who takes to the streets to protest the precariousness of work. Her expression is one of rage and impotence. The floor that should be supporting her is collapsing. While my sister was finishing her work, I was beginning mine, a prayer of thanks



to Basel, the city that cares for me and gives me support: from words to embroidery. A work in progress...

Besides the real and concrete company of my sister and the linyera, between June and October I had the opportunity to communicate weekly with women who were isolated, whether due to physical confinement or geographical distance. Through meditation exercises, visualizations, songs, dances, embroidery crafts, and rituals, we connected and committed to support each other. We named our little group Latiendo Juntas (Hearts Beating Together), and we have also joined other circles of as many as a hundred women who gather for one purpose: to accompany and care for one another by sharing a question, a poem, a drawing, or a gesture.

Our reflections and sharing were shaped by questions such as:

- What has been my main concern in this time of pandemic?
- In what area of my body is this concern located? (colour that area in a self-portrait you have drawn)
- What have I done to get through this difficult situation?
- Is there any object that has been a source of strength for me during this time? (take a picture and send it along with your photo)
- Has the pandemic crisis brought any positive experiences to my life? What are they?
- -In what area of my body can I feel the emotion that generates positive experience? (colour that area in a self-portrait you have drawn)

I never imagined how much poetry and affection, how many prayers and good wishes, I would receive in this time of suffering, death, and uncertainty that the pandemic has caused.

My sister is already back in Chile, the linyera is with me, life goes on...

Josefina Hurtado Neira

La Linyera

Author: María Cecilia Hurtado Neira, Chilean. Year of production: 2018 – 2020. Size: 55 x 90 cm (width x length). Materials: Pieces of recycled clothing fabric, sewn onto a piece of fabric in one color, over burlap. Collection: Josefina Hurtado Neira. Original in Basel, Switzerland.

Economy is care

Dr. theol. Ina Praetorius and Dr. theol. Regula Grünenfelder of the Women's Synod Switzerland 2020/2021

When you read the business section of a newspaper, you learn a lot about money, the market, and profit but almost nothing about the laws of nature and the largest economic sector: unpaid work. The Women's Synod Switzerland therefore makes the neglect of unpaid work by society and in economic theory its main theme and reminds us: "Economy is Care".

Not only in the media, but also in most economics textbooks, from about page three onwards the only thing that matters is money. It's as if economics were only about buying and selling. It is as if people were born as adults, ladies and gentlemen who earn money and spend money from the first day of their lives. And who never need a cup of tea and a kind word when they have a cold, and who never get sick and die. Thus, in the conventional understanding of economics, almost everything that people need in life is missing.

However, according to the experts, the economy has a sole purpose: to ensure that all people get what they require to live. As Professor Günter Ashauer writes in his book, "The Basics of Economy", "It is the task of economics to examine how the means to satisfy human needs are most usefully produced, distributed, and used or consumed." Therefore, according to political scientist Antje Schrupp, "care work, including unpaid care work, [...] should finally be considered a natural part of the economy." That means it must also be included in economic calculations, otherwise all calculations will be wrong!

Without care there are no people, without people there is no economy

All people are needy, no matter how much money, property, power, and education they have accumulated. From the first day of our lives to the last, we all need air, water, food, shelter, a bed, a toilet, protection, a sense of meaning, a feeling of belonging, and much more. That is why we need the economy. And that is why the economy is so important.

In 1776, the economist Adam Smith invented the "invisible hand of the market". It supposedly ensures that everyone automatically gets what they need if no restrictions are imposed on economic activity. In reality, however, the supposedly free market economy is dependent on nature and certain people, especially women, providing everything necessary without financial reward. Would you be alive if your parents had provided for you only in return for financial reward? The many jobs that mainly women do unpaid at home has had a name for some time now: care work.

Most work is unpaid

The idea that care work has nothing to do with the economy and is a private matter corresponds to the traditional patriarchal vision of cohabitation, which looks like this: outside in the hostile world, it is mainly men who manufacture products and exchange them for money. Meanwhile, women provide for well-being and recreation

in the family. They make sure that the others who work “properly” are able to return strengthened to face the tough competition for income and career.

However, care work is not a private matter, but a business. It is directly connected to the core of the economy, namely the satisfaction of needs. Thanks to national and global statistical surveys, we now know that more people work without pay than are being paid. In 2016, for example, 9.2 billion hours of unpaid work and 7.9 billion hours of paid work were performed by the population of Switzerland (aged 15 and over).

We are all dependent on the care of others

In the era of the patriarchy’s twilight, the supposedly clear distinction between male-occupied exterior space and

female-occupied interior space has been mixed up. Once the dichotomy of the economy is lifted, poverty due to care work is no longer normal. It is therefore high time to replace this dichotomy in all areas with future-oriented thinking.

The result is the emergence of new models of society: people who take care of the household, raise children, and care for relatives, or who are committed to community welfare can secure their livelihood and expect an adequate pension in old age. The economy is again about the really important matters that affect us all. We are returning to a realistic self-perception: we are all dependent on care, vulnerable, and needy — sometimes more, sometimes less. This dependence is particularly noticeable at the beginning and end of life. Sustainability becomes normal: good living needs healthy, diverse ecosystems as the basis of life.



Comic: Illustration: Kati Rickenbach. In: Praetorius I. & Grünfelder R. (2018). Wirtschaft ist Care. Schweizerische Frauen synode 2020.

Latin America Synod Report, 2020

Ruth Vindas*

Covid-19 and Gender Violence

The Covid-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc globally. Mandatory quarantine to prevent the spread of the coronavirus is showing positive impact around the world, but the “femicide pandemic” continues.

According to studies throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, before the pandemic, domestic violence was one of the main concerns for women throughout the continent. In response, strong campaigns against gender violence organized a series of marches that filled the streets in countries throughout the region. Yet just a few weeks later, figures indicate that with the advance of Covid-19 and the measures of social isolation, the number of abuses and femicides has grown. Mexico and Brazil are the countries that register the most femicide cases per year in the region, while the highest rate per 100,000 inhabitants is in the so-called Northern Triangle of Central America (El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala). This terrible reality is also evident in Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and the rest of Latin America. As specialists dedicated to defending women's rights explain, “Confinement fuels the tension and stress generated by concerns related to safety, health, and money. It also reinforces the isolation of women who have violent partners, separating them from the people and resources that can best help them. It is the perfect situation to exercise controlling and violent behaviour in the home.”

The Covid-19 pandemic is causing incalculable human suffering and economic devastation worldwide. However, for many women and girls, the threat is greatest precisely where they should be safest: in their own homes. The quarantine actually creates greater risks for women living in situations of domestic violence.

In addition to gender violence, other impacts of quarantine must also be taken into account. Public health measures such as home-schooling, telecommuting, housekeeping, care for the elderly, among others, place a greater burden on women as domestic work is generally not evenly distributed. Women make the greatest contribution and suffer the most from the confinement burden of Covid-19. This inequity is very evident in regions like Latin America, where machismo and fundamentalisms continue to be fed by oppressive patriarchal systems.

Challenges and Changes: What Path to Take?

Latin American countries continue to face the challenge of gender violence. There is a lot of work ahead, and many women in need, so we must hold strong and...

- Continue our efforts to reduce gender inequalities.
- Keep up the fight against religious fundamentalisms; in the midst of crises, we urgently need spaces for reflection, analysis, and rereading of biblical texts that are liberating.
- Do not let your guard down with the pronouncements of human rights.
- Generate more spaces for training in and research on issues of violence.
- Promote conscious pastoral accompaniment processes, in addition to talks, workshops, and other dynamics that provide tools for the empowerment of women, girls, and adolescents.
- Strengthen networking efforts among partner countries and other institutions.
- Maintain constant training and updating on issues of gender justice and violence.

Our Actions to Promote Gender Justice in Latin America Femicide Course April-November 2019

This training course for leaders from the different countries that make up the Mission 21 Continental Assembly in



* Professor of Christian Studies at Latin-American Biblical University, Costa Rica. She is also delegate to the Synod, Mission 21

Latin America is a concrete contribution to raise awareness among women and men involved in Mission 21 projects in the region and to address the issue of gender equality as a clear and precise training process to empower women.

All Mission 21 partners in the region took part: Bolivia, Chile, Peru, and the continental organizations of the Latin American Biblical University (UBL), the Ecumenical Research Department (DEI), and the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI). Participants also came from Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Argentina, and Guatemala.

The course achieved its objective: to strengthen the capacities of women leaders of partner churches and organizations, in the management of tools and techniques, which they identify strategically, for the prevention of femicide. Spanned the areas of self-care and mutual care; biblical-theological analysis and spiritualities; knowledge of their rights and the means to access justice.

“I walk with...” Campaign

This campaign promoted by Mission 21 aims to promote awareness, dissemination, and accompaniment of women in situations of gender violence. In 2019, the campaign corresponded to Latin America. The focus was on raising awareness about femicides, a problem that continues growing even in these times of health crisis due to Covid-19. The campaign has been promoted in the spaces for exchange among the Mission 21 partners and others, that as faith-based organizations we must raise our voices and contribute to the eradication of gender-based violence and the growing fundamentalisms in our region. Our motto is “Woman, You Are Not Alone.” The “Black Thursday” Campaign has also been taken up and promoted as a commitment to solidarity with women experiencing situations of violence.



Notebooks: Gender Justice

Teaching materials on gender justice were developed as a result of a collaborative project of the Latin American Biblical University (UBL) and the Ecumenical Research Department (DEI), with the support of the Mission 21 Gender Department.

The material consists of five notebooks, each of which addresses a theme related to gender justice. The general theme of the series is “On Paths of Justice.” Topics such as gender justice, social justice, and environmental justice are addressed. The series helps women collectively share their experiences and equips them with more tools to discern situations of gender violence in the Church, at work, and within the family.



Women of Faith, Women's Security

Gladys D. Mananyu*

“Silent advocator for the protection of the precious gift of life!”

Integrating Women in Peacebuilding

The South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC), an ecumenical body with vast experience in advocacy and community peace dialogues, developed an Action Plan for Peace framework with a gender-sensitive approach to embrace the inclusion of women and men in peace work. SSCC recognizes the importance of “giving voice to the voiceless” and amplifies women’s God-given voices on issues affecting them.

Although women suffer and carry the burden of all the violent impacts of war, they are left out of many peace processes. Because of their gender, in most case, little if any attention and value are given to women’s views in South Sudan, which has proved a challenge to peacebuilding. In the search for sustainable peace, SSCC uses the United Nation Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security as a catalyst to mobilize women in peacebuilding. SSCC bridges the gap between the UNSCR policy and the practical realities faced by women at the local grassroots level in South Sudan’s (post-)conflict context. One must take time to study community settings and engage women according to their community rules and beliefs. SSCC’s Action Plan for Peace aims to bring change and has created a platform that draws in women from the church and grassroots.

Training Women of Faith in Peacebuilding

One of the strategies of SSCC’s Action Plan for Peace is to train women leaders so that they acquire knowledge and skills in communication, governance, leadership, and mediation. Women engage after training community leaders (chiefs, landlords) for non-violent conflict intervention. The trained women leaders also mobilize women’s groups for monthly prayers and fasting for peace. They use these monthly meetings as a platform to update other women on the situation of the country and share messages of love, forgiveness, peace, and reconciliation.

Women often face rejection from their family because their public participation in society can expose family members to abuse or targeted arrests by the security personnel. That’s why women fear speaking up. To reduce this fear, SSCC has established grassroots forums in which the participants are equal (50% are women). The entry point of these forums is the power of sharing. Participants gain strength or relief by telling their stories and hearing the stories of others. Biblical

teaching is always reflected, as in John 8:32: “Speak the truth and the truth will set you free.”

Challenges for Women Active in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

Community customs can be an obstacle for creating platforms for women to talk freely. Political and ethnic polarization makes it difficult for women to take up their common cause in society. Even some women do not positively embrace the views of their fellow women representatives.

Although UNSCR 1325 refocused attention back on women in peace work, in practice the resolution’s goals remain unmet at all levels in South Sudan. For example, in the current peace process a good number of women leaders were involved in the peace talks in Khartoum and Addis Ababa, but most of them “missed out” at the equal representation in decision-making levels, despite the constitutional affirmative action requirement. The patriarchal framework of society mainly prevents women from holding leadership positions. Yet, there is increased and encouraging recognition of women’s role in peacebuilding in South Sudan today!

Five Big Challenges in Peace Work

1. **Language barriers:** Most women that we deal with do not speak English. Providing translation is time consuming, and often, the true meaning of what is being said is changed.
2. **Irregular attendance** at women activities: Many mothers and housewives face a tough choice of either attending a communal activity or caring for their children’s needs. Furthermore, rampant insecurity makes it difficult to mobilize and carrying out activities.
3. **Inadequate funds** for women activities: Women come up with many good activity plans, but they are not implemented because of lack of funds since different partners support specific program of interest. Continued campaigns are needed to redirect funding resources to the plight of girls and women groups, especially in rural areas.
4. **Inaccessibility** of other locations due to bad road conditions and poor security.
5. South Sudan is experiencing socioeconomic and political instability that affects freedom of speech

*Regional Facilitator of the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC)



and movement. There is **poor enforcement of the rule of law** by the authorities who should support marginalized groups. Often authorities show a **lack of political will** to allow activities to be carried out.

Despite these challenges, the UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security remains an opportunity to promote and ensure women's participation in peace processes.

Five Significant Impacts on Society

1. The community has become **aware of the impact of trauma** on people. Trained women were able to continue healing sessions and survivors have moderately recovered.
2. **Co-existence** between communities that have been in conflict has moderately improved. For example, there has been sharing of water points and markets and even socializing together. There has been a **reduction of tension** of inter-communal fighting upon gaining an understanding of the impact of violent conflicts, cattle raiding, and revenge attacks.
3. Community members have acquired knowledge on **sexual and gender-based violence**, and women leaders can report incidences and work collectively to denounce them through campaigns. SSCC plays a significant role in denouncing the stigmatization of and discrimination against the survivors and supports them to recover and regain their human dignity.
4. There has been great **involvement of women** in peace and development programs, from the grassroots level to the top. As defenders of human women's rights, a good number of young women and girls boldly enrolled as cadets in the military institutions and led community peace processes.
5. SSCC's establishment of a **national women's program** created platforms for women groups to participate in the prevention of violent conflict while building a free and safe space for women to discuss root causes of conflicts and create a safe environment for dialogue.

Asia Synod Report, 2020

Obertina Johanis*

Gender-Based Violence in Our Continent

In Asia, women still face gender-based violence, as well as structural barriers. This violence is experienced by women all over Asia. In Indonesia, there were 431,471 cases of violence against women in 2019, an increase of 6% from 2018. The most common form of violence against women is domestic violence, which accounts for many as 11,105 incidents or 75% of the total cases of violence. In Malaysia, violence against women also remains high. During 2018, there were more than 5,000 cases. In South Korea, research conducted by the Korea Women's Hotline revealed that up to 50% of Korean women have been physically abused by their romantic partners at least once in their lives and almost 90% of the survey respondents reported having been either physically or emotionally abused by their romantic partners. Japan's National Police Agency released data from 2018 showing 77,480 calls to local police related to domestic violence and gender-based matters.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, women are the most vulnerable group affected by the virus for many reasons. For example, women who work as health workers in hospitals and women who work in the informal sector, such as traders in traditional markets, have no choice but to continue working in public spaces during the pandemic. Women often missed receiving pandemic-specific assistance from government agencies or non-governmental organizations. Women are also increasingly vulnerable to becoming victims of domestic violence during this public health crisis. There are many reports that say that during the pandemic, domestic violence has increased.



Our Projects

One of the achievements in 2020 was the expansion of knowledge about violence against women and how to deal with it. In Indonesia, for example, more and more churches have training in handling gender-based violence. There is also an awareness of the need to build service centres for women victims of gender-based violence. Although up to now only six churches in Indonesia have service centres. In addition, the 16-day Campaign Against Violence Against Women is increasingly widespread.

*Pastor at Gereja Kristen Pasundan (West Java) Obertina was part of the Training of Trainers in Advocacy for Women's Rights in Basel and Geneva in 2018.

Pastora Obertina Johanis - Asian Ecumenical Women's Assembly 2019

The Women and Gender Desk partly funded the participation of Obertina Johanis, Pastor at Gereja Kristen Pasundan (West Java), at the Asian Ecumenical Women's Assembly (AEWA) in Taiwan, 21-27 November 2019. Obertina also took part in a three-day workshop on "Asian Ecumenical Women Responding and Strengthening HIV&AIDS Advocacy," held 19-21 November 2019 as part of an AEWA pre-event.

In her role as the Women's Coordinator, Asia, of the Mission 21 synod, Obertina was able to strengthen her professional network, since AEWA was attended by some 250 women from Asia, Australia, and Europe, who are part of various women's organizations, such as the Asian Women's Resources Centre (AWRC).

At AEWA, Obertina engaged in strategizing gender mainstreaming in the Church and society. Furthermore, during AEWA she raised awareness among participants with an advocacy event on sexual and gender-based violence. Through her participation in the workshops, Obertina connected HIV with her work for women human's rights. She is now equipped to advocate for the inclusion of women's specific needs in the response to HIV in Indonesia. As only 17% of people living with HIV in Indonesia were on treatment in 2018, enhancing advocacy skills on this topic is important.

Obertina's participation at AEWA was fruitful in finding solutions for addressing gender inequality in a Church context and enhanced her advocacy skills.

Women's Summit, Pre-PGI General Assembly XVII

Repelita Tambunan*

This project contributed to the empowerment of women by organizing a Women's Summit as part of the Pre-PGI General Assembly XVII. The Women's Summit had 387 participants and was held 2-5 November 2019 in Tambolaka, Indonesia. The participants mainly came from the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI).

Topics discussed in plenary sessions included the role of women in democracy, the protection of women and children's rights from a gender perspective, and local wisdom and the Sustainable Development Goals in the national development

agenda. Out of these plenary sessions, the summit developed recommendations to the PGI, the Synod Office, and the Indonesian Government, for example, the establishment of a Women's Crisis Centre and making the 16-days Campaign an annual routine activity for each synod. The Women's Summit furthermore contributed to the facilitation of the 2019-2024 Women's and Children's Bureau programme of the PGI.

*Head of Women and Child Bureau in Communion of Churches in Indonesia

2020 Message of the Women's Delegates of Mission 21

Listening – exchanging – learning from each other – to empower women!

The main burning issue reported at the 2019 Women's Pre-Synod of Mission 21 was the vulnerability of women who do not have access to their basic rights. The Women's delegates of the online Synod 2020 report that COVID-19 pandemic worsens the situation.

How is the worsening of access to basic rights experienced?

- **Women's health:** The pandemic hits especially hard women in the health sector and women who work in the informal sector such as traders in markets. They had no other choice but to continue working. This impacts mental health since there was an increase in fear and insecurity, and no time for rest and self-care.
- **Government level:** Many governments did not provide enough assistance to ease the impact the pandemic had on people's lives. For example, despite warnings, domestic violence increased in the African, Asian and Latin American partner countries and many women and girls were not protected.
- **Community Level:** In Latin America, the power of drug traffic networks increased and weakened supporting organizations and networks in slums. Thus, these networks are controlling a big sector of the population.
- **Economic and social status:** The income of women dropped because they can no longer operate their businesses. Migrant women in Asia were forced during the pandemic to return home without salary. Hunger has risen as a new burning issue in Latin America, affecting a growing number of women and their families. In Europe, unpaid care work continues to be undertaken mainly by women.
- **Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and femicide:** continue to be a burning issue experienced by women on every continent and has increased during the pandemic. For example, Paska A. Nimiriano (African delegate) reported that in May 2020, a 20 years old girl was beaten to death by her brothers for rejecting the man the brothers wanted her to marry with.

Achievements and good practices

- In the African partner countries, more women have been appointed as leaders. Gender equality and equity have improved in Africa. Some women could not read and write but they can now and value education. The distribution of tasks at home is more fairly balanced.
- In Indonesia, more churches give training on handling gender-based violence. There is an increased awareness to build service centres for women who are victims of gender-based violence. The network of female theologians in Indonesia PERUATI, together with women and men from other organizations, held a demonstration urging the government to immediately pass a bill for the elimination of sexual violence.
- In the Latin American partner countries, a good practice is to maintain training spaces on how to deal critically with fundamentalisms: In these training spaces women with different experiences of life, work, and beliefs are found; hence it is an opportunity to break stereotypes. A central aspect is to question certain learnings reaffirmed by religious mandates that naturalize gender violence.
- In Switzerland, women demand gender equality under the motto "Salary! Time! Respect! Now more than ever!". On 1 July 2020, Switzerland changed its Equal Opportunity Act to improve equal pay for women and men. Companies with more than 100 employees must carry out internal wage equality analyses.
- The women network of Mission 21 participated in the international campaign "16 days of activism against gender-based violence" and in the campaign of the World Council of Churches "Thursdays in Black" which is about showing respect for women who are resilient in the face of injustice and violence, and encourage others to join them. The solidarity action "I walk with..." of Mission 21 rose awareness to the increasing number of femicide (murder of women because they are women) in Latin America.

2020 Challenges

- There is a continuous need for education on respecting World Health Organisation WHO's and governments' rules concerning COVID-19.
- The African partners experience problems when advocating for gender justice with traditional, religious, and government leaders. There is a big need in holding educative talks on rape issues, and in preventing that under-aged girls are married off.
- A big challenge for Asian partner countries is the strong patriarchal way of thinking in Asian societies, including in Asian churches.
- In Europe, the number of women in leadership positions is still far lower than that of men, they get lower pay than men, and do most of the (unpaid) care work.
- The Latin American partner countries need to reduce gender inequalities and fight hard against religious fundamentalisms. In the midst of crises, it is urgent to open spaces for reflection, analysis and re-reading of biblical texts that are liberating.

Call to the Mission 21 Synod 2020

We call upon Mission 21 and its partner churches and partner organisation to support women's access to their basic rights.



Walk with us...

... Towards a world without rape, sexual assault, forced marriages and the murder of women!

Tools for Reflection and Transformation

Staying strong in the midst of a pandemic

Solveig Schrickel*



Vivir en tiempo de crisis:
Al coronavirus le ganamos con inteligencia, actitud y un buen sistema inmunológico

Consejos para fortalecer nuestro sistema respiratorio:

Receta Pomada Pectoral

- 1.) Se ponen 150 gramos de vaselina sólida y 50 ml de vaselina líquida en un jarrito metálico con tapa
- 2.) Se agregan 1 cucharada sopera de hojas de eucalipto
1 cucharada sopera de hojas de romero
1 cucharada sopera de hojas de menta o poleo
1 cucharada sopera de semillas, hojas o flores de hinojo

(Todas las hojas tienen que estar bien trituradas, pueden estar frescas o secas)

- 3.) Se calienta a baño María a fuego muy suave durante una hora. El jarrito tiene que estar bien tapado, para que no se pierdan las sustancias volátiles.
- 4.) Se cuele y se envasa.

Aplicación: en el pecho y en la espalda, en caso de tos y otros problemas respiratorios, las veces que sea necesaria. Las plantas utilizadas son todas descongestionantes y antimicrobianas. Otras plantas medicinales que se pueden usar en esta pomada: tomillo (= tomillo = chascudo), lavanda, manzanilla, pino, anís, etc.

Nota: no aplicar en niños menores de 1 año, especialmente cerca de la nariz. Es más recomendable aplicar la pomada en la espalda hasta los 2 años más o menos, alejado de la nariz.

Si no quiere usar vaselina, se puede reemplazar por 150 cc de aceite de maravilla (u otro aceite vegetal), 50 g de aceite de coco, manteca de cacao o cera de Karité y 5 g de cera de abejas u otra cera. Se hace el mismo procedimiento de los pasos 2-4.



Vivir en tiempo de crisis:
Al coronavirus le ganamos con inteligencia, actitud y un buen sistema inmunológico

Consejos para cuidar nuestra piel: ALOE

Hay muchos tipos de aloe, pero todos sirven para calmar irritaciones de la piel. Se usa el gel transparente dentro de las hojas, hay que pelarlas muy bien y sacar toda la capa verde y el jugo amarillo que está justo debajo de la superficie.

- ❖ **Partes usadas:** Gel de las hojas (líquido viscoso, incoloro y transparente de las plantas frescas)
- ❖ **Propiedades:** Cicatrizante, refrescante, regenerativa. Se aplica directamente en la piel.

RECETA:

- ✓ 2 cucharas soperas de gel de aloe, triturar con minipimer
- ✓ 3 cucharas de yogur natural
- ✓ 3 cucharas soperas de jugo de naranja

Mezclar todos los ingredientes, aplicarlos sobre la piel afectada, dejarlo durante aprox. 20 minutos. Después sacar, lavar la piel con agua tibia y lubricar.

Si es para calmar la piel irritada, se puede repetir todos los días. Si es como máscara cosmética, una vez en la semana es suficiente.

Nota: usar solo el gel transparente y no exponer la piel tratada a la luz solar.

In Chile, women use indigenous knowledge about medicinal plants to strengthen themselves physically and mentally. This knowledge also helps during the coronavirus pandemic. This pandemic has had cruel consequences for many in Chile. Hundreds of thousands of people lost their jobs. Women were forced to stay at home with violent partners because of the curfew. Parents had to explain to their kids that there's no dinner tonight. How do we not break down under all this suffering?

SEDEC, the Development and Community Education Service of the Methodist Church in Chile, has been giving classes in herbal medicine in the city of Concepción for many years. In this time of great crisis, knowledge of the healing effects of plants proved a valuable resource for physical and psychological strengthening. Today, SEDEC shares tips on herbal remedies via social media under the motto: "We will defeat the coronavirus with intelligence, solidarity, and a good immune system!" (Mauda Cuminao and Solveig Schrickel)

Learn how to strengthen yourself with these recipes:

- Learn how to strengthen yourself with these recipes:

Recipe:

- 1) Place 150 grams of solid petroleum jelly and 50 ml

of liquid petroleum jelly (Vaseline) in a metal pot with a lid.

If you don't want to use petroleum products, you can substitute 150 cc of vegetable oil, 50 g of coconut oil, cocoa butter or shea butter, and 5 g of beeswax or other wax.

- 2) Add 1 tablespoon of eucalyptus leaves, 1 tablespoon rosemary leaves, 1 tablespoon mint leaves, 1 tablespoon of fennel seeds, leaves, or flowers. All the leaves should be well crushed; they can be fresh or dry. Other medicinal plants that can be used in this preparation are thyme, lavender, chamomile, pine, or anise.
- 3) Heat in a water bath over very low heat for one hour. The pot must be well covered so the essential oils don't evaporate.
- 4) Filter and pour into small pots.

Application: For coughs and other respiratory problems, rub on the chest and back as often as necessary. All the plants used are expectorants and antimicrobial.

Note: Do not use on children under one year old, and on children under age two, apply on the back only.

*International worker of Mission 21 in the Development and Community Education Service of the Methodist Church-SEDEC, in Concepción, Chile

Plataforma de Informaciones

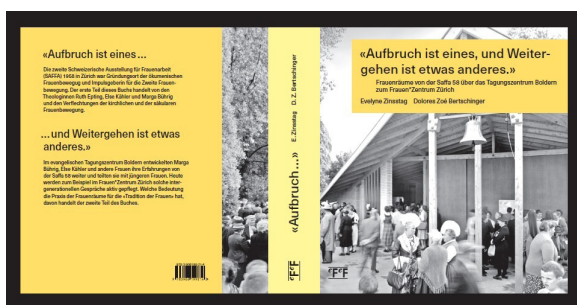
Fabo – A Worldwide Learning Community

Fabo.org is a learning community for civil society organisations. On the website, you can find a learning catalogue with courses on gender, project management, conflict prevention, and advocacy. Fabo wants to give to everyone an opportunity to learn and create. By learning and sharing together, we can all become empowered agents of change, individuals and organisations alike. In 2020, the Women and Gender Desk of Mission 21 collaborated on the creation of two learning



experiences:

- How to Do a Gender Analysis. See <https://fabo.org/llab/gender-analysis>
- Advocacy Training on Women's Human Rights. See <https://fabo.org/lwf/Women%27s-Human-Rights-Advocacy-Training-for-FBOs>



New Book: 'Starting out is one thing and going on is something else' - Women's spaces in Switzerland, from Saffa 58 and Boldern to the Women's Center Zurich.

Written by Evelyne Zinsstag and Dolores Zoé Bertschinger

Evelyne Zinsstag of the Women and Gender Commission of Mission 21 has published a book about the ecumenical women's movement in Switzerland. She shows how the theologians Ruth Epting, Else Kähler, and Marga Bührig fought for equality and a church open for all. Ruth Epting was born in India as the daughter of Swiss missionaries and worked for the Basel Mission. Marga Bührig was part of the presidency of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Together with Else Kähler, she founded a house for female reformist students in Zürich, Switzerland. These three women were important pioneers for the protection of women's human rights in Switzerland.

World Day of Prayer 2021: Vanuatu

On 5 March 2021, we celebrate the World Day of Prayer with the voices of the women in Vanuatu and the topic "Build on a Strong Foundation," based on Matthew 7.24-25:

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man/a wise woman, who built his/her house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock."



More information:
<https://worlddayofprayer.net/>

Sharing Practices for Gender Justice

"If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it," said U.S. feminist Margaret Fuller in the 19th century. Our network is here to learn from one another, and our blog makes it possible. Online, we can share our practices for achieving gender justice. For example, the organisation Aid International – Christian Women of Vision shows how it is addressing the issue of gender-based violence in Cameroon with a YouTube video produced together with young actresses and actors.

Link: <https://m21-womengender.org/en/tools-sharingpractices/>

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