

Emmaus Helsinki: Report of activities for 2009

Emmaus Helsinki was founded in 1966 and is today a **community of volunteers**. In 2009 around 70 persons participated in the work of Emmaus Helsinki. The volunteers range in age from 15 to 90 years, and they work according to their possibilities in their free time, some once a month, some several times a week. Emmaus Helsinki also offers some trainee positions to long-term unemployed persons and to students from vocational schools. Each working day, about ten persons gather around the lunch table. The work is co-ordinated by one salaried person.

The work consists of collecting donated items (with a rented van twice a week), sorting, pricing and selling them in our two second-hand shops (both shops were open 5 days a week), packing clothes, cooking and cleaning, as well as participating in various meetings and campaigns.

The administrative work is done by the members of the board, elected at the annual meeting of the association.

In 2009 our volunteers met twice to discuss Emmaus' values and our own motivation to work within Emmaus. Several volunteers took part in a seminar commemorating the 60 year anniversary of the international Emmaus-movement, organised by Emmaus Åland for all the Emmaus-groups in Sweden and Finland. One person participated in the 60 year festivities in Paris, and one person represented our association at the Regional Assembly of Emmaus Europe in Brussels.

Emmaus Helsinki supports regularly the activities of three partners: the Yayasan Penghibur Foundation in Indonesia, the association Pag-La-Yiri in Burkina Faso and the Cuna Nazareth Foundation in Peru. All three of them are members of Emmaus International.

Yayasan Penghibur, has been our partner since 1984, when it set up a home for orphaned and destitute children. In addition it works for improving the health and living conditions in the area of Kelet, on Java island.

In 2007, Emmaus Helsinki and Yayasan Penghibur agreed upon the foundation of a separate sponsorship organisation, which since the beginning of 2009 is channeling financial support from the Finnish sponsors and from Emmaus Helsinki to Yayasan Penghibur. Thus the direct partnership with Emmaus Helsinki ceased at the end of 2008. In 2009 our support to Penghibur was 10 000 €. With the aim of improving the environmental conditions in the area, Penghibur received support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in Finland for a 3-year tree-planting project that was finished in 2008. In the summer 2009 an external evaluation was made. The project has been successful. Thanks to the 30.000 planted trees, the ecology of the area has improved and the local peasants are motivated to continue to plant more trees. The costs for the evaluation was paid in part by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) (2 500 €) and by Emmaus Helsinki (1 163 €).

In 2008 Emmaus Helsinki joined forces with the Finnish association Marttaliitto to support **Pag-La-Yiri**, a big women's association in Zabre in Burkina Faso. Marttaliitto has worked with Pag-La-Yiri for many years and is currently supporting the setting up of a solar powered bakery. This project receives support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in Finland. As part of this project, Emmaus Helsinki helps Pag-La-Yiri to run a sewing centre where 15 women are being trained during 2 years. In 2009 Emmaus Helsinki's financial contribution to the sewing centre was 3 000 €. One of our board members visited Pag-La-Yiri in the spring, and two women from Pag-La-Yiri were our guests for two days in the autumn, in connection with Marttaliitto's 110 year anniversary.

For several years, Emmaus Helsinki has channeled money to two day-care centres run by **Cuna Nazareth** in Peru via the Finnish Swallows (also a member of Emmaus International). Poor parents from the slums of Lima can go to work when their children have a safe place to stay. In addition Cuna Nazareth provides advice and moral support to the families. In 2009 we supported this work with 3 844 €.

Since a couple of years Cuna Nazareth is planning to set up a recycling centre, with the long term aim of increasing their own income. Emmaus Helsinki, together with Emmaus Westervik, Emmaus Åland and the Finnish Swallows have decided to support this initiative, and will present a common project to the MFA, for training disadvantaged young persons in the profession of recycling. With support from the MFA, a trip was made to Lima in 2009 to plan the project. One person from our board took part in this trip.

For planning the recycling centre and for getting it underway, we supported Cuna Nazareth in 2009 with 11 558 €, including 10 000 € for buying a truck.

The association **Zimbabwe Aids-orvot** (Aids Orphans in Zimbabwe) was given 2 100 € in support of their work to help Aids orphans in Dzivaresekwa. Our support was used for paying the rent of the children's home Dzikwa Shelter.

Within **Emmaus International** we have in 2009 participated in the **Solidarity Sale** with the income from the 'World Village' festival in Helsinki in May 1 000 €, and given 1 000 € in **emergency aid** to the Emmaus-group on Madagascar, that had lost all its tools in a burglary.

In March we celebrated the World Water Day in our shops and gave the income from the sales 1 070 € to support EI's **water and sanitation programme in Benin**, where the local inhabitants together with EI are providing clean water and sanitary facilities to 65 000 inhabitants in the Nokoué lake area. One of our volunteers went to Benin to participate in a work camp organised by EI in February 2009.

Through **Emmaus Europe** we supported the Emmaus trial-member in Ukraine with 4 000 €. **Oselya** runs a traditional Emmaus community, offering a home and a place of work to homeless persons in Lviv. We are also participating in the European **container-programme**. Together with Emmaus Westervik we sent in 2009 two big truckloads of clothing, shoes and household things to the **Polish Emmaus-groups**. Our part of the packing and shipping costs amounted to more than 3 000 €.

While searching for ways to increase our **work for the homeless in Finland**, we bought in 2009 a small apartment in Pukinmaki, in the suburbs of Helsinki. This apartment has been rented to Kovaosaisten Ystävät (The Friends of the Underprivileged), that rents it to a homeless person needing support. For the first renter, an immigrant, the apartment has been an important step to improve his daily life.

We have also supported this year several associations and institutions working with the homeless and the poor in Helsinki by giving used clothing and shoes, altogether 150 sacs and boxes. The income from our sales on the Night of the Homeless, was given to the association Vailla Vakinaista Asuntoa (No Fixed Abode).

Some material was also given to social institutions in **Estonia**. We brought a wan-load of furniture and household things to Kohila, to a service centre for elderly and handicapped. At the same time we visited Kati-koti, a home for mentally handicapped persons.

Emmaus Helsinki plays an active role within **KEPA**, the Finnish umbrella organization for development NGOs, and takes part in its lobbying work and training sessions. One of our board members is today member of the KEPA-board.

Another important network for us is **Kierratysliike** (a Finnish recycling movement). We participated in the annual Downshifting week in April, as well as in the Don't Buy Anything Day in November. While aiming to diminish the amount of textile waste, some of our volunteers are creating new products out of old clothing that cannot be sold. The income from these products are given to the sewing centre in Burkina Faso.

The total income from our second-hand sales in 2009 were 195 736 € (in 2008: 166 315 €), which means that our **membership fee** (1,5 %) to Emmaus International in 2010 is 2 936 €.

The complete annual report, in Finnish, including the financial report and some photos, can be found on our website <http://www.emmaushelsinki.fi/fi/toimintakertomus.html>

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