

To create the basic necessities for a worthy human existence

The Bethlehem Mission Immensee as Organization

The Bethlehem Mission Immensee (BMI) is a catholic missionary organization with its seat in Immensee (Switzerland). In cooperation with other religious and civil organizations, it is engaged worldwide on behalf of the disadvantaged in society. It provides skilled persons to take part in specific and limited assignments in the projects of partner organizations and promotes the processes of international solidarity.

The motivation of the BMI is the vision of a just and peaceful world and the desire to work together in partnership with people from other cultures and religions. The basic needs for existence, dignity and rights for every person are BMI's most important topics.

The skilled persons consciously lead a simple lifestyle and thereby share the life and are fully present with the people in their living context. They make careful use of the means on hand in order to avoid dependencies.

Background

Zambia, independent since 1964, is basically a peaceful country – which cannot be taken for granted for a country with 72 different ethnic groups and as many languages. As a result of a long history of poverty, exploitation, mismanagement and corruption, the government is not in the position to implement some of the most basic tasks of a state. As a result the majority of the population lives in poverty. The people suffer from poor health services, lack of access to education and inadequate protection of their basic rights. HIV/AIDS has worsened the already difficult situation and has brought amongst other effects the traditional social system to the brink of collapse.

Although Zambia has vast areas of arable land, the country is repeatedly dependent on imported food products from other countries. The worldwide climate changes and unreliable rain-falls are to some extent responsible for this situation.

Since 1974, the BMI has supported and accompanied partner organizations to overcome these many challenges.

Thematic priorities and targets

The BMI country programme for Zambia 2009–2012 supports projects in the areas of health, nutrition and activities that provide income for disadvantaged people in the poor areas of the capital city of Lusaka and in the rural areas. Also covered are the comprehensive themes of HIV/AIDS, mother and child health, the training of youths in carpentry and metal work as well



as conservation farming (production and training). There are large obstacles to the access of public health facilities in the rural areas and women and children suffer most as a result. Life expectancy has dropped by 20 years in the last 30 years due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The BMI-skilled persons are working together with local partners towards the following goals: To improve access to health care; to discuss HIV/AIDS openly; to provide for the population access to professional learning and training facilities, to gradually improve the income with positive effects on nutrition, the education of children and the economic structures of the communities. A priority is the strengthening of organizations and institutes.

Target groups

HIV/AIDS patients and their relatives, orphans, young people, small scale farmers, health workers and caregivers, women in child-bearing age, children less than 5 years.

Partnerships and networks

The Catholic Church is the most important partner to date in Zambia. The Church partners are the Archdiocese of Lusaka and the Diocese of Ndola with various organizations active under their roof. Further active partner organizations of the BMI in Zambia are various NGOs and the Ministry of Health. All



Country programm

Zambia

Bethlehem Mission Immensee

skilled persons, including the BMI Coordinator are engaged in various local networks.

The BMI locally

The BMI is represented locally by a Country Coordinator who is the contact person for the partner organizations, guides the skilled persons and is responsible for assuring the quality of the assignments.

The partner organization holds the responsibility for the project and provides the necessary framework for the skilled person to work within. The work of the skilled person is overseen in cooperation by a representative of the partner organization and the BMI Country Coordinator.

It is the duty of the skilled person to work in the project according to the quality criteria mutually agreed upon.



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Facts

Area	752 618 km ²
Population	11,862 Mio. (2007)
City population	35%
Life expectancy	38,63 years
Population below the poverty line	51%
Literacy rate	80,6%
BIP pro head in US\$	1500
Main export goods	copper /cobalt 64%, electricity, tobacco, flowers, cotton
Main export countries	Switzerland 41,8%, South Africa 12%, Thailand 5,9%, Democratic Republic of the Congo 5,3%, Egypt 5%, Saudi Arabia 4,7%, China 4,1%
Foreign debts in US\$	2,913 billion

Source: www.cia.gov (Dec.08)