

Felm 2024 Partner Consultation Recommendation for Future Collaboration and Working Together





**United in Faith, Hope and Love –
transforming together**



The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (Felm) By-Laws stipulate that one of the duties of the Felm Governing Board is to convene at least every 5 years a meeting with “the key foreign churches and organizations it cooperates with in order to develop the joint undertakings in the long term”. Based on this the Felm Governing Board appointed a planning group in the autumn 2023 to prepare a consultation in conjunction with the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCF) International Mission Partnership Consultation in August 2024.

The event prepared by Board members and Felm leadership together with the Felm International Advisory Board (FIAB) consisting of Felm partner representatives convened a series of meetings under the heading of “United in Faith, Hope and Love – transforming together”. In May 2024, four regional online meetings were organized in Africa, Asia, Middle East and Latin America where all Felm nearly one hundred partners were invited. Under Faith, Hope and Love, the regions had chosen specific topics to discuss with Felm. The results were analyzed by the FIAB with Felm leadership and served as the background for the main event in Finland.

A selected number of partners, mainly those invited already by the ELCF for their event, participated in the face-to-face meeting in Finland in August 2024. The consultation took place back-to-back with the Annual General Meeting of Felm, and a joint seminar was organized, allowing interactions with parish representatives who are key Felm owners and donors. These relationships were deepened with participants’ visits to the different parishes after the event. The consultation included worship life, plenaries, panels and a discussion of global recommendations under three thematic headings - Faith, Love and Hope – and the transformation of the partnership. These were agreed in a hybrid meeting with all Felm partners.

This series of consultations contributed to the revision of the Felm strategy in 2024 and are guiding the collaboration in the coming years.

Recommendations for Future collaboration

OUR FUTURE FOCUS

We will:

- Focus on sharing the good news of hope in Christ, on theological education and explore new ways, such as online teaching while ensuring the access of ethnic and indigenous groups, women, people with disabilities and lay leaders
- Focus on supporting the church leadership, including lay leadership and enhance the sustainability of pastoral work through, for example, mentoring and supporting churches on ensuring youth participation in life of the church in all levels
- Focus on climate justice and supporting churches to take climate action including joint advocacy and learning and ensure youth involvement in climate action.
- Focus on strengthening the agency of churches, civil society and local communities in peace and reconciliation, on strengthening the agency and inclusion of People with Disabilities (PWD) and the advocacy of their rights, and on advocacy on gender justice



OUR WAY TO WORK TOGETHER

We will:

- Strengthen the use of local knowledge in planning and decision-making and ensure meaningful participation of communities
- Strengthen mutual respect and open dialogue enhancing the agency of partners, equalizing the power dynamics of the partnership and create platforms of sharing such as regional-level leaders roundtable platform to share ideas, resources, practices and challenges, fostering trust and mutual accountability
- Strengthen networking and partnerships with other stakeholders including ecumenical networks, various faith traditions, governments and civil society actors
- Strengthen partners' capacities in advocacy, particularly on developing evidence base, theological justification and on supporting the creation of effective advocacy coalitions that link local communities and their contextually relevant topics to global level
- Strengthen the capacity of churches to use digital tools, AI and social media in reaching people and developing churches' work
- Improve communication and learning together and strengthen adaptive management approaches that allow Felm and its partners to respond to the changing context by adjusting programming
- Strengthen the partners' understanding of each other as the Body of Christ and their capacity of self-reliance, increase the ownership and equal partnerships. We will support the commitment of the members of churches and organisations to contribute financially through more integrated support systems like tithing, digital funding, and resource management



The Felm International Advisory Board (FIAB) consisting of representatives of Felm partners and Felm leadership was responsible for the planning of the consultation process in 2024 together with the Felm Governing Board. New FIAB members were appointed by the Felm Governing Board, and they will continue to follow up the implementation of the recommendations together with the Felm Governing Board.

The FIAB members are:

Chairperson

Bishop **Mari Parkkinen**

Chairperson of the Felm Governing Board, Finland

Chairperson

Rev. Dr. **Bruk Ayele**

President of Mekane Yesus Seminary, Ethiopia

Ms. **Sokny Onn**

Country Director, Epic Arts, Cambodia

Rev. **Selma Chen**

President of the Lutheran Church of Taiwan, Taiwan

Rev. **Gerardo Hands**

President of Iglesia Evangélica Luterana en Venezuela,
Venezuela

Mr. **Admire Mutizwa**

Director of Church Peace and Just Societies Department,
Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Zimbabwe

Ms. **Eva Azar**

Education Director, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in
Jordan and the Holy Land, Palestinian Territories
Youth Representative Ms. Sarah Sigdel, SAHAS, Nepal



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Felm Fellowship is a concept of innovative partnership and network model designed to deepen interaction and shared learning. It entails all kind of partnership forms. Felm Fellowship strengthens the value of working together and enables knowledge sharing. The goal of Felm Fellowship is to strengthen networking among partners, share relevant and useful information, foster spiritual connections, and continue the shared journey. Felm International Advisory Board (FIAB) is the owner of the Felm Fellowship concept.

Do you have any questions or comments? Please, contact FelmFellowship@felm.org