

# **POLICY ON FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

## **FOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES IN THE EMS FELLOWSHIP**

Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS)  
Vogelsangstraße 62 | D-70197 Stuttgart  
Tel.: +49 711 636 78 -0  
E-mail: [info@ems-online.org](mailto:info@ems-online.org)

## CONTENT

### **POLICY ON FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES IN THE EMS FELLOWSHIP**

*Adopted by the EMS Extraordinary General Meeting in a video conference,  
held from Stuttgart, Germany on 1st December 2025 ..... Page 02*

# POLICY ON FINANCIAL SUPPORT

## FOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES IN THE EMS FELLOWSHIP

### I. MISSION STATEMENT

“We are on a journey together towards an international ecumenical fellowship of churches and mission societies sharing our hope in the kingdom of God.... The gospel concerns all dimensions of life. Therefore, our witness is holistic. Proclamation of the Gospel, worship, prayer life, pastoral care, Christian education, diaconal service and the commitment for justice, peace and the integrity of creation cannot be separated from each other.”

*Taken from “Common Witness”, Theological Guidelines of the EMS Fellowship*

In keeping with this mission statement, the sustained support of selected programmes and projects of members of the fellowship is one of EMS’ core tasks and one of our specific contributions to missionary witness at the respective place. We affirm that all churches and mission societies in the fellowship need to share gifts and receive gifts so that God’s mission can be fruitfully pursued. We commit ourselves to equal relationships in which there are no donors or recipients, but all have needs to be met and gifts to give. EMS is a fellowship to which all members participate on equal terms.

### II. SUPPORT CRITERIA

#### (1) GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Our support for programmes and projects is guided by the following principles and objectives, regardless of the topic:

**Holistic witness:** The supported programmes and projects testify to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and do so in a way that is inviting and welcoming, non-exclusionary, brings healing and expresses committed solidarity.

**Extending competences of the churches:** All project activities together must form a coherent project. A general objective of our project and programme support is to strengthen and to extend theological, missionary and diaconal competences of the churches in the EMS fellowship. In order to reach this goal, we also promote and run capacity-building in the area of project and church leadership. We promote the development of infrastructure that contributes to environmental and financial sustainability and does not incur major follow-up costs.

**Participation and empowerment:** We foster self-reliance by affirming people and empowering them to tackle questions and develop problem solutions in their own life situations from their own resources.

**Gender justice:** Entrenching gender equity in all programmes and projects has a key function for the aim

underlying them all: a life in dignity. Programmes for only one gender may be supported where a particular need for it is given.

**The overcoming of discrimination:** The supported programmes and projects involve all people within their beneficiary groups, regardless of religion, creed, culture, social status or gender, age, ethnic origin or adherence to a minority.

**Sustainability:** An important goal of our project/programme support is to ensure its long-term effectiveness, the rooting of its results in the life of the beneficiary group even after the project has ended. Support from EMS is intended to promote the self-financing and self-sustaining of programmes and projects.

**Ecological awareness:** In the context of the climate crisis and our commitment to EMS' eco-theological guidelines, justice, peace and the integrity of creation we are attentive to preserving and increasing ecological resources in every project and programme region.

**Strengthening local culture and resources:** We respect the culture and faith practice(s) of the population in the project regions. In the programmes and projects they use their own resources and competences in solving problems and to undergo independent spiritual, social and economic development.

**Interfaith and Inter-religious engagement:** We recognize and honour that the programmes and projects of our member churches must successfully operate in contexts with diverse faith traditions. We believe that cooperative, constructive, dialogical and positive interactions between people of different religious traditions can benefit us all.

**Networking:** We encourage and foster exchange, collaboration and the sharing of expertise within the EMS Fellowship and between projects and programmes. We also support the networking of projects and programmes with other local churches, religious communities and NGOs.

**Combating corruption:** The resources of the EMS fellowship shall only be used for designated purposes of the member churches and mission societies in the EMS fellowship as agreed upon in a signed contract. We oppose any form of corruption as it destroys the foundations of our fellowship and puts the success of programmes and projects at risk. The support for programmes and projects is thus based on the EMS Anti-Corruption Policy which is an integral part of all programme and project agreements. Everyone in the EMS fellowship shall strictly observe the state and labour laws in force in the respective country.

In projects and programmes carried out or supported by EMS or by EMS in cooperation with its members or its partners, orderly, complete and understandable accounting shall be guaranteed, and it must always be possible to provide evidence of the use of resources for the respective purpose through observing the regulations for keeping financial records and correctly documenting all business transactions. Wherever possible, international auditing

standards shall be observed.

In cases of possible corruption or misappropriation of EMS resources, EMS has the option of requesting additional documentation to prove the use of the funds, e.g. payment receipts, lists of participants or contractual agreements with third parties. EMS has the option of having external audits carried out in accordance with international standards and commissioning auditors and/or lawyers to carry out the corresponding investigation. EMS has the right to choose the auditors and/or lawyers. In this case, EMS will cover the costs.

**Common standards in planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME):** For the planning of the project support, continuous monitoring and evaluation regarding the achievement of goals common standards apply within the EMS fellowship (see III.1). They also serve to enhance mutual transparency on the use of funds and effective fundraising by EMS for the programmes and projects.

In principle, only programmes/projects that meet these criteria qualify for EMS support. However, in reality it is not always possible to meet each one of these criteria completely as the conditions and resources of programmes and projects vary greatly. If this is so, the project application should state the reasons. All aspects of each application will be carefully weighed up and criteria that are not fully met (yet) will get special attention during the monitoring of the programme or project.

## (2) ELIGIBLE AREAS OF ACTIVITY

In support for projects and programmes we concentrate on the thematic areas found in the EMS Constitution that connect us in our ecumenical community as areas of practice. Based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focussed in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all EMS stakeholders our investment in the following thematic areas contributes to achieving several UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>1</sup>:

- Evangelisation and Theological Training
- Diakonia, Education and Training (SDG No. 3, 4, 5)
- Combating Poverty (SDG No. 1, 2, 8 & 10)
- Commitment to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) (SDG No. 7, 10, 13, 15, 16 & 17)

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

### III. STANDARDS AND PROCESSES IN PROJECT SUPPORT

#### (1) STARTING POINT

Mutual responsibility and transparency, along with common learning and action, form the foundations of cooperation on projects in EMS. The standards and processes set here for planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) in project support, improve

- the competent selection, accompaniment and fostering of programmes and projects
- thematic exchange and networking, and thereby the realisation of common witness in the practical fields
- the professional and sustainable management of programmes and projects
- the effectiveness of our cooperation
- the joint planning of supportive measures like consultancy or capacity-building on problems in the project or in our cooperation
- accountability towards the EMS fellowship and donors
- effective fundraising and high-profile outreach by EMS

#### (2) STANDARDS AND PROCESSES

The EMS fellowship agrees on the following standards in the common PME of programmes and projects:

- submitting complete project and programme proposals
- submitting a planning report for the second year of support
- submitting an evaluation report
- submitting an externally audited annual financial statement on programmes and projects upon the request of the EMS General Secretariat (see II.1 Combating Corruption and the EMS Anti-Corruption Policy)

The standards of the EMS Safeguarding Policy shall apply to all stakeholders in EMS programmes and projects.

A timeline for the preparation of program and project applications and reporting for the budget will be provided in a timely fashion by the Presidium and the Management Board of the Secretariat.

#### (3) COOPERATION WITH INDEPENDENT PROJECT PARTNERS

EMS may support the projects and programmes of independent partner organisations that have been recognized and endorsed by the EMS members in the respective country.

## IV. FINANCING

### (1) PROCEDURE FOR ALLOCATING FUNDS

The approval of project and programme proposals is affected biennially in line with the biennial EMS budget. The regional member churches are called upon to endorse funding proposals from their area.

In the framework of EMS budget planning, the funding proposals will be considered in the Committee for Programme and Project Support (ProPro Committee), which consists of seven persons appointed by the Mission Council. Since the composition of the Committee is to reflect the diversity of the EMS fellowship it consists of representatives from the churches in all regions and a member of the Finance Committee. Three Committee members are to be members of the Mission Council as well. The EMS Secretariat supports the work of the ProPro Committee and delivers all necessary information for deliberation.

The ProPro Committee shall prepare the proposal for the allocation of funds in the area of Support for Programmes and Projects to assist the further deliberations in the Mission Council as part of the preparations for the budget. The decision on the allocation will be made by the General Meeting as part of the budget.

The support criteria form the basis of decisions on funding proposals. At the same time, all churches and organisations in the EMS fellowship are to participate in programme and project support, as a matter of principle.

A small project fund is established. It enables support of projects up to a maximum funding amount of € 15,000. The Presidium decides on proposals submitted to the fund.

The implementation rules of the application procedures are set in separate documents “Application procedure for project and programme funds” and “Application procedure small project fund” by the Secretariat.

EMS may establish other funding programmes in addition to ProPro funding following the principle rules of the ProPro Policy.

### (2) FUNDRAISING FOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMMES

All members of the EMS fellowship commit themselves to contribute to the financing of projects and programmes by raising financial resources within the framework of their abilities. Fundraising can only be conceived as a common strategy. It is essential that the member churches and project partners be integrated strongly into fundraising in order to jointly bear witness all over the world. In view of this perspective, project owners on site are encouraged to do local fundraising as a part of their responsibility towards the fellowship.

## V. COOPERATION AND WORK-SHARING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

### (1) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS STRATEGY AND THE FUNDING PRACTICE OF CHURCHES IN THE EMS FELLOWSHIP

In order to effectively implement project and programme support by EMS on behalf of its members there must be a coordinated approach between EMS and the member churches and member organisations. The point is to guarantee that the quality standards laid down by this concept can take comprehensive effect in project and programme cooperation and that no “funding market” arises within the EMS fellowship allowing for providers with different standards. On the other hand, there must also be a guarantee that projects and programmes are not funded from several quarters within the EMS fellowship, while others always receive nothing. Therefore, there shall be an agreement that the member churches in the EMS fellowship (at least at the level of the whole church) and the EMS General Secretariat to inform one another of applications and approvals of project and programme funding in churches, mission societies and institutions in the EMS fellowship and that they consult with one another on major funding cases. Apart from mutual information and advice, the aim is to relate the criteria and standards of the respective funding practice and where possible make them more similar.

### (2) COMPLEMENTARITY TO CHURCH-RELATED ORGANISATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

As an ecumenical fellowship of churches and missions in three continents, EMS is a forum for exchange and cooperation in common witness. The support of programmes and projects forms one aspect of this holistic witness. Our commitment in the areas of evangelisation and theological training; diakonia, education and training; combating poverty and commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation is part of the long-term multi-layered collaboration that unites churches and missions in EMS. These roots are reflected in the common selection of projects and project partners, guided by traditional cooperation, and the comparatively low financial volume of our project funding.