

Report of the Felm Partners' Consultation 14–17.5.2019

“Towards a Shared Vision”



Felm 1859

PRODUCED BY

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FELM – TOWARDS A SHARED VISION



1. Foreword by Tero Norjanen, Felm Director of International Cooperation: Felm Partners' Consultation in context 2019

Each partner organisation brings a different set of values, priorities, resources and competencies to a partnership. The challenge of any partnership is to bring these diverse contributions together, linked by a common vision to achieve sustainable goals. Without doubt, the challenge mentioned above was overcome during the three-day consultation in Finland, at which different points of view were shared very openly, based on mutual trust. I believe the result was that a shared vision to bring hope to marginalised people was strengthened among the partners. As I stated in my opening remarks: “a shared vision at its best is an aspirational description of what partner organisations would like to achieve or accomplish together in the future. Having a clear shared vision can give partners direction and inspiration and be the foundation for goal setting and action planning.”

The ultimate success of the consultation, however, will be determined by our future actions together as partners. This report, which is the outcome of collective work at the Partners' Consultation, provides an excellent tool for developing our partnership further. It also serves as a starting point for a mid-term evaluation process for the current Felm strategy and at the same time launches a journey towards the new Felm strategy, which starts in 2023.

At the consultation participants contributed important information through facilitated workshops. All this significant information was collected by Tero Massa, the author of this final consultation report. In the report you'll find recommendations made by him. Although they do not represent official Felm policy, they serve as discussion points for further development. For example, Felm aims to produce a totally new partnership development plan.

Dear reader, you have in your hands a report which can at its best adjust decision making to serve our shared vision and joint mission better.

Let's celebrate and recognise the invaluable contributions of our shared Partners' Consultation!

Tero Norjanen

Director of International Cooperation

2. Introduction

2.1. Partnership as identity, value, and a method of working

Felm is a faith-based organisation that has been working globally since 1859. Felm is deeply rooted in Lutheran Christian identity, and its vision has always been to bring hope to those on the margins of society.

A distinctive feature of Felm that has shaped and developed its organisational identity throughout its history is partnership. Felm seeks partners who share its vision of hope, and trusts in their commitment and capacity to implement work. Felm joins hands with partners and strengthens capacity when required, but Felm acknowledges above all the professionalism, motivation, and ownership of partners in their work. This acknowledgement is the basis of our partnership.

Partnership enriches Felm, and shapes and reforms its identity, strategy, and work. Partnerships enrich reality, and extend operational scope and depth to all partners in our agreement to work together.

Joining in partnership also poses challenges for both participants. Through global partnership we enter into a complex and challenging web of interconnectedness that affects both partners' identity and work. In its role as a donor Felm is also aware that the challenge of creating and maintaining genuine partnership is also pressing. Economic dependency should not dictate how Felm and its partners conduct their cooperation and develop their partnership.

We should also acknowledge that we have different ideas and hopes concerning good organisational partnership. Our expectations of, aspirations for, and ideas about partnership are informed by our cultural backgrounds and our individual histories. Felm is blessed and challenged by a variety of partnerships throughout the world. Felm partners with churches and non-governmental organisations of different faith and cultural backgrounds. All our partners use varied methods and have different work capacities and scopes. This diversity brings different concepts and expectations of partnership into the relationship. Whose expectations of partnership do we implement? Even within each of our organisations we have different ideas of good (and bad) partnership.

Together we face local and global changes that compel our organisations to adjust to new conditions and requirements. Change may strain our partnership and force us to readjust our cooperation to better serve evolving circumstances. Such circumstances can also be seen as a new possibility to develop and deepen our partnership. New ideas and methods for working together usually arise when they are genuinely needed. Shared difficulties and obstacles call us to face the future together.

To examine partnership and its meaning, we need to listen to each other, acknowledge our common ground and differences, and search for shared understanding. One of the best ways to do this is to identify where our partnership has already succeeded and learn from such successes. What we have already achieved together forms a foundation from which to develop our mission and cooperation together.

One of our shared successes has been this 2019 partnership consultation. All the partners who participated – Felm staff, Felm board members, and stakeholders – contributed to the consultation's success. This report seeks to present some of the richness of our discussions about partnership, discern and investigate the key results, and recommend how to proceed in developing partnership.

2.2. Expected outcome of the consultation and the report

Felm's regulations state that Felm must arrange a consultation every 5th year to ensure the voice of our international partners is heard. This year, our consultation was planned as a project with an outcome and outputs. The reason for this year's project approach was that Felm's new strategy (2017–2022) needed to be reflected on mid-way with our partners. Felm has also acknowledged that as our partners have become more diverse in their profiles and identities, partnership has become more complex and challenging. Advances in the Results Based Management system (RBM)¹ have also changed our work and communication with each other. As a result of these changes, Felm needs a clear view and a plan for developing international partnership. The following goals were set for the 2019 partners consultation.

Outcome:

A committed plan to strengthen our partnership for realising our shared vision

Outputs:

1. Increased understanding of our shared vision of bringing hope to the marginalised.
2. Felm understands the relevance of our strategy's implementation with our partners.
3. Participants are able to create and deepen networks with each other.
4. All participants acknowledge the merits and challenges of partnership, and are better equipped to strengthen it.
5. A report with a suggestion based on relevant information and feedback to adjust decision making to better serve our shared vision and joint mission.
6. Participants are empowered in our shared vision and joint mission.
7. First phases of Felm & Partners consultative board established.

¹ In this report RBM and PME (Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation) are both referred to quite often. RBM is a specific project management mode in which all the operations and actors work to reach the intended results of a project or programme. PME refers to the project management cycle and all its related operations.

The outcome and outputs set were quite ambitious for a three-day conference. The bar was set deliberately high because of Felm’s commitment to developing partnership and listening to what our partners and stakeholders have to say about Felm’s strategy and partnership. The outcome of the consultation was formulated to be inclusive and open, but at the same time challenging and expressing our commitment to development. Too often we envision great ideas, but the follow-up and realisation do not materialise. We get stuck in doing things as they have always been done.



Half the Felm partners who joined the consultation wanted primarily to learn more about partnership

‘The committed plan’ mentioned at the outcome-level points towards to the future and the realisation of our development in our partnership. The ultimate success or failure of the consultation will be determined by the actions we take after it. Are we going to have a working and realistic plan to follow up and implement what we have learned together?

This report will comment on and evaluate the outputs of the consultation in the following chapters, with a short conclusion in Chapter 8.7. Some outputs are quite open to interpretation (such as 3 and 6), because each participant experienced the consultation differently. However, the feedback chapters (8.6. and 9.4.) reflect at least to some extent on the overall attitude to these outputs.

The report is markedly weighted towards Felm’s international partners’ insights and opinions. This does not mean that Felm staff’s or stakeholders’ opinions are omitted from the report. It simply means that where the data obtained from the consultation is concerned, the balance favours Felm’s partners. The report aims above all to highlight their opinions. Some of the ideas and viewpoints raised by Finnish participants will be addressed in other forums.

The report investigates, analyses, and presents the discussions, ideas, and results connected with partnership development, and offers recommendations based on these findings. Many findings and ideas relate to the work of Felm and its partners. For the most part this report does not explore these ideas further. Many fall outside the report’s scope (and in many cases the author’s expertise). I hope that presenting all the groupwork in the appendices can benefit those who wish to explore the various groupwork ideas in more detail.

2.3. Structure and method of the consultation and the report

The Felm Partners' Consultation was held at the Vesala conference centre near the Finnish city of Jyväskylä between 14 and 17 May 2019. The consultation was planned to be participatory at every stage – and it was organised accordingly. The participants invited to attend the consultation were chosen to represent Felm's partners from many levels of their respective organisations. We hoped to have a rich and diverse input from our partners that would especially take into account the perspectives of those who implement work at grassroots level.

The consultation opened many forums for dialogue and interaction between partners, Felm staff, and relevant stakeholders. Felm chose to focus on identity-related issues such as the organisation's vision, mission, and partnership as topics for discussion. An inclusive approach was built into the consultation's structure and facilitation. The space in which the consultation took place was designed and built to enhance the message of inclusivity. The front wall bore the slogan '*Our shared vision*', the back wall '*Our World*', the wall on the left '*Our Mission*', and the wall on the right '*Partnership*'. We hoped that sitting in the middle of this room would itself serve as a message. This was '*Our Consultation*' in a broad and inclusive sense.

We decided to minimise digital disturbances to face-to-face interaction at the consultation. We strongly advised against using computers and handheld devices during groupwork and shared sessions. This worked well: participants were more able to focus on interaction and discussion with each other. We also minimised the use of PowerPoint presentations and other tools. The classic power of pens, markers, and big sheets of paper helped us to engage deeply in the topics of our discussion and be present with each other.

All participants also received a 'Partnership Passport' to be used during the consultation. The passport worked as a notepad during the consultation's working sessions. It also contributed to the writing of this report. Participants were able to cut off designated sheets from the passport and drop them in a feedback box (see [Appendix 10.3](#) for the passport model).

After each groupwork all the groups shared their work with the others. The big sheets of paper were attached to the walls, and the other participants were encouraged to comment on each group's findings with designated symbols. In this report these symbols work like vote results. They help to highlight important and burning issues, and have been acknowledged as accurately as possible in this report. They afford Felm and its partners valuable information about the emphasis, prioritising, and directions for partnership development.

The symbols participants used were as follows:

A **heart** represented feeling good ('I like') about something
An exclamation mark denoted importance and seriousness.

A **question mark** indicated that the participant did not understand a particular notion, comment, or issue (or was largely confused by it).

The facilitators limited the use of symbols. This meant that each participant had, for example, only one of each symbol for each groupwork presentation. Some groupwork was only commented on with exclamation marks – for example, in Working Session 4 Chapter 4 and Appendix 9.2.)

The symbols were colour-coded to enable us to discern the group to which the commenter belonged. **Blue** was allocated to our partners, **red** to Felm workers, **green** to Felm board members, and **pink** to Felm stakeholders. (For a full list of participants see Appendix 9.1.)

This report presents each result's conclusions. They are based on the number of symbol votes each idea/topic received. The major emphasis is on the partners' votes. The other votes can be seen in the charts and are counted in the 'All' category in the results. The votes are presented according to the logic of each groupwork. Some ideas/topics received votes from all the participant groups. These are marked in the results with 'ALL COLOURS'. All the groupwork results (also taking into account notes taken during plenary and group sessions) can be found in the appendices.

The results are followed by analysis and recommendations for developing cooperation. After the recommendations there is a chapter about partner comments. The report and each of its sections is commented on by four Felm partner representatives chosen during the consultation. They are: Lorato Moalusi (Chief Executive Officer, Kagisano Society Women's Shelter, KSWS), Florence Bongive Zuma (Senior Advocacy Officer, Acting Managing Director, CBR Education and Training for Empowerment, CREATE South Africa); Surendra Shresta (Executive Director, SAHAS, Nepal); John Hernández (Pastor, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia); and She Hongyu (Deputy General Secretary, Amity Foundation).

In each chapter you will also find a box with questions for further discussion. Their addition supports the continuation of the consultation's dialogue and its dynamic. Different questions are addressed to different groups, but the reader is naturally free to seek the answers to any question. We hope these questions can serve as a tool for continuing the partnership discussion within each organisation and between partners.

A summary of the main recommendations for developing partnership can be found in Chapter 8.8, which is followed by the appendices, containing detailed information about the consultation and its results.

2.4. Expectations of the consultation

During the first day (14 May) of the consultation we asked the participants about their expectations. Each participant was able to vote for only one expectation. These are the percentage results for each expectation.

I want to learn more about Felm

Primary expectation of all participants: 7.8%

Primary expectation of international partners: 14.3%

I want to learn more about partnership

Primary expectation of all participants: 48.4%

Primary expectation of international partners: 50%

I want to network with other partners

Primary expectation of all participants: 36%

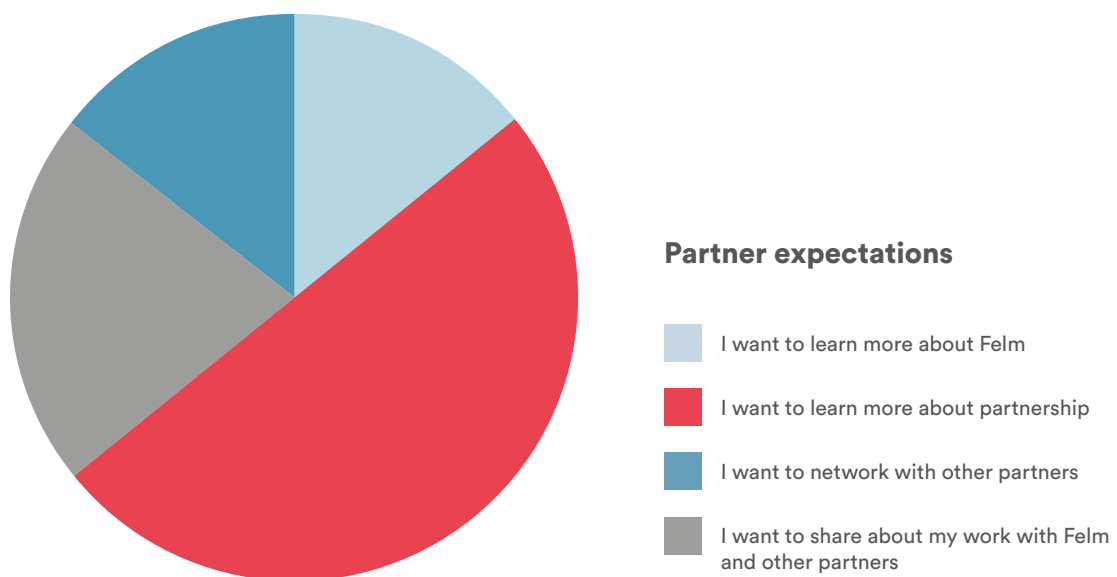
Primary expectation of international partners: 21.4%

I want to share about my work with Felm and other partners

Primary expectation of all participants: 7.8%

Primary expectation of international partners: 14.3%

Total votes: 64; total partner votes: 28





2.5. Analysis

The results show clearly that the main interest of both the partners and all the participants was to learn more about partnership. The willingness to network with Felm and other partners is also evident from the expectation results. This result also shows that partnership in itself is a theme that Felm and partners need to explore further together. Three days of consultation every five years is clearly not enough. Partnership is a dynamic and complex phenomenon that needs to be further studied and discussed.

2.6. Comments from partners

Lorato Moalusi: While partnerships at the global level are important, it is also imperative to link Felm partners within countries and regions. It was clear that partners within countries, regions or continents did not know or work with each other. Their collaboration will facilitate and feed into the global consultative forums.

She Hongyu: The figures and charts show the convening of the consultation indeed met the needs of participants. As time changes, there are new developments in partnership: geopolitical factors and the social and economic development of countries have all influenced the development of Felm's partners. This has also brought about changes in Felm's policy, as well as in the forms of cooperation between Felm and its partners.

John Hernández: The consultation was well prepared. It's important to note that this was a big challenge, as the outcomes and outputs show. I really believe that the methodological route was well utilised. Finally, the expectations expressed at the beginning of the encounter reflect the urgency of networks and of building healthy partner relationships. This meeting was a good example of how to do this.

Questions for further discussion

- What are your expectations of this report? What do you hope it will tell you? Did anything about the consultation leave you with questions?
- In your opinion, what are the most important aspects in partnership?
- When finishing this report Please send feedback to Felm regional director in your region. Did this report meet your expectations? If it did, which parts? If it did not, which parts? Do you see this report as a logical continuation of the consultation?



Kenneth Mtata and Channlyda Ry present their organisations to each other.

3. Our Shared Vision

3.1. Sharing of visions

Working Sessions 2 and 3 Wednesday 15 May

The opening plenary session began with an introduction to the theme of the consultation by Felm’s Director of International Cooperation, Tero Norjanen: ‘Committed plan to strengthen our partnership in realising our shared vision’.

Norjanen reminded the participants that the consultation was a safe space, where opinions could and should be expressed without fear. Creating and safeguarding this safe space was of the utmost importance to Felm. Upholding and respecting this safe space was also every participant’s responsibility.

The last Felm Partners’ Consultation was held in 2014. It produced valuable information and input for Felm’s ongoing 2017–2022 strategy. The four themes of hope were a way of categorising and directing Felm’s mission towards its vision ([Appendix 10.4.](#)) After Norjanen explained the context of the consultation, Felm’s Executive Director,



This shared vision wall tells of our striving for abundant life.

– ROLF STEFFANSSON, FELM

Rolf Steffansson, spoke about Felm’s organisational identity and the value of partnership.

In addition to Felm’s vision and mission, Felm’s four values directed our work. These were

justice, partnership, love of neighbour, and responsibility. Partnership was Felm’s core value. It influenced and directed everything we did. The most important question concerning partnership was: are the things we do in the best interests of those with whom we work? Justice was also related to the question of climate change. The western and northern hemispheres had been responsible for causing climate change. The south and east were now suffering the consequences most. Our emphasis thus needed to be on fighting climate change and supporting those who suffered from it. This was a matter of justice.

Following Steffansson’s remarks Norjanen emphasised that sharing our organisation’s vision was very important. Clear visions were a strong basis for making clear plans.

Steffansson then introduced the idea of the Felm International Advisory Board. The plan was for the Board to have twelve members, with at least one from each region. Meetings would be held twice a year. The meetings would rely on video conferencing as well as face-to-face meetings. The key question posed for the Board by Felm would be: ‘Are we heading in the right direction?’ (see more about Felm International Advisory Board in chapter 8.5.)

After Norjanen and Steffansson’s remarks the consultation proceeded with introductions of each organisation’s vision, comprising a statement and three things about the organisation the participant wanted to share. The group was divided into three subgroups. As each subgroup presented their statements, the others learned from the presenting partners.

Eventually, each organisation’s vision was attached to the front wall under the heading ‘Our Shared Vision’.

These are the visions that were presented under the Shared Vision topic:

First Step Cambodia: ‘We envision a Cambodia where children live and grow up in a safe environment, free from sexual abuse and able to fulfil their potential.’

LWF Mauritania: ‘Unity, dignity, peace and societal justice, tolerance, the fulfilment of basic human rights and quality of life.’

CSI-SI: ‘Transformation of violent conflict into a non-violent political process.’

The Finnish stakeholders' shared vision was: 'The implementation of Common Witness'.²

China Lutheran Seminary: 'To equip the servants of God with a deep understanding of the Word of God and a keen awareness of the contemporary context for the global Chinese-speaking churches.'

Amity Foundation China: 'Abundant lives, more justice and a better world'

CBR (Education & Training for Empowerment) CREATE: 'To work in solidarity with children, young people, and adults with disabilities, and their families and communities, towards inclusion and participation in a barrier-free South Africa.'

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bolivia: 'Living and proclaiming the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ in our Bolivian context, with faithful, servant, open communities of faith that are sustained in God's grace and unconditional love.'

ELCIN-EBF: 'Gospel, Diakonia, Counselling, and Development.'

LWF: 'Liberated by God's Grace, a Communion in Christ, living and working together for a just, peaceful, and reconciled world.'

Continuing Learning Organisation (CLO): 'To see local churches in Cambodia being spiritually rich, organisationally healthy, financially sustainable, and actively involved in the holistic transformation of Cambodia.'

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania: 'A church in which people know Jesus and have life in its fullness.'

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia – Department of Mission, Diakonia and Social Services: 'Aiming to create a just society through the provision of services that enable communities to be self-sustainable.'

Botswana Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Support Centre: 'A violence-free society in Botswana.'

Sahas-Nepal: 'A prosperous and just society for future generations.'

Lutheran Church of Senegal: 'Abundant life for all.'

IELA: 'To be a church that serves the whole of creation.'

² <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/mission-and-evangelism/towards-common-witness> (retrieved 9.8.2019)

Middle East Council of Churches (MECC): ‘To be the voice of the voiceless. Living in a peaceful and diverse society. Working for a just society.’

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia: ‘Service, witness, and communion.’

Bethel Mekane Yesus Girls School: ‘To create and oversee excellence in female education.’

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thailand (ELCT): Peace, joy, justice, and hope.’

United Mission to Nepal (UMN): ‘Fullness of life for all in a transformed Nepali society.’

Christian Study Centre: ‘A more peaceful world through interfaith harmony, peace, and justice.’

Lubango Orphanage, Angola: ‘Welcoming and housing marginalised children and young people. Religious and academic teaching. Literacy work with girls.’

Zimbabwe Council of Churches: ‘Churches together for a united, peaceful, just and prosperous nation.’

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land – ELS school: ‘We care, we share, for the future we prepare’

Lutheran Church in Cambodia (LCC): ‘The LCC as a channel of God’s blessing through a holistic mission to Cambodia and beyond

LWF Laos: ‘Empowering the poor for a just, peaceful, and reconciled livelihood.’

Euro-Burma Office (EBO): ‘An inclusive national vision through a dialogue process. Conflict transformation to end 70 years of conflict.’

Marhaban Centre: ‘Social work: holistic accompaniment. French language studies: learning that helps integration into French society and awareness about rights and duties. Counselling: clarifying Christianity to those from a Muslim background.’

Lutheran Theological Seminary (Hong Kong): ‘The ‘hub’ of theological education in the region: Hong Kong, Mainland China, and Southeast Asia.’

Felm: ‘Peace, joy, and righteousness.’

When each participant’s vision had been attached to the front wall, there was time to reflect on ‘Our Shared Vision’. Facilitators encouraged the participants to select

some of the visions they found interesting and keep them in mind for further networking.

The following comments were made before the closure of the session:

Kenneth Mtata: ‘Evangelisation isn’t clearly present in the visions – how does this relate to secularism in Europe?’

Jennifer Jivan: ‘The visions represent a variety of views.’

Daniel Orn: ‘The visions have many things in common – they show that Christian witness is expressed in a variety of ways.’

Jukka Jämsén (Finnish stakeholder): ‘The Trinity can be seen in the visions.’

Rolf Steffansson: ‘This shared vision wall tells us of a striving for “abundant life”.’



**Fullness of life for
all in a transformed
Nepali society**

**- UNITED MISSION
TO NEPAL (UMN)**

3.2. Analysis

Through this sharing we increased our understanding of our shared vision to bring hope to the marginalised (Output 1 of the consultation). Sharing our thoughts, ideas, and questions is usually the best way of empowering each other, so this session also responded to Output 6 of the consultation.

The idea behind sharing each organisation’s vision was to bring the identity of participant organisations to the surface and allow them to share current/important issues about their organisation. Vision and mission statements explained why the organisation existed in the first place, and sharing them meant sharing ‘who we are’. Placing the visions alongside each other gave us all the opportunity to witness the richness of our shared vision. Sharing them also showed us where and how we differed, and where our visions were, if not identical, very similar. Understanding where our visions touched each other and where they differed helped us to evaluate and develop partnership. When we understand who we are, it is easier to engage in dialogue and create partnerships with others. Some Felm church partners may have been surprised to find that Felm now also has NGOs as partners which are not necessarily related to the church. This does not mean that Felm is changing from being a faith-based organisation to a secular one. It simply shows that the scope of Felm’s work has broadened. Churches and church-related partners are still at the core of our work, and continuous theological reflection is needed now as much as ever.

3.3. Recommendations

Deepened and continuous reflection about vision and mission.

The concept of a shared vision inspired participants during the consultation. Discussions about vision and mission touch the very core of who we are and what we want to do. The more people are aware of their own and their partner organisation's vision and mission, the easier it is to make strategic choices concerning where to focus resources and the kind of partnership needed to achieve the organisation's goals.

Felm should focus on developing regional and global network meetings (and offer facilitation for such meetings) where these issues can be discussed further.³

Recommended topics for future workshops and discussion

- The organisation's **vision and mission** statements: How have they been formulated? Who was responsible for the process? What are their values based on? Are they biblically inspired? If they are, what was the guiding perspective that led to the present formulation? Felm and its partners might investigate together how well each organisation understands these vision and mission statements. Can everyone in the organisation commit themselves to these identity-constituting statements? How well is the vision communicated between beneficiaries and stakeholders?
- Are all the **organisation's projects** in line with its vision and mission?⁴ This question is a crucial test for the organisation's autonomy and identity. If something is not in line (as long as it provides funds), the ownership of projects is at high risk. And if the ownership of a project is in question, the project should be abandoned.
- **Values**, and what they mean in practice. When an organisation wants to explain how it works or the kind of policies and rules to which it adheres, it usually refers to its values. Values may be vague and open to a multitude of explanations. To make values more directive in steering the organisation's behaviour, commitments to actions (and policies) that represent each value should be formulated and implemented. The key is to derive verbal expressions from nouns (values). If 'truth' is the value, an example of derived action in the partnership context would be to 'always share risk evaluations truthfully with the partner'. Another would simply be 'always speak the truth'. Verbal expressions require much more commitment from staff than value expressions when they are expressed nominally. Felm's value is 'partnership', and one of the actions (in this

³ More about networks in Chapters 7.4.2. and 8.8.5.

⁴ One test for the organisation is to compare its projects' impact on its vision statement. Are they on the same line? Do they resonate with each other?

case, a Felm regulation) connected to this value is organising partnership consultations every five years. ‘Every fifth year we organise a partnership consultation.’ It is easy to see if the organisation ‘walks the talk’ or not.

Supporting Felm partners in organisational development

Felm may evaluate the need for organisational development with each partner and organise consultation and training for development if required. In such cases, regional donor networks should also be utilised. It is in the interest of all donors that the implementing partner has a clear **strategy, organisational structure, and autonomy**. It is a good idea to set these as a goal for cooperation (or as an administration-related project plan’s outcome).

It is important for Felm to have staff who can assist partners with their organisational development. A focus only on the impact and outcome of projects may result in a loss of direction. Being a partner means being interested in the whole organisation and how the project(s) fit(s) with each organisation’s identity. Having many projects and donors increases the need for organisational development and support.

Theology

Not every Felm partner has a Christian identity, but most do. In both cases, it is crucial for partners to understand each other’s identity. Understanding Felm’s church connection helps the partner to understand Felm and its mission more deeply. It is no less important for Felm to understand the value/cultural/faith identity of the non-Christian partner. We all have roots that go deeper than the surface of our organisation reveals. Open discussion about differences and similarities in identity strengthen partnership and clear up misunderstandings and possible prejudices on both sides. Theological reflection about organisational identity is essential for Christian faith-based partners. In these cases, the background to the formulation of vision and mission is based on faith and scripture, even if the actual written statements may not contain religious terminology. Felm should uphold the value of theological training for its staff to ensure a sufficient understanding of religiously motivated organisational identities. Those who are called on to facilitate regional or global network workshops should have adequate theological understanding alongside facilitation skills. This is also the case for churches’ organisational development and partnership reflection. Felm’s partnership with churches and Christian organisations has a special spiritual aspect that evades blunt definition.



**A church in which
people know Jesus and
have life in its fulness**

**- EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF TANZANIA**

3.4. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: How often has Felm discussed the Vision, Mission and Values (VMV) and shared it with partners? It is important to find the shared vision with the partners. Similarly, how often do partners discuss VMV with the board, staff and focus communities? Just having a document does not yet ensure that the VMV will be put into practice.

Lorato Moalusi : Organisational strengthening or development is a way for Felm to invest long-term in its partners. This facilitates sustainability beyond Felm funding. Strong organisations have a better chance of making a continuous and long-term impact on the communities in which they work.

She Hongyu: NGO workers are often not as good at being managers as entrepreneurs are. NGOs are often strongly mission-driven but weak in organisational management and development. Supervising an organisation in mission management, staff mobilisation, management strategies and human resource management are all key to the development of an organisation. It would be excellent if Felm could have staff helping partners with organisational management and development.

It would also be good to strength Felm staff's capacity in project management, because government funding has strict standards, stressing the efficient use of funding and results-based management. Support from Felm staff is therefore crucial.

John Hernández: Knowing the self-understanding of such diverse colleagues allowed us to find common understandings for different contexts. It is a huge challenge, especially for Christians, to understand that our faith takes concrete form in diverse ways, and it is very hopeful to find meeting points with other non-Christian experiences. It was not difficult for us to identify with the different perspectives, I think the greatest challenge is to work on the understandings that can produce tension.

Questions for further discussion

Questions for partners:

- Are you happy with your organisation's vision and mission statements?
- How does your organisation's vision guide your work? A good test of a vision statement: 1. Do you remember it easily? 2. Is it sufficiently challenging? 3. Can you be proud of it? Is it sufficiently realistic? Is it motivating?
- Do you have a clear strategy that helps you steer and administer your donor-funded projects?
- Do you think that the organisation's strategy needs to steer the work strictly or do you think that the strategy needs to be flexible allowing changes in work as challenges and operational environment change?
- Do you think that you should formulate your strategy to be more in line with major donors wishes and aspirations?
- Look at your organisation's values. Are the values visible in your organisation? Is it easy to derive verbal expressions from them? What kind of actions can you come up with?
- How would you improve our discussion and reflection on organisational identity?
- What does it mean to be the Lutheran Church in 2020? How does our identity as Lutheran Christians present itself to the communities in which we live and work? What is the 'added value' of being Lutheran? How does Lutheran faith connect with the shared vision of Felm and its partners to 'bring hope to the marginalised'?

Questions for Felm's staff and the Board:

- Is there enough room in Felm for an organisational identity discussion?
- How well do you understand Felm's theological background?
- Do you think our vision, mission, and values are in line with our theological and church-related background?



4. Our World – the challenges we face

Working Session 4
Wednesday 15 May

4.1. Keynote by Ojot Ojulu from the LWF⁵

Ojot Ojulu from the Lutheran World Federation began the session with a global survey of current megatrends and threats. He emphasised that climate change was an existential threat that affected every country across the globe. Climate change was very difficult to mitigate and fight against, because its root causes were global. Even if an island nation did everything it could to fight against it and mitigate its negative effects, it might still sink into the ocean and perish if other countries did not take sufficient action.

The gap between rich and poor had grown globally. Gender-based discrimination was also a huge problem in many places, though the worldwide community had made progress in this matter and had allocated significant resources to support and advocate gender justice. Ojulu also shared the LWF's concern that civil society was shrinking in many countries. Various kinds of harassment of human rights advocates and organisations were already a common phenomenon. There were differences between

⁵ For the whole keynote speech see [Chapter 9.2.1](#).

countries, but on the global scale harassment was on the rise. There were also clear signs that many actors suffered from increasing bureaucratic difficulties. For example, NGOs found it difficult to register or receive funding from other countries. Digital surveillance and fake news were also a major threat to civil society in many countries. Those who worked to promote human rights had suffered because of grave security threats. Due to these threats, their possibilities for advocacy had been diminishing.

National populism was also getting louder, and the ‘us’ and ‘them’ mentality was often heard in public discussion. Religion could also be used to enforce national populism and create hostility against people of different backgrounds.

4.2. Results from the groupwork on the operating environment

After the plenary session and Ojot Ojulu’s keynote the participants divided into groups according to regions. The aim of the groupwork was to discuss the global megatrends and threats mentioned in the keynote and prioritise their resulting effects. The megatrends were divided into four themes/headers: **climate change** (warming); **the growth of religions**; **the growth of inequality**; and **the growth of digitalisation**. The groups wrote the concrete effects they had witnessed in their context for each megatrend on post-it notes. The next task was to evaluate and prioritise the effects: how big was the impact of each effect in the local context? The ones with the biggest impact were attached to the wall. When each group had finished, all the consultation participants were able to vote with an exclamation mark (!) on the effects. All the results can be found in Appendices [9.2.3](#) and [9.2.4](#).



Food security, conflicts, fake news and inequality were among the most discussed topics in “Our World”-group works.

4.2.1. Prioritised results

The four global megatrends/threats were discussed in groups to identify common denominators and discern the concrete effects of megatrends in partners’ operating environments. The list in Appendix 9.2.3 presents all the effects discussed in the groups. It reveals a variety of difficult challenges which partners face in their local contexts. However, the most important perspective we can gain is from an examination of the prioritised effects each group decided to present on the ‘Our World’ wall.

These prioritised results help Felm and its partners see what the most pressing issues currently are. The findings can guide us in allocating resources. In reading Tables A, B, C, and D (Appendix 9.2.4) the reader should bear in mind that although a certain prioritised effect in a chart might not have received exclamation votes, it was still seen as a major prioritised topic in the group. The column on the furthest left of the tables presents all the burning issues in the global context.

The challenges/topics receiving the most exclamation marks from our partners are presented below.

A. Climate change	
Food security and sovereignty	9 votes – 22 votes total ALL COLOURS
Disasters such as floods and droughts	9 votes – 15 votes total
B. Digitalisation	
Fake news	10 votes – 18 votes total
C. Growth of religions	
Increased conflict, violence, terrorism	9 votes* – 9 votes total
Fundamentalism, extremist teaching	
+	
Link between politics and religion, fundamentalism	9 votes – 26 votes total
Religion as a basis for mobilising for development	7 votes – 21 votes total ALL COLOURS
D. Growth of inequality	
Increasing gap between rich and poor: ALL COLORS	10 votes – 28 votes total
*Conflict as a phenomenon was mentioned as a prioritised effect in three out of four themes and received a total of 17 partner votes (and a total of 26 among all participants). This heavy emphasis on conflict reflects the issue’s global severity.	

4.3. Analysis

As **climate change** progresses, the need to build our communities to withstand catastrophe and strengthen food security increases. This issue affects all Felm's partners, churches and NGOs alike. The discussions and results of the consultation reveal that the allocation of resources to build organisations' and communities' capacity to respond to these challenges is of the utmost importance.

The **digitalisation** megatrend is shaping our environment in many ways that are difficult to predict. The results reveal both negative and positive reactions to the matter. Negative effects are clearly dominant. This poses a challenge to us – we cannot turn back the clock, so how can we use digitalisation to benefit and help us? Three suggestions were made: 'connecting people sustainably', 'strengthening democratic access', and 'using digital tools to promote human rights'. These ideas should be further examined, along with the question about the general effects of digitalisation. Among the challenges highlighted in the digitalisation category, *fake news* came top of the list. This phenomenon destroys trust globally and within local communities. It creates divisions and fuels conflict. Digitalisation was also seen as being connected with the shrinking space of civil society. Governments and corporations gained access to information about citizens that could be used to suppress and control human rights advocates. Digitalisation issues were in deep need of more research, training, and networking to build a relevant capacity for Felm and its partners alike. We should not remain passive or simply reactive to digitalisation. Felm and its partners should pursue a more proactive perspective and a clear action plan to mitigate the negative effects of digitalisation and benefit from what it might contribute. The discussions also revealed that both the positive and negative effects of digitalisation are very related to context. The contextuality of digitalisation can also be seen as an opportunity for Felm and its partners to undertake research on the matter.

The negative effects of digitalisation can sometimes be tackled with quite basic models and ways of working. This especially applies to learning and facilitation processes. The partners' consultation was an example of this. Intentionally creating space and time without digital disturbance was found to be a relief in the age of 24/7 connectiveness. It also helped the participants to focus on the learning process.

As with digitalisation, the **growth of religions** was seen as having its pros and cons. Conflict fuelled by the growth of (a certain type of) religiosity as well as religions' positive role in mobilising for development were the hottest topics. We counted fundamentalism and extremist teaching, and their link to politics, as an umbrella of linked phenomena creating conflict, amounting to 18 partner and 35 of the total votes.

Religions' role in mobilising for development received many votes from partners, as well as from Felm workers and stakeholders. The positive role of religion is an important and inspiring topic within the Christian and interreligious contexts. What are the

common denominators between religions that help us mobilise?

What are the shared strengths of Lutheran faith and among churches in the Lutheran community that drive us to develop communities and lives?



What kind of positive impact could Felm and its partners create together through social media to promote peace and harmony in the regions?

The **growth of inequality** was spelled out in many groups, identifying a growing gap between rich and poor. It was pointed out that the gap was widening especially within countries – not between them. The new inequality paradigm was less about the divide between developed and undeveloped countries but the inequality the world suffered on a smaller geographical scale. Inequality was also seen in relation to gender and racial discrimination. Corruption and its link to the huge gap between rich and poor were discussed. Inequality also increased the likelihood of conflict.

Conflict and the various phenomena that cause it were the common denominator in all four megatrends. This is a reminder of the interconnectedness of our challenges. Fake news, the growing gap between rich and poor, climate change, and extremist religious teaching can all be seen as contributing to the increase of conflict.

4.4. Recommendations

Food security and sovereignty

Felm should organise a training of trainers (ToT) programme about food security for relevant Felm staff and selected partners from 2021. The programme should be linked to the existing Felm climate change resilience programme. Felm should also re-evaluate the importance of food security projects in Felm programmes. Building the food security capacity of Felm and its partners should permeate both development and church work programmes. Food security will be an even more pressing need in the future due to climate change.

From the perspective of church cooperation, rural congregations all over the world are in a key position to be food security advocates for local communities. Building the food security capacity of churches and their local workers can be seen as an integral part of building and enhancing the strategic goal of an *open church*. Both congregations and their surrounding communities need bridges that build and uphold meaningful communication and cooperation. The Lord's Prayer – 'give us this day our daily bread' – is not (only) a metaphor. It is a call for concrete action when receiving daily bread is becoming even more uncertain because of climate change.



Digitalisation

To increase understanding of the possibilities of digitalisation, Felm and its partners can identify relevant regional digitalisation training. Encouraging the use of digital platforms in conducting meetings is a way of decreasing our travel-related carbon footprint. This is possible in some regions, but not in all. Felm and its partners can also discuss how to mitigate the negative impact of digitality in their daily interaction. Meetings and other situations requiring face-to-face interaction mobile devices should be omitted from interaction during training. Felm can encourage and train willing partners in the use of social media to promote the partner's environmental agenda with more planning and awareness. Conflict sensitivity is also closely related to the use of social media. What kind of positive impact can Felm and its partners create through social media to promote peace and harmony in the regions?

In terms of the connection between digitalisation and theology and church issues, Felm can increase active collaboration with the universities of Turku and Durham (UK), and the networks provided by the Lutheran World Federation. There is a global group focusing on digital theology,⁶ in which Felm's presence could be stronger. This would naturally mean allocating human resources to researching the topic, and in time this

⁶ Digital theology can be understood as:

1. researching the possibilities of theological training via the digital medium;
2. researching the phenomenon of experiencing sacredness through digital platforms;
3. researching how digitality transforms theology, Christianity, Christian identity, and the life of the church.

input would prove beneficial for Felm's partners. Another option would be to identify a prominent researcher among our partners (or in their networks) and connect him/her to the digital theology research group, and provide a scholarship for academic study in the field.

Felm and its partners can also discuss how to mitigate the negative impact of digitality in their daily interaction. In order to create spaces free from digital disturbance Meetings and other situations requiring face-to-face interaction, mobile devices and computers could be omitted from interaction during training, the same way as we did in the consultation.

Religion as mobilising for development encourages Felm to be alert in its theological reflection, strategic development, and partner cooperation in development work, advocacy, and peacebuilding. In church cooperation Felm and its partners undertake development work through diakonia etc., without naming it as such. This is not to say that churches do not need to learn more about advocacy, for example: quite the contrary. To enhance 'mobilising religion for development', Felm needs to develop its internal discussion, reflection, and training in programme and regional cooperation. Structural obstacles in Felm should be removed for a more fluid interaction between units (and departments). This is a challenge for the restructuring of Felm's international department. One way to be aware of the theological resonance of programmes and projects is to allocate more resources for theological reflection in each unit. This may mean theologians working more closely with each unit full- or part-time in Felm. Internal training and workshops focusing on raising theological awareness in Felm's work internally and externally will also be important. Growing stronger in theological reflection and research on vision, mission, and cooperation will enhance Felm's added value in Finland and globally. It will also strengthen Felm's partnership with the churches.

4.5. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: Felm is underlining the importance of the climate change issue. However, the most important thing is how Felm will prioritise the issue in terms of funding and innovative programmes and projects to enable partners to implement climate change and disaster risk reduction, and linkage with other Finnish organisations (for example, companies).

Although climate change is a threat for developed and developing countries, rich and poor alike, it is by far the greatest threat to marginalised families, children, the disabled, women, and the elderly. Felm partners could design a new project or focus on the existing projects on i) hunger and malnourished people; ii) food production, availability, access, quality, utilisation and the stability of food systems; iii) inequality.

She Hongyu: Digitalisation, whether we like it or not, is changing our lives. Fundraising, promotion of organisations, office automation systems, and online banking are changing how we live. Partners should be encouraged to utilise technology in areas that will directly benefit the organisations like online fundraising. The earlier the intervention, the sooner dependency on particular donors will reduce.

Concerning religion as mobilising for development, sensitivity, as well as motivation, is needed.

I agree with the proposal to enable Felm's staff to have a better understanding of the theology on which the values and significance of our work is defined. 'Not all Felm partners have a Christian identity, but most do.' Even for partners without a Christian background, it would be good to understand Felm's theological reflection to bring more religious meaning to the work. Felm's staff does not need a deep grounding in theological thinking, but they must be able to share theological developments with partners.

However, religious sensitivity in different regions remains important. Attention should be paid to how evangelism and theological reflection are conducted.

John Hernández: When you look at our world, conflict situations are definitely the biggest challenge. The problem is that despite being part of the human experience, we have prioritised a negative view of conflict. To see conflicts as opportunities and make challenges an opportunity for hope requires concrete answers to specific problems. The globalisation of the world occasionally leads us to have a hopeless outlook. Recovering the force of real changes in concrete contexts and placing them in dialogue with global experiences allows us to develop an approach that overcomes fatalistic discourses.

Questions for further discussion

For all:

- How do you read the prioritised results of 4.2.1? Are the challenges mentioned in the results relevant in your context? In Your context's point of view: is there something missing?
- Does Felm or your organisation take these challenges sufficiently seriously? Does Felm allocate resources according to the results? What should be done less / more?
- Should Felm and its partners place more emphasis on dialogue and conflict prevention work? What would this mean (concretely) in your local context and community?
- How is the growth of inequality addressed in churches and their theological discussions? Does Christians and non-Christians in your context see wealth as blessing from God or other deity? If so, how does your church respond to these attitudes of "theology of glory"⁷

For partners:

- Are you familiar with Felm's Economic Justice and Peace and Reconciliation Policies? Are these policies in line with your organisation's ideas, strategy, and policy? Should we shift the focus of these policies? Do you think these policies are followed in our cooperation? If not, why?⁸
- What kind of digital innovations could help you in your work?
- In your opinion what are the best ways to counter religious extremism in your church and/or your community?
- What could be done to help your organisation fight against climate change be more effective?

⁷ Theology of glory can be seen as the opposite to a core lutheran teaching of "theology of the cross". Lutherans believe that God's blessing and presence is revealed amidst suffering and want. Material richness in this life is not a special sign of God's blessing in individuals life.

⁸ Felm Economic Justice Policy, https://felm.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Economic_justice_policy_of_Felm.pdf

5. Our Mission

Our Mission I & II

**Wednesday 15 May. Working Session 5. Working Session 6.
Thursday 16 May, Working Session 7.**

Felm understands and perceives mission with its partners through four Themes of Hope leading to the vision of righteousness, peace, and joy. The Themes of Hope are: ‘We witness to God’s boundary-crossing love’; ‘We defend the dignity and human rights of the marginalised’; ‘We strive for a more just world’; and ‘We build peace and reconciliation’.

Through these themes of hope Felm collaborates and builds partnerships with churches and organisations all over the world. The themes also testify to the diversity of Felm’s partnership(s). Felm hopes to share these themes with all our partners, but it is natural that with some Felm focuses mostly on one or two of the themes, and the respective goals of international cooperation. With churches Felm always witnesses to God’s boundary-crossing love. Felm recognises this as the identity shaping the mission of churches throughout the world. Felm cooperates with peacebuilding organisations and initiatives under the theme of building peace and reconciliation.

We constructed our sessions for the ‘Our Mission’ part of the consultation under the four Themes of Hope. Felm invited partners from different geographical areas to join groups according to their expertise and knowledge of the theme. Before the groupwork there was a plenary session in which Felm asked four partner representatives to deliver a keynote on each theme. Partner keynotes were accompanied by Felm unit directors’ keynotes.

In addition to the Themes of Hope Felm has cross-cutting themes which, as the name suggests, cut through/permeate all its programmes. These themes are: conflict sensitivity; the environment and climate change; and gender justice. At this consultation Felm chose to focus on the climate change issue because of its urgency. A group was formed to respond to the challenges Felm’s partners face in their environments. Vongmany Vongphachanh from LWF Laos was asked to deliver a keynote on the climate change issue.

One of the consultation’s expected outputs was to achieve an understanding of the relevance of Felm’s strategy implementation with its partners. Partners were asked to respond to a questionnaire about Felm cooperation before the consultation. The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain feedback about the relevance of Felm strategy and prepare the participants for the groupwork. The participants’ questionnaire responses are not included in this report, but an overview can be found in [Appendix 9.3](#).

5.1. The Themes of Hope and Climate Change – plenary discussion

Theme of Hope 1: ‘We witness to God’s boundary-crossing love’ Director of Felm’s Church Cooperation unit, Pia Kummel-Myrskog

What does mission mean? People often think that mission means only the first Theme of Hope – ‘We witness to God’s boundary-crossing love’. However, at Felm we talk about holistic mission. All four Themes of Hope are part of this holistic mission. The four themes taken together constitute hope.

The first Theme of Hope (25% of Church Cooperation’s work) includes:

- Sharing the good news. Not just from North to South but also from South to North.
- Translation of books of the Bible. An integral part of Felm’s work: 46 books were translated in 2018.
- Theological education: both scholarships and support for theological institutions.

We see the congregation as an open and boundary-crossing community, and as part of the global church. Exclusion and inclusion are realities in different contexts. It is important to Felm that congregations are inclusive. Our concept is non-discrimination, accessibility (both physical and spiritual), and diaconal formation.

After Kummel-Myrskog’s presentation **She Hongyu** from Amity Foundation, China was asked to present her organisation’s work in relation to the first Theme of Hope.

- In 1987 Amity foundation’s Bible printing began. God’s boundary-crossing love was very important for our work. This year marks a milestone: 200,000,000 Bibles have been printed by Amity Foundation.
- A major shift in funding: Amity has progressed from 100% international funding to 90% Chinese funding. A major part of our funding comes via the internet.
- Important themes for Amity: SDGs are for the whole world. No one is left behind. We are an inclusive society.
- Amity’s vision is inclusivity. Both genders, disabled people, and young people should all be involved. Boundary-crossing love means churches should also be taken on board.
- Amity is also a member of Act Alliance and is engaged in some disaster work.
- In the field of innovation the focus is on AI. It is a tool that enables access to people, but it also creates inequality. For example, Amity has been training farmers in digitalisation.

Theme of Hope 2: ‘We defend the dignity and human rights of the marginalised’

Director of Felm’s Development Cooperation unit, Katri Leino-Nzau

The world is constantly changing. Technology solves some problems but also creates new ones. Inequality is growing, and climate change becomes a greater risk every day. International politics is changing: power politics, polarisation, and marginalisation have increased. Intersectional discrimination is a current challenge.

Felm is striving to change the world and make it a more equal place. All Felm’s work is human rights-based, and we seek to decrease/end marginalisation and discrimination.

Important topics in the second Theme of Hope:

- Gender is very important. It is central to most of Felm’s work.
- We advocate and provide services for people with disabilities.
- Minorities should live as part of society. They may be religious groups or castes, indigenous communities, etc.
- We seek to improve the lives of the exploited – slaves, the elderly, etc. – through advocacy and other methods.
- A safe childhood: we support child protection. Through mother tongue-based education and other methods we also seek to support children so that they are not marginalised.
- Climate change work is central to Felm’s work, and we also seek, for example, to decrease the number of our flights. We try to incorporate innovations in our work.

After Leino-Nzau’s presentation, **Surendra Shrestha** from the ‘Group of Helping Hands’ (SAHAS), Nepal, was asked to present his organisation’s work in connection with the second Theme of Hope.

Discrimination against women and girls in Nepal and the best practices for tackling it.

- The family is a unit. Different levels and social structures must be considered in planning work
- In Nepal patriarchy and the caste system are still a reality. Women and children are second-class citizens. Dalit women and girls are often undervalued. For example, women and Dalits are excluded from participation in politics.
- Partnership with communities is SAHAS’s basic principle.
- It is a bottom-up process with 37 organisations. 85,000 families benefit from the work.
- Some examples of SAHAS’s work: women are taught to read and write. Women gather together to discuss their problems. They write minutes and are proud of their work.
- A big problem: when women menstruate, they are put in a cow shelter for 3-4 days. One to two teenagers die annually because of this practice.
- SAHAS works against child marriage.
- SAHAS has supported the establishment of small businesses.

- With Felm's support 15,000 families have been supported in 4 districts.
- Felm has a 3-year project with SAHAS, but a 9-year partnership with community-based network organisations. The aim is to strengthen awareness raising about climate change and develop resilient communities through adaptation and mitigation.

Theme of Hope 3: 'We strive for a more just world'

Director of Felm's Peacebuilding and Advocacy unit, Kristiina Rintakoski

- During the 2014 Partners' Consultation one key priority emerged: work for social justice and peace
- For many partners, which are often churches, advocacy is a prophetic mission and concrete work to help people. At the same time, it is important to consider a rights-based approach.
- The right to hope. Human rights are important if hope is to be possible. Felm's duty is to empower civil society and ensure that duty bearers remember rights holders and honour their rights.
- So – why advocacy? The analogy of a river is helpful: if a river is in flood, people can be provided with pastoral care and other kinds of first aid. They can then be helped to resume cultivation and farming etc. However, why the river flooded in the first place should be investigated later. Why did it happen upstream? Did a dam cause it? What can be done to prevent future floods? In this analogy first aid is emergency relief, and seed supply and training for better farming are development cooperation. Identifying the cause of the flooding and actions to prevent it in future is advocacy.
- Through advocacy we seek to influence societal structures at different levels to make the world a more just place for all.
- Felm can support partners in advocacy. Advocacy is more influential when those whose rights are down-trodden do the actual advocacy work.
- Advocacy should be incorporated more into our various projects around the world.

After Kristiina Rintakoski's presentation, **Lorato Moalusi**, from the Botswana Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Support Centre, was asked to present her organisation's work in relation to the third Theme of Hope.

- The vision of the BGBVC (Botswana GBV Prevention and Support Centre) is a peaceful, safe and just society, free from gender-based violence.
- There is a lot of gender-based violence in Botswana. 67% of women have experienced it.
- The organisation operates an outreach and education programme with Felm.
- At first they worked in only one city/town, but in 2013 they started to work with Felm in 4 regions. The aim is to help communities understand what gender-based violence is. In communities the mindset has often been that GBV is normal because men have the right to abuse women. The project involves

cultural dialogues in communities in which the participants try to identify the causes of violence. At first men and women talk with each other in separate groups. On the following day the groups are merged. Then information about GBV and ways to tackle it are shared. Teaching is also offered in schools at the same time as parents are being informed about these issues. The result is that there is more awareness of rights.

- Challenges: many think that only physical violence should be reported. Children find it difficult to report violence. Bribery is also a problem. For example, in one community seven girls became pregnant by older men and could no longer go to school. The men gave money to the girls so they would not report them. Our organisation's advocacy encourages people to report such incidents and not just accept the money and remain silent.
- The organisation also undertakes HIV work and operates women's shelters.

Theme of Hope 4: 'We build peace and reconciliation'

Senior Advisor for Felm's Peacebuilding unit, Tanja Viikki

- Peace and reconciliation were prioritised in the 2014 consultation alongside advocacy.
- Felm works with partners. We call for cooperation between international organisations and CSOs and other stakeholders.
- We strive for inclusiveness and a just peace:
- We focus on local peace actors. Groups (e.g. women) often excluded from processes are supported. Peace is rarely sustainable without inclusion.
- Unjust structures must be addressed.
- Real peace and reconciliation also take place at an emotional level -> psycho-social support is an important new element in our peace work.
- A dialogue-based approach: different groups engage in dialogue at different levels, from the local to the national.
- A bottom-up approach and inclusivity are very important in our peace work.
- Information should be incorporated into the process from the bottom up.
- Conflict sensitivity
- Advocacy and international responsibility are an important element of peace work. There is a global responsibility to resolve conflicts and problems.

After Tanja Viikki's presentation, **John Hernández** from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Columbia was asked to present his church's work in relation to the fourth Theme of Hope.

How can groups emerge from conflict? Healing in social processes is an important theme.

- Conflict and transition from it are part of life. We therefore need to consider how to process conflicts and find healing.

- An analogy with peace processes: healing vs curing. A cure is the application of treatment. Healing is a process. A cure does not automatically make us healthy.
- The Colombian peace process presents new opportunities for people.
- Conflicts produce emotions and feelings, and these need to be considered. People should be given the opportunity to process their emotions and feelings. Forgiveness cannot be demanded.
- If people lack hope, it is difficult to end conflict. People should find new meaning so that they will have opportunities to go further.
- What makes us human? People again need to see themselves as human beings – to rehumanise themselves. In conflicts the other party has attempted to dehumanise their adversary.

Cross-cutting theme: climate change

Vongmany Vongphachanh from the Lutheran World Federation Laos was asked to present their work in the area of climate change.

- LWF Laos has been engaged in partnership with Felm for seven years.
- LWF Laos undertakes climate change work in northern Laos. Climate change as a term is new in Laos, but it is affecting the lives of millions of people, especially given 7 million people, 80% of the population, are farmers.
- LWF Laos is gathering information. The weather is extreme. Temperatures are very high; storms are very heavy. There is an impact on crops, because there are more insects than before, for example. Problems have already arisen, but they are becoming more frequent every year.
- Work is undertaken with the government at the national level. The government has a climate change plan. An important theme for the government is climate change adaptation.
- Awareness raising: when people are asked about problems, they are aware of the problems but are unaware that this is a global phenomenon. The LWF has raised awareness – for example, in drama – to enable people to understand what climate change is.
- People are trained to mitigate the effects of climate change. For example, forest-friendly agriculture and stoves that use less wood were introduced to people so that forests could be protected.
- At the district and national levels networking is undertaken with various organisations to share information with others.
- The government gave four hectares of land to LWF Laos to use for training farmers. There they can learn about how to grow different plant species.
- LWF Laos has a new strategy for 2019–2024. Climate justice is a cross-cutting issue in the work. The LWF needs considerable help with mitigation methods etc.
- One district governor emphasised that the most vulnerable should be at the centre of the work, because the poor will only get poorer otherwise.



Voting with symbols helped us to see what the burning issues in our cooperation were now.

5.2. Prioritised results of four Bridges of Hope and one Tree of Resilience – groupwork

After the plenary session described in the previous chapter the participants were divided into groups to work on tasks called the ‘Bridge of Hope’ (1–4) and ‘Tree of Resilience’ (climate change). The Bridge of Hope groupwork proved a quite successful mode for interaction and method for Felm to receive feedback on its strategy’s relevance and implementation, and create a platform for networking in thematic fields for partners (Consultation Outputs 2 and 3). The ideas we received during the groupwork discussion and the assurance that our cooperation was bringing fruit were the most relevant feedback we could take away from the exercise.

Each group was facilitated by Felm workers with a connection to and expertise on the theme in question. The aim was to share and reflect on our mission, with all its successes and difficulties. The working order in all the groups was the same. **First**, the participants reflected on past successes with Felm. What had worked and what had we achieved together? The first phase was about forming the foundation for the Bridge of Hope. The **second phase** was about discussing the challenges we faced in the local context, as well as with our partnership. The **third phase** was about finding solutions to challenges and obstacles in our cooperation and improving our shared mission. In the fourth phase the groups were asked to envision a brighter future – what would we achieve when the obstacles and challenges were overcome?

The prioritised results are presented below according to symbol votes. Hearts and exclamation marks are summarised and counted as the sum of votes. It is noteworthy that in all groupwork the facilitators were creative, and the methods and results of the groupwork were varied. This means that the voting results are not comparable.

Bridge of Hope 1 “We witness to God’s boundary-crossing love”

The foundation of the Bridge – Successes in Theme of Hope 1

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. Training and capacity building | 3 partner votes |
| 2. Gender equality | 3 Felm votes |
| 3. Sharing good news and faith formation | 3 Stakeholder votes |
| 4. Support of marginalized groups and minorities | 1 Felm vote |

The challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 1

Local context

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Sustainability | 1 partner vote |
| 2. Migration policy | 1 partner vote |
| 3. Environment as a whole | 1 Board member vote |
| 4. Being Christian in a Muslim city | 1 Felm vote |

Challenges in partnership

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Complicated reporting system | 1 Felm vote |
| 2. Language | 1 Felm vote |
| 3. Communication in two levels:
Custom & culture | 1 Felm vote |
| 4. Power -> Language | 1 Felm vote |

Solutions to challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 1

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Communication issues
(importance, language, context) | 4 partner votes |
| 2. Responding in time (reporting) | 3 partner votes (and 6 total votes) |
| 3. Training, capacity building
(in communication with Felm) | 3 partner votes (and 5 total votes) |
| 4. Felm to revise reporting system | 1 partner vote (and 4 total votes) |
| 5. Felm needs to flexible according to local context | 1 partner vote (and 5 total votes) |
| 6. Prioritize the projects | 4 Felm votes |
| 7. Better pre-planning | 2 Felm votes |
| 8. Felm staff’s understanding of the local situation | 1 Felm vote |
| 9. Wise use of resources | 1 Board member vote |

What will we reach when these obstacles are overcome?

What will the future look like in Theme of Hope 1?

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. A better world | 2 partner votes (and 4 total votes) |
| 2. Local, more independently funded church | 2 partner votes (and 4 total votes) |
| 3. A fighting church – a church that fights for life | 1 partner vote (and 10 total votes) |
| 4. Hope in Jesus Christ | 1 partner votes (and 9 total votes) |
| 5. A complete change in how we cooperate | 3 Felm votes |
| 6. All the above topics without distinction | 12 partner votes (and 15 total votes) |

Bridge of Hope 2 “We defend the dignity and human rights of the marginalized”

The Foundation of the Bridge – Keys to Success

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Respect | 2 Partner votes |
| 2. Trust | 2 partner votes |
| 3. Knowledge of the context | 1 partner vote |
| 4. All of the “keys to success” | 1 partner vote |

The challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 2

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Poverty | 2 partner votes (and 4 total votes) |
| 2. Limited human resources | 1 partner vote |
| 3. Organisational developments | 1 partner vote |
| 4. National policies restricting NGOs | 1 partner vote |
| 5. Droughts | 1 partner vote |
| 6. The reporting system contains items that aren’t applicable to us | 1 Felm vote |
| 7. Climate change | 1 Felm vote |
| 8. Limited skills | 1 Board member vote |

Solutions to challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 2

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Exchange ideas, learning from other partners | 3 partner votes (and 9 total votes) |
| 2. Developing the reporting system and material | 3 partner votes |
| 3. Building capacity | 2 partner votes (and 4 total votes) |
| 4. More volunteers | 1 partner vote (and 2 total votes) |
| 5. Long term partnership | 1 partner vote (and 2 total votes) |
| 6. Advocacy | 4 Felm votes |
| 7. Climate change: local solutions and at every level of the partner organisation | 5 Felm votes |
| 8. Restoring institutional memory | 2 Felm votes |
| 9. Exchange visits | 1 Felm vote |
| 10. General vote to all these solutions | 2 partner votes |

What will we reach when these obstacles are overcome?

What will future look like in Theme of Hope 2 “In Perfect World”

1. Sustainable Felm team for certain countries	3 partner votes (10 total votes) ALL COLORS
2. Women empowerment	3 partner votes (9 total votes)
3. We will share knowledge through exchange visits	3 partner votes (5 total votes)
4. Partnership platform to tackle problems	2 partner votes (7 total votes)
5. Access to justice	2 partner votes (7 total votes)
6. Empowerment of local stakeholders	2 partner votes (3 total votes)
7. Share stories thematic areas	1 partner vote
8. Poverty alleviation	2 Felm votes
9. Felm and partner have same vision & standards	2 Felm votes (3 total votes)
10. Space for defending rights	1 Felm vote
11. Access to services	1 Felm vote
12. Annual conferences for sharing success stories	1 stakeholder vote
13. All ideas without distinction	9 partner votes (and 13 total votes)

Bridge of Hope 3 “We strive for a more just world”

The Foundation of the Bridge of Hope 3

The group formed a ‘Basis’ table, describing our successful cooperation under the theme. The table received only one vote (heart), from Felm staff, regarding the raising of the age of consent to 18 in the penal code.

The challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 3

1. Violence against people in rural areas	1 Felm vote
2. Murder of social leaders	1 Felm vote
3. Harmful cultural practices and expectations	1 Felm vote

Solutions to challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 3

What do you need? What can Felm offer as an organisation for enhanced advocacy work?

1. Networking within countries	4 partner votes (13 total votes) ALL COLORS
2. Capacity building, training	5 partner votes (5 total votes)
3. Lobbying at international forums	3 partner votes
4. Soft approach – building a relationship with governments	2 partner votes
5. Technical and financial support for the human rights mechanism	1 partner vote (2 total votes)
6. International campaign, access building	1 partner vote (2 total votes)
7. What can we do to ensure that the work continues when we aren’t there?	6 Felm votes (7 total votes)
8. Unfolding access	1 Felm heart

What will we achieve when these obstacles are overcome?

What will the future look like in Theme of Hope 3 – Future prospects

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Key concepts: Well-coordinated, evidence-based, interconnected, shared coalitions, influential | 7 partner votes (15 total votes) |
| 2. Capacity needs (general) | 3 partner votes (4 total votes) |
| 3. Capacity needs in coalition building, and making them functional | 3 partner votes (4 total votes) |
| 4. LWF coordinates advocacy with its members | 1 partner vote (2 total votes) |
| 5. Finding links in national and subnational advocacy linked to international processes | 1 partner vote (2 total votes) |
| 6. Finding links between the donors of Felm’s individual partners | 6 Felm votes |
| 7. Capacity in theological advocacy | 2 Felm votes (5 total votes) |
| 8. Capacity needs: Advocacy in the context of shrinking and hostile space | 3 Felm votes (4 total votes) |
| 9. Finding links within Felm partners nationally and regionally | 2 Felm votes (4 total votes) |
| 10. Capacity need: turning data into advocacy tools | 2 Felm votes |
| 11. Capacity needs: taking leadership in coalitions | 1 Felm vote |
| 12. Finding thematic links between Felm partners | 1 Felm vote |

Bridge of Hope 4 “We build peace and reconciliation”

The Foundation of the Bridge of Hope 4:

The recognised success of our cooperation

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Credibility | 2 partner votes |
| 2. Role of faith | 1 partner vote |

The challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 4

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Educational system (negative mindsets) | 1 partner vote (2 total votes) |
| 2. RBM limitations | 2 Felm votes |
| 3. Peacebuilder burnout | 1 Felm vote |
| 4. Security threat | 1 Felm vote |
| 5. All challenges in table | 3 partner votes |

Solutions to challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 4

The group named these solutions “opportunities”.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. A long-term approach | 3 partner votes (6 total votes) ALL COLORS |
| 2. Building a peace advocacy network to share good experiences | 1 partner vote (9 total votes) |
| 3. Using religious institutions to mobilise for peace | 1 partner vote (6 total votes) |
| 4. Being more adaptive | 1 partner vote (2 total votes) |
| 5. Invest in strong and accountable organisation | 1 partner vote (2 total votes) |
| 6. The education system needs exploration | 1 partner vote (2 total votes) |
| 7. A change of language to avoid misunderstanding | 1 partner vote |
| 8. Not limiting our scope to RBM | 1 Felm vote |

What will we reach when these obstacles are overcome? – what will the future look like in Theme of Hope 4 – The future of peacebuilding

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. Link network of “best practices” to enhance the framework of “best fit” | 6 partner votes (12 total votes) |
| 2. Role of facilitator | 5 partner votes (13 total votes) |
| 3. Promote dialogues in humanitarian aid | 2 partner votes (5 total votes) |
| 4. Sustainability | 2 partner votes |
| 5. 4D | 1 partner vote |
| 6. Don’t be trendy | 1 Board member + 1 Felm vote |
| 7. Go beyond RBM | 2 Board member question marks |
| 8. Vertical connection | 1 Felm + 1 Board member vote |
| 9. 360 degrees | 1 Board member vote |
| 10. Multiplier | 1 Felm vote |
| 11. Role (in general) | 1 partner vote (3 total votes) |
| 12. Principles | 1 partner vote |
| 13. Whole table received | 7 partner votes (12 total votes) |

Group Climate Change: “Tree of Resilience”

The Roots table of the tree received no votes

Trunk of the Tree: what can we do in partnership to build communities resilient to climate change?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Theological reflection | 4 partner votes (5 total votes) |
| 2. Training on fundraising, local fundraising | 3 partner votes (4 total votes) |
| 3. Networking | 2 partner votes (7 total votes) ALL COLORS |
| 4. Capacity building | 2 partner votes (6 total votes) |
| 5. A shared mitigation plan | 2 partner votes (3 total votes) |
| 6. Felm’s lobby on behalf of partners | 2 partner votes |
| 7. Be intentional | 1 partner vote |
| 8. Strategic Felm and partner planning | 2 Felm+ 1 Board member votes |
| 9. Technical support | 2 Felm votes |
| 10. Climate change and the environment as a cross-cutting issue | 1 Felm vote |
| 11. Learning and sharing forum | 1 Felm vote |



Fruits of the Tree: What will we achieve together?

Results and actions leading to these results.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Community will be empowered to stand up for their rights and protect their environment | 4 partner votes (11 total votes) |
| 1a. <i>Community empowerment</i> | 2 partner votes (3 total votes) |
| 1b. <i>Training of trainers</i> | 1 partner vote |
| 2. Communities care for the environment, use resources responsibly and maintain them for the future | 4 partner votes (10 total votes) |
| 2a. <i>Networking</i> | 3 partner votes (5 total votes) |
| 2b. <i>Capacity building for partners</i> | 3 partner votes (4 total votes) |
| 3. The local forest is protected | 4 partner votes (5 total votes) |
| 4. A resilient livelihood | 2 partner votes (3 total votes) |
| 4a. <i>Renewable energy</i> | 1 partner vote (2 total votes) |
| 4b. <i>Plantation</i> | 1 stakeholder vote |
| 5. Communities are safe and enjoy a peaceful environment | 1 partner vote (5 total votes) |
| 5a. <i>Networking</i> | 3 partner votes (5 total votes) |
| 5b. <i>Capacity building for partners (the same actions as in number 2)</i> | 3 partner votes (4 total votes) |
| 6. A technological solution | 1 partner vote (2 total votes) |
| 6a. <i>Adopting climate-smart technologies for lifestyle, agriculture, livelihoods</i> | 1 Felm + 1 Board member vote |
| 7. Government need to set budget for disaster risk reduction | 1 partner vote |
| 7a. <i>Negotiate</i> | 1 partner vote |
| 8. A national and international agreement will be implemented | 4 Felm votes |
| 8a. <i>Advocacy campaign at all levels</i> | 5 Felm votes |
| 9. A disaster risk reduction and mitigation plan in place at the community level | 3 Felm votes |
| 10. The curriculum is developed to include climate change subject | 1 Felm vote |
| 11. A strict policy and practice (climate policy) for partner organisations | 1 Felm vote |
| 11a. <i>Implementation and evaluation / monitoring plan</i> | 1 Felm vote |



Building the Tree of Resilience together

5.3. Summary of feedback discussions concerning Bridge of Hope and Tree of Resilience groupwork

In their comments participants said their experience of the groupwork had offered good lessons and fruitful discussion. Participants observed that the consultation had an open atmosphere that had allowed them to freely express their ideas, opinions, and feelings. The discussion had also helped in reflecting on their own situation. Working and discussing together had prompted ideas for what to do in projects. All the groupwork had underlined the importance of Felm's partners and their work. Some facilitators had been anxious before the discussion, because the organisations differed greatly in size, capacity, identity etc., but it was ultimately easy to see that each partner was doing something that could be shared with the others.

This groupwork helped to see the variety of the expertise of the partners and Felm. Some participants felt that this expertise was not yet being optimally used, and there was work to be done if this community was to fully exploit it. The key challenge was to see how to improve networking between partners. The International Advisory Board could be one solution. Steffansson commented that the Advisory Board would play a role, especially in information sharing.

The participants also found many similarities as well as differences between each groupwork. Several comments emphasised that there had been no donor-recipient feeling in the group discussion, but that it had as if they had been working as a united group. It was felt that much of the responsibility for the work was on the partners' side. Some participants were a little confused, and some even disturbed, about the role of the visitors (called 'sailors') between groups. These visitors were other Felm workers, board members, and stakeholders. Many of the visitors mentioned that it was challenging to catch up with the conversation and see the whole picture of what was being done and discussed in the groups. Tero Norjanen commented that this experience was a kind of metaphor for the challenge of being in a leadership position. Leaders usually got a glimpse of parts of the joint mission. Seeing the big picture, the whole story, was challenging.

5.4. Analysis

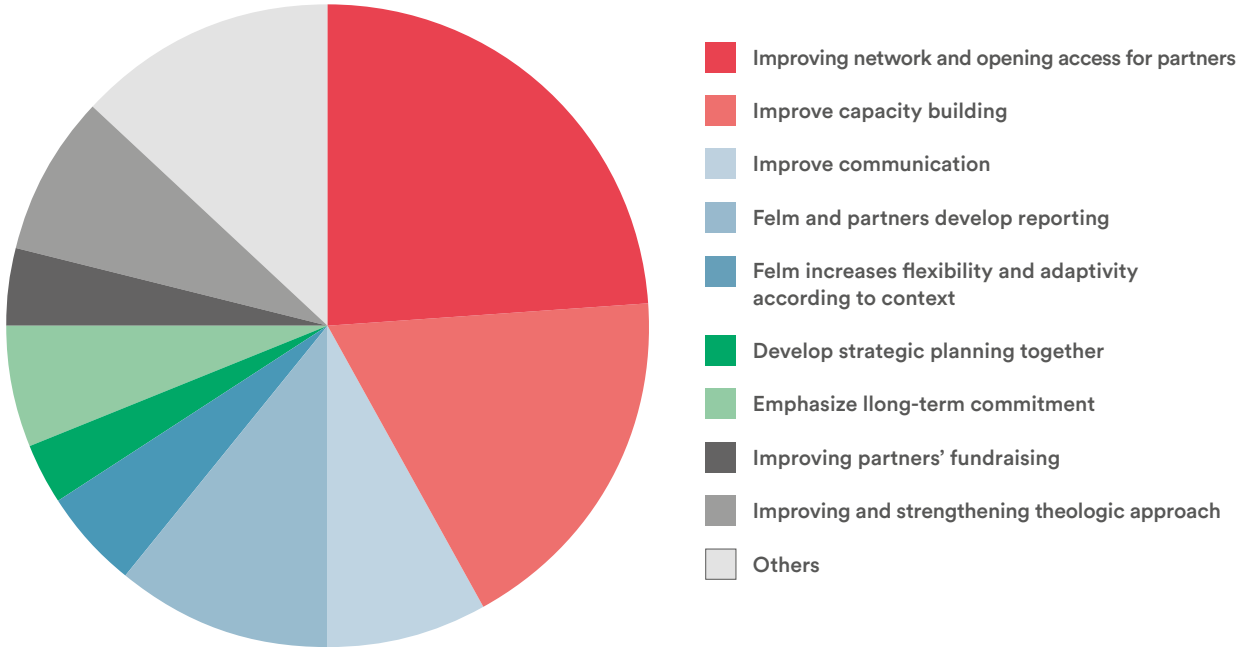
The Bridge of Hope groupwork sessions were like idea factories, presenting several ideas for programme and cooperation development. The whole of the 'Our Mission' session provided Felm with valuable information about the implementation of its partner strategy (Consultation Output 2). Felm and its partners' work is broad and varied in scope, which both enriches and challenges partnership. *The Bridge of Hope* and *Tree of Resilience* groupwork was planned to increase the networking of our partners, who were facing similar issues and involved in the same kind of mission (Consultation Output 3).

Comparing the results of this groupwork and distilling some trends or focal points are difficult because of each facilitator's creative approach. Comparing the suggestions for 'solutions to obstacles and gaps in cooperation' (phase three of the work) and then grouping similar proposals afford a general perspective on cooperation development. This summary of suggested solutions is presented below in two charts (partners and all participants). The partners considered regional and global networking with access building the best way to improve cooperation. Capacity building in different areas received the second highest number of votes. The 'other' category was a mixture of ideas that could not be categorised under any other topic.

Concerning partnership reflection and development, Felm's regional directors made notes about ideas and recurring themes in all groups, and constructed a SWOT model ([Chapter 7.3](#)).

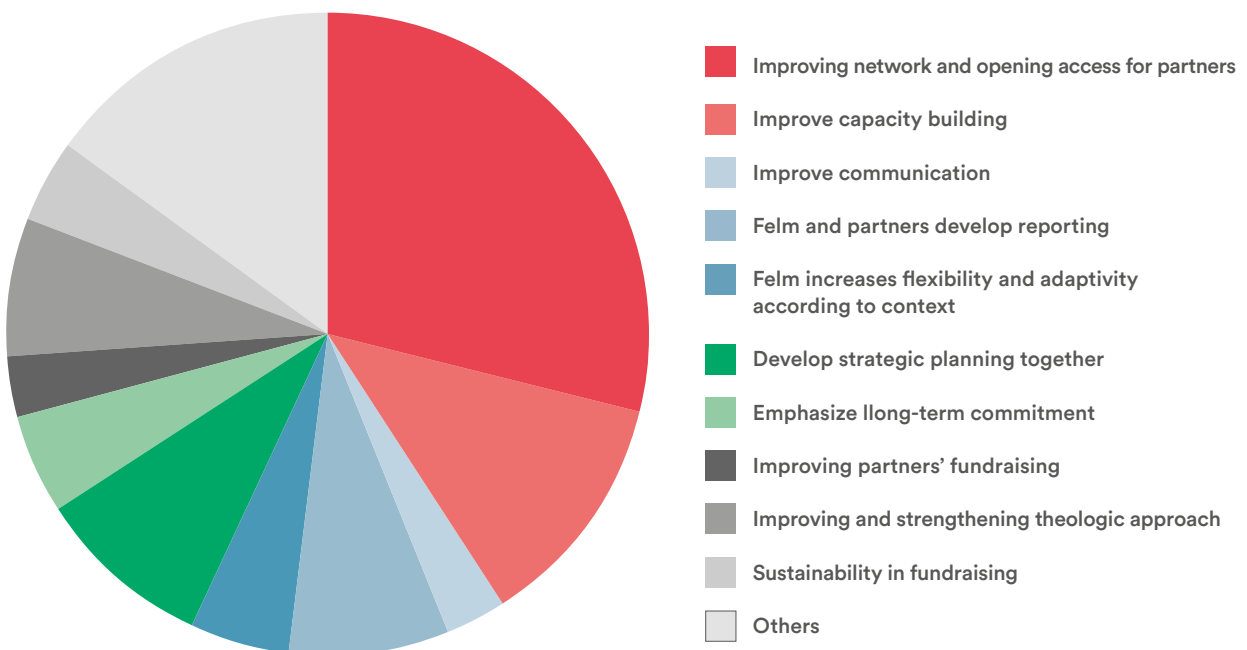
5.4.1. Solutions Chart 1 – Partners

Solutions to obstacles and gaps in co-operations – Partner votes



5.4.2. Solutions Chart 2 – Everyone

Solutions to obstacles and gaps in co-operations – All participants votes



5.5. Recommendations

Networks

Improving and strengthening networks was clearly the most supported way of improving cooperation. This result received even more emphasis later in the partnership discussion phases. Recommendations concerning the improvement of regional networks can be found in [Chapter 8.8.5](#). However, I recommend that Felm units explore the groupwork results and again investigate the shared ideas concerning network improvement and access building, summarise them, and develop ideas further as suggestions for action and improvement, a.) within Felm's organisation and b.) in our cooperation with our partners. A facilitated workshop concerning the improvement of networking should be conducted using the material and recommendation of this report, as well as Felm units' suggestions.

Capacity building

Constant evaluation of capacity building needs is crucial if Felm and its partners are to focus on the right things. Clear capacity building plans should be made with partners in the regions. The challenge is always to reconcile 'what we have' with 'what we need' in a constantly changing situation. This should also go both ways. It is a common misconception that the donor gives, and the implementing partner only receives. To achieve a balance, enough time must be reserved to create a shared understanding of the needs and opportunities. Partner organisations could arrange workshops for Felm (and other donor) staff in each region to improve their capacity in the local context or for various other issues that would help Felm staff to cooperate with partners and understand the operating environment.

The need for capacity building expertise should have a stronger impact on Felm HR policy. There is a damaging tendency to see the capacity building process too narrowly – as a single area involving information and skills that are then conferred on the recipient. As Felm is expected to build a partner organisation's capacity, *learning about learning*, dialogue, facilitation skills, and cultural knowledge and sensitivity become the most important skills and abilities required of Felm's regional workers. In essence, capacity building is learning, and learning is transformation. Learning and transformation happen in situations where the participants actively engage in joining in and constructing learning processes. Planning, constructing, and leading these processes are a perspective and work method (as well as a set of skills and capacities) that work like an electricity conductor. Without the conductor there is no electricity. Where there is no genuine learning process, no capacity building can happen.⁹

⁹ How many PowerPoint presentations or lectures do you remember? Compare this to learning experiences in which you actively participated.

The question is: are Felm’s recruiting policy and practices and internal training programme built to meet this challenge? Does Felm sufficiently emphasise the capacity to facilitate and learning processes when it is recruiting workers, who are meant to cooperate closely with partners? It is also noteworthy that knowledge about the subject (whether RBM, theology, or anything else) is easier to build up later with training than capacity related to learning, facilitation, and dialogue skills. Such skills were required from Felm staff responsible for facilitation during the consultation. Leading a group discussion with different phases and set goals (and with sensitive issues) is a demanding challenge for the facilitator. To lead a demanding group process to a conclusion while at the same time ensuring that all participants are participating equally (and within a strict timeframe) is difficult. It requires an extensive set of skills and capacities.

I present here a table systematically evaluating the skills and abilities needed from Felm staff who are sent to work with partners in the regions (or are otherwise in continuous contact with international partners). This table offers one perspective for studying the kind of skills and capacities necessary for building partners’ capacity and upholding healthy partnership. Categories **A–D** intertwine and connect with each other, and in some cases it is difficult to tell them apart. That said, it remains clear that workers are stronger in some categories and weaker in others. This table is merely an example that can be used to see whether Felm places enough weight on Categories **C** and **D** when recruiting new personnel and arranging internal training for its staff.

The numerical values in the variable row are my own evaluations. How would you evaluate the impact of each skill/capacity category on partnership building?

The central challenges written in the table are only completed for C and D to further explain their skills and capacities. The challenges are only a list of examples.

” The session was very interesting. We learned a lot from the other partners. It brought hope and encouraged us in strengthening our work together as partners. It also highlighted the challenges we have as organisations and churches – challenges that are very common. Felm has offered great support to the partners. Without your financial support we could not have achieved so much. Thank you!

– PARTNER

Evaluation of Felm workers’ skills and capacities in continuous contact with partners.

This table is a tool for evaluating required skills and capacities. Numbers in the ‘variable’ are Tero Massa’s estimates for example purposes.

SKILLS AND CAPACITIES OF A WORKER	A. Substance knowledge (theology, economics, agriculture or similar)	B. Project management knowledge (PME, RBM)	C. Skills and capacities related to learning about learning, pedagogy, facilitation skills, and communication	D. Skills and capacities related to dialogue and cultural interaction, cultural sensitivity, resilience in a foreign culture
Variable: Impact on partnership building and support (1-5)	2	3	5	5
Key challenges related to each skill and capacity			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How does the worker plan, develop and conduct learning platforms and processes? - How does the worker prioritise the capacity building needs related to partnerships? - What kind of planning processes does the worker engage in with the partner? - How does the worker enhance a dialogue approach with the partner? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What kind of contact does the worker build up with the partner? - How well is the worker equipped to understand and decipher cultural phenomena? - How much cultural change and difference can the worker bear? - How well can the worker distinguish between harmful and positive cultural conceptions and practices? - How well does the worker understand theology and church-related issues? - How well can the worker communicate Felm’s core issues to the partner? - How well can the worker communicate the partner’s core issues within Felm? - How equipped is the worker to deal with sensitive and conflict-prone issues with the partner?



Surendra Shrestha

5.6. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: How does Felm conduct its organisational assessment of partners? As mentioned in the report/document, having a long-term partnership benefits Felm, its partners and focus communities/groups but may create dependency and a lack of innovation. It would be worth having an organisational assessment every 3 years as a Felm project cycle prior to a new MoU, so that Felm can get correct information about the performance partner and reduce the gap.¹⁰

Lorato Moalusi: Organisational Assessment should be followed by an organisational development plan, which should be included in the budget for the following year to ensure organisations are sufficiently strong to do their work effectively even beyond the Felm partnership. The plan should focus more on building organisational systems that can be retained even when there is a change of staff, given the high staff turnover in NGOs. We should perhaps also consider ways in which Felm partners who are capacitated can facilitate capacity building for those still lagging behind.

¹⁰ Surendra also shared how the Felm Nepal team has been successfully engaging in organisational development with local partners: I. Assistance for developing strategic direction, and strategic planning; II. Organising a Partners' Conference annually and sharing of successes, challenges and planning; III. Enhancing the capacity, not only of project staff, but of the senior staff/management team and board in relevant topics; IV. Organising technical training/workshops on Felm and Nepalese government requirements/changes; V. Organising a programme to improve the wellbeing of leaders (executive directors) twice a year; VI. Coordination of support among partners; VII. Facilitating and building linkage and networks with INGOs and companies and other development actors in Nepal and outside Nepal; VIII. Providing a scholarship for higher study and research (PhD) for partner organisations' leaders; IX Breakfast or lunch meeting with Felm Helsinki visitors.

She Hongyu: Felm has accumulated a wonderful pool of partner resources. Regional networking meetings and country reports on the macro situation would be very helpful for others in the region to understand the world and work.

Networks

Some of Felm's partners have embarked on internationalisation, working with partners outside their own countries to support local people in dealing with social problems. Unlike Felm, these partners are new to the international aid arena and are feeling their way in the start-up period. Felm's regional offices/country offices could facilitate the introduction of good local partners and help the new international organisations to understand the local situation and become more mature members of the international aid group.

Capacity Building

The success of any organisation is highly dependent on human resources. Apart from the capacity building provided by Felm's staff, other capacity-building methods could be identified. Capacity building may include a large variety of areas connected with the full operation of the organisation. Some capacity building can be localised. Felm may consider providing funding or opportunities for partners to receive training in various places in either the country or region.

It would be good if Felm had staff with the ability to provide capacity building. However, there are also many resources organisations can find in the local society. A combination of capacity building provided by Felm and the local society could be considered.

John Hernández: Translating our visions into concrete tasks is always a great challenge. During the consultation we managed to consider our actions in a concrete way. The construction of the bridges of hope and the resilience tree was very successful. The challenge of transcending realities and contexts remains. Reality too often overflows into our capacity for analysis, so it becomes very pertinent to remain in constant dialogue. We need to strengthen local capacities for PME, as well as the capacity of RBM models, to adapt to local conditions.

Felm's purpose and concrete actions in maintaining a relationship of dialogue that breaks with the donor/recipient vision and translates into true mutual learning that contributes to the transformation of the concrete realities of exclusion are also very significant.

Questions for further discussion

For partners, Felm board members and stakeholders

- How do you see the connections in the Bridge of Hope groupwork? Do they speak of a single united mission in which we engage in partnership? Are the results of the Bridge of Hope groupworks connected to our common mission to bring hope to the marginalized?

For partners

- What theme of hope are you mostly involved with? How do the results of groupworks resonate with your context?
- What do you think about the solutions presented in 5.4.1 and 5.4.2.? What mode of solution do you see most important in your cooperation with Felm? If you would make an action plan for you and for Felm (related to that solution), what would the action plan look like?
- It is said that Lutheran theological training is in crisis, meaning that very little quality academic Lutheran theological training is available in the regions where Felm works with its partners. Does this apply to your region? Or do you see academic Lutheran training and teaching as unnecessary for church growth? If so, why? Are there good networks and partnerships between Lutheran institutions in your area? If so, what makes these networks good and relevant?
- What role do women play in your local networks? Does partnership building usually happen only between men? Do you see problems with gender equality?
- Shrinking civil space was mentioned in several discussions and groupwork sessions. How can our partnership assist you and your organisation in this challenge?

For Felm:

- How do you think advocacy and peacebuilding can be implemented more in your work? If you are already engaged in such cooperation in your church (or church network), what works – and what does not work?
- What do you think about the table presented in 5.5.? Does Felm prioritise the right skills and capacities in recruitment and internal training? Do you see a connection here with the current high staff turnover?

6. Felm in Finland and fundraising

Working session 9

Thursday 16 May

Satu Kantola, Deputy CEO of Felm presented about Felm's work in Finland.

What is Felm?

- Felm is a faith-based organisation engaged in a holistic mission of church cooperation, development, peace and reconciliation, advocacy, and emergency relief.
- Felm is an agency for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland's international work.
- As one of the largest Finnish civil society organisations working in global development, Felm also receives funding from Finland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs.
- All the parishes (approximately 400) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland are members of Felm. Most participate in the Annual General Meeting, which is held during the Mission Festival in May.
- Felm also has about 20 NGO members.
- Felm belongs to many networks and umbrella organisations in Finland.

How does Felm work in Finland?

- Felm's work in Finland aims to secure our international cooperation by obtaining financial, functional, and spiritual resources for the work.
- Almost half our income comes from local parishes.
- In return, we support parishes in their holistic mission approach and provide training for church staff.
- Felm trains volunteers for both international and national tasks.
- Felm staff and volunteers travel around Finland reporting on our work with partners and the results of our common work – success stories about the work partners do in cooperation with us.

Fundraising 2018 figures

- €8.6 million budgeted support from parishes
- €7.9 million development cooperation and peace and reconciliation funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- €5.7 million from investments and other income

- €10.8 million from private donors, church collections, and activities etc., plus legacies
- In different ways private donors donate some €10 million. They bake, sew, knit, do woodwork, sing, organise events, or simply donate a monthly sum.
- Campaigns include the famous Finnish Christmas carol events and also specific awareness raising campaigns on issues like human rights or climate change etc.

Fundraising in the private sector, by Director of Fundraising, Hanna Hokka

Finns want to support Felm, but they need us to communicate with them about the challenges and problems our partners face in their lives – and tell the story about what we are already doing together to face these challenges. The message to Finns must be engaging and inviting – how can they help in our joint work?

Felm reaches supporters through churches, direct contact, letters, and increasingly through websites and social media.

Main themes in 2019

Climate change affects all our partners, and people in Finland are very aware of the problem and willing to help and give. Children and young people are close to Finns' hearts, and they want greatly to support this work. People suffering from discrimination throughout the world are the focus of our fundraising this year.

International Financing by Director of International Financing, Karoliina Tuukkanen

Karoliina explained Felm's growing emphasis on helping our partners develop their own local and international fundraising. Felm's aim was to assist our partners by supporting coalitions and networks. Improved fundraising and diversified income would help partners in their self-sustainability. Felm was interested in learning from partners about their plans for developing fundraising and how Felm could help with these efforts.



6.1. Summary of plenary discussions concerning Felm in Finland and fundraising

Partner: Does Felm have a support agreement with every parishes of the Finnish church?

Felm staff member: Felm has an agreement with 91% of parishes. Some are so small that we don't have a separate agreement with them.

Partner: Are all the Felm staff members of parishes in the Finnish Church?

Felm staff member: Most are.

Partner: Does Felm fund partners to become self-sustainable?

Tuukkanen: Administration accounts for 10% of the development projects financed by the MFA, and fortunately, funds are not earmarked. People in Finland are critical of administrative costs, so good administration is needed if our organisation is to be seen as reliable.

When we start a new partnership, we already have some discussion about self-sustainability when financial support ends. We learn together how to progress towards self-sustainability ('co-evolution').

Partner: Can we fundraise to cover administration costs?

Felm staff member: Administration costs can be included in most projects.

Steffansson: Self-reliance should be included in project planning from day one.

Kenneth Mtata: Neutral money from Felm is essential in a context where government money is unavailable.

Partner: Who are Felm's private donors?

Felm staff member: Church work is financed by Finnish church members. Bequests and legacies are also important for fundraising. Private citizens also make donations through campaigns, for example. The private donor sector is ready to support all kinds of work.

Partners: Congratulations to Felm for its good income flow in 2018.

Felm staff member: We have to admit that a large part of it arises from selling the old office building.

Partner: Does Felm pay income tax?

Felm staff member: No, only for publishing and Päiväkumpu (the conference and camp centre).

Partner: Does Felm have any business cooperation with companies?

Tuukkanen: Some donations have been received, but Felm is currently establishing deeper theme-based cooperation with companies.



Toivoa ilmassa

Felm campaigning poster "Hope is in the Air"

6.2. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: Success and failure in the partnership should be transparent. We should address the success and failure of both the partners and Felm. How willing is Felm to do this?

The development cooperation fund should go to focus communities as much as possible, and MFA funding requires a maximum administration cost of 10%. Does this apply to Felm and its partners? Is 10% for administration costs realistic? In Nepal the Social Welfare Council allows up to 20%, and it has recently been suggested that this percentage should be reduced.

How often does Felm conduct organisational assessment of its partners?

Lorato Moalusi: Felm's ability to assist its partners in developing Resource Mobilisation Strategies and setting up reserve funds will go a long way in ensuring the partners continue their work. It should equally be in the interest of Felm that partners are able to continue the work beyond the partnership – the long-term results of Felm's investment. Partners can learn a lot from Felm, particularly in mobilising local resources. This is important for countries whose access to donor funding has been significantly reduced due to their income status.

She Hongyu: Fund raising and mobilisation varies greatly from place to place. In today's world two aspects might be considered:

A. The digitalisation of the world: online fundraising in some countries including China and the US is beginning to become the main fundraising channel due to the rapid development of technology. Most of Felm’s funding comes from supporting churches. Research into online fund raising in Finland might be worthwhile to **1)** make donation easier and more efficient, **2)** attract funding from non-church donors.

B. Globalisation has seen a rapid increase in the number of transnational companies. Finland has several world-renowned companies with business in different countries. Working with the headquarters of these companies with the aim of supporting projects in the developing countries where sub-companies operate might be worth exploring.

John Hernández: This session, in which we addressed the issue of funding, was very important. Understanding the fundraising work carried out by Felm will allow us to also know the human dimension of administrative management. It is not only economic resources but humanitarian and faith motivations which lead to the involvement of individuals and communities in contributing to the transformation of the world. Examining that work will allow us to see the other side of the coin and the importance of partners’ transparent accountability.

Questions for further discussion

For partners:

- What surprised you about Felm and its fundraising? Why?
- Did you learn anything about fundraising from the presentation or get new ideas?
- What is your organisation’s fundraising goal? How do you think Felm can help you achieve these goals? Please share your thoughts with your local Felm staff.
- How can you help Felm develop its fundraising? You can share your ideas with Felm’s local staff.

For Felm:

- What can we learn about fundraising from our partners?



7. Our Partnership

Working Session 10
Thursday 16 May

7.1. Reflection about partnership

The whole consultation was about partnership. Partnership is like a glue that binds our vision and mission. It is itself a complex issue, which needs to be discussed and reflected on continuously. It is also a sensitive issue, because it is connected with people's emotions and relationships. Building partnership requires a shared understanding of what it means to be a partner, and what it means to uphold genuine partnership. As we come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, we need to use time, energy, and willpower to build up our shared understanding.

Even among Felm's staff partnership is viewed differently. A few decades ago, Felm missionaries (and those from other mission organisations) held very different views of partnership from those held by many of Felm's current workers. It is still not unusual to hear metaphors of partnership as a marriage (especially in church contexts). As we know, marriage comes with lifelong obligations between the spouses. This metaphor expresses deep emotions, as well as an ideal of lifelong commitment. The marriage metaphor can be compared with another Christian metaphor, that of travel companions. These travel companions are on a road to a town called Emmaus. During their journey Christ accompanies them, but they do not recognise their Saviour and mentor until he reveals himself to them (Luke 24:13–35). This metaphor views partnership

differently. It is about sharing and accompaniment on our path (towards our vision).¹¹ It also introduces a remarkably clear element of sacredness to the picture. God reveals himself in our partnership. In partnership we eventually experience more than we bring to it. One plus one is not two: when God enters the picture, it is three.

Of course, there are many metaphors, both Christian and non-Christian, with which we have been brought up in our culture. Referring to only these two, one can easily grasp the challenge we face if we do not share and discuss our partnership concepts. If one partner sees themselves in a marriage-like partnership and the other sees themselves as walking on the road to Emmaus with a friend, we are bound to encounter some misunderstandings in our partnership!

7.1.1. Symbols of partnership

Discussions of partnership in our consultation were deliberately the last topic. We believed that when we discussed partnership, we would need safety and trust among the participants. We began our group reflection about partnership **by choosing symbols that represented each participant's view of partnership and what it should be about**. The following expressions emerged. Technical note: participants' comments have been attached to each symbol used. Examining partnership through these symbols and their related expressions paints a rich and colourful picture for us.

Gloves represent hands, walking together, and acting together. Gloves are for planting something new to enhance life. Relationships are longstanding, but we need two parts. We need hands, but we also need gloves. We need each other and safety. Every finger has a task. One finger fundraises, etc. Partnership is primarily mutual understanding and building support – what is useful? Mutual support, hand in hand.

Matches keep the fire going. A line from a movie: an actor teaches a girl that a box of matches is useful if you don't use all of them at the same time, because they burn down quickly if you do. Partnership needs to be long-term. You also need two things to produce light (the match box).

A candle symbolises togetherness. (A candle on its own is useless: you need matches.) We need openness and transparency, accountability, and clarity. Partnerships should bring light. Light enables us to see things, and it has many meanings and purposes. You can use light for different things – light is life. Partnership lights the light through the Gospel: 'We are the light that brightens the sky of the marginalised'.

A torch helps us to find solutions. The world appears out of the darkness. Our partners show us the places where we need to bring light.

¹¹ The Lutheran World Federation published a document "Mission in context: Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment" in 2004, in which it envisioned the practice of mission as 'accompaniment', using the Emmaus encounter as a model. See <https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/DMD-Mission-in-Context-EN-low.pdf>

A plastic spade: teachers help us to deepen our education. We also need to renew our partnership. Consider new ways to do this. Place your hands on the clay: we share, we work together, we sweat together, we rejoice together.

A dinosaur describes the length of our partnership. Long traditions and partnerships are appreciated. Look at the other side of the dinosaur – how will we develop partnerships in the new world? There needs to be a balance between the old and the new.

Seeds: Because they are something to eat, they represent practical issues. Seeds are beautiful. They need nourishment and care. Everything is born from the land. The seed symbolises hope, a new season, a new year. A partnership with Felm symbolises new hope.

A medical syringe represents the services that enable us to do our work.

An umbrella may be partly broken, but it still has lots of good in it. All its spokes need to be together for a solid partnership.

A whistle: partnership is like a whistle which is blown where there are people in need or suffering from discrimination.

A baby's shoe: partnership is a journey. We need to be ready with a shoe, one shoe. The assumption is that the other shoe is needed. You need both shoes to walk.

A Velcro fastener: you need both sides for it to work – and this is what partnership is like.

The cross is the centre of our partnership. It comes with the love of God to initiate the partnership. What is the goal behind the partnership? As Christians, our partnership has Christ at its heart.

A car represents a journey. You need the fuel and the engine to work. And so do we: cooperation, partnership between several partners, including financial ones. As this car is actually a fire engine, it shows there's always lots to do.

A mobile phone: partnership is a connection, and we come together from all over the world. A phone helps us to communicate.

A Spiderman figure: partners work in the field. They need to be resilient, and sometimes their work is invisible. But partners are like superheroes because of all they do.

A peg: all its parts work seamlessly together. If one part is missing, it won't work.

A box represents diversity. The two parts of the box are different, but they fit together - just like our partners. There's an empty space – and then we come together to fill it with a common goal.

A rubber duck floats innocently in the world. Partnership at its best is equal, even though it's impossible when someone holds on to the money and someone else does the work. That's the reality. But we must have a common goal, and we must always be honest.

A gorilla stands firmly on its legs, just as partnership should. It moves smoothly and knows what it's doing. That's the goal, anyway!

A disposable spoon/fork/napkin: partnership is about working together, helping each other to survive, eating together. A spoon is an important instrument, a symbol of life. I don't want only to eat from Felm, but I can cook for myself and for Felm. Both institutions can feed each other spiritually and financially. We need reciprocity. Partnership is sharing the table. We can do more with partnership than we can without it.

A mirror: we reflect each other. When we travel in the darkness, we shine our light. We don't always need words, but our light shines.

A belt represents connectivity.

A sponge represents education. Every student needs a sponge to wipe away the wrong answer. It symbolises mutual comprehension.

A flower symbolises joy. The partnership should be one of mutual understanding, joy, and something beautiful.

Other comments about the symbols and reflection about partnership:

Partnership should have a multiplier effect in our work.

Sharing the same vision brings strength. Sometimes we are very selective, but we should be inclusive.

As partners, we have the same goal. The South receives funding, but it doesn't end there. It should go both ways. It's not all about money: everyone contributes their best. Both sides should benefit from the partnership. Partnership is not one-sided. And partnership is full of surprises.

7.1.2. Analysis

Concrete symbols speak to us through forms that help us understand complex and sensitive issues¹². When we examine the comments on each symbol, we can identify some common denominators for a positive and appreciated partnership.

¹² Symbols could also be used in several ways in RBM training: 'Choose a symbol that represents a project's Impact level and then choose one that represents its outcome level.' The results might be interesting.

” We reflect each other. When we travel in the darkness, we shine our light – we don’t always need words: our light shines.

- PARTNER

1. Strength and longevity

Like a gorilla, partnership stands strong and firm. Felm and its partners are stronger and more capable of facing challenges together. Sticking together through difficulty is a test of partnership. It is also imperative for a strong and enduring partnership that both partners invest in upholding and devel-

oping it. Strength and longevity are also connected with feelings of security, resilience, and long-term sustainability. Strength is born of mutual trust and a sharing of identities, plans, and values.

2. Dynamic complementariness and reciprocity

Partnership is about reciprocity between each partner. A genuine partnership is not a stagnant power relationship but a dynamic process in which both partners communicate and feed each other spiritually and in other ways. Partnership is not reactive: it is proactive and interested engagement with each other. Partnership happens when there is vertical and horizontal convergence. We move forward in our mission, but we also delve more deeply into challenges and successes together. Through partnership we can rediscover our identity. Partners complement each other through their identity and uniqueness. Complementary partnership is a beautiful thing to behold.

3. A light that brings understanding, reflection and transparency

Partnership brings light into the world where we work, but it also brings transparency, openness, accountability, and clarity within and between our organisations. The concepts of reflection and light are also related to our shared vision. A vision is fundamentally something that we ‘see’ in front of us. Our shared exploration of our shared vision provides an aim for our partnership and reaffirms it.

7.1.3. Recommendations

Felm should do more research in matters relating to partnership. Theological, organisational, and other models are needed to raise awareness of partnership as a phenomenon. Partnership is not easily definable: it is more like a prism that sheds light in many directions. As the perspective changes, light’s prism seems to change too. This partnership research should be conducted with Felm’s partners. One possibility would be to produce a publication with Felm partners concerning aspirational partnership. This publication already has a title – ‘Shared vision’.

Such a publication about partnership could investigate more profoundly different biblical (and other cultural) models for partnership and compare them. This joint publication would serve as a valuable input in Felm's next strategy process.

7.1.4. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: In developing countries NGOs are accused of nepotism and a lack of good governance (the transparency pillar). We who are partners need to be free of this accusation.

How often does Felm assess the organisation in this respect during partner selection? Felm needs to be very strict.

Lorato Moalusi: To strengthen partnerships, Felm should occasionally apply for funding with its partners from sources outside Finland. With its international experience and capacity Felm can be the main applicant; partners should be co-applicants. This would also be a way to strengthen the capacity of partners in the area of resource mobilisation. Does Felm have a programme that sends volunteers to different countries to work with its partners?

John Hernández: The beginning of the consultation and the meaning given to the images used evoked the shared need to grow in fellowship. The consultation provided an important place in which to grow in mutual knowledge, which leaves us with the challenge of thinking about network relationships between Felm mission partners in the Global South. The metaphors that emerged in this exercise largely express the positive imaginary around joint work: it is important to consider the challenges and difficulties of this vision of shared mission.

Questions for further discussion

For all:

- How do you feel about these three points of partnership?
 1. Strength and longevity.
 2. Dynamic complementariness and reciprocity.
 3. Reflection and transparency. Do they make sense? Or are they confusing or inadequate? What kind of symbols would you draw to describe these three points of genuine and healthy partnership?
- If you had to pick three symbols that represent your idea of a healthy partnership, what would they be?

7.2. Results of discussions about the two claims about partnership

After general discussion about the nature of partnership the groups proceeded to discuss two claims concerning organisational partnership. These claims are not statements about partnership by the Felm organisation. They were formulated for the consultation by the writer, Tero Massa. The claims were inserted in the groupwork as tools for raising discussion about partnership in the specifically organisational sense. The claims are as follows:

1. ‘Genuine partnership grants extensions and sets requirements for tuning to the organisation’s or organisations’ mission, vision, and organisational behaviour’.

Extensions means: Through partnership we acquire access to an extended and enriched reality. We can see, experience, and do more through partnership than without it.

Genuine partnership requires us to ‘tune’ our work with our partner. We need to plan, move, and work in sync with our partners. This tuning may also entail limitations or adjustments to organizational goals, activities and behaviour.

2. ‘Partnership increases uncertainty (both positive and negative) in the organisation.’

7.2.1. Analysis

Some groups found it quite difficult to grasp the meaning of the claims, and some seemed to go quite deeply into the topic (For the reports of the conversations see [Appendix 9.6.2.](#)) It was interesting to see how differently they were also interpreted. ‘Tuning’ and ‘uncertainty’ are themselves neutral concepts. However, their interpretation divides people.

One way of understanding more about the **first** claim is to see that partnership gives us experiences and knowledge that we would never even have thought possible. The consultation itself was an example of this. Felm has received a multitude of gifts in many forms from its partners from all around the world. And for the partners it was probably an unforeseen experience for the partners to join and experience the playback theatre on Thursday evening. This new experience led some of our partners to discuss how this playback-method could be used to help traumatised people. This is a prime example of how partnership grants unexpected extensions to our own organisation. It also says something positive about the uncertainty we face in our partnership. What these new experiences brought us could not have been planned. They were born of our partnership.

The tuning mentioned in the **first** claim can mean several things. Some participants viewed it negatively, probably because tuning implies that the organisation loses some of its autonomy and identity in partnership. The reason for choosing ‘tuning’ as a term in this context was because it reflected and pointed to adjusting something (such as volume) to better suit the current situation. Tuning could be seen

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Corruption is a serious threat, but what can we do about it as an organisation? If it's at the top level then is there much a small organisation can do? But what if the corruption happens at the grassroots level?

- PARTNER

as a metaphor to ‘tune in’ to a certain radio station, a frequency – to connect with somebody. It is also noteworthy that the claim about tuning was intended to mean **both** parties in a partnership. On the donor-recipient axis this means that both partners need to tune in to each other. Tuning here does not mean that the other partner needs to tune in alone: it is both partners’ responsibility to find the frequency at which they can connect. The requirements of tuning vary according to the scale and volume of the cooperation in question. If an organisation has only one donor responsible for funding more than, say, 40% of all the organisation’s operations, the tuning requirements for both sides must be significantly greater than in a situation where a donor cooperates with an organisation in only one project. For Felm (and other organisations with several partners) the challenge is how to tune in to and synchronise cooperation with a multitude of different partners. Tuning does not mean that the organisation loses its identity and core values. It is more related to the sensitivity, reciprocity, and rhythm of cooperation. Felm needs regional staff with sufficient organisational authority to tune in to partners from different geographical and cultural backgrounds. This is a significant challenge to an organisation like Felm, which is engaged in global programmes and steering while implementing its work through its partners. The more decisions are made in isolation from regional and partner insights, the more blind such organisations become.

Concerning the **second** claim – some people enjoy uncertainty – ‘life is like the present’, as one of the participants said. Some people see uncertainty as a threat or as a fundamentally negative thing. The context and the current situation have a major influence on how this is experienced. A partner that relies solely on one donor’s support probably sees uncertainty as an existential threat.

Having partners (and friends) gives us security and certainty in life, as one of the consultation partners mentioned. We wouldn’t like to live or operate without partnership or friendship in our private lives. However, partnership and friendship inject a healthy dose of **uncertainty** in our lives and work. Felm cannot foresee all the changes that will happen in the regions, despite all the great global development and trend fore-

casts. Felm experiences pleasant and less pleasant surprises all the time. Life remains a surprise. The same goes for Felm's partners: changes in Felm's fundraising in Finland or in its regional staff have a major impact on how cooperation proceeds.

To enjoy the upsides of uncertainty, an organisation needs to be sufficiently flexible to respond to the good things suddenly received in partnership. To deal with the negative aspects, Felm and its partners need to have contingency plans and risk analysis in place. Building self-sustainability is also key in improving our responsiveness to uncertainty.

7.2.2. Recommendations

Felm's preparedness for uncertainty

To be flexible and responsive to uncertainty, Felm needs to examine its organisational structure. Finding a balance between global programmes (and their steering) and regional decision making is the key challenge Felm needs to resolve. The more executive power is transferred to the regions, the more flexible and equipped Felm is to respond to uncertainty. Regional planning should be more involved in the first phases of the strategy process. This would ensure Felm's work's contextual relevance, as well as Felm's partners strategy input. The presence of regional voices should also be increased and enhanced in Felm's upper decision-making processes.

To better 'tune' cooperation with partners, Felm should be especially mindful of: 1.) the speed of developments within its organisation; 2.) simultaneous developments in Felm's organisation; and 3.) the development preparedness and capacity of each region and partner. Each new development has an impact on both regional staff and partnership. Each new development has to go through several phases before it is effectively running in the regions. Simultaneous or too rapid development destroys the ownership of the work, and creates an experience of insufficiency and stress in the regions. To control and adjust the impact of development, Felm should screen each decision, using a 'partnership-friendliness' checklist. The International Advisory Board and the regional networks should be used to evaluate the impact of development.

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There's always uncertainty in peacebuilding. It's impossible to predict what will happen. You also need to find a way to appreciate uncertainty and learn to live with it. Sometimes uncertainty can lead to something positive. It offers you an open future. You can choose which way you want to go.

- PARTNER

Partners' preparedness for uncertainty

For the Felm partner, one of the best ways to prepare for uncertainty is to have a diverse source of income. Partners can assess their donor dependency (how large a percentage of income comes from each donor) and see how big the risk of each donor's financial withdrawal poses to the organisation. With a diverse source of income the negative impact of a certain donor's financial withdrawal is always reduced. Another way to deal with uncertainty is to be very proactive towards the donor(s), communicating regularly even if the donor does not. Partners should require answers on time, and remind donors of their obligations and commitments. Being only reactive towards donors is the worst way to prepare oneself for future uncertainty. Felm's regional staff have many regional partners with whom they need to communicate. Partners should ensure that they are always on Felm's regional staff's radar! The third recommendation for dealing with uncertainty is to have genuinely zero-tolerance of corruption. Corruption poses the biggest risk to partnership with Felm. The best way to tackle corruption is to systematically build anti-corruption culture into the organisation. An indicator of the culture concerning corruption is to see what happens when corruption occurs in the organisation. Does the organisation have a clear procedure for everyone in the organisation, regardless of position? Or does the organisation try to cover it up? An anti-corruption culture is transparent and is willing to admit that there is always a risk of corruption.

The willingness to build and enhance a system where corruption and fraud cannot thrive is quite easily noticed, as well as its opposite. Felm is always willing to support workshops and training to support an anti-corruption culture in partner organisations¹³. If a member of a partner's staff reports corruption to Felm's staff and no procedure begins, he/she should report the matter again but to a more senior Felm staff member, accompanied by a complaint that the first report failed to result in proceedings. It is also possible to make a report anonymously on Felm's website (see Footnote 9).

7.2.3. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: Felm can help in enhancing governance, the capacity building of human resources and linking networking with development actors so that the partner can diversify its funding partners, programmes and projects and innovate to be able to cope with uncertainty and resist a role in civil society.

Lorato Moalusi: In some instances, Felm is not the only development partner working with partner organisations. It is therefore important for Felm and its partners to discuss things such as Level of Effort (LoE)/cost sharing. This not only promotes transparency but prevents duplication of efforts or double dipping. It also helps both en-

¹³ Reporting on corruption and Felm anti-corruption policy: <https://felm.org/what-is-felm/transparency-and-responsible-management/felm-against-corruption/>

tities to prioritise areas of operation and Felm to recognise its contribution to the development of the countries in which it is operating.

She Hongyu: To reduce uncertainty, both Felm and its partner organisations need to be transparent with each other concerning issues such as organisation, projects and finance. An intake form from partners on some key indicators (staff size, funding amounts, board directors, key leadership personnel, project focal areas etc. will give Felm a good picture of the partner organisation. Felm could also send partners a circular letter about Felm in the past year. This could be like an annual report, but in a less detailed form.

The fight against corruption is another area that needs strengthening. Spot-checks might also be considered if any doubts are generated to ensure action is taken before problems escalate.

John Hernández: The whole debate about the terms tuning in and uncertainty shows that negative experiences in cooperation environments (probably with other organisations) are an important issue to take into account in building healthy relationships. The fight against corruption is a clear example of how important the commitment of local parties is. The support and experience of Felm is essential if we are to grow in this regard.





How do we take advantage of the opportunities in front of us?

7.3. Partnership SWOT

After discussing partnership definitions and the two claims the groups moved on to analyse the current status of partnership between Felm and its partners. This was done using the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) matrix. The SWOT on the next page was prepared by Felm's regional directors, who had followed the Bridge of Hope groupwork with partnership SWOT 'lenses', completing their own SWOT matrix according to what they had heard in the discussion. Before the 'Our Partnership' work the regional directors convened and shared their results with each other. They then assembled one SWOT summarising all the directors' individual SWOTs. The resulting SWOT was then used and shared as a discussion point in all the groups. All the groups could make additions to the presented SWOT. All the participants were also given the opportunity to mark their own comments on the SWOT, using the familiar symbols (heart, exclamation mark, question mark)

Regional Directors original Partnership SWOT. Assembled using the directors’ personally completed SWOT matrix.

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic approach • Grassroot presence • Long-term partnership • Knowledge of local context • Shared vision 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same high requirements for all partners, without flexibility • High turnover of staff • Lack of human resources • Short time-span of projects • Thin institutional memory
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking of partners • Capacity building • Utilisation of expertise • Improved use of Felm’s local teams • Mutual learning 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political and religious conflict • Shrinking space of civil society • Poor communication • Lessons not learned • Corruption

7.3.1. Results and Analysis

Each category will be presented separately with the four highest votes received (summarising the hearts and exclamation marks) in the partner and all votes categories. In all the categories four results were significantly more emphasized than the others.

Strengths	
1. Long-term partnership	8 partner votes (and 11 total votes)
2. Holistic approach	7 partner votes (and 10 total votes)
3. Shared vision	6 partner votes (and 11 total votes)
4. Knowledge of local context	6 partner votes (and 9 total votes)
Opportunities	
1. Networking (containing ‘networking of partners’, global networking, networking with like-minded organisations)	13 partner votes (and 16 total votes)
2. Mutual learning	8 partner votes (and 13 total votes)
3. Capacity building	7 partner votes (and 9 total votes)
4. Utilising expertise	2 partner votes (and 3 total votes)

Weaknesses

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Felm has the same high (PME) requirement for all Partners, without flexibility | 9 partner votes (and 13 total votes) |
| 2. High turnover of staff and thin institutional memory | 6 partner votes (and 13 total votes) |
| 3. Short time-span of projects | 5 partner votes (and 6 total votes) |
| 4. Lack of human resources | 5 partner votes (and 6 total votes) |

Threats

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Political and religious conflict | 8 partner votes (and 8 total votes) |
| 2. Shrinking space of civil society | 6 partner votes (and 14 total votes) |
| 3. Lessons not learned | 3 partner votes (and 4 total votes) |
| 4. Poor communication | 2 partner votes (and 5 total votes) |

Final SWOT, with the four notions receiving most votes in descending order in each category

STRENGTHS

- Long-term partnership
8 partner votes (and 11 total votes)
- Holistic approach
7 partner votes (and 10 total votes)
- Shared vision
6 partner votes (and 11 total votes)
- Knowledge of local context
6 partner votes (and 9 total votes)

WEAKNESSES

- Felm has the same high (PME) requirement for all partners, without flexibility
9 partner votes (and 13 total votes)
- High turnover of staff and thin institutional memory
6 partner votes (and 13 total votes)
- Short time-span of project
5 partner votes (and 6 total votes)
- Lack of human resources
5 partner votes (and 6 total votes)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Networking
13 partner votes (and 16 total votes)
- Mutual learning
8 partner votes (and 13 total votes)
- Capacity building
7 partner votes (and 9 total votes)
- Utilising expertise
2 partner votes (and 3 total votes)

THREATS

- Political and religious conflict
8 partner votes (and 8 total votes)
- Shrinking space of civil society
6 partner votes (and 14 total votes)
- Lessons not learned
3 partner votes (and 4 total votes)
- Poor communication
2 partner votes (and 5 total votes)

The SWOT assembled by the regional directors changed little after the group discussion and voting. The **two** notions receiving the most votes in the entire SWOT were ‘Networking’ and ‘Felm has high (PME) requirements for all partners, without flexibility’. Networking was again the favoured option for improving cooperation between Felm and its partners (as it was in the Bridge of Hope groupwork: see 5.2). In the Bridge of Hope groupwork the same high PME demands were raised as an important topic for discussion, but it was even more clearly presented as a weakness in this SWOT. The pace and scope of PME developments have left some Felm partners and staff in uncomfortable situations. Pushing all the projects into the same-sized box was not considered a meaningful way of cooperating.

The concept of a ‘shared vision’ seems inspiring: it was raised in the SWOT as one of the key strengths of partnership. A holistic long-term approach and knowledge of the local context were seen as fundamental building blocks for our cooperation. There are probably very few who would disagree with these fundamentals.

In the ‘opportunities’ category the three most popular notions (after networking) were related to learning. Mutual learning, capacity building, and utilising expertise are all issues connected with how we can learn from each other. This again highlights what was previously mentioned about capacity building in Chapter 5.5.

In the ‘weaknesses’ category – alongside the PME issue – three things spoke of the lack of continuity in partnership: a high turnover of staff and a thin institutional memory, and the short time-span of projects. I have placed high turnover of staff and thin institutional memory together, because they are basically connected. A lack of continuity and organisational amnesia (a thin institutional memory) fracture the underlying fabric of partnership. Everything needs to be repeatedly rebuilt with new staff. This is especially challenging in cultures which place great emphasis on the building of personal relationships. Constant staff changes may also generate cynicism and a lack of effort in building relationships. Why bother expending energy in building a partnership if the people keep changing all the time? There are things that both Felm and partners can do to combat the high turnover, but we have to admit that this is also a global trend. People in international work do the same work for shorter periods. They change organisations and positions more than previous generations. To look on the positive side: it is good to have new ideas and fresh perspectives. The old model of the same people running the show for decades is not something for which we should strive. Change is positive, but change that is too rapid is negative.

Concerning the complaint about the short time-span of projects, by definition projects entail work that has clear time limits and goals. Seeing project cooperation in general as a weakness is understandable if the entire partnership is reduced to merely implementing projects. Projects that are well planned and have clear ownership (a strong connection to the organisation’s vision, mission, and values) fall seamlessly into the organisation’s work structure. Human resources should be matched with the

operation's set goals and actions. Lacking these resources probably speaks of the immensity of the challenges Felm's partners face in their operating environments. With more resources more could be done for the benefit of people and communities. Lacking human resources in partnership probably speaks of a lack of contact between partners. This may be because of a lack of Felm personnel in the regions – which in turn speaks of a failure to allocate the right resources in the first place. In any case the recipe for weak contact is that strategic goals and actions fail to line up with resources. To fix the formula, one needs to adjust either the set goals and actions, or increase the resources.

The 'threats' category resonates heavily with conflict issues and the shrinking space of civil society. Political and religious conflict and the shrinking space of civil society are seen as the biggest global threats. However, there are also lessons to be learned about 'lessons not learned' and poor communication. Lessons not learned can be seen as being connected with a thin institutional memory and dysfunctional leadership. Leaders do not change course, even when there are clear signs that something about the cooperation is not working. Communication is a major challenge to a partnership that stretches across the globe. There is a natural inclination to communicate mainly with those in the near vicinity. Communication with those near us can easily consume all our time. Communication with people who are far away requires much more mental energy and comes less naturally.

7.3.2. Recommendations

When we look at the SWOT matrix, we should investigate how to enhance strengths and eliminate weaknesses – or at least mitigate their negative impact. How do we take advantage of the opportunities before us? And how do we mitigate the effects of the threats – or even convert them into opportunities?

Enhancing strengths and taking advantage of opportunities:

Felm's International Advisory Board is one approach to creating a global network. It should be connected with regional networks. In future the regional networks might propose candidates for the Advisory Board. Each member of the Advisory Board should also have a clear responsibility in the regional Felm network. The regional networks should focus on the following topics:

- 1. Organisational identity, strategy and partnership.** Enhancing the understanding of shared vision, mission, and partnership.
- 2. Development of facilitation, dialogue, training, and advocacy skills.** Learning about learning. How to build one's capacity for capacity building.

3. Topics related to burning issues we face in our cooperation and operational environment. These topics might be: climate change resilience (food security); dialogue and conflict sensitivity; digitalisation; and dealing with fundamentalism and religious extremism. Religion as a mobiliser for development. Fundraising.

4. RBM capacity building. Training about RBM-related matters. Sharing of best practice between partners.

These topics can also be used directly in workshops with partners. Felm currently emphasises 3 and especially 4. This is natural, because of the development of PME. In future the capacity building of PME should be in proportion with the three other topics.

To strengthen the knowledge of the **local context**, partners can organise culture workshops for Felm (and other donors' regional staff members) in the regions. Felm should reserve enough time and resources for orienting new staff in the regions. Felm should also conduct internal training in Helsinki to assist in staff's understanding of the local context and cultural differences. Felm could invite experts from partner organisations to attend these internal training events.

Shared Vision – publication¹⁴

Eliminating and mitigating weaknesses and countering threats

A lack of human resources was mentioned as a weakness. This is mainly the result of a lack of income. Good planning with RBM tools (focusing on only certain goals at a time) and clear communication of the project requirements are essential for partner organisations in tackling part of the problem. Generating resources through fundraising is also crucial. Having a clear vision, mission, organisational structure, and anti-corruption culture with PME-skilled staff makes the partner a suitable and attractive candidate for local and international support.

A lack of human resources is always *connected with set goals and actions*, or due to unforeseeable (short-term) changes. Short periods when the proper resources are lacking are manageable, but longer periods strain existing human resources, resulting in high staff turnover and exhaustion. Matching what the organisation *wants* and the kind of resources it needs is especially a challenge for leadership and communication. Poor communication between partners and inside the organisation increases the risk of bad decisions and strains human resources to breaking point. To tackle the unforeseeable changes that create the lack of human resources, the organisation needs to be more risk aware, reserve time for analysis, and focus on upholding risk registers with clear responsibilities. A more fundamental change is to make the organisational structure more flexible and prepared for uncertainty and change.

¹⁴ See [Chapter 7.1.3](#).

To make the PME system more flexible, Felm needs to set different categories of PME requirements, according to the capacity of the partner and the size of the projects. Smaller projects with personnel not yet accustomed to PME requirements struggle with a format of planning and reporting that is out of proportion. For a more detailed recommendation concerning PME see [Chapter 8.8.3](#).

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Communication isn't only about talking. It's also about listening. If you don't hear what your partner is saying but only rush to say something yourself, you won't understand.

- PARTNER

The organisation needs to examine the root causes of the high staff turnover and deal with them. This requires the leadership to instigate an inquiry into the matter. A high staff turnover suggests that many workers do not want to commit themselves to certain positions. This is usually because they feel that the organisation's leadership or organisational structure does not support them.

Support entails compensation for the work, clear responsibilities and goals, sufficient resources, ownership of the work, and enough challenges (but not mission impossible!). All workers differ in their needs, but everyone needs a certain level of compensation and support. Taking care of staff's wellbeing is an attitude that will contribute to tackling high turnover. There is a great risk in church and development work that the employing organisation takes advantage of personnel's high inner motivation and calling. The supposed inner motivation becomes a pretext for the employer not compensating adequately for the work or expecting the staff to bear impossible workloads. Requesting a higher salary/holidays/a bearable workload may even be evidence of a deep lack of motivation for the work. Taking care of the organisation's staff is the best way to combat organisational amnesia (a thin institutional memory). Clear plans, job descriptions, and updated risk registers help new staff to continue the work of their predecessors.

Conflict and the shrinking space of civil society are global threats that Felm and its partners need to fight against in larger coalitions and networks (as in collaboration with the LWF). Advocacy and dialogue work with peacebuilding are perspectives and working methods that can permeate all of Felm's and its partners' work (in addition to individual peacebuilding projects, for example). If this is to happen, Felm needs to adjust the organisational structure to be more internally inclusive of different methods and expertise. Strict boundaries between units do not serve this goal. The staff of the advocacy and peacebuilding units should also be incorporated more in regional teams. Felm regional offices need to have more advocacy and peacebuilding expertise regularly at their disposal. This would probably feed into the increasing permeation of advocacy and peacebuilding in all Felm's work.

Theological education – method is message

To combat religious fundamentalism, Felm and its partners need to strengthen theological education and training in all regions. Poor education usually makes churches and their workers more vulnerable to a narrow-minded fundamentalism. This is especially challenging in areas where the church is in a minority. The temptation to give easy answers to complex situations is the road to political and religious extremism. In connection with theological training, the mode of constructing the learning process is crucial to building a dialogue-oriented and open Lutheran Christian identity. The methods the teacher uses in building the learning process is a message in itself. There is a strong correlation between identity building and the method of the teacher. The more the teacher relies on monologue and expects the pupils to learn by listening and repetition, the more likely he/she is to inculcate religious fundamentalism in their pupils. The more the teacher creates dialogue and constructs the learning process to include pupils' own input and ownership of the learning process, the more the teacher advocates a dialogue-engaged and open Christian identity.

Felm should launch projects to improve theological training covering all Felm's regions. These projects should emphasise the capacity building of the teaching methods, as well as the subject matter in question. Here are some suggested focal points for these projects: 1. Screen the regions' theological seminaries and universities. Choose those that take dialogue and the goal of an 'open church' seriously and allocate scholarships to partners only for these institutions. 2. Strengthen the capacity of these institutions (through the *Felm theology* programme, for example). 3. Organise training and workshops on participatory methods for teachers of theology in Felm and its partner organisations. 4. Research the status of partner churches' theological education and support churches in providing a theological education programme for staff and active members. 5. Organise theological education in rural areas with participatory methods and dialogue-engaged contextual theology. 6. Research the status and development of Lutheran Christian theology in the regions where Felm works with its partners.

Communication and leadership

Improving the communication of Felm and its partners requires more time, energy, and effort to create shared understanding and shared vision. Cultural differences and language barriers are all obstacles that need to be considered. The more familiar a person is with a certain culture, the more he/she is aware of the challenges associated with communication. Communication between international partners is not merely about changing the language. People with different backgrounds interpret things very differently. This is why Felm cannot rely on sending emails/documents to partners and expect them to be understood as they are understood in Finland. Here again, the importance of creating space and time for participatory interaction models

is paramount. The more each participant is able to have their own input in the discourse, the more shared understanding will happen.

Communication within Felm also presents a major challenge, because the organisation stretches around the globe. As was mentioned in the previous analysis chapter, people tend usually to communicate with their nearest environment. The

greater the distance, the more energy and determination people need to expend in communication. Distant people drop from our radar more easily than people we encounter regularly. If the worker's timetable is full, and he/she is under schedule and time pressure, they are more likely to reduce their contact with people who are far away. To ensure that the communication between regions and the Helsinki headquarters is adequate, and decisions are made with 'partnership awareness and friendliness', regional directors should be more strongly present in Felm's governing units.

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Felm isn't always there when you need it. A local presence is especially lacking. It's difficult to manage everything with emails when you have a tight schedule.

- PARTNER

7.3.3. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: Does Felm hear partners' voice on networking at national, regional, and international levels? If so, who is responsible for it?

Lorato Moalusi: Where there is more than one implementing partner in a country, Felm can facilitate sharing of resources instead of each having its own, such as Finance Managers, Human Resource Officers, etc. This will strengthen collaboration between the partners, maximise resources, and save money.

She Hongyu: Networking of personnel resources, especially in specialised areas, can be further strengthened – for example, specialised staff/advisors in project management, diakonia, rehabilitation, fundraising, and ministry for people with disabilities. Felm might consider establishing a pool of personnel resources to offer support to partners when required.

It's worthwhile for Felm to consider the partner exit strategy by evaluating risks and the effectiveness and efficiency of partners. Good partners should be kept, partnerships with riskier and less effective partners should be terminated, and new partners to bring new ideas and innovation to cooperation should be identified.

Relay of organisational culture

The staff of an organisation begin to share its characteristics after they have been with it for a while. It's relatively easy to establish and consolidate the organisational culture when the organisation is less dispersed; it always remains a challenge for organisations that have many branches and staffers stationed outside the headquarters.

Staff members should be involved in active communication and kept informed of what's happening. They should be visited as often as possible: hosting meetings for missionaries will to some extent help relay the organisational culture.

Felm may have its organisational culture in written form. It would be helpful if this culture is clearly conveyed to staff involved in the field.

John Hernández: The SWOT Matrix developed by the regional directors offered us a very good picture of the feeling of the consultation. The biggest challenge with the use of this tool lies in being able to transform weaknesses into strengths, while being prepared to face perceived threats. Concerning our Shared Vision, it is very important that both Felm and its partners commit to concrete actions so that this can occur.

Questions for further discussion

For Felm and its partners:

1. What are the biggest problems/gaps in our communication? How can we improve communication and fill the gaps?
2. What are the root problems of your organisation's high staff turnover? How can we address those roots and retain our staff longer?
3. What can you do to improve and support good and equal partnership on your part?
4. Build your own SWOT for your organisation's partnership with Felm. Share this SWOT with your regional Felm staff and discuss it.



7.4. Strengthened Partnership 2023

The last phase in the partnership group discussion was to envision a future with a strengthened partnership. The focus was to find improvements by imagining strategic decisions and actions, as well as thinking about what to reduce or cut in cooperation. In addition, the exercise attempted to take a peek ‘outside the box’ – to imagine the things we will probably forget or postpone without good reason.

The groupwork was launched based on the following scenario and questions:

Use a time machine and transport yourself to 2023. Partnership between Felm and your organisation has strengthened markedly. Great! What has happened?

1. What have been the most important strategic decisions and actions partners and Felm have taken to achieve this goal?
2. What strategic decisions and actions concerning reducing or cancelling something (rather than starting something) have been the greatest relief to you in terms of this goal?
3. As always, some necessary decisions and actions have been postponed – which postponed decision or action has proved to be most problematic in achieving this goal?

After discussion the groups wrote their suggestions for each question category on the Partnership wall. All the consultation participants were able to vote with symbols.

7.4.1 Results and analysis

Each category (question) will be presented separately with the 3 or 4 highest partner votes received (summarised with hearts and exclamation marks). Question marks have been excluded from the counting of the results.

Question 1. What have been the most important strategic decisions and actions partners and Felm have taken to reach this goal?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. The network (global and regional) has been strengthened to ensure partners' sharing results in better collaboration with Felm and its partners | 48 partner votes (and 64 total votes)
ALL COLOURS |
| 2. We have learned to continuously learn from each other. Mutual learning and trust has improved. | 14 partner votes (and 23 total votes)
ALL COLOURS |
| 3. The Felm International Advisory Board has been a great success, with open communication | 8 partner votes (and 12 total votes) |
| 4. The capacity of partners is where we want it to be | 7 partner votes |

Question 2. What strategic decisions and actions concerning reducing or cancelling something (rather than starting something) have given you the most relief in terms of this goal?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Felm has stopped inventing projects for partners
<i>It is noteworthy that this topic received 8 question marks. Many participants were confused or did not understand the issue.</i> | 5 partner votes (and 6 total votes) |
| 2. Prioritising long-term partnerships to create global collaboration and advocacy
<i>This can be understood as a proposition to start fewer projects and collaborations with new partners.</i> | 6 partner votes (and 11 total votes) |
| 3. Analyse together what data we really need (reduce data collection) | 2 partner votes (and 3 total votes) |

Question 3. What are the most problematic decisions we are likely to postpone?

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Bad exit strategies still exist | 3 partner votes |
| 2. Communication and dealing with plans | 4 partner votes |
| 3. Wrong persons in place (job positions) | 1 partner vote |

The message from all participants concerning the need to create partnership networks globally and regionally was very clear. The same results came up strongly both in the “Our mission” and partnership work phases of the consultation.

The results and discussions also strongly presented the need for a Felm International Advisory Board. How this board would connect with regional networks was a question that needed to be discussed, reflected on, and decided.

The need for mutual learning and *learning about learning* was also a very popular improvement topic. This result resonated strongly with the mutual learning discussed in the previous chapters. The challenge for Felm and its partners was to see whether we reserved enough time and energy to create opportunities for mutual learning. This ‘learning about learning’ posed a challenge to all our organisations – what kind of processes do we have to ensure the growth of understanding in this matter? How do we facilitate meetings and workshops? When we are dealing with challenging and complicated topics such as PME or partnership, how do we ensure that our organisations’ staff are up-to-date in this respect? How do we preserve organisational and institutional memory concerning these overarching themes, which have a constant impact on our work? Learning about learning is a method that feeds into capacity building at all levels. It also brightens organisational identity and strategy.

Concerning capacity building, this result gives us a distinctive perspective for our cooperation. Does Felm reserve the time required to analyse the aspired goals for capacity building with its partners? Does Felm decide unilaterally for the benefit (or burden) of our partners? Discussing and deciding on the goal of partner capacity together would assist in making long-term plans with clear, measurable, and committed goals.

Participants also voted that Felm should not engage in projects whose ownership was unclear. Project ideas can probably come from any direction, but the key issue is whether there is genuine interaction and discussion about a project’s necessity, as well as the local partner’s motivation to engage in it. These discussions need partners’ trust and respect if they are to communicate clearly about the intentions and motivations of each organisation. Felm regional staff also need cultural sensitivity and understanding to proceed with new project ideas. In these matters the local partner and the regional networks could be valuable assets for all involved parties.

Analysing together what data we need is a good suggestion for PME development. This would be part of sharing understanding about PME and the need for it. It may become clearer to the partner if Felm could provide a more detailed explanation of the need for data. Partners could then help Felm to see more clearly the kind of data collection that is realistic and meaningful in the context.

The issues we are probably *most likely to postpone* are related to partnership transformation (from financial to other kinds of support), communication of plans, and bad staff deployment. All changes in partnership status are critical phases for both Felm and the partners in question. It is clear that Felm needs a better process and capacity

for staff to deal with these changes. Sufficient resources and time must be reserved for dealing with partnership transformations. Selected Felm partners could be invited to provide input for this process's formation.

One of the consultation's designed outputs (Output 4) was that all participants should acknowledge the merits and challenges of partnership, and be better equipped to strengthen it. The discussions, ideas, and results all allow us to see that awareness of the merits and challenges has been raised and shared. Felm and its partners now have up-to-date information and clear focal points for the investment of energy and resources in developing partnership. All these issues should be addressed in Felm's partnership strategy development.

7.4.2 Recommendations

Networks

The popularity of improving global and regional networks as a key development for partnership must be taken as the spearhead goal for partnership development. This message (and the strategic development following the report) can help deepen and widen Felm's identity as an organisation. Felm's work is partner-based, but it can also be more network-based. Felm is already active and present in many networks, but its role can be even more to be profoundly a creator, advocator, and enhancer of partner networks, working as an axis in an umbrella of partners. What does this require from Felm? Felm needs to analyse the current network status to be more aware of its current position. I recommend that Felm construct a Theme of Hope/goal of international cooperation-based partner-network portfolio to increase the organisation's awareness of current networks and their linkage to different partners. As the portfolio will be constructed through a theme or a goal, it will help the Felm units to approach these networks through shared goals, not unit boundaries. Through this portfolio it will be easier to see and understand the different connections between stakeholders related to each Theme of Hope. There are also high hopes for the role of Felm's International Advisory Board. The initiation of its work is a necessary response to the need for global networking.

Learning about learning

Concerning the need for Felm and its partners to continuously learn from each other, I recommend they focus on developing their staff's understanding of mutual learning processes. The processes of learning and *learning about learning* are profoundly related to organisational identity (broadly understood as the organisation's and individual worker's identities), communication, and capacity building. A learning attitude requires one to accept one's own ignorance. This does not mean the wrong kind of humility (don't hide your light under a bushel). Real humility is closely connected to

a method of approaching situations where partners meet. Both partners should acknowledge their need for learning. Behaving like experts who have all the answers is the best way to destroy a mutual learning process from the start. Conferences are frequently built on this model of building platforms for the display of expertise. We have all experienced marathon conferences where experts displayed their knowledge in an endless procession of similar PowerPoints. Although the content may be interesting, very little learning happens within and between the participants. The attitude feeds into communication and capacity building. If the attitude of the donor, for example, is 'the expert is training the novices', the monologue approach usually extends all too naturally to capacity building and communication. One person (the expert) is the process's proactive participant. The other's role is to be reactive and receptive. This internal dynamic also expresses and enhances power relations within and between organisations.

Felm and its partners should strive for **mutual transformation** in the field of mutual learning, capacity building, and communication. Learning is about the rearrangement and transformation of thoughts, attitudes, and feelings. When this happens, **partners share the process of learning**, not necessarily the results (which may vary according to each participant). I believe the participants experienced some of this shared learning process during the consultation. How can Felm and its partners create these mutual learning processes? This is largely about re-evaluating the current disposition, attitudes, and 'business as usual' approaches to organising conferences and meetings. It is also about investing the right resources (personnel, time, etc.) in planning conferences, workshops, and meetings. When time is scarce, and people are in a hurry, it is safest to rely on the monologue approach. Participatory methods require considerably more planning than monologue methods. Participatory methods also require a willingness to trust in what emerges from the mutual learning process. Using participatory methods and mutual learning means trusting and relying on partnership to guide the learning process forward, not the supposed expertise of a single person or organisation.

Discussing capacity-building needs and the role of Felm's staff

More feedback about Felm's staff from partners (seconded/regional) should be encouraged. Partners' insight is invaluable when **assessing capacity-building** needs in the region. Felm's regional directors could also engage more in discussions about Felm's staff's performance with the partner organisation. All our resources should be focused in accordance with Felm's strategy and our partners' assessment of capacity-building needs. Felm's partners should remember that Felm's staff cannot and should not replace local staff, even if this was how it was done a few decades ago. A realistic assessment of Felm's seconded staff's required role is crucial to building a healthy partnership in the region. As the role of Felm staff becomes clearer for the partner, the building of genuine partnership becomes more possible for all participants. When the expectations of Felm's staff's role are misplaced, it is more likely that

conflict and misunderstanding will arise between Felm and the partner. Even if the leader knows the role of a certain Felm worker, the other workers in the organisation may have a very incomplete understanding of it. For partnership formation both Felm's regional director and the partner's leadership should ensure that the understanding of Felm workers' role is shared across the organisation.

Ending of financial cooperation

Concerning the ending of financial cooperation (referred to in the chart as a 'bad exit strategy'), there should be more open discussion about the causes and consequences for Felm and its partner to have a better understanding of the matter. Several reasons may cause Felm funding to end. All are serious scenarios that need to be communicated clearly in Felm and with partners.

One scenario is that Felm is forced to cut funding for some projects because Felm's backing donors like the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs reduces or refocuses funding. These changes may be quite rapid and happen against Felm's will. In these cases, open communication and allocating time for the partners concerned are vital. Other sources of funding inside Felm and through networks should be investigated.

The second scenario is that Felm is forced to cut or reduce funding because of corruption in the partner organisation. This means cooperation is insufficiently safe for the partnership to continue in financial form. When trust has been breached, it is very difficult to rebuild it. The biggest challenge is the partner organisation's reaction to such cases. Is the organisation silent about them and does it cover them up? Or does it have a clear procedure for reporting and dealing with corruption (see more on this in [Chapter 7.2.2](#))?

Felm has set a strategic goal to help build partners' financial management capacity. In the unlikely (and worst) case, where the leadership of a partner organisation is unwilling to support this process, Felm and other donors will have good reason to suppose this lack of motivation is due to hidden agendas and private financial gain in the organisation. Hidden agendas are detrimental to organisational development and professional partnership.

If the leadership does not support and allocate sufficient resources to upgrading financial management, Felm should react accordingly. This means reducing support markedly or withholding it until the motivation to build trust and be accountable is reaffirmed. These processes leave the partnership in a very inflammatory phase for a long time. However, clear decisions should be made without delay and communicated clearly to all levels of the partner organisation. It should also be made clear what needs to happen for the financial support to return to its original level.

The third scenario concerns Felm's strategic plans. Felm must make strategic choices to be faithful to its vision and mission. Unfortunately, this means withdrawing funds

from projects that are beyond the core of Felm’s strategy. Withdrawing from certain projects is not a statement that the project is not valuable, or that Felm wishes to sever its partnership. It means that Felm and the partner will grow apart financially. The key issues are the timely communication of plans and capacity building for self-sustainability. Self-sustainability must be part of project planning from the project idea’s first phases. Building diversified income is crucial to preparing for uncertainty and building the organisation’s lasting autonomy and independence (for more on this see [7.2.2](#) and [8.8.4](#)).

When financial cooperation ends, Felm should have a clear plan in place which all Felm’s personnel follow. This process should include the following: **1.** Clear responsibilities for the process. In most cases the Felm regional director should lead the process and communicate with the partner. **2.** Documentation of each meeting and discussion related to the process for the benefit of both partners. **3.** Preparation and capacity building for the end of financial cooperation. **4.** Open communication and continuous communication, sharing facts and the process’s timetable, receiving the partner and understanding all the difficult feelings related to the process. **5.** Analysing the situation together and allowing the expression of thoughts and feelings, focusing on shared successes in cooperation and making them visible, supporting key staff in both organisations through consultation. **6.** No later than a year after the project’s funding has ceased Felm should contact the partner and explore opportunities to continue with a transformed partnership.

The fourth scenario is one in which both partners know from the outset that the financial support will last for only a certain (and usually short) period. Both partners should ensure that during the cooperation the end of financial support and what this will mean for the project and the organisation are regularly discussed. Building false hope or evading the topic is irresponsible and unprofessional conduct that seriously harms the partnership.

7.4.3. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: One way to build capacity is to utilise partners’ human resources from one region to another region in project designing, training, workshops, and evaluation to ensure Felm doesn’t have to pay high fees to experts. Partners’ staff can contribute without paying additional fees.

Lorato Moalusi: Felm needs to put in place a clear appointment process for the Felm International Advisory Board. This is a very important part of ensuring continuous linkages and communication within and between regions and partners. However, if partners in a region do not even know each other, how are they going to vote for representation? My suggestion is that this should be done by country at the beginning of the five-year term. It could proceed alphabetically in the region, starting with the first or the last letter of the alphabet (e.g. in Southern Africa Angola or Zimbabwe could be

done in the first term, then Botswana or South Africa in the second term). This way, Felm won't have to depend on its partners, but the selection can be done by Felm, as they know the partners in each country.

John Hernández: As a global cooperation organisation, it is a huge challenge for Felm to establish strong relationships with partners in different contexts. Mutual learning processes are therefore vital, and they place Felm in a particularly important role as an axis in the consolidation of work networks. This networking is more complex than the traditional way of working with partners. Indeed, it may present an opportunity to break with the power schemes that can be established as a result of funding. Understanding everyone as co-responsible means that beyond the execution of a project we feel ourselves to be co-participants and partners on the journey to more appropriate transformation processes, to which the projects point. The end of projects must be considered an advance to another stage of the process. The exit strategy must be understood as a strategy of the journey's continuity in different conditions, in which the partnership moves away from the donor/recipient relationship, and in which some partners even cease to be partners.

Questions for further discussion

For partners

- Make two lists of 'dos' and 'don'ts' for Felm concerning the beginning and ending of financial cooperation. What are the essential actions that build a basis for a well-functioning partnership? What should be avoided? How would you wish Felm to proceed when ending financial cooperation with your organisation? What are the most important things in the process – the 'dos' and 'don'ts'? Discuss this list with Felm's regional staff when discussing partnership.
- 'Network (global and regional) has been strengthened to ensure partners' sharing results in better collaboration with Felm and its partners' was the most popular idea in the consultation. How would you put this into practice? Please share your ideas and proposed action plans with your regional director.

For Felm

- How should Felm support its staff concerning learning about learning and facilitation?
- What would help Felm's staff to have a more harmonised idea of good partnership?
- Knowledge of the local context with expertise in local languages has been one of the strengths of Felm. How can Felm ensure that this strength is maintained in the future?



Towards strengthened partnership!

8. Summary and commitment to the future

Working Session 10
Thursday 16 May

8.1. General discussion and questions and feedback about the consultation

- Sharing practices is not yet included in the duties of the International Advisory Board. Will it be included?
- How can we improve cooperation/networking between partners?
- It is good to get to know Felm's strategic partners
- Felm is changing. Felm has done a lot of good things in Namibia.
- Perhaps the next consultation could be in a region to enable what has been learned to be put into practice.
- Facilitation tips from the consultation for the partner's own work at home.
- We have gathered a lot of information. It needs to be analysed well and put into practice!
- Thanks for the opportunity to express ideas and thoughts freely, and to engage and contribute.
- There has been an emphasis on good organisation and planning, and lot of inspiring ideas.

- When we meet, we inspire and boost our work.
- Exchange visits at a country or regional level to establish contact – even by Skype – can Felm could facilitate such cooperation?
- Partners are transforming Felm at this consultation.
- Transformation means things remain the same but transformed. We need to see the opportunities.
- Change is a slow process (e.g. progress towards PWD inclusion, gender violence).
- New technology provides access and increasing contact without the need to always meet physically.
- Sauna – a traditional Finnish forum – as a means of negotiation!

8.2. Ideas to which we have committed ourselves

‘Ideas I can commit myself to’ was written on the front wall. Underneath were three categories: **1.** Personal level; **2.** Organisational level; and **3.** Networking level. Participants were asked to write their commitments on the wall for each category. For this report I have organised the ideas by themes and included them in the table to help the reader focus on each theme. The themes are: change in disposition/attitude (refers to change in values and motivation); a new and improved work focus; new ideas and tools for work and improved communication. Most ideas came from partners and Felm workers. Some ideas from stakeholders are mentioned on a separate line.

1. Personal level

Felm staff – personal level

Change in attitude / disposition	New and improved work focus	New ideas and tools for work	Improved communication
Giving positive feedback and encouragement	Learning more about partners’ work	Producing tools for partnership meetings and praying for you all	Listening even more carefully, learning from partners
I want to learn properly what we do together at grassroots level	More project visits		Remembering CC emails
Fighting harder for indigenous rights	Working on project planning and requirements		Better communication
			More communication
			Will be in contact with partners more. Felm managers talk about cooperation possibilities

Partners – personal level

Change in attitude / disposition	New and improved work focus	New ideas and tools for work	Improved communication
Availability and disposition to work hard	Working on income-generating projects	Using some of the tools learned during consultation, e.g. the first exercise: 'Our Shared Vision'.	Communicating with other participants (consultation)
More commitment to serving people	Bringing back all ideas and reflecting on how things could be improved	Innovations are coming	Sharing what I've learned about Felm's organisation and its work at home
Being available / availability	Shared fundraising		Openness to dialogue
Continuing in my enthusiasm	Teamwork		Improving work and communication
Prayer!	Sharing learning with management team		Improving communication with my region's (Felm) regional director
Serious monitoring and evaluation of projects	Gathering information about the project I wish to embark on		More frequent communication for better understanding and support
Reflection on what to improve, and work harder	To enhance God's love through social justice and equality		Learning/listening more for personal transformation
More commitment to global communion	Improving participatory process in my organisation		
	Supporting the 'Light of Hope'		

Stakeholder – personal level

Maintaining contact with partners (by email, etc.) and sharing prayer requests between partners.

2. Organisational level

Partners – organisational level

Change in organisation's disposition	New and improved work focus	New ideas and tools for work	Improved communication
Trust and respect	Strengthening the partnership between MECC and Felm	Revisiting the organisation's vision and mission using this process	Sharing of best practice and lessons learned
Strengthening commitment and support	Following recommendations for more reporting and transparency	Innovations in activities	Sharing my experience with the organisation
Servant mood	Strengthening collaboration with Felm	Organising a reflection session with Felm's country representatives to agree on how partnership could be improved	Working to improve communication and strengthen partnership
Good cooperation	Focusing more on global warming and climate change matters	Establishing links with other partners	Sharing my experience
Strong commitment to the sustainability of all ministries	Improving best practice	Documentation of success stories/best practice	Sharing Felm's vision and commitment to help those who are marginalised
	Developing projects		Promoting better communications with partners in my organisation
	Projects relevant to people		
	Learn more about climate change & organize a district conference		
	Strengthen good governance		
	Strengthen the networking with other local & regional NGOs		

Felm staff – organisational level

Change in organisation's disposition	New and improved work focus	New ideas and tools for work	Improved communication
Process takes time – let's give it. Project is time-limited.	Constantly reminding my unit of everything we've discussed and shared here – and me too!	Offering capacity building for project fundraising	As a unit – more interaction with old and new partners.
	Strengthening regional advocacy	Defining best practice in cooperation and with partners and within the organisation	Improving communication in all directions
	Ensuring the implementation of the consultation's recommendations in my unit's work	Organising climate change best practice training for partners/ via Skype and Felm's staff	Sharing the information with all Felm's staff members.
		Considering possible ways to transform weaknesses into strengths and threats into opportunities	More interaction with different units and partners.

Stakeholder – organisational level

Forming our theology and strategies with partners abroad.
Sharing experiences from this consultation in Finland.

” Reminding my unit of everything we've discussed and shared here constantly – and me too!
- PARTNER

3. Networking level

Partners – networking level

Change in organisation's disposition	New and improved work focus	New ideas and tools for work	Improved communication
Being open to sharing	Following up on instructions	Initiating meetings with other CSOs in the country	Sharing success stories
Resourcing together	Sharing about our work and asking for support	Establishing a function for network management	Being more connected with all Felm's partners and making MECC more known by others
	Macro environment with partners	Creating a friendship sharing network	Constant communication
	Working more closely to exchange experiences and learning	Exchange programme	Communicating at a regional level with other Felm partners
		Beginning email exchange with partners who work in the same thematic areas and possibly organising practice exchange with them	Sharing with the churches of Venezuela, Bolivia, and Colombia what we've learned here
		Online platform for sharing information	More communication at regional level
		Empowerment-based networking for concrete results and supportive and meaningful partnership	Communicating with my regional partners to share our work
		Creating a regional network group and sharing success stories	Communicating with partners through internet-sharing experiences and new ideas
			Active communication and sharing

Felm staff – networking level

Change in organisation's disposition	New and improved work focus	New ideas and tools for work	Improved communication
More networking	Cooperation in sharing fundraising practices	Using the networking meeting (already placed) to share best practice between partners	Networking with our Finnish donors/supporters
	Strengthening networks by facilitating and organising platforms for knowledge sharing (with partners)	Arranging regional Skype networking sessions between partners.	
	More training with other partners in the area		
	Finding ways for the partners to come together at country/regional level		

Stakeholders

Exchanging workers, organising short-term action/visits

8.3. Analysis

The ideas written on the wall were above all a testimony to the motivation and enthusiasm created by our shared time together. As the consultation was nearing its end, it was natural to hear and see how people wished to continue our communion and shared vision in other forms. All the ideas are seeds that will grow in different parts of the world.

Many ideas concerned an improved focus on work and communication. Sharing what happened during the consultation or reaching out to partners in the future motivated many participants. Sharing a meaningful learning process will help Felm and its partners to revisit what was achieved

” Organising a reflection session with Felm’s country representatives to agree how partnership can be improved.

- PARTNER

together during the consultation. Learning with the biggest impact is usually unrelated to new information but to a (re)discovery of what the most important things are. This is also clear in the table.

8.4. Comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: How does Felm assess its partners and link their commitment to a shared vision, mission, and the intended objectives at organisational (Board) and personal levels?

Lorato Moalusi: s a way of learning together and improving communication, there should be a biannual publication of best practices. We should also be intentional about sharing information, lessons, and evolving (best) practices. Everything discussed and recommended at the consultation should be prioritised by year for the next five years. The things that can and should be implemented by partners should be directly communicated to them.

She Hongyu: There are a lot of recommendations. It would be realistic to start with just one or two to really make change happen. The Amity Foundation is highly supportive of Felm in the next phase of its development, and we will do all we can to support the finalising of the recommendations of the consultation.

John Hernández: The consultation was a very inspiring space for the participants. To a large extent the partners came up with fresh ideas. Its success will be seen in the extent to which these experiences are translated into practical renewal. I must emphasise that Felm's inclusion in its own structure of an active listening and mutual learning space with the partners with whom it works itself already reveals a different and valuable way of understanding its mission. In this way we feel that we can really have a shared vision with Felm that is enriched from many perspectives. Thank you for joining us and for walking alongside us.

Questions for further discussion

For Felm's partners and stakeholders:

1. What was or what could be the idea you could commit yourself to?
Have you already made an effort to make it happen?
2. Pick one idea that is not yours and examine it. Could you take that idea and use it to develop partnership?
3. Which idead inspired you? Why?
4. Was there an idea you found surprising? Why?



8.5. Felm Advisory Board

Rolf Steffansson, Executive Director, Felm

Background

To strengthen partners' participation and their opportunities to influence Felm's planning and monitoring, the present strategy of Felm includes the establishment of an International Advisory Board (FIAB). The Felm Board sees the FIAB as a useful way to interact. The FIAB should not add to unnecessary bureaucracy or delay decision making.

In April 2019 the Felm Board approved the working order of an International Advisory Board for presentation to the Partnership Consultation (PC) arranged in May 2019. The PC discussed the proposal and affirmed the need to establish an Advisory Board. However, the representatives asked for more clarification on the mandate of the FIAB.

The PC observed that the FIAB:

- can promote better and more flexible communication between Felm and its partners
- provides an improved channel of feedback for Felm's partners
- provides a tool for monitoring achievements
- improves cooperation in the Themes of Hope, both horizontally and vertically
- adds quality to assessing the working environment
- makes joint processes more efficient

- helps in understanding Felm's procedures
- provides opportunities to influence Felm's strategy

As additional goals for the FIAB, the partners suggested:

- sharing of best practices
- strengthening regional networks
- building hope, trust and efficiency

In line with the observations and recommendations the Felm Board approved the working order of the FIAB in October 2019.

**Terms of reference for the Felm International Advisory Board
Approved at the Felm Board meeting, 21.10.2019**

Membership

The International Advisory Board consists of twelve (12) members. Ten of the members represent Felm's international partners. Members are elected from the working regions of Felm.¹⁵ The Finnish members of the Advisory Board are the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Felm Board. The Felm Executive Director convenes the meeting and is responsible for the preparation of the presentations. The Executive Director of Felm is the presenter and the secretary of the International Advisory Board. Members of the Felm Executive Group have the right to attend.

The Advisory Board should include expertise in all Felm's strategic priorities. The different types of partner organisation are represented in the membership:

- Ecumenical networks
- Churches
- Church-based organisations
- Non-governmental organisations

The Advisory Board's composition observes the Lutheran World Federation's gender and youth inclusion policies.

Election procedure

The Felm Board elects the members of the advisory board from the nominees of the Felm partners. The term of an international member is three years. A third of the membership positions are filled each year. A member who has served two full terms is not

¹⁵ **East Africa and the Horn of Africa:** Ethiopia, Tanzania; **East Asia:** the Chinese-speaking areas; **International disability networks:** Ecumenical Disability Advocacy Network EDAN; **International networks:** Act Alliance, Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches; **Latin America:** Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela; **Mekong River Area:** Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand; **Middle East:** Cyprus, Israel, Middle East Council of Churches, Palestine, Syria; **South Asia:** Nepal, Pakistan; **Southern Africa:** Angola, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe; **West Africa:** Senegal, Mauritania.

eligible for re-election. Should a member resign in the middle of the term, the Felm Board elects a replacement, based on the nomination of the international partners for the rest of the resignee's term.

Responsibilities

The International Advisory Board supports the work of Felm and for its part fosters the fulfilment of Felm's vision and goals. The International Advisory Board provides opinions and statements concerning the strategy, planning, and allocation of resources to Felm's operations.

Meetings

The International Advisory Board meets two or three times a year. The members of the International Advisory Board will meet physically at least every second year. The rest of the meetings are organised through video conferencing. Felm ensures that each member has access to the necessary technical equipment for video conferencing.

In the spring the International Advisory Board:

- discusses the changes in the operational environment and their impacts on the cooperation of Felm and its partners
- discusses the basic assumptions of Felm's financial and operational plan for the following year.
- discusses the development needs of partnership cooperation
- makes recommendations on international funding opportunities and their use
- discusses Felm's key policies of Felm, their relevance, and the needs of policy development
- discusses other relevant issues.

In autumn the International Advisory Board

- discusses the annual report of the previous year and provides statements to the Felm Board
- discusses the risk assessments of the regions and gives statements and recommendations to the Board of the Felm
- discusses changes in Felm's international programmes and gives recommendations to the Felm Board
- receives information about how the recommendations and opinions issued have affected Felm's decision making and operations
- report on their contributions towards the Felm partnerships in their respective regions
- deals with other matters mentioned in the invitation to the meeting

The International Advisory Board convenes for an extraordinary meeting in the year following the mid-term review of the Felm strategy (the next review is in 2020) and gives its opinion and recommendations concerning the results of the mid-term review.

The International Advisory Board convenes for an extra strategic workshop in the preparation of a new strategy and gives its input to the making of the strategy. Members of the International Advisory Board shall be invited to attend the meeting in writing or electronically at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

The International Advisory Board shall have a quorum when the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson and at least five (5) members are present. Minutes of the discussions shall be drawn up of the meetings and signed by the Chairperson and the Secretary.

The present members of the Felm International Advisory Board

The Felm Board has appointed the following members to the FIAB on the basis of partners' proposals.

Member

Surendra K. Shrestha, Nepal
Hilda Mungure, Tanzania
Jaalo Mphadhi, Namibia
She Hongyu, China
Adama Faye, Senegal
Sourahya Bachealany, Lebanon
James San Aung, Myanmar
Atahualpa Hernandez, Colombia

Deputy member

Humphrey Peters, Pakistan

Dorothy Moyo, Zimbabwe
Selma Chen, Taiwan

Ibrahim Azar, Pakistan

The members of the networks and the disability networks are still to be decided.



8.6. Consultation feedback from the partners

Please return to the Working Session 1 question. Did the consultation meet your expectations? Was anything missing? What are your reflections on our working sessions and the consultation's arrangements? Do you feel you have been heard? What are your concrete suggestions for improving partnership with Felm? Thank you for your feedback.

'Yes, the consultation met my expectations, although it failed to include the political agenda in the discussion. The arrangements were wonderful – thanks to everyone at Felm who devoted so much of their time and effort to all the arrangements. Yes, I feel my voice was heard by Felm. To improve partnership, we need to build a more mutual understanding, maintain a close relationship, and engage in peer discussion. We also need on-site visits to partners' work. Felm staff should be available to communicate with partners in each country.'

'The working session met my expectations. I now have a clear understanding of what Felm is all about. There was nothing missing. Indeed, I learned a lot more than I had expected. The group sessions were awesome. When I expressed myself, I got the impression my opinions and contributions were taken seriously. Felm should continue the good work and engagement, and strengthen networking and give feedback when necessary. Thank you.'

'Be clear and as open as possible – follow the partners' recommendations. Yes, the consultation has helped to improve my understanding of Felm's organisation.'

'The consultation met my expectations – nothing was missing. The working sessions and consultation arrangements were perfect. A little privacy in our rooms (accommodation) would have been good. Discussions were perfectly heard. Suggestion for improvement of partnership – clear communication and consideration of the local context.'

'I had four expectations – to contribute, participate, learn from others, and meet my Felm family and celebrate Felm's 160th anniversary. I think all my expectations were met. I'm sure the celebration will be the focus this evening and this weekend. The working sessions were great - very creative and engaging. I'm glad I was able to contribute. The overall management was excellent, including the playback entertainment (tarinateatteri). The only concern I have about the partnership discussion is that we started with the two statements about partnership, which was very odd – it would have been helpful to start by reflecting on own partnership relationship than examining these statements and being guided by them. Sharing with Felm and its partners was also very good.'

'A very well-planned and organised event that allowed a lot of scope for feedback. The timing was a little tight. It would have been useful to include a partners' sharing session. Overall, it was an excellent event – congratulations!'

‘The consultation met my expectations. It was based on different opinions and perspectives, which contributed to everyone’s learning. I also think Felm is a good and very inclusive organisation.’

‘The consultation met my expectations. It covered the prospects for Felm working with its international partners. I’m very happy with the way the sessions were arranged. It allowed a safe space to speak. The small groupwork was also effective. The facilitators were good, and they were respectful. To improve partnership, there should be regular contact – a meeting once a quarter between partners and Felm. This can be done using Skype or Zoom or even WhatsApp calls. Then there can be physical visits twice a year. Partners should consider writing success stories and sharing them with Felm.’

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My expectations were met. I now have a clear understanding of what felm is all about. There was nothing missing. Indeed, i learned a lot. The group sessions were awesome.

- PARTNER

‘Yes, it met my expectations. However, I feel presentations by all the partners of their work (5–7 minutes) would have given us a broader idea of Felm work. I learned a lot from the working sessions: they extended my knowledge of areas I’d never heard about. I made friends (did some networking), got ideas for enhancing my work, learned from the implementation of the strategic planning (the facilitators

were great). I’ve been heard a lot. The Advisory Board is a great idea. I feel an electronic website for every partner to describe the impact of their work would be great. Exchange visits to deal with mutual problems would be good. We should have a team working on each project, not only a regional director (not necessarily in the field – they can work from Finland).’

‘The consultation met most of my expectations. I’m sure it needed a lot of energy to organise it. All the working sessions were informative, and people talked about practical things. My suggestions and idea were heard in the group discussions, and I hope they will be put into practice.’

‘A transparent and cordial dialogue.’

‘The entire workshop was absolutely wonderful. It met my expectations. It has been a great time. Just a big thank you!’

‘Developing or establishing a strong network. Developing projects and reporting to Felm through the developed networking system. And last but not least, praying for Felm. God bless you all!’

‘All my expectations have been met. The working sessions were well prepared, and all the facilitators were amazing and creative. I’ve had the opportunity to listen to others and to be heard. I will go home with all my new ideas and reflect with Felm’s country representatives on how the partnership can be improved.’

‘Generally, yes – but some of the spiritual elements weren’t met. Overall, I’m happy. I feel I’ve been heard. Suggestions: plan for partners in projects to be more in tune with sustainability. Partnership should be more reasonable. We can’t always depend on Felm’s financial support. Thank you for our partnership!’

‘At a personal level I need to communicate more with the regional director – share the little stories (positive and challenges) so that she can report to Felm. At the organisational level I need to learn more about climate change and raise the community’s awareness of it. Before the end of the year I want to arrange a distinct campaign related to climate change. I need to network with other partners at the regional level. We should share best practice and support each other.’

8.7. Conclusions – Did we achieve our aim?

In short, yes – in terms of the consultation itself. As was mentioned in the introduction, the ultimate test for the success of the outcome remains to be seen in the near future. Concerning the different outputs that we set for the consultation, I consider this consultation was successful.

We increased our understanding of our shared vision and were inspired by what we encountered. Felm also received crucial information and insights for its strategy implementation, with all the richness and challenge that comes from working with partners. The Felm strategy seems inclusive in many respects, and most partners see themselves as contributing to it.

‘Network’ was the word receiving most votes at the consultation, and this testifies to its significance. Partnership was discussed at length using various methods, and the partnership groupwork produced clear inputs concerning the direction in which Felm should proceed.

Rolf Steffansson led the discussion about establishing the Felm International Advisory Board, and the process is well underway. We hope that all the participants were able to empower each other in our shared vision and mission during the consultation. We trust this empowerment will be transmitted to the regions and among the communities we are all called to serve.

One of the consultation’s expected outputs is the report ‘You hold in Your hands’. A summary of the main recommendations can be found in the next chapter.

8.8. Summary of the main recommendations for developing partnership

It has been a privilege and labour of love to go through all the material Felm’s staff, board members, partners, stakeholders produced during the consultation. The material contains hundreds of ideas and perspectives on the cooperation of Felm and its partners. Some issues seemed to pop up all the time, and the voting with colour-coded symbols helped in identifying some of the peak results. The following recommendations are the main summary of those found in each chapter. Some ideas are developed further here. Some topics and the details of recommendations can be found only in the chapters, so the reader may need to look there for further information.

8.8.1 Strategy and organisational identity

Concerning Felm’s strategic development, the Partners’ Consultation has provided ideas for development. A concrete suggestion from partners was that Felm should initiate *partnership strategy development and follow-up in place*. This suggestion should be launched and developed without delay. The report’s recommendations will be included in this strategic development with some modifications. The partnership strategy development should also consider other relevant results in this report, as well as ideas developed in Felm’s various units since the consultation. This partnership development should start in 2020 and eventually have an impact on the 2023 Felm strategy, creating a strong and mutually entwined dialogue-engaged partnership and perspective¹⁶. Such a perspective would enhance the ‘partnership mindset’ (a term used in the consultation) with Felm’s staff and partners.

Felm’s strategy, with its vision and Themes of Hope, seems inclusive for the partners, and Felm is on the right track here. The concept of a shared vision inspired many participants. Felm and its partners should engage in regional organisational identity workshops. This can be done with Felm and one partner at a time, or by convening with many partners from the same region (at a Felm regional network meeting – see [8.8.5](#)). These organisational workshops could mirror what was done in the consultation but also delve more deeply into organisational identity. They could include discussions and reflection on values, policies, etc. The aim would be to build a better understanding of each other and continue to share our identities. Workshops would help participants to discover the most important things Felm and its partners share, but they would also help to revive and rediscover our organisational identities. Shared reflection on our identities would create a stronger resonance between organisations. It would also help in identifying possible development issues and challenges.

¹⁶ Strategy is usually thought of only as a long-term plan. However, it can also be seen as a pattern, position, or perspective.

These workshops would also be very beneficial for new staff (within Felm or its partner organisations) and constitute a crucial process at the beginning of partnership formation. Without partnership reflection our signed agreements are in danger of being just pieces of paper. Partners should have proper time to think about and reflect on agreements before they are signed. Such partnership-focused workshops could include cultural and religious reflection. With church partners they should include theological and ecclesiological discussion.

Felm could also assist partner organisations more in the facilitation of strategy/organisational identity processes (through Felm's own staff or by relying on local third-party expertise). As partnership is increasingly project- and RBM-based, the need for the organisation's own strategy and identity processes increases. Which projects should the partner implement? With whom and with which resources and networks? These questions will become more challenging to the partner as they implement various projects with different outcomes. How does the partner see the connection of the project's impact- or outcome-level with the organisation's vision and mission? Organisations should not implement projects if they do not engage and resonate with their true identity – even if Felm is willing to offer funds to certain kinds of project. These 'unowned projects' weaken the partnership organisation's commitment to the work, and they pose great risks to partnership.

During the consultation partnership was discussed using several methods, from rubber duck symbols to SWOT analysis. In distilling all the ideas, I have come up with a three-point suggestion for a description of a healthy and genuine partnership between organisations (see the ideas based on symbol choosing in Chapters [7.1.1](#) and [7.1.2](#)). I also suggest some methods and actions that might support them. Many are probably already in use in the regions, and many more could be formulated.

A genuine and healthy partnership is characterised by:

1. Strength and longevity

The ideal partnership is solid and enduring. Partners are stronger and more capable of facing challenges together. The value of staying together through hardship is a test for partnership. It is also imperative for a strong and enduring partnership that both partners invest in supporting and developing it. Strength and longevity are also related to feelings of security, resilience, and long-term sustainability. Strength is born of mutual trust and the sharing of identity, plans, and values.

2. Dynamic complementariness and reciprocity

Partnership is about the mutual reciprocity of each partner. Genuine partnership is not a stagnant power relationship but a dynamic process in which both partners com-

municate and feed each other spiritually and otherwise. Partnership is proactive, not reactive, and involves interested engagement with each other. Partnership is shared movement, vertically and horizontally. We move forward in our mission, but we also go deeper into our challenges and successes together. Through partnership we can rediscover our identity. Partners complement each other through their identity and uniqueness. A complementary partnership is beautiful to behold.

3. Light that brings understanding, reflection and transparency

Partnership brings light to the world in which we work, but it also brings transparency, openness, accountability, and clarity within and between our organisations. The concepts of reflection and light are also related to our shared vision. A vision is fundamentally something we ‘see’ in front of us. This shared exploration of shared vision provides an aim for our partnership and reaffirms it.

Recommended actions for supporting partnership. These recommendations are mainly addressed to Felm’s regional workers and partners, who are in continuous contact with each other.

- Plan and develop **steps** to enhance and strengthen partnership. Agree certain dates you will do this and follow them up.
- Focus on improving communication. To do this, a good starting point might be to **identify communication** gaps. Create clear communications responsibilities for the partner.
- Share the organisation’s long-term plans in time.
- **Examine** whether your organisation and its communication are as transparent to the partner as it claims. Any discrepancy between what is promised and what is done is bound to fracture trust and mutual respect. If there is a clear discrepancy, raise it on different platforms until change happens.
- **Share difficulties and challenges** openly. Create platforms and time for dealing with problems. Do not hide internal or external risks, failures or problems. There is a good chance they will negatively affect the partnership later. It is usually our willingness to deal with a problem that is key.
- **Major changes** in organisational structure, identity, or mode of cooperation always have a major impact on partnership. When one of the partners is facing such changes, appropriate time and resources should be allocated for a shared exploration of how the partnership and cooperation will be affected.
- Share discussions and ideas related to **strategy, organisational identity, values**, and so on. Ask for facilitation help for meetings if necessary. Use the ideas presented in relation to ideas for networking (8.8.5).
- **Invest time** in upholding and developing a partnership that is **free of RBM terminology**. RBM has its place, but both partners should ensure interaction free of it.
- Discuss **spiritual and religious questions** and their relationship with partnership (even if you don’t share the same faith). As we observed in the operational

analysis, religiosity is increasing globally. As a faith-based organisation, Felm has positive motivation and capacity to facilitate and engage in these discussions.

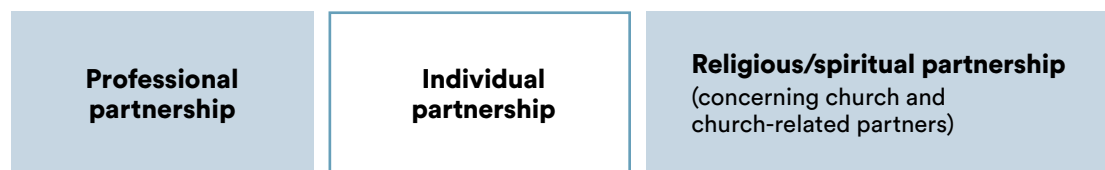
Investigate partnership models – companionship

As was mentioned in Chapter 7.1, various ideals are connected with aspirational partnership, and they explicitly or implicitly affect the partnership’s formation. As partners, we need to be more aware of the impact of these ideals – pictures, stories, and metaphors – and investigate them together. These ideals are born with each of us through our upbringing, and religious and cultural background. By sharing thoughts about these ideals, Felm and its partners can move to examining an ideal to which both partners can feel they can commit themselves.

I recommend (at least for Felm and its church-based partners) Luke 24:13–35 as an ideal model for reflection. This biblical model is a healthier model than the marriage partnership model. In the Emmaus model companionship is more dynamic, and it is a more vision- and mission-oriented journey. Companions are on the road to the fulfilment of a shared vision. The narrative begins and ends with wonder. The journey progresses from sadness to joy, from desperation to hope. The mysterious appearance of Christ and his eventual revelation to his companions are a reminder that in partnership we always receive more than we bring to it. There is a sacredness in the journey and partnership, even if it is sometimes hard to see.

8.8.2. Personnel in partnership

Partnership between Felm and its partners is built through the following three perspectives or paradigms – how we examine, develop, and experience partnership:



When we’re discussing agreements, methods of cooperation, and so on, we’re talking about professional partnership. This is the dominant and fundamental feature of the partnership between organisations.

To begin with, it is organisations (and to some extent communities) that are in partnership, not individuals. Supporting professional partnership means following up our agreements, codes of conduct, and policies together. We need shared understanding and commitment to do this. Without a strong professional partnership (and a constant

commitment to supporting and developing it), we face confused and incoherent cooperation, with a risk of corruption and the arbitrary use of power based on individual relationships.

Every organisation is comprised of people in relationship with each another. The aforementioned professional partnership is agreed between individuals who step into the partnership through their organisations. Partnership between individuals can and should be developed all the time. Connections between individuals are like bridges that support the organisational partnership. A high staff turnover forces us to continually rebuild these bridges.

Strong partnership between individuals is an asset, but it should not be seen as primary. Nor should organisational partnership be seen as secondary. Because we are in a partnership, we always represent our organisations and are committed to agreements between them. Individual relationships are important, but they should not dictate or override any part of our professional partnership. When powerful individuals override or undermine professional cooperation and procedure, they cast a shadow over the entire cooperation and organisational partnership. Powerful individuals' hidden agendas are detrimental to professional partnership. They are like bugs that eat the roots and trunk of the tree. People in high positions and those with major influence on partnership formation and development should always investigate (with their colleagues) how they can use their position and influence to strengthen professional partnership. Open discussion about their role can clarify organisations' internal mandate and responsibilities concerning partnership(s).

As a faith-based organisation, Felm places strong emphasis on a partnership that is intertwined with spiritual elements. Reflection and discussion about the spiritual and religious building blocks of our partnership are elementary. We understand that our partnership opens us to another realm, and our joint mission has a deeper significance than we can express. In partnership we are called to join in God's mission in this world. Christ calls us through and with the marginalised. As Rolf Steffansson reminded us at the consultation's opening service, Christ suffered outside the gates. And he calls us to follow him outside the encampment (Heb.13:12–13). Sharing, reflection, and discussion about the spiritual understanding of our partnership make us stronger and enhance our commitment to work together. It also motivates our cooperation and works as a source of energy to work for each other. Through partnership we are called to witness to the unity of God's mission in this world (John 17:11).

A healthy partnership needs these three partnership perspectives to be connected and balanced. (Where NGOs with no Christian affiliation are concerned, the third perspective should be applied to Felm.) Although these perspectives should be connected, they should not be mixed when discussing partnership. Our spiritual connection and identity are not an excuse to neglect professional partnership: on the contrary, they should be a source of motivation to strive for it.

Emphasising professional partnership includes the concept of equality. Felm decided to invite representatives from all levels of our partner organisations to this consultation. This was a strategic decision, intended to gain an insight from the grassroots level, because it was felt it would strengthen our partnership at all levels of our partner organisations. Building and strengthening partnership are not only the role for organisations' leaders (though they bear the greatest responsibility) but of all staff members. The more extensive the commitment to professional partnership, the more meaningful the partnership will be to all who are engaged in it.

8.8.3. Balanced RBM and PME

Felm has made a strategic decision to use Results Based Management (RBM) and the related Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) in all our international cooperation. This has entailed a major change for some of our partners, especially for smaller organisations and churches that have grown accustomed to a different kind of cooperation. RBM brings with it many tools for organisational development, and the results Felm receives from our partners' projects are a great asset for Felm's strategic development and evaluation of cooperation. RBM also serves as a great tool for fundraising in Finland. Good results help Felm to report back to donors and strengthen their commitment to Felm and its international partners.

Building partners' RBM capacity also serves the goal of increased self-sustainability. With increased RBM capacity partners are better equipped to apply for funding from other local and international donors. The RBM system brings with it a challenging mindset that helps the organisation to discern and prioritise activities' expected results. However, this process takes time, and facilitation and training skills. New project planning and reporting formats make no sense if the partner has not been given time to engage in the learning process. Requirements without proper training, time, and capacity only increase frustration and destroy the ownership of the work. In addition, Felm and its partners obtain false results. The pace of RBM development must be in tune with partner organisations' capacity – and Felm's own regional staff's capacity to improve and support partners' capacity.

One solution would be for Felm to have different RBM development categories matched with partner organisations' RBM capacity (and to take the Felm staff's regional capacity into consideration). Partners could move between these categories, and attaining the next level could be motivated by different means. These categories would serve what was described in the consultation as the 'need for local flexibility'. Having these categories would not mean turning back the clock.

Felm should have an agreement with each partner containing an explicit description of a level of RBM reporting related to the partner's capacity. Even those partners that are just beginning to improve their RBM capacity should have a baseline reporting

system in place for Felm funds. Beyond this level everything is added value which increases the organisation's competence and possibility to increase its funding.

From Felm's perspective agreements on the capacity building of RBM management should include a *partnership commitment promise*. This states that Felm requires no reporting that has not been sufficiently taught or explained to the partner. Furthermore, Felm should promise that this reporting system will remain the same for an identified period.

Felm's RBM system brings a considerable workload to the partners and to Felm's staff. With the same model of requirements for all partners, smaller and less-trained partners must carry a bigger burden than more expert organisations. The bigger the organisation, the more resources it can deploy to handle Felm (and other donor) PME demands. If the requirements are and remain the same for all partners, Felm's staff presence and capacity building should be in proportion to local capacity. In turn, this means Felm's staff resources should be moved according to local needs. Felm's high staff turnover is already a problem, so moving forward in this way seems unwise if partnership is to be enhanced.

The increased RBM requirements also run the risk of consuming other modes of interaction between Felm and its partners. As the interaction becomes more technical (with responses to RBM questions), the opportunities for a sharing of life and faith decrease. This has a negative effect on partnership. Finding a balance in RBM cooperation is a key issue for Felm's partnership development. As Felm is dedicated to working with smaller churches and organisations that have yet to attain a high level of RBM capacity and expertise, the categorisation system should respond to the requirement for local flexibility. This would also be a message of genuine respect and reciprocity between partners. By balancing RBM, Felm and its partners can enjoy the fruits of good project management, which enhances professional partnership.

8.8.4. Self-sustainability and healthy partnership

The questionnaire and consultation discussions highlighted the fact that many Felm partners struggle to find sufficient funds to run their projects. One point of Felm's strategy is to direct resources according to our strategy's focal points. This means an end to funding for certain projects in Estonia, Russia, and France. The released funds will be reallocated to strategically important areas. Ending funding should not mean an end to partnership. This may sound like empty words to partners experiencing the end of financial cooperation. Nevertheless, Felm is willing to continue partnership even when financial cooperation comes to an end. Such continuing partnership should be discussed with the partner long before financial cooperation comes to an end. There should be a clear and transparent procedure for partnership transformation (whatever that transformation is). This should also include a series of facilitated meetings where both organisations share their long-term plans, questions,

and thoughts concerning the partnership. Felm should focus on building economic sustainability with partners facing a decrease in their funding at least three years before the funding stops. This might also be the case with partners facing a decrease in funding from other donors apart from Felm.

The need for fundraising capacity building was also raised as an important matter at the consultation. Fundraising is connected with developing healthy partnerships. The more diversified the funding the partner has, the healthier the relationship with Felm (and other donors) will be. More diversified funding means more self-sustainability and fewer uncontrollable risks to the organisation. Diversified funding is also based more on the companionship partnership model than it is on the marriage model. An ‘only one donor’ idea is built into the latter. As the partner is less dependent on one donor, the power factor in the donor-recipient axis becomes less influential. In other words, the partnership is more equal. Having multiple donors poses challenges to the organisation, but it also enriches the partner. It also increases the need for a clear strategy and organisational identity. The clearer the organisational identity, the easier it will be for the partner to make decisions concerning the planning and implementing of projects with several donors. A clear strategy also helps to see how different projects and their outcomes support the fulfilment of the organisation’s vision. In turn, this builds the partner’s fundraising and communication capacity. A clear and logical strategy makes it easier for the partner to explain why a project is needed and the expected role of a certain donor in the project. Having diversified income and sufficient unrestricted reserves also reduces the negative impact of a funding drought. It equips the partner to continue the work without a donor (who has decided to end financial cooperation). Partnership transformation in such cases is also easier to handle. The more a power relationship is involved, the more feelings of dependency will be attached. Supporting partners to have a more diversified income should be one of Felm’s strategic development focal points.

In the first phase partners highly dependent on Felm should be targeted for receiving fundraising capacity building. Felm should agree a clear percentage goal for diversified income with these partners and follow up the process. At the next Partners’ Consultation the partners with more diversified income can give feedback on the progress and reflect on partnership development with Felm to see if this hypothesis holds.

8.8.5. Global and regional networking

One of the consultation’s clearest and strongest messages was that there was a need for more global and regional networking. Felm can strengthen its organisational identity as a network-building and strengthening organisation. Felm’s current logo can be seen as symbolising a network of partners. It proclaims that we are equal partners around a table. The concrete steps for developing networks begin with the work of the International Advisory Board.

The second phase of Felm's strategic development is to build a partner network portfolio based on the perspective of the Themes of Hope and goals of international cooperation. The portfolio will raise the awareness of each theme and goal, and assist Felm to strengthen these networks strategically. As this portfolio will be based on goals rather than organisational structures, it will support Felm's internal communication and cooperation.

In addition to building this portfolio, a strategic development of regional networks should commence. One possibility is to create a regional board or platform on which all the regional Felm partners will be represented¹⁷. These regional networks could convene in a joined workshop once or twice a year. The travel budget for these meetings can be included in an appropriate project plan submitted to Felm with a local funding percentage. To strengthen global networking, one representative (rotating) from each regional network will travel to another Felm regional network meeting or join the meeting through video conferencing. This will ensure the exchange of good ideas and best practice from one region to another and increase global networking. The topics for each region should be decided regionally. However, I present below a categorisation of themes and perspectives that may help focus the work of regional networks and give some ideas for discussion and capacity building between Felm and its partners. Linking these global themes and the received feedback will also serve the work of the International Advisory Board and Felm's strategic development. The division into four categories, as well as the suggested topics, is based on the consultation's results.

1. Organisational identity, strategy and partnership. Enhancing understanding of shared vision, mission, and partnership.

2. Development of facilitation, dialogue, training, and advocacy skills. Learning about learning. How to build capacity for capacity building.

3. Topics related to burning issues we face in our cooperation and operating environment. These topics could be: climate change resilience (food security); dialogue and conflict sensitivity; advocacy; digitalisation; dealing with fundamentalism; and religious extremism. Religion as mobilising for development. Fundraising.

4. RBM capacity building. Training in RBM-related matters. Sharing of best practice between partners.

Regional network workshops and meetings should be facilitated by Felm's staff or local experts, according to available resources. Felm partners can be invited to play an active role in supporting and developing the networks. Felm and its partners might appoint a small and flexible commission with defined positions for a fixed period to ensure the network's operation. A digital platform can be created to provide support

¹⁷ There's no need to reinvent the wheel. If operating networks are already running in the regions, their work will only need to be adjusted.

and strengthen the regional network's institutional memory. Through the digital platform information and results from the workshops will be shared with all the partners. The convening of regional networks is a great opportunity for Felm's headquarters personnel to meet partners in one location. These meetings will also be key to improving communication and the sharing of strategic development in both Felm and its partner organisations. These networks can be developed to work as joint coalitions for applying for funding from international donors.

8.8.6 Partnership awareness and a friendly organisational culture

Partnership is experienced in organisational identity, agreements, personnel cooperation, programme cooperation, financial cooperation, communication, and partnership culture (meeting intervals, etc.). It is hard to find a sector in our organisations where partnership or its related issues are not present in some sense. Partnership touches almost everything we do. Because of this and through all we have learned together at the consultation, it is meaningful to look in the mirror and ask if our own organisation's structure is adjusted to *being a partnership that is aware and friendly*. Is our strategy and organisational structure built to support and develop genuine and healthy partnership? Or is our current organisational model its opposite? Felm and its partner organisations are all somewhere on the scale. In developing partnership, we should start by examining the issue and raising awareness of it.

Concerning Felm's organisational structure, it may be a challenge to distribute regional work's authority and executive power. One might argue that the closer the executive power of regional work (project implementation, recruiting, networking, budgeting, etc.) is to the region and regional office, the better suited the decisions will be to serving partnership. Felm's regional workers understand and most importantly *share* the reality of the local operating environment with the partners. Regional workers have knowledge and intuition of what works and what doesn't (or requires considerably more time) in a specific context. Felm's regional workers need a global perspective on strategic guidance and support, which will come from the Helsinki headquarters.

Many of Felm's partners need capacity building in advocacy and conflict sensitivity. Felm already has extensive expertise in these fields, but there is a lack of communication and cooperation between different units. To improve its internal cooperation and partnership, Felm needs to rearrange the international department's organisational structure in a more flexible and multi-expertise unit-based approach. As the *partnership within Felm* itself (units and departments) grows and strengthens, cooperation with partners will be enriched by greater expertise and vision.

Felm is called to place itself in a genuine, equal, respectful, and professional dialogue with partners in all regions. In its major donor role Felm is more challenged to create an equal dialogue because of the existing power relationship of financial dependence. Although Felm is more challenged because of its position as a donor, both partners

are responsible for creating this dialogue and partnership. Supporting the method and perspective of professional cooperation is one of the most important ways to ensure an equal partnership. If our partnership ceases to be professional, the power relationship will become less controllable and will threaten the partnership.

The question of the organisation's *partnership awareness and friendliness* is relevant for Felm and its partners alike. It might be good to develop a habit of checking this in every major decision the organisation makes: what will be this decision's or organisational development's impact on our partnership? If the impact is negative, what can we do to prevent or mitigate its effects? If the proposed decision or development is clearly harmful to the partnership, should the organisation withdraw the proposal and return it for more preparation? A partnership checklist would help the organisation to be more aware of other partners and develop partnership more strategically and proactively within the organisation.

8.9. Concluding comments from partners

Surendra Shrestha: Healthy partnership depends on respect, trust, innovative and good governance, and the regular assessment of partners. Who is responsible in Felm? The Felm country office or Felm Helsinki?

Lorato Moalusi: This was the first consultative forum for me, and I found it quite informative in terms of Felm's global work and processes. The facilitation was very effective, as it allowed everyone to participate. Thumbs up to the two facilitators! What I appreciated most was looking into the next five years, as it gave me hope that Felm intended to ensure its investments don't go to waste. I wish to see more connections/linkages/collaborations with other partners within countries and regions. We should not wait for our next meeting in five years. I also wish to see the formation of the International Advisory Board, as I see it as a vehicle to improve communication between partners locally, regionally, and globally.

The opportunity to learn about the work of other organisations was greatly appreciated. I was also grateful for the opportunity to discuss the impact of climate change on women in my country, as well as to present my work and the work of my organisation, the Botswana Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Support Centre, at the Phenomenal Women session.

Bongi Zuma: I have discussed the report with the members of the disability forums. The report is excellent and well presented, and covers almost everything that was discussed during the consultation. It is written in simple, reader-friendly language. One comment from youth with disabilities: 'I don't see this as a report but as a tool that we can use as young people to raise awareness about climate change.' Another comment from a mother of a disabled child: 'I agree this is not a report but a tool that we can use to work together, share experiences, and learn from other Felm partners.'

She Hongyu: Friendly partners and professional staff!

The consultation has enabled participants to understand Felm and its partners close up. It has also enabled partners to generate preliminary ideas for how and at what level partners work. Felm's staff were very caring and hospitable – all the international guests were well cared for. All the organisation of the consultation ran smoothly and well throughout. The staff were very committed to facilitating discussions and demonstrated their professionalism and capability.

Thematic networking

Felm could consider hosting workshops according to themes, such as gender-based issues, environmental issues, disabled people ministries, organisational management, SDG, etc. to help partners get to know the discussions and practices in other parts of the world and get ideas for improving their own work.

Capacity building

This will remain a focus for organisational development. Competition between organisations is competition between the staff's capacity and organisational management. Providing good opportunities for staff development will help the organisation to keep developing and maintain its staff. While focusing on the project's goals, Felm and its partners also need to focus on staff capacity building.

Questions for further discussion

For all:

- Which result in the report is most surprising to you? Which of the report's recommendations do you think is most important? Why? Do you disagree with any of the recommendations? What would you recommend instead?

You can use these questions to engage in discussion in your unit or organisation. Please write a memo of the discussion and share it with Felm/ partners.

For partners:

- Have you already implemented some ideas that you learned about at the consultation? What have you done? If you haven't but are planning to, what are you going to do?

You can share these thoughts and ideas with Felm's regional staff

For Felm:

- Where is the ownership of the partnership(s) visible in Felm's organisational structure? Should it be more visible?
- How will the results of this consultation be seen in Felm?



Appendix 9: Results of the groupwork

9.1. Expectations of the consultation

On the first day (14th of May) of the consultation we asked the participants about their expectations. Each participant could vote for only one expectation. These are the results for each expectation.

I want to learn more about Felm

Partners: 4

Felm Board: 1

Felm workers: 0

Stakeholders: 0

Total: 5

Percentage: 7.8%

Percentage of partner votes: 14.3%

I want to learn more about partnership

Partners: 14

Felm Board: 2

Felm workers: 14

Stakeholders: 1

Total: 31

Percentage: 48.4%

Percentage of partner votes: 50%

I want to network with other partners

Partners: 6

Felm Board: 0

Felm workers: 14

Stakeholders: 3

Total: 23

Percentage: 36%

Percentage of partner votes: 21.4%

I want to share my work with Felm and other partners

Partners: 4

Felm Board: 0

Felm workers: 1

Stakeholders: 0

9.2. Results from the groupwork on the operating environment

Our World – the challenges we face

Working Session 4

Wednesday 15 May

The participants divided into groups, according to the global threats and megatrends presented in the keynote address of Ojot Ojulu of the LWF, and prioritised the caused effects. The megatrends were divided into four themes/headings: **climate change** (warming), the **growth of religions**, the **growth of inequality**, and the **growth of digitalisation**. The groups wrote the concrete effects they had witnessed in their context on post-it notes for each megatrend. When the effects had been recorded, the next task was to evaluate and prioritise them. How big was the effect's impact in the local context? Those with the largest impact were posted on the wall. When each group was finished, all the consultation's participants could vote with an exclamation mark (!) for each effect.

9.2.1. Ojot Ojulu's LWF keynote

Scanning the global operating environment: Seeking multilateral solutions for global challenges

It is a great privilege and honour to have been asked to provide some remarks on such an important question. The question in itself is already a challenge, because the world is facing many challenges today. I will try to focus on some of the challenges that I see from my vantage point, drawing from my experience as the Assistant General Secretary for International Affairs and Human Rights of the Lutheran World Federation. But

first, let me thank Rev. Rolf Steffansson and his team for inviting the LWF to be part of this important discussion.

For those who do not know the Lutheran World Federation. It is a global communion of 148 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing over 75.5 million Christians in 99 countries. It was founded in 1947 in Lund, Sweden and currently has its Head Office in Geneva, Switzerland. The LWF works with its member churches and also has a humanitarian arm known as the World Service that does development and humanitarian work in 25 countries. I lead the LWF's global advocacy team, so this is where I will be coming from as I try to respond to the question before us.

Today, we live in a dynamic, fast changing, and increasingly interconnected world. The digital revolution in Silicon Valley cannot be disconnected from the civil war over mineral fields in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Coltan). Executive orders signed in the White House can have detrimental effects on families in Central and South America, or Syrian refugees in the Middle East. The industries that underpin the Chinese economic boom could at the same time be causing devastating typhoons in the Philippines or cyclones in distant places like Mozambique or Zimbabwe.

This is to say that globalisation is indeed a reality with tangible effects on our daily lives. Events in a remote corner of the world can have far-reaching consequences on the opposite side of the globe. This level of interconnectedness also makes it difficult for one party or stakeholder to resolve any of these global challenges on their own.

This makes the current partnership consultation so important and relevant. All of us from **different continents, countries, and contexts can sit together, talk to each other, share our experiences, and collectively strategise how to address such global challenges.** Sustainable Development Goal 17 emphasises partnership as a goal on its own, because the achievement of the other sixteen goals depends on collaboration between and among nations, organisations, and peoples like us.

In this brief presentation I cannot pretend to cover all the important global challenges we are facing in our respective operating environments. But I would like to focus on climate change, the rise of extreme inequality, the shrinking of civil society space, and the rise of populist movements and religious fundamentalism.

Climate change

There is indisputable scientific evidence that human activity is causing the earth's climate to change at an alarming rate. We are witnessing the dire consequences of climate change in our respective localities: communities suffering from draughts and food insecurity, extreme weather conditions, loss of biodiversity, and so on. In all these situations, while the richer countries that contribute most to climate change can af-

ford to adapt, the poor countries that contribute the least end up paying the cost of climate change.

Climate change is an exemplary global challenge that no single nation – **no matter how big, wealthy, or powerful** – can solve on its own. Churches and congregations may plant thousands of trees, and promote responsible consumption and living. We may even lobby our governments to adopt green growth and development policies. Individual governments may tax carbon emissions, cut subsidies to polluting industries, give incentives for renewable energy, and adopt stronger environmental regulations. These are all good initiatives, and actions that need to be taken. We should promote and advocate their implementation.

However, if we want to have a greater impact, we must transcend our individual local/national actions on a global scale through collaboration and partnership. When it comes to climate change, none of us is independent. We are all at the mercy of actions taken by people on the other side of the planet. As one writer wrote, the people of Kiribati in the Pacific Ocean could cut their greenhouse gas emissions to zero and nevertheless be submerged under the rising waves if people from other countries don't act. Even powerful nations such as China and Japan are not ecologically sovereign. To protect Hon Kong or Tokyo from destructive floods and typhoons, the Chinese and Japanese will have to convince the Russian and American governments to **put our planet first – above their short-sighted national interests.**

In short, climate change is a global challenge that requires interconnected local, national, and global solutions. We need to join hands and bring our experiences and voices together to create an impact on a global scale. At the LWF we have been emphasising the intergenerational justice aspect of climate change for the last seven years, advocating for young people and our responsibility to act as good stewards of the earth and its resources for the following generation. As one Native American saying goes, 'We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children'.

The good news with climate change is that each of us can play her/his part, even at an individual level. There is no excuse not to act. We can only take better action globally if we are already acting locally.

The rise of extreme inequality

I was in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in December and January for my vacation. I went to visit a friend who lives in a neighbourhood where I studied for four years some time ago. I was surprised to get lost in a neighbourhood I thought I knew well. The area used to be a poor neighbourhood, with simple houses and no asphalt roads. It is now a totally different neighbourhood, full of magnificent villas, high walls with wire fences, and fancy gates. Unfortunately, on the main road, I could see more street children and

women sitting and begging for money. While the neighbourhood seems to have become wealthier, the number and conditions of the poor seems to have also increased. This is not an Ethiopian problem. It is a global problem, which we see in every neighbourhood and city around the world.

The increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of the very few is deepening the fragmentation of societies, questioning fundamental values of human dignity, equality, and non-discrimination, and deepening ecological and economic crises around the world. In countries around the world a minority of wealthy people are taking an ever-increasing share of their nations' income. According to Oxfam 82% of the global wealth generated in 2017 went to the richest one per cent of the global population, while the 3.7 billion people who make up the poorest half of the world saw no increase in their wealth.

Why is this a serious problem? Well, because extreme inequality is not only a question of justice for the poor, but a question of our collective wellbeing and the kind of societies we want to be. It is about creating sustainable societies, communities, nations, and a sustainable planet. The evidence is before our eyes that extreme inequality is tearing apart the social fabric that makes a society, harming economic growth, and delegitimising our political systems. The rapid rise of extreme economic inequality is significantly hindering the fight against poverty, making it difficult to achieve the SDGs.

One of the most obvious and oldest forms of inequality is that between women and men. According to Oxfam, in more economically unequal societies, fewer women complete higher education, fewer women are represented in the legislature, and the pay gap between women and men is wider. The rapid rise in economic inequality in recent decades in most countries is therefore a serious blow to efforts to achieve gender equality.

Rising inequality also poses a threat to global peace and security. In recent years the World Economic Forum's *Global Risks* survey has found '**severe income disparity**' to be one of the top global risks for the coming decade. Extreme inequality hurts everyone, and we therefore have to act together.

The LWF, in collaboration with its ecumenical partners, including FELM, is working on an initiative called *Waking the Giant: Churches and the SDGs*. This is a global ecumenical initiative that aims to build the capacity of churches to contribute effectively to the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development. I think this is an example of how we can collaborate globally, based on our concrete local actions, to expand and boost the scope of our impacts. If you need more information on *Waking the Giant*, talk to Leena – she knows more than I do about the project.

Shrinking civil society space, and the rise of populist movements and religious fundamentalism

Civil society have been part and parcel of the post-war world order, contributing to humanitarian work, development, and advocacy to make the world a better place for all. Churches and FBOs have been part of these civil society networks at all levels, from local to global, promoting justice and human dignity through concrete service delivery projects such as schools and health. In Africa many schools and health services were introduced by missionaries to local populations. Today, civil society organisations are acting as a critical voice, thereby holding governments and policymakers to account.

However, the space for civil society to speak up has been shrinking around the world. Churches are not exempt from this threat. At a workshop we organised for church leaders last year in **Kampala, Uganda** on this topic, church leaders spoke about increased threats, harassment, and intimidation against church leaders who speak truth to power. One leader said that he used to be invited to state dinners and special occasions at the state house, but after his church criticised the government he was no longer invited.

The level of threats can vary from country to country. But generally speaking governments have been putting stringent policies and regulations in place to make it hard for civil society organisations to operate, things like placing too many bureaucratic hurdles to CSOs registering or renewing their licences, blocking their external funding sources, excessive regulation, including spying on CSOs' work and staff, and in some cases the unexplained closure and confiscation of CSOs' offices and premises. Extrajudicial detentions and murders of human rights defenders have become common in some countries.

The shrinking civil society space is not only limited to offline space. Governments and corporations also now employ digital technologies to infiltrate CSOs, delegitimise them by spreading 'fake news' about them, and sometimes dehumanise human rights defenders. While the digital revolution has aided CSOs in many ways, its capture and monopoly by corporate interests poses serious threats to people's rights to privacy, the manipulation of democratic processes, and the marginalisation of the voice of the people.

While many authoritarian governments in the past, especially in developing countries, have always used extrajudicial mechanisms to restrict the work of CSOs, what makes the current phenomenon worrisome is the fact that governments are now using legislation to legally stifle the voice of CSOs for the international human rights standards they have ratified. And second, this is no longer only a trend in developing countries: it's also a global trend in developed and well-established democracies. Hence, what is at stake here isn't just the existence of this or that organisation, but the democratic world order and human rights regime that aspires to achieve equality and dignity for

all. That is why the most targeted groups are defenders of women's, environmental, indigenous, and LGBTI rights.

The shrinking civil society space is also linked to rising populist movements and emerging autocratic leaders around the world. In recent times, from the US to Hungary, Turkey, the Philippines, and India, we are seeing the rise of nationalist populist movements promoting hatred, xenophobia, and sexism to fragment communities into 'us' versus 'them' or those 'inside the camp' versus 'those outside the camp', to use the words from Rev. Steffansson's sermon yesterday. Civil society organisations and churches which promote the rights of those 'outside the camp' are labelled enemies of the people by autocratic leaders.

One of the elements misused by autocratic leaders and populist movements is religion. These movements thrive on exploiting the importance of religion in people's lives. In the midst of the uncertainties created by globalisation these movements invoke fear and foster a sense of identity, belonging, and meaning among their followers. Instead of facing the uncertainties and working together as a global community to address these global problems, populist movements and religious fundamentalists offer quick and local solutions to the most complex global problems. Such approaches do not work, and they need to be challenged.

Last year we organised a regional workshop in Africa on FBOs and civil society space. The religious leaders at the workshop reaffirmed the theological mandate of loving our neighbours as ourselves and caring for and defending the oppressed and needy, regardless of their religious, ethnic, gender, racial, or national origin.

The LWF also organised a conference of churches against populism in Berlin last year at which churches and theological institutions were encouraged to promote education and spiritual formation as a means to continually transform our communities into non-violent spaces of full, just, and safe participation for all, and to learn about the root causes of injustice, reclaim agency for justice, and witness prophetically against oppressive exclusionary systems and structures.

To conclude, I would like to reaffirm such forums as the best starting point to address such global issues. I used to think of meetings as a waste of time, but after five years of UN meetings in Geneva I came to appreciate that global challenges need multilaterally negotiated solutions which take into account the views and voices of everyone around the table. Unilateral solutions do not take us very far. There is a saying in Africa: 'If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together'. We need to continue dialogue on these issues, including the ones on which we might disagree. But we also need action on the ground. Our global credibility depends on our action on the ground in our respective locations. That is what in the LWF we call the local to global, bringing global experiences to shape global policies, but also the global to local, ensuring that global commitments are implemented on the ground.

Thank you!

9.2.2. Our World – Groups

Facilitator Pekka Härkönen

Happiness Gefi (F)	Africa
Tomas Ndawanapo (M)	Africa
Anteneh Birhanu (M)	Africa
Adama Faye (M)	Africa
Bongi Zuma (F)	Africa
Marieme Mint Ahmed (F)	Africa
Emmanuel Shangweli (M)	Africa

Facilitator Ilkka Repo

Lorato Moalusi (F)	Africa
Cipriana Vilombo (F)	Africa
David lilleka (M)	Africa
Kenneth Mtata (M)	Africa
Tirunesh Mekonnen (F)	Africa
Jaloo Mpadhi (F)	Africa

Facilitator Jan-Eerik Leppänen

Simon Chow (M)	Asia
Daniel Orn (M)	Asia
She Hongyu (F)	Asia
Surendha Shrestha (M)	Asia
Thuzar Thant (F)	Asia
Jennifer Jivan (F)	Asia

Facilitators Olli Pitkänen, Juha Lind

Amnuay Yodwong (M)	Asia
Yaim Chamreun (M)	Asia
Erwin Chen (M)	Asia
Vongmany Vongphachanh (F)	Asia
Dhana Lama (F)	Asia
Channlyda Ry (F)	Asia

Facilitator Arja Koskinen

Emilio Aslla (M)	South America
Atahualpa Hernández (M)	South America
John Hernández (M)	South America

Facilitators Miikka Kallio, Heikki Takko

Ojot Ojulu (M)	Africa
Prisca Higuera Cornieles (F)	Europe
Georgette Hazboun Rabadí (F)	Middle East
Samer Laham (M)	Middle East
Mahmoud Ramadan (M)	Middle East

**9.2.3. All results brought up by groups
(written on post-it notes)**

Growth of religions	Climate warming / change	Digitalisation	Growing inequality	Undefined category
Free theological training	Lack of rain	Depending on digitalisation – power supply challenge	Increasing gap between rich and poor	Slavery is still practised (Mauritania)
Prosperity teachings	Change in seasons	A basic common language is lacking	Conflict	Gender-based violence
	Hot environment/ climate	Spreading rumours instead of good things	Violation of human rights	Domestic violence
	Lack of water	Negatively affecting children's education + exposing them to pornography	Human trafficking	Early marriage/ pregnancy
	Inequality	Promoting hatred	Freedom of speech	
	Internal migration	The poor stay poor	Discrimination	
	Increased snow melt	Apps for farmers	Destruction of family	
	Immigration	Fake news x 2	Increasing vulnerability	
	Agricultural economy impacted	Family life – sociological problems	Migration	
	Shortage of water	Discrimination	Self-protection of privilege and status	
	Drought	Increased digital crime		
	Temperature on the rise	Online exploitation		
	Sea level on the rise	Balance between technology and its use – not good		
	Change in biodiversity	Digital waste increasing		
	Drought	Using the internet to attack others		





Growth of religions	Climate warming/change	Digitalisation	Growing inequality	Undefined category
	Temperature on the rise – water and electricity shortages Air pollution	Addiction to digitalisation, resulting in no face-to-face communication		
	Increased food insecurity	Shrinking civil society space		
	Seasonal change affecting farmers	Self-centredness – mine is better than yours		
	More disasters	Violence and terrorism		

9.2.4. Prioritised results and votes

A. Climate change

Prioritised effect	Partner votes	Felm votes	Stakeholder votes	Felm Board votes	Total
Conflict	6	8	1	–	15
Disasters, such as floods and droughts	9	5	1	–	15
Facing uncertainty, inconsistency, changing seasons	3	3	1	–	7
Food security, food sovereignty	9	9	2	2	22
Importance of raising awareness	1	–	–	–	1
New possibilities in changes	2	–	–	1	3
	Total partner votes 30	Total Felm votes 25	Total stakeholder votes 5	Total Board votes 3	Total votes 63

B. Growth of Digitalisation

Prioritised effect	Partner votes	Felm votes	Stakeholder votes	Felm Board votes	Total
Addiction to digitalization, resulting to no face to face communication	3	–	–		3
Shrinking civil society space	7	4	1	–	12
Infringement (violation) of confidentiality	–	–	–		–
Digital Illiteracy	9	9	2	2	22
Excludes people without access. Negative impact on other people	3	8	1	–	12
Fake news	10	7	1		18
Lack of privacy and security	3	–	–	–	3
Lack of understanding	–	–	–		–
Democratic access	3	7	1	1	12
Tool for promoting human rights	1	–	–		1
Source of information	–	–	–	–	–
Connects people sustainably	–	1	–	2	3
	Total partner votes 31	Total Felm votes 28	Total stakeholder votes 4	Total Board votes 3	Total votes 63

C. Growth of religions

Prioritised effect	Partner votes	Felm votes	Stakeholder votes	Felm Board votes	Total
Increased conflict, violence, and terrorism	9	–	–	–	9
Fundamentalism, extreme teaching	2	6	–	–	8
Link between politics and religion, fundamentalism	7	9	2	–	18
Self-centredness: 'mine is better than yours'	3	2	–	1	6
Peace, love, and care	–	–	–	–	–
Religion as a basis for mobilising for development	7	9	3	2	21
	Total partner votes 28	Total Felm votes 26	Total stakeholder votes 5	Total Board votes 3	Total votes 62

D. Growth of inequality

Prioritised effect	Partner votes	Felm votes	Stakeholder votes	Felm Board votes	Total
Increasing gap between rich and poor	10	11	5	2	28
Growing inequality because of climate change	1	5	–	1	7
Gender-based violence	6	6	–	–	12
Racial discrimination	3	2	–	–	4
Land problems	1	2	–	–	5
Violation of human rights	3	2	–	–	5
Conflict	2	–	–	–	2
Rising corruption	2	–	–	–	2
Youth radicalisation – extremism	–	1	–	–	1
Greater poverty	1	–	–	–	1
	Total partner votes 28	Total Felm votes 26	Total stakeholder votes 5	Total Board votes 3	Total votes 62

9.3. Results from the pre-consultation questionnaire concerning the Themes of Hope and climate change

One of the consultation's expected outputs was to reach an understanding of the relevance of Felm's strategy's implementation with our partners. To achieve this goal, partners were asked to respond to a questionnaire about Felm cooperation before the consultation. The aim of the questionnaire was to receive feedback about the relevance of Felm's strategy and to prepare the participants for the Bridge of Hope and Tree of Resilience groupwork.

The participants' answers are not included in this report as such. The information from the questionnaire will be presented first with joint successes (the list marked with a dot), followed by challenges (-), and ideas for solutions (+).

9.3.1. Questionnaire example

Felm Strategic Consultation 14-17.5.2019
Invitation, Theme of Hope 1, and questionnaire instructions

Dear Friend,

During our Consultation we will work in groups whose focus will be based on our strategy's Themes of Hope (1-4). You will find more information on Felm strategy and the Themes of Hope in the appendices to this email.

During the consultation we welcome you to participate in the group: **Theme of Hope 1: 'We witness to God's boundary-crossing love'**. Your feedback and advice concerning the theme will be very valuable to us at Felm.

In preparation for the groupwork and general discussions we ask you:

- 1. To answer the questionnaire** attached to this letter on the following page. Please note that in this questionnaire we ask you to share your experiences especially on the relevant theme, and the goals of international cooperation relevant to the theme. You are free to choose which goal(s) you focus on in the questionnaire. The questionnaire will provide valuable information for Felm and serve as a crucial tool for the consultation.
- 2. To prepare to share about your organisation's vision statement.** If you are unsure about your organisation's vision statement, please consult your organisation's leadership and governing body.

The Felm Regional Director or a person they designate will contact you soon and will assist you with the questionnaire if required. Should you have any questions regarding the consultation, please do not hesitate to contact Felm's staff.

We kindly ask you to return the completed questionnaire as a word or PDF document to the Felm Regional Director by email at the latest on 3.5. If you wish to answer in a language other than English, please inform the local Felm staff. Felm will cover the translation expenses.

On behalf of Felm,
Tero Norjanen
Director, International Cooperation

QUESTIONNAIRE

Results of our cooperation during 2017–2019 concerning **Theme of Hope 1** and the goals of international cooperation:

Goal 1. ‘Those who have not yet heard the gospel have been touched by God’s all-encompassing Love’

Goal 2. ‘Congregations serve as an open community and cross all the boundaries as part of the global church’

1. Name one major success that resulted from the partnership with Felm.

- 1.1. What did we do, how, and for the benefit of whom?
- 1.2. Can you specify what Felm’s added value was in this project?
- 1.3. Who else, besides your organisation and Felm, was part of this cooperation?
What did you learn from working together in this project?

2. In your opinion what remains the biggest challenge in realising our shared vision?

- 2.1. In terms of Felm and/or other partners and stakeholders.
- 2.2. In terms of the local or international context.

3. What should happen for us to meet these challenges and possibly overcome them?

- 3.1. What can Felm do?
- 3.2. What can your organisation do?

4. What results will we see when these challenges have been overcome?

- 4.1. How will our shared vision be realised better/more effectively?
Please give some examples.
- 4.2. How should our cooperation improve in the future?

5. What is your organisation’s vision statement?

9.3.2. Results of the Theme of Hope 1 questionnaire

Major success and Felm partnership’s added value

- Deaf education, including bilingual deaf education, which was completed more than two years ago, and inclusive deaf education at present. Deaf children have better conditions and an environment in which they can integrate with other children. Felm’s added value was advanced ideas, connection with expert resources, and information. **(China)**
- Contributing to the dignity of the human being. This benefited the most forgotten and marginalised. Felm’s added value was economic support, partnership, and walking alongside the local partner. **(Bolivia)**

- To care for the migrant workers of Southeast Asia, foreigners facing execution in Taiwan, and preaching the gospel. Felm's added value was ministry and sharing the responsibility for coordinating. **(Taiwan)**
- Educating evangelists, awareness raising about albinism. Felm's added value was financial support, monitoring, and strengthening the relationship in the local context. **(Tanzania)**
- Church leaders can expand and deepen their ministries, and seminary leaders have more advanced theological knowledge for training future pastors to meet their increasingly challenging environment in the fields of gospel preaching and Christian pastoring. Felm's added value was scholarship and teachers. **(Hong Kong, China, Mekong)**
- Thanks to the support of FELM, we have been able to respond very swiftly to a real need on the ground which emerged in September 2018, when we resumed the activities of the centre. We call this work 'NAM: Non-Accompanied Minors'. This is a group of young boys (aged 14–17) from Sub-Saharan Africa who have left their country of origin for a better future in Europe – in Marseille in France. **(France)**

Major challenges (-) in cooperation and ideas (+) for development

China

- A lack of experts in the local context.
- Popularising the use of sign language in inclusive and special education classes in other special education schools and areas in Mainland China.
- + Strengthening contact and timely communicating about projects, connecting with expert resources.
- + Helping us to connect with more advanced expert resources to guide our project.
- + We will plan better and more appropriate activities for schools, and find both foreign and domestic expert resources.

Bolivia

When two institutions wish to undertake a project, the fundamental challenge is that we understand exactly what we want to do and how we intend to accomplish it; we have to make sure that we share the same vision.

- We need to improve our communication, know ourselves better, and create relationships of sincere and transparent dialogue. We also need to seek a community vision to be successful in our work.
- We need to acknowledge our cultural differences and accept them without excep-

tion. We need to improve and create spaces for participation, build trust and mutual respect, and create exchanges for people equally at different levels – women, young people, and pastors – to both Bolivia and Finland.

Work on the issue of advocacy, being instruments of law, duty bearers.

+ Felm to share long-term strategies and policies which will allow us to identify the mission and objectives of the institution towards a community vision.

+ Accompany more, walking together and learning together about our values and cultures.

+ We could make organisational management more efficient and effective, and to be transparent and reliable.

Sharing our strategic plans and institutional policies with Felm, in such a way that Felm can also know about our vision and the goals of our work.

+ Planning and organising the exchange of associates or members, such as pastors and volunteers, for Bolivia.

Taiwan

- The biggest local challenge is the difficulty of communication, affected by the cultural differences between government officials and co-workers for other mission organisations.

+ FELM may provide training to improve communications skills and the necessary information to help co-workers grasp cultural differences.

+ We may assist the co-workers to arrange a consultation on the law and policy for the execution of migrant workers and foreigners. We also may provide training for communications skills for the volunteers from local congregations.

Tanzania

- The complicated reporting system. The growth and need are bigger than the resources.

- As a new diocese, it is becoming difficult to find partners to support mission and community work. The growth and need are bigger than the resources. We greatly acknowledge Felm in this respect as the only official partner we have with whom we share a vision.

+ Timely reporting

+ Maintaining partnership with Felm.

+ Providing mentoring services for new congregations.

Hong Kong

- No longer restricting scholarships for Mekong students to those from the Lutheran churches, given that more than 90% of church and seminary leaders seeking scholarships are non-Lutheran.
- Political instability in the Mekong and the restriction of Christian policies in mainland China can affect the number of students from these countries.
- + Felm can try to provide scholarships for as many students as possible, as long as the political atmosphere is still relatively stable in these countries.
- + We should take advantage of the current relatively stable political climate in these countries to provide theological education for as many students as possible. We will closely monitor the situation and communicate our findings to Felm occasionally.

France

- The major challenge for us is 2022, which sees the end of Felm's support for our association – Felm currently supports 90% of our operations.
- + We need to continue collaboration beyond 2022 in a town where insecurity is omnipresent, and immigrants are arriving all the time. We will continue to develop public and private partnerships to finance our innovative action or those that are already running.

9.3.3. Results of the Theme of Hope 2 questionnaire

Major successes and Felm partnership's added value

- Restoring the human dignity and value of the marginalised. Felm's added value was the bringing of transparency and accountability. **(Senegal)**
- Women were ordained as priests for the first time in 2018. Felm's added value was the presence of a Felm missionary. Through her example and teaching she helped the acceptance of ordained women. **(Thailand)**
- Teaching and supporting vulnerable children and young people from broken families. Felm's added value was designing best strategies and methodologies to help children live a dignified life, free from harm and abuse **(Ethiopia)**
- Training parents who have children with disabilities. Workshops to teach them about the rights of children. Felm's added value was its financial support. **(South Africa)**

- Bringing together the collective effort for the common good. Empowering women and girls to participate and take leadership positions in communities. Felm's added value was the concept of holistic mission, networking, capacity building, and increasing transparency. **(Nepal)**
- Felm's work in our school focused on helping parents, students, and teachers in different areas, such as opening opportunities for employment, especially in a tough political and economic situation, helping 60 families to educate their kids, especially when we 55% of them are female. Felm's added value is being our main sponsor. **(Palestine)**
- Within the framework of the Integrated Community Development Programme (PDCI), which is a project that uses an integrated holistic approach, Felm has allowed poor communities, both in rural areas and in pre-urban slums in the capital Nouakchott, to improve their income and have a more dignified existence. Felm's added value was an integrated holistic approach that respects the rights of vulnerable and marginalised persons. There has been ongoing support and encouragement for various stakeholders to take innovative action. A stable system of financing that is open to the needs of target communities is required, along with a strategic approach that is sensitive to both national and international contextual changes. **(Mauritania)**

Major challenges (-) in cooperation and ideas (+) for development

Senegal

- The biggest remaining challenge is how to have the same vision in our own context.
- + To be involved more and more with partners in events like this strategy consultation.
- + Our organisation can give suggestions and recommendations when presenting reports to Felm

Thailand

- Finance remains a big challenge. Finnish and Norwegian support is important, but the ELCT need to be prepared for self-reliance, especially when something like a financial crisis happens suddenly.
- + There is a need for more cooperation, sharing, and working together. The ELCT plans to source more income locally – now, not in the future. There is a need to teach church workers to find ways to generate income.

Ethiopia

- We have sometimes faced challenges when working on project activities, because many people need the project's support, and the budget is too small to address their needs.
- The frequent unrest following the change in the political regime remains a challenge in the execution of project deliverables.

- + It would be great if FELM could add more to our budget so we can attain the desired outcome of the planned project deliverables.
- + The organisation must try to find different income sources to fill the gaps in meeting people's needs.
- + Capacity strengthening
- + Creating platforms for sharing organisational visions.

South Africa

- Additional funding is required to monitor parents' support groups when they start taking action and educating members of their communities.
- The CREATE staff needs to see how they are doing – more visits!
- In the international context there can be a lack of understanding of the context and the reality of working in rural areas.

- + Felm can understand the need to respond to the huge need for the protection of children and adults with disabilities.
- + CREATE can work more closely with all government departments.
- + CREATE can advocate for the revival of the CBR forums that used to exist.
- + CREATE has initiated a CBR Think Tank to bring all stakeholders – government and non-government – together to design a strategy for better service delivery to persons with disabilities.

Nepal

- Alleviating poverty and reaching out to women, girls, and socially excluded communities.
- A minimal impact on poverty reduction from short-term projects.
- Collective action for climate change.
- An unexpected shift of the budget from a CSO to a private company.
- Hegemony created conflict and diverted CSO funding to humanitarian aid.
- Lack of a basket fund.
- National Integrity Policy for CSO(I/NGOs)
- Political unrest.
- Natural disasters.

- + Trustworthy long-term partnership. Linkage and networking for collective efforts.
- + Support from CSOs rather than private companies.
- + Capacity building of partners.
- + Reaching out to Dalits, women, girls, the marginalised, and socially excluded communities.
- + Coming together for a collective effort on common causes.
- + Establishment of community-based network organisations.
- + Linkage and networking for collective efforts/policy advocacy.
- + Embracing gender equality and prioritising it as the main component of development cooperation aimed at social justice.

Palestine

- In our culture some Muslim families give learning opportunities to males but not females. Exhaustion leads to some parents being unable to cope with their children, especially if they have learning difficulties.
 - Our special education teacher is unqualified because our universities don't offer training. Our special education teacher has learned on the job and by attending some workshops.
 - We are under occupation in Palestine, and there is some corruption in the Palestinian Authority. Our movement is restricted, because we need permits to move from one area to another, and they are sometimes cancelled. The fast turnover of Felm's local team is a big challenge.
-
- + Felm should design more visible website containing all partnering organisations and Felm's work in its regions.
 - + Newsletters should be distributed to all partnering organisations to publicise Felm's work.
 - + Success stories from all over the world should be published. Felm's work should be marketed more in our school by telling students and parents Felm is sponsoring them.
 - + More visits by Felm's Local team to the families.
 - + There needs to be a questionnaire to evaluate programmes and spell out their backgrounds.
 - + Each partner will prepare a marketing film to share Felm's vision.

Mauritania

- Maintaining a substantial level of funding mobilisation to assist communities in Mauritania, given the country's vulnerable situation.
- Reinforcing operational synergies with state stakeholders, UN agencies, and civil society organisations in accordance with their mandates and the objectives of the

projects being implemented.

- Working on the visibility of the projects, both at national and international levels.
- Monitoring the evolving country, regional, and international contexts (in the Sahel) concerning the consequences of the effects of climate change, migration, communities' security, and their resilience to different shocks so that operations are relevant and up-to-date.

+ Felm should have a special campaign to mobilise funds to support Mauritania.
+ Mauritania should continue to a priority country for emergency relief projects, resilience-building projects, and projects to prevent illegal migration to European countries.
+ We can conduct periodic analyses of disruptions in the country context in collaboration with other national stakeholders.
+ Platforms and networks around innovative projects for vulnerable communities should be promoted.
+ Building on achievements, success stories, and best practice and rolling them out at the national, regional, and international levels.

9.3.4. Results of the Theme of Hope 3 questionnaire

- The LCC's Governance: The LCC has improved its governance in recent years. This is because of the accompaniment of our mission partners. Felm specifically has played a big role: training staff in capacity building for church leadership, finance, and project management. Felm's added value was to inculcate a project/church management mindset with an awareness of good accountability/stewardship. **(Cambodia)**
- One of our greatest successes has been girls' literacy. Some of them have also been willing to work for society. Felm supported our girls and families financially and through prayer. Cooperation was a great value, because being in contact with Felm is a great advantage. **(Angola)**
- A project called the ELCIN Business Foundation (EBF). Other related services/facilities under EBF, although not established under the Felm-ELCIN partnership, are: Mbiliyomwene Farm, Ithrus Fishing, Loyal Property, etc. In 2013 Felm provided a financial contribution towards the establishment of the EBF. **(Namibia)**
- A major success is that we have witnessed increasing dignity of the marginalised by contributing to changes in communities' attitudes to observing the rights of groups suffering from discrimination, such as marginalised women and men, persons with disabilities, and persons with HIV and AIDS, creating self-reliance for sustainable development. Felm's added value was empowering target communities (rightsholders) by awareness raising, skills training, direct support with resource materials, networking with other resource institutions and government departments, and lobbying and advocacy. As well as governance, leadership skills and the building of social accountability at the lo-

- cal level were enhanced. **(Tanzania)**
- Felm supported initiatives to strengthen community systems and structures within the communities with which we are working. There have been coordination and collaboration between local stakeholders as referrals of GBV survivors have improved, and survivors/victims have been linked to crucial services. The project's beneficiaries include women and children who are facing abuse. Local structures have also benefited. Felm's added value was the support it offered for the engagement of community influencers in leading community-based projects and its facilitation of the development of a GBV directory of the service providers and services available in the communities. **(Botswana)**
 - Felm allows us to continue and improve all our programmes and gives us a sense of security that we are supported in what we do: our direct support services for child victims; building of the capacity of professionals working with children; and preventing abuse and protecting children. Felm's added value was the assistance it gave us in becoming more engaged with the risks children with disabilities face in Cambodia, and their need of support. This has allowed us to develop experience and assist in developing training content to build the capacity of Cambodian professionals to correctly support and respond to children with disabilities, the group most vulnerable to abuse. This has allowed us to lead the Disability Network and to collaborate more closely with CIF and Safe Haven, two NGOs who are dedicated to supporting children with disabilities. **(Cambodia)**

Major challenges (-) in cooperation and ideas (+) for development

Cambodia

- In real implementation we often get side-tracked. Sometimes when we get too busy with justice activities, we tend to forget the whole purpose of church ministry.
 - We lack a group of people who can put hold the church's vision in their hearts. We often merely look at challenges and get exhausted.
 - A dependency culture remains a challenge. This doesn't mean we don't need each other: it is rather a dependency that relies on the other with no inter-dependency.
 - We are often challenged by the changing situation of today's politics and social economy. The church in Cambodia cannot openly address society.
-
- + We should continue to train the local organisation in project/finance management.
 - + We need experts to train us in social issues:
 - + We should continue to build the capacity of the leading staff.
 - + We should strive to transform families (as cells of society) through family ministry.
 - + We should gradually improve the implementation and knowledge of sustainability.
 - + We need to produce more young people who can make a positive impact on society.

Namibia

- The church's economic development is very much neglected in theological articulation.
- It is a marathon process for a non-profit entity such as the church to venture into economic development projects, because it requires resources such as funding, expertise, and human resources.

- + Felm needs to change its work in direct financial support for services. It should support projects that provide money to the church and the community. The idea that Felm cannot support business-related facilities owned by the church should be discouraged.

- + The church must encourage the umbrella of business-related service to undertake a strategic analysis to position the church to meet financial challenges through business and entrepreneurship. To promote partnership between ELCIN and Felm and businesses/organisations to ensure quality planning, administrative, and management systems in church business-related services.

Tanzania

- In many areas poverty still lingers, and there is a threat that some improvements already realised may be reversed in the near future due to issues like rapid population growth (Tanzania is expected to have a population of 130 million people by 2050! Unemployment rates are high. and there are few employment opportunities, limited improved social services, and climate change effects. The available funding doesn't enhance TCRS programmes in the wider society of other areas with similar needs to those in the current area of operations.

- Felm needs more funding to intervene in and address various needs in the areas of operation and to reach other needy communities, and more visibility in its work with partners.

- Other partners need to report more on the impact on the ground, and there needs to be more involvement of stakeholders in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programmes.

- Increased empowerment is needed for both men and women, with special programmes to target young people, and especially girls, who are the majority.

- In the area of operations communities and stakeholders, such as government and other resource institutions, need to increase financial and material contributions. The government needs to create employment opportunities.

- More visibility and reporting of impacts on the ground are needed.

- There needs to be increased resource mobilisation by diversifying the resource mobilisation base.

- There should be more lobbying and advocacy.

- + Increase funds by fundraising and expand the areas of operation so as to reach many needy people and therefore to reduce human suffering and poverty and discrimination.
- + Partners should be tasked to report more on the impacts on the ground of partnership interventions.
- + The funding scale should be increased by developing joint proposals with partners for EU funds etc.
- + The marketing/resource mobilisation unit should be strengthened, and it should strengthen its collaboration with the communications unit.
- + Good practice across the globe should be documented so they can be replicated in others areas – contextualised, of course
- + To maintain accountability and transparency in implementing programme activities, Felm’s financial manual and ethical principles in the 2017-2022 Felm strategy should be adhered to, as well as the TCRS financial manual and ethics, including resource mobilisation, by considering strategic organisational objectives and plans.
- + Impacts realised should be more reported than activities implemented.
- + Local structures, for example Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania parishes and dioceses, should be strengthened, and capacity built for issues related to humanitarian aid and development, The TCRS has been a competent, experienced, and specialist agency in these areas.
- + The capacities of local government should continue to be built, and gender justice and climate change issues should feature in all meetings and interventions.
- + Good practice should be documented and shared with Felm and other stakeholders to show what works well, where, and how.
- + The impact sustainability of phased out projects should be documented and evaluated.

Botswana

- Access to services by project beneficiaries or GBV survivors is still low, as most cases are not reported. Efforts have been made by Felm and other stakeholders to ensure that cases of abuse and neglect are rapidly reported, but it remains a challenge to persuade people to report incidents of abuse.
- GBV, HIV, and AIDS and lack of support for people with disabilities are global challenges that are closely related but not addressed systematically. While reporting cases of GBV remains a major challenge, the few that are reported take a long time to be prosecuted, and when they are, impunity is high. These issues all discourage victims/survivors from reporting. In the local context a culture of silence is rampant. Most families encourage survivors to be quiet, meaning appropriate action is hardly ever taken.
- + Felm should continue and increase its efforts to reach out to more communities, and capacitate community leaders and influencers to be champions of GBV prevention and care.
- + The BGBVC will continue to advocate for the rights of women, children, and people with disabilities, as well as sensitise communities concerning GBV. The aspiration of

the BGBVC is to establish one-stop shops for the provision of comprehensive services to GBV survivors and community safe spaces to provide protection locally for clients who cannot access the only shelter in Gaborone, the capital.

Cambodia

- It remains a challenge to source sufficient funding for our programmes. Where gender equality is concerned, most organisations and foundations focus on girls and women, forgetting or failing to recognise that in some cases it is actually boys who need more support for gender equality and equity to be achieved.

- Geography and poor infrastructure make it difficult to realise our ambition to provide our services to all the provinces in Cambodia. Several provinces face extreme forms of poverty, increasing the risk of abuse, while being underserved – some provinces have barely any professional NGOs or social workers in the field.

+ Felm could assist us by supporting us to gain more visibility, both nationally and internationally.

Helping us find additional funding sources would allow us to continue growing our expertise and services, and expand the number of child abuse victims we can support. It would allow us to develop new programmes to improve the situation for all Cambodian children by training and certifying social workers in underserved provinces, providing training to teachers and school staff, developing safe spaces for boys (there are none today; they exist only for girls), and improving the reporting mechanisms in communities.

+ We have been increasing our efficiency and have been building the capacity of our staff, two aspects that contribute to increased productivity and efficiency in providing our services. Every year we are becoming more professional, growing our child protection expertise, and always looking into ways to persuade our government to take more responsibility and be more involved – in the long term we hope our government will become fully capable of coordinating and managing the country's social work services, as happens in developed countries, with the FSC part of the full picture as a specialist in child abuse prevention and response.

Angola

- The biggest challenge is working to achieve our goal. It is difficult to work with different countries.

- It is a challenge to accomplish what is required with all the people with whom we are in contact.

+ Accompanying our work appropriately to improve it and keep in touch with all the new forms of work.

+ FELM should always accompany every project to see if there is an improvement

compared with the intended goals.

+ Our organisation should always follow Felm's requirements and make our work and activities visible.

9.3.5. Results of the Theme of Hope 4 questionnaire

- It is definitely to Felm's credit that for the first time in the history of the Church of Pakistan a structure of the Diocese of Peshawar (DoP), a local organisation (the CSC), and Felm joined hands for a three-year period to build the capacity of the church in a more organised and structured way. The longstanding partnership between Felm and the DoP, and the trust built over the years between the two partners, meant the DoP was open to the CSC visiting its project sites and those implementing the project, and meeting the project's direct beneficiaries. Felm's added value was that both the DoP and CSC have a high regard for Felm because of its integrity and the values Felm's staff upholds. **(Pakistan)**
- The implementation of the War to Peace project is an important achievement because of the importance for the Lutheran Church in Colombia of making a significant contribution to the transformation of the conflict. Felm has challenged us with its involvement and provided the conditions for the development of this task. Felm's added value was its contribution to the church's understanding of mission as service. It is very significant for us to have a partner who understands that our action starts from faith and seeks to transform the conditions of injustice caused by the conflict. A great value of working with Felm is its respect for the communities with which we work. **(Colombia)**
- We need flexibility, relevance, and mutual understanding of the importance of a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding, because local dynamics contribute to the production of violence and peace. Developing the ownership of the process, Track 3 at the grassroots level, and vertical knowledge, Track 6, which links with Tracks 3, 2, and 1, will sustain our ability to continue under any future political agreement. We need to develop diversity in the institutionalisation of the process, management, and the steering committee with the consultation's parallel tracks. Felm's added value was in designing a bottom-up, multi-entry, 360-degree approach, which led us to develop an ecosystem of peace to counterbalance the conflict ecosystem and play a role in changing the minds and attitudes of many other international players. This may lead us to serve as a catalyst and multiplier in building a critical mass for peace by galvanising local and national players through regional and international support. **(Syria)**
- This year Felm has supported MECC with another education programme through the provision of non-formal education to encourage students in Grades 9 and 12 to pass the final exam and stay in schools, in addition to offering part support for tuition fees to poor students studying at private schools. The project will target non-Christian as well as Christian students. By targeting all people in need irrespective of their faith background, we will promote peacebuilding, reconciliation, and the preservation of social cohesion. Felm's added value is the sense of soli-

parity with affected people and its contribution to the mitigation of the risks that directly affect children during crises. Many partners were involved in these activities, including ICCO in Holland and Mercy Corps in the US. **(Middle East)**

- Through its partnership with Felm the EBO supports the Myanmar peace process by strengthening the relationship between various stakeholder groups, as well as within each group by providing coordination platforms, dialogue space, and facilitation support. The process's fragility and unpredictable nature makes it crucial to be flexible in programme design and funding allocation for a timely response to the emerging situation. With Felm we have managed to support many strategic initiatives that have brought together various stakeholder groups regionally and nationally. **(Myanmar)**

Major challenges (-) in cooperation and ideas (+) for development

Pakistan

- Conversations may become layered when many partners are involved in implementing projects. However, this also brings great learning opportunities. It makes us realise that this is the context with which we need to struggle to seek ways to overcome our challenges. The timebound nature of each project and its implementation may also be challenging.

- The local context remains a challenge in terms of security, new policies, visa issues, and taking cognisance of the growth of extremism worldwide.

+ Candid conversations are the best and most effective approach. When conversations are candid, they generate greater trust. Only then can genuine efforts be made to jointly seek solutions. This is what the present CSC management is doing in requesting all those with whom it partners to do the same.

Colombia

- The greatest challenge is to establish enduring reconciliation processes. This makes it necessary to understand that the point is less about overcoming the armed conflict and more about having the conditions in place for overcoming social conflict and the lack of access to minimal conditions for a large part of the country's population.

- We need to dimension the global implications in the local reconciliation processes.

- We need to discuss reconciliation in Colombia as a long-term process. We need to persist despite local political changes. The significant change in the national political context is the greatest risk the process has faced.

+ We must persist in the processes of local accompaniment of communities at the same time as we advocate with other civil society actors by pressing the parties to comply with the commitments of the peace agreement they have signed.

+ Felm should play an important role in the implementation of the agreement through international pressure. International cooperation can offer vital assistance in protecting communities by making known the real state of implementation to ensure that the agreement's centrality to the implementation process is understood in the communities. The international support for the organisms created by the agreement, such as 'Special Justice for Peace' and the Commission for the Clarification of Truth is fundamental to ensure the conditions for a reconciled society do not vanish.

+ We are committed to continue participating with other organisations, churches, and communities in advocacy with the parties for persistence in implementation. We should work to persuade other actors in the Colombian armed conflict to seek a negotiated solution.

Syria

- Using knowledge without the drivers and agencies who create it.
- The conflict has developed its own ecosystem. The different parties position themselves according to their interests, not according to the conflict's root causes.

+ We should nurture a spirit of mutual learning as a catalyst for a peace and redevelopment ecosystem, preserving the facilitation of intersubjective knowledge at different levels of the conflict.

+ We should plant a dialogue culture at the local level, supporting Tracks 3 and 6 (vertical knowledge), and relying on informal and formal peace infrastructures.

+ We should mitigate the systemic dilemma between local ownership and international actors, and develop multi-stakeholder control of the process.

Middle East

- We need to work with partners according to the needs of their contexts, and in specific activities that assist in realising goals.

+ Felm and MECC should discuss further cooperation in the areas of peacebuilding, advocacy, and creative activities, leading to the achievement of targets.

Myanmar

- The decades-long political conflict has made Myanmar a deeply divided country along ethnic and religious lines. Change is needed at all levels, from individuals' attitudes to national policy. We need a new generation of leaders who stand on the value of equality and democratic principles. Hope rests on youth and open-minded individuals who can think beyond the boundaries of their own ethnicity and religion, or offer just moral leadership.

- + Felm should provide financial and technical support to various locally owned/led peacebuilding initiatives.
- + Funding for grassroots CSOs and CBOs should target the active participation of young people and women in social and political movements. Instead of one-off events, we should look into long-term support to empower them.

9.3.6. Results of the Climate Change questionnaire

What are the best practice and success stories related to the climate change adaptation, mitigation, and resilience of the communities with which you are working and within the projects you are implementing?

- CLO staff joined in planting 2,000 trees with its partner NGO in the Prey Lang area, planted a mangrove tree in the Tropang Sangke community, and released fish into Kampong Thom in 2018. Through these activities we raised awareness of the importance of tree planting and protecting our forest and fish for others. With other partners? As mentioned above – these activities were sponsored by Felm and Danmission. **(Cambodia)**
- Here's a case story from the UMN: Baseni village is in the Hupsekot Rural Municipality in Nabalparasi Sustapurba – 250 kilometres south-west of Nepal's capital city. Its location is hilly and off-road. Forty-four families, consisting of 312 people, live in the village.

With the objective of addressing these problems and enhancing the village's resilience to the impacts of climate change, residents discussed options, finally deciding to irrigate the rainfed land with a perennial water stream just a few kilometres from the village. The ideas were incorporated in the 'Basheni Irrigation Service for Forest Conservation and Climate Change Impacts Resilience Project 2018'. This was a good collaboration between Bread for the World (Brot), the United Mission to Nepal (UMN), Isai Samaj Nabalparasi (ISN) – the UMN's local partner, the Himalaya Community Development Forum (HICO-DEF) – a local NGO, and the Hupsikot Rural Municipality.

The project was completed last December and renews the hope of 312 people, with a 50,000-litre water tank connected 24/7 with delivery pipes that are always ready to use. A network of earth canals irrigates the fifteen hectares of parched land with a sufficient flow of water. Padam Thada, a 32-year-old man from the same village says, 'I have cultivated tomatoes, cauliflowers, cabbages, and carrots since December 2018. I sold vegetables worth USD 1,300 in just four and a half months.'

Aita Singh has earned USD 700, and Kedar Singh has made USD 600 in the last four months. Many others have started commercial vegetable farms and sell

their produce in the nearby towns twenty kilometres down the hill. The produce is organic, and the mild climate makes the vegetables tasty. Shoppers prefer Baseni vegetables to those imported from elsewhere.

This is representative of several other projects the UMN has organised, with similar phenomenal outcomes that have catalysed a great adaptation to the impact of climate change. **(Nepal)**

- There are no success stories related to climate change as such, but a lot has been done in other areas, especially in community awareness about environmental control. The department is at the planning stage in climate change mitigation. **(Namibia)**
- We have been able to create awareness among the community and are planting trees by mobilising students and staff members through environmental protection clubs. **(Ethiopia)**
- Several actions have been implemented. Some have been successful: allocating cultivation land for people to replant and rehabilitate the forest; promoting awareness raising in the community and to responsible government officers; promoting environmentally friendly agriculture, e.g. tree and cardamom planting to generate income and protect the forest; promoting integrated agriculture. **(Laos)**

What could we do to meet your needs in addressing climate change and building resilience within your organisation and/or projects?

Laos

- + Networking, sharing, and supporting technical knowledge building for the project team, and financial support for the long-term operation.
- + Understanding the local context, analysing and identifying the climate change problem
- + Strategic planning for operation
- + Building support relationships and constructive cooperation with the Lao government
- + Ongoing improvement of knowledge and innovation regarding climate change

Ethiopia

- + Felm could support us by providing training about climate change for our staff members and students: its causes, effects, and solutions. We would also appreciate it if Felm could provide us with a budget for implementing campaigns to minimise climate change.
- + Our organisation can arrange conducive conditions for addressing your mission in various ways: dealing with concerned government bodies, coordinating with the community, and providing training centres and the required materials on request.

Namibia

+ Felm could extend funding for an immediate medium- to long-term programme development budget to ensure our organisation plays an active role in climate-resilient and sustainable development, poverty eradication, and policy reform, leading to communities resilient to the effects of climate change.

+ Ensuring the organisation's active participation in addressing wider socioeconomic obstacles and other climate-related risks within the context of sustainable development and further committing to play its part as a coordinating and development partner in ensuring that the development agenda remains in line with the country's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Nepal

+ It is important that we make the mainstreaming process as technically sound as possible. Learning exchanges between the UMN and Felm can add value to this.

With the increasing impact of climate change, projects addressing the technical addressing of the adaptation needs of vulnerable populations may also be wise. Felm funds adaptation measures, and the UMN implements the projects with local communities.

Cambodia

+ Felm could support us with human capacity: building up the CLO's staff's knowledge of advocacy, or training on the environment or climate change. It could also allocate more funding to the CLO so that we can hire more staff for the work and have enough funds to support their activities.

+ The CLO's staff could increase its practical knowledge of the environment and climate change, and share it with the partners and beneficiaries with whom the CLO is working.

9.4. Feedback from partners concerning Felm's strategic categorisation of the Themes of Hope

How does Felm as an organisation look to you? Is there anything surprising or that you'd like to clarify? Based on the discussions, how do you feel about Felm's strategic categorisation of 4 Themes of Hope?

'The categorisation makes it easier to plan and monitor, as well as allocate partnerships. In terms of working with partners, I wish there could be contact between Felm's staff and partners at least once a quarter, even if it is via email or a Skype support meeting.'

‘Felm is very supportive of its partners with a vision to improve life and creation holistically. I’m proud to be one of Felm’s partners.’

‘Felm’s focus on marginalised communities is an interesting approach.’

‘Felm is a welcoming, loving, and efficient organisation. The staff are very kind and considerate. The consultation sessions have been very well planned. The four Themes of Hope are very opened, and they would still work and be suitable for the next development phase.’

‘Felm is an organisation with a holistic approach. It offers capacity building, advocacy, hope to people in need, and reconciliation. Felm’s strategy is a great help in building strong partnership. I believe capacity building will strengthen partnership.’

‘The four Themes of Hope were in line with the LWF, and they fit the context in which we work.’

‘The support given to partners is significant, and it has made a visible impact on the lives of people in the community. Felm’s strategic Themes of Hope are indeed restoring the hope of many, and when hope is restored, it heals the nation. At the end of the day the lives of many will change as a result of the helping hand Felm is giving to its partners.’

‘Felm is an organisation with a distinguished history that has done remarkable work and mission worldwide. Felm’s four strategic Themes of Hope cover most of our challenges, but I saw no plan to work more with both evangelical and other churches in the region. The four Themes of Hope are very much needed today in the Middle East, the cradle of Christianity.’

‘Felm is an organisation that inspires others to restore hope for marginalised groups – for example, women and people with disabilities, by demonstrating God’s love, restoring dignity, defending human rights, and advocating for justice, peace, and reconciliation. The four Themes of Hope are very relevant in the present context. These are very complex and challenging areas. They are also intertwined and interdependent to some extent. There is also sometimes a vicious circle in which marginalised groups find themselves. However, I wonder which themes of hope Felm has excelled in, and what/how can we partners learn from you!’

‘Felm is an open and welcoming organisation, and one that believes in partnership. The Themes of Hope are very important and life affirming. They help us to survive, create, build, and look forward.’

‘The Themes of Hope are inspiring, as is the commitment of the staff and board members.’

FELM – TOWARDS A SHARED VISION

‘I think Felm is an amazing organisation. My expectations have been exceeded.’

‘Peace, reconciliation, and advocacy are the most important issues in our world.’

‘Felm is mission- and development-oriented. It can therefore accommodate each group, regardless of the diversity. The four Themes of Hope are excellent.’

‘Having listened to the presentation on the four Themes of Hope, it’s clear that Felm is an organisation that seeks a holistic and collective approach to addressing social issues. Felm is also open to exploring invisible issues with a very flexible attitude, which makes it a strong organisation. It would have been extremely helpful to have had more representatives from our organisation at this consultation.’

‘For me personally Felm has played an important role in introducing international partners and helping us to learn from each other. Felm has also built the capacity of the local church and organisations. The four Themes of Hope look very good as a summary. However, my general question concerns whether they reflect the practical approach to Finnish Christian spiritual life in general. Are there any plans for evangelism to restore the spirituality of the Finns? We have talked so much about social issues (human rights, social justice), but we must do a spiritual reflection on them to find ways (by God’s grace) of improving our spiritual life before we can be agents of change.’

‘I think Felm is working worldwide to solve problems and enhance people’s lives. So, it seems hope is the light in which people with problems can move on in their lives. I think Felm’s strategy is inclusive, though it may need to be more involved in advocacy directed at governments.’

‘Felm is a very caring, loving, and supportive organisation that understands the Word of God as the foundation of everything. It was excellent to hear the presentations from the partners, and I was surprised to find how many organisations Felm is supporting in the world. Thank you – and well done Felm! :)’

‘The terms and situations that support the themes of FELM should be contextual (climate change, inequality) so that everyone can situate themselves.’

‘The strategic themes are well ranked. I think climate justice should be a theme in its own right given the current global context.’



9.5. Results from the Bridge of Hope and Tree of Resilience

Our Mission: Bridge of Hope groupwork

Wednesday 15 May

Working Session 6

Thursday 16 May

Working Session 7

9.5.1. Bridge of Hope and Tree of Resilience group participants

Bridge of Hope 1

Facilitator: Katariina Kiilunen

Felm representatives in the group

Jan-Erik Leppänen

Pia Kummel-Myrskog

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| 1. Happiness Gefi | Africa |
| 2. Tomas Ndawanapo | Africa |
| 3. She Hongyu | Asia |
| 4. Prisca Higuera Cornieles | Europe |
| 5. Simon Chow | Asia |

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 6. Erwin Chen | Asia |
| 7. Emilio Aslla | South America |

Bridge of Hope 2

Facilitator: Roosa Rantala

Felm representatives in the group

Pekka Härkönen

Katri Leino-Nzau

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Anteneh Birhanu | Africa |
| 2. Surendha Shrestha | Asia |
| 3. Adama Faye | Africa |
| 4. Bongi Zuma | Africa |
| 5. Marieme Mint Ahmed | Africa |
| 6. Amnuay Yodwong | Asia |
| 7. Georgette Hazboun Rabadi | Middle East |

Bridge of Hope 3

Facilitator: Niko Humalisto

Felm representatives in the group

Juha Lind

Kristiina Rintakoski

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Emmanuel Shangweli | Africa (not present at the consultation) |
| 2. Yaim Chamreun | Asia |
| 3. Lorato Moalusi | Africa |
| 4. Cipriana Vilombo | Africa |
| 5. David lilleka | Africa |
| 6. Rev. Atahualpa Hernández | South America |
| 7. Daniel Orn | Asia |

Bridge of Hope 4

Facilitator: Riina Isotalo

Felm representatives in the group

Miikka Kallio and Ilkka Repo

Tanja Viikki

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Kenneth Mtata | Africa |
| 2. John Hernández | South America |
| 3. Samer Laham | Middle East |
| 4. Mahmoud Ramadan | Middle East |
| 5. Thuzar Thant | Asia |
| 6. Jennifer Jivan | Asia |

Tree of Resilience group

Facilitators: Ruusa Gawaza and Miia Barrow

Felm representatives in the group

Olli Pitkänen, Arja Koskinen, Heikki Takko

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| 1. Dhana Lama | Asia |
| 2. Ojot Ojulu | Africa |
| 3. Channlyda Rhy | Asia |
| 4. Tirunesh Mekonnen | Africa |
| 5. Vongmany Vongphachanh | Asia |
| 6. Jaloo Mpadhi | Africa |

9.5.2. BOH Theme of Hope 1 groupwork

The foundation of Bridge of Hope 1

The group saw the following aspects of shared mission as the most important building blocks for our successful cooperation in this field.

Quality cooperation	Networking
Training and capacity building 1 partner heart 2 partner exclamation marks	Quality cooperation
Gender equality 3 Felm hearts	
Support for marginalised groups and minorities 1 Felm heart	
Sharing good news and faith formation 3 Stakeholder exclamation marks	

The challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 1

Perspective: challenges in the local context

Raising Awareness	Environment as a whole 1 Board member exclamation mark	Infrastructure	Local Lutheran church weak and small	Growth and need higher than resources	Lack of people with higher education	Decreasing financial support
Underestimating the importance of theological education	Being Christian in a Muslim city 1 Felm exclamation mark	Lack of technology	State funding because welcome given to people without rights	Sustainability 1 partner heart	'Our building is so small for all the things we need to do'	Many converts with no stable Christian faith
Resources: good practice, personnel, funding	Social convention and tradition	Succession	Migration policy 1 partner exclamation mark	More Christian volunteers from the local church needed	Training in human resources	

Perspective: challenges in partnership

Reporting	Complicated reporting system 1 Felm exclamation mark	Annual reports are a huge task	
Change of co-workers	Frequent change of regional co-workers. For example: in three years three regional directors		
Communication	Felm situation -> policy, strategy	Communication on two levels: custom and culture 1 Felm heart	Visits, 1 visit / 1 year
Language	3 – a Lingua 1 Felm exclamation mark	Power -> language 1 Felm exclamation mark	
Different interest in strategy 1 Felm question mark	Not about evangelisation	Felm = human rights 1 Felm question mark	
Context	Local context		
End of work	Misunderstanding 2022? End of 30 years of cooperation. France is not a developing country, but the migrants coming to France are from these countries.		

Solutions to challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 1

Awareness 1 Felm exclamation mark	Advocacy	Communication of the importance 1 partner exclamation mark	Understanding by Felm staff of the local situation 1 Felm exclamation mark			
Resources 1 partner heart	Financial support	Wise use of resources 1 Board member heart	Mobilisation of local resources	Training, capacity building 2 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm heart 1 Felm exclamation mark	Prioritising the projects 4 Felm exclamation marks	Better planning in advance 2 Felm exclamation marks
Environment 1 Felm exclamation mark	Knowing the environment before the visit	Perseverance	Communication about the context 1 partner exclamation mark	Communication according to needs		
Communication (customs, culture)	Regular communication	Awareness	Advocacy with pictures and IT	Capacity building in communication with Felm 1 partner exclamation mark		
Reporting system	Respond in time (Advice for Felm partners) 3 partner exclamation marks 3 Felm exclamation marks	Felm to revise reporting system 1 partner exclamation mark 2 Felm exclamation mark 1 Board member exclamation mark	Felm needs to be flexible according to local context 1 partner exclamation mark 4 Felm heart			
Different interest in strategy	Combining the strategies (Felm and partner) through discussion					
Change of Felm co-workers 1 Felm exclamation mark	Proper hand-over between old and new regional staff					
End of cooperation	External fundraising expert 1 Felm heart 1 Felm exclamation mark					
Lanaguage	Improvement of communication in English 1 partner exclamation mark					

Where will we be when these obstacles are overcome? What the future will look like in Theme of Hope 1

Dream: Autonomy, with local and national assistance. - MIRACLE -	A better world 2 partner hearts 2 Felm exclamation marks	A fighting church 1 partner heart 4 Felm hearts 1 Board member heart	Hope in Jesus Christ 1 partner heart 6 Felm hearts 1 Felm exclamation marks 1 Board member heart
A totally new way of cooperation 3 Felm exclamation marks	Local, more independent – Felm able to share resources in other areas 1 partner heart 2 Felm exclamation marks	A Church that fights for life 4 Felm hearts	Autonomously (independent) funded church* (text very unclear) 1 partner heart
All the above, without distinction 12 partner hearts 3 Felm hearts			

Plenary discussion concerning Bridge of Hope groupwork 1

- The foundation of the bridge describes our joint achievements
- Gaps and obstacles in partnership are related to reporting and to the turnover of Felm co-workers

9.5.3. BOH Theme of Hope 2 groupwork

The foundation of Bridge of Hope 2 – keys to success

Holistic approach	Shared vision	Trust 2 partner exclamation marks	All the keys to success 1 partner exclamation mark
Respect 2 partner exclamation marks	Felm's staff's support and willingness to assist	Changing mentalities	
Capacity building by Felm	Innovation, creativity by organisation	Leadership development	
Training by Felm	Knowledge of the context 1 partner exclamation mark	In collaboration with / involvement of traditional leaders, teachers, parents, grandparents, community members, local leaders	

The challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 2

Our own organisation	With Felm	Local context	International context
Lack of sufficient financial resources	Concrete results from partner consultations	Poverty 2 partner exclamation marks 1 Felm heart 1 stakeholder exclamation mark	Insufficient funding
Limited human resources 1 partner exclamation mark	Reporting system includes items that don't fit us 1 Felm exclamation mark	Droughts 1 partner exclamation mark	Private sector-led development
Limited skills 1 Board member exclamation mark	Continuous Felm staff turnover	Helping parents psychologically	Complex for funding application system
Organisational development 1 partner exclamation mark	Rapid change	Shrinking space of civil society	
	Rapid change, no long-term focus	Unqualified special education teachers	
	Lack of basket funding	National policies restricting NGOs 1 partner exclamation mark	
	Gaps in sustainability/ exit plans	Climate change 1 Felm exclamation mark	
	We can't help students after they graduate (special education)	Floods	
		Special political situation	
		Corruption	

Solutions to challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 2

Developing reporting system and material 3 partner exclamation marks	Organisational assessment	Importance of diplomacy, relationships and connections	Local awareness raising, training for farmers. Felm's role in financial support and advocacy	Risk mitigation: work at community and village level (climate change)	Advocacy 4 Felm exclamation marks 1 Felm heart	All these solutions 2 partner exclamation marks
Revising the reporting questions etc.	More volunteers (perhaps later part of the staff) 1 partner heart 1 Felm heart 1 Felm question mark	Exchanging ideas 2 partner hearts 1 Felm heart	Involve local admin	Bringing partners together to join forces	Exchanging expertise (Felm partners)	
Concrete questions in reporting material	Team working on a project – more than one person knows about a certain project 2 Felm hearts 1 stakeholder heart	Learning from other partners 1 partner heart 1 Felm heart 4 Felm exclamation marks	Exchange visits 1 Felm exclamation mark	Building capacity 2 partner exclamation marks 2 Felm exclamation marks	When we're working locally, we need to look at the problem from an international perspective	
Reporting needs to be linked to the project size	Restoring institutional memory 2 Felm exclamation marks	Long-term partnership (same focal point in Felm) 1 partner heart 1 Felm exclamation mark	Monitoring visits to solve problems together	Climate change: local solutions and at all levels of the partner organisation 3 Felm hearts 2 Felm exclamation marks	Discussing reporting with partners	

Where will we be when these obstacles are overcome? What the future will look like Theme of Hope 2. In a perfect world we will have the following:

<p>Partnership platform to work together to tackle problems 2 partner hearts 4 Felm hearts 1 Board member heart</p>	<p>Women's empowerment 2 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark 3 Felm hearts 2 Felm exclamation marks 1 Board exclamation mark</p>	<p>Poverty alleviation 2 Felm exclamation marks</p>	<p>Felm and partners have the same vision and standards 2 Felm exclamation marks 1 stakeholder exclamation mark</p>	<p>Sustainable Felm team for certain countries 3 partner exclamation marks 5 Felm exclamation marks 1 Board exclamation mark 1 stakeholder heart</p>
<p>Empowerment of local stakeholders 2 partner hearts 1 Felm heart</p>	<p>Space for defending rights 1 Felm exclamation mark</p>	<p>Shock Resilience</p>	<p>Access to justice 2 partner exclamation marks 3 Felm hearts 1 Felm exclamation mark 1 Board member heart</p>	<p>Access to services 1 Felm heart</p>
<p>Initiatives that would help support and achieve the ultimate goal of access to education</p>	<p>Annual conferences for sharing success stories 1 stakeholder heart</p>	<p>Sharing stories from different thematic areas 1 partner exclamation mark</p>	<p>Several partners doing the same thing – multiplier effect</p>	<p>Shock resilience</p>
<p>All ideas, without distinction 8 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark 2 Felm hearts 2 Board member hearts</p>	<p>We will share knowledge through exchange visits 3 partner hearts 1 Felm exclamation mark 1 stakeholder exclamation mark</p>			

Plenary discussion and reflection concerning Bridge of Hope groupwork 2

- The partners expressed their appreciation of the opportunity to share openly
- Trust and respect were key partnership issues
- There are plenty of problems, but we have the power to change the situation
- Reporting, capacity building, and advocacy are key teams
- In a perfect world there will be a partnership platform, a sustainable local Felm team, access to justice, and services for partners
- This is a letter of commitment

9.5.4 BOH Theme of Hope 3 groupwork

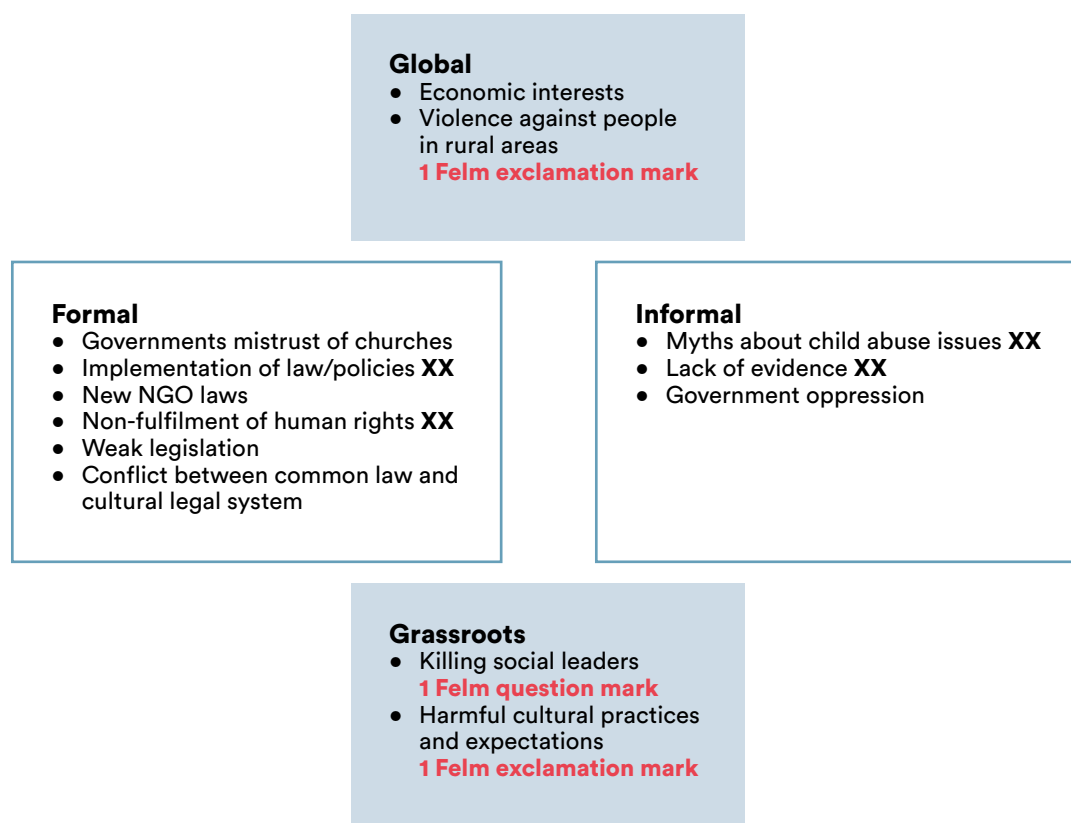
The foundation of Bridge of Hope 3

The group formed a ‘basis’ table describing our successful cooperation under the theme

	Formal structures (Politics/Law/Institutions)	Informal structures (Discourse/Companies/ Communities)
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for local education structures • Advocacy for unemployment and vocation training for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-level advocacy • Protected FARC ex-combatants • Indirect advocacy through capacity building • Cultural understanding and beliefs
Extra-local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Violence Act • Penal code (age of consent raised to 18) 1 Felm heart • Peace agreement advocacy to governments • National guidelines on kinship, foster care, domestic adoption • National standard for social work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-based advocacy (research) • Capacity building for service provider

The challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 3

X was used as an emphasis marker in the group



**Solutions for challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 3
What do you need? What can Felm offer as an organisation for enhanced
advocacy work?**

What do you need?	What can Felm offer?
Hard approach – network advocacy 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm question mark	Felm coordinates partnership
Soft approach – building relationships with government (provide consultation) 2 partner hearts	Felm provides fundraising expertise
Capacity building 3 partner hearts 1 Felm heart	Unfolding access 1 Felm heart
International campaign, access building 1 partner heart 1 Felm heart	What can we do to ensure that the work continues when we aren't there? 4 Felm hearts 2 Felm exclamation marks 1 stakeholder heart
Networking within countries 4 partner hearts 4 Felm hearts 2 Felm exclamation marks 1 Board member exclamation mark 1 stakeholder heart 1 stakeholder exclamation mark	Training by Felm 2 partner exclamation marks
	Technical and financial support for human rights mechanism (UPR, CEDAN etc) 1 partner heart 1 Felm exclamation mark
	Lobbying at international forums 3 partner hearts

Where will we be when these obstacles are overcome?

What the future will look like in Theme of Hope 3

Future prospects

<p>Key concepts All the key concepts 3 partner hearts 4 partner exclamation marks 1 Felm heart 6 Felm exclamation marks 1 stakeholder exclamation mark</p>	<p>Objectives</p>		
<p>Well-coordinated Evidence-based Interconnected Shared coalitions Influential</p>	<p>1. Finding links in:</p>	<p>2. Capacity needs 3 partner exclamation marks 1 Felm heart 1 Felm exclamation mark</p>	<p>3. Lutheran World Federation coordinates advocacy with its members 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm exclamation mark</p>
<p>Extra-local</p>	<p>a) Within Felm’s partners, nationally and regionally 1 Felm heart 1 Felm exclamation mark 1 Board member heart 1 Board member exclamation mark</p> <p>b) Among the donors of Felm’s individual partners 6 Felm exclamation marks</p> <p>c) National and sub-national advocacy linked to international processes 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm exclamation mark</p> <p>d) Thematic links among Felm partners 1 Felm heart</p>	<p>a) Theologically based advocacy 2 Felm hearts 1 Board member heart 1 stakeholder heart 1 stakeholder exclamation mark</p> <p>b) Building coalitions and making them functional 2 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm heart</p> <p>c) Advocacy in the context of shrinking and hostile space 3 Felm hearts 1 Board member exclamation mark</p> <p>d) Taking leadership in coalitions 1 Felm heart</p> <p>e) Turning data into advocacy 1 Felm heart 1 Felm exclamation mark</p>	

Plenary discussion and reflection concerning Bridge of Hope groupwork 3

- It is important to learn to speak the same language on advocacy, which has multiple levels and methods
- Future prospects will be built on central concepts: sharing; connecting; and coordinating

9.5.5. BOH Theme of Hope 4 groupwork

**The foundation of Bridge of Hope 4: ‘We build peace and reconciliation.’
Recognised success in our cooperation**

Mobilisation for dialogue (horizontal + vertical) 4D
Legacy of success a living dialogue
Good initiatives that should be invested in
Role of faith 1 partner heart
Trust in partnership
Credibility 2 partner hearts
Being proactive instead of reactive

The challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 4

RBM limitations 2 Felm exclamation marks	Education system (negative mindsets, exclusiveness) 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm exclamation mark	Funding structure	Co-opted in unjust systems	Shrinking space of civil society
Dialogue – terminology can be hijacked	Peacebuilding to transform social as well as armed conflict	Security threat 1 Felm exclamation mark	Human resource development	Social media – contradictory digital impact
Burnout of peacebuilders 1 Felm exclamation mark	Visa issues	National + regional + global politics		Challenges in general 3 partner exclamation marks

Solutions to challenges and obstacles we face in Theme of Hope 4

The group named these solutions as opportunities.

<p>Not limiting our (scope?) to RBM (one of the tools) 1 Felm question mark 1 Felm exclamation mark</p>	<p>Leaving the terminology = influencing the space</p>	<p>Education system needs to be examined, fruitful dialogue, continuing the debate 1 partner heart 1 Felm exclamation mark</p>	<p>Building a peace advocacy network to share good experiences 1 partner exclamation mark 8 Felm hearts</p>
<p>Using religious institutions to mobilise for peace 1 partner heart 4 Felm hearts 1 Felm exclamation mark</p>	<p>Change of language to avoid misunderstanding 1 partner heart</p>	<p>To be more adaptive 1 partner heart 1 Felm heart</p>	<p>investing in strong and accountable organisation 1 partner heart 1 Felm heart</p>
<p>Long team approach 3 partner hearts 1 Felm heart 1 Board member exclamation mark 1 stakeholder exclamation mark</p>			



Where will we be when these obstacles are overcome?

What the future will look like in Theme of Hope 4

The future of peacebuilding

The whole table received 6 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark 2 Felm hearts 3 Felm exclamation mark	Role 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm heart 1 Board member heart	Principles 1 partner heart	How	VIP
	Catalyst	Neutrality	Promote dialogues in humanitarian aid 2 partner hearts 2 Felm hearts 1 stakeholder heart	Link network of “best practices” to enhance the framework of “best fit” 4 partner hearts 2 partner exclamation mark 5 Felm hearts 1 Felm exclamation mark
	Multiplier 1 Felm heart	360 degree 1 Board member heart	Go beyond RBM 2 Board member question marks	
	Mediator	4D 1 partner exclamation mark	Eco-system	
	Facilitator 4 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark 7 Felm exclamation marks 1 stakeholder exclamation mark	Long investment	Don't be “trendy” 1 Board member heart 1 Felm heart	
		More adaptive	Real Politics	
		Sustainability 2 partner exclamation mark	Focus on grassroot	
			Vertical connection (knowledge / people) 1 Felm exclamation mark 1 Board member exclamation mark	

Plenary discussion and reflection concerning Bridge of Hope groupwork 3

- There are striking similarities despite differences in local contexts
- ‘A small success can be a major success’ – discussion is needed on what success is in each context (subjectivity of meanings)
- Ideal transition in Felm: from facilitators to multipliers

9.5.6. Climate Change groupwork: “Tree of Resilience”

Roots of the Tree: The group identified the following as root causes of poor climate resilience

Poor planning, monitoring and planting, especially in rural areas	Dependency on agriculture	Powerless community	Climate condition	Lack of education
Lack of priority	Lack of awareness	Poverty	Poor monitoring and implementing of laws	Social injustice
Marginalisation	Geographical vulnerability	Economic agenda	Lack of livelihood	Lack of capacity
Landmines	Corruption	Displaced people	Deforestation	Consumption habits/lifestyles
Negligence and ignorance	Environment-compromising decisions	Politicisation of climate agendas	Vulnerability due to disease	Limited access to technology
Governments focus more on rural areas	Cultural beliefs	Outdated traditional laws / practices		

Trunk of the Tree: what can we do in partnership to build climate change resilience in communities?

Be intentional about it and 'walk the talk' (do it) 1 partner heart	Climate change and the environment as a cross-cutting issue 1 Felm exclamation mark	Link to research and institutions for local evidence-based research	Documentation support	Learning and sharing forum 1 Felm exclamation mark	Human resources: local and international
Do no harm approach	Exchange visits and south-south visits 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm exclamation marks 2 Felm question marks	Strategic planning: Felm and its partners 2 Felm exclamation mark 1 Board member exclamation mark	Media and Communication partners work through Felm	Financial support	Theological reflection 4 partner exclamation marks 1 Felm exclamation mark
Local stakeholders' involvement	Networking 2 partner hearts 3 Felm hearts 1 Board member heart 1 stakeholder exclamation mark	Joint innovation, development for climate change	Joint mitigation plan 2 partner exclamation marks 1 Felm heart	Training for fundraising 1 partner heart 1 partner exclamation mark	Local fundraising 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm exclamation mark
Material support	Felm lobbies on behalf of partners 2 partner exclamation marks	Joint efforts for financial support	Technical support 2 Felm exclamation marks	Capacity building 2 partner exclamation marks 4 Felm hearts	

Fruits of the Tree: What will we achieve together?

Result	Communities are safe and enjoy a peaceful environment 1 partner heart 3 Felm hearts 1 stakeholder heart	Communities care for the environment, use resources responsibly and maintain them for the future 2 partner hearts 2 partner exclamation marks 2 Felm hearts 4 Felm exclamation marks
Activities to help communities build resilience	Networking 3 partner exclamation marks 1 Felm heart 1 Board member exclamation mark	
	Mobilisation of media 1 Felm question mark	Capacity building for partner organisations 1 partner heart 2 partner exclamation marks 1 Felm heart

FELM – TOWARDS A SHARED VISION

Result	The community will be empowered to stand up for its rights and protect its environment 3 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark 6 Felm hearts 1 Felm exclamation mark		Technological solution 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm exclamation mark
Activities to help communities build resilience	Community empowerment 2 partner hearts 1 Felm heart	Focus group discussions	Adopt climate-smart technologies for lifestyle, agriculture, livelihoods 1 Felm heart 1 Board member exclamation mark
	Community consultation	Training of trainers 1 partner exclamation mark	
	Awareness raising. Workshops about climate change		

Result	The curriculum is developed to include climate change 1 Felm heart	
Activities to help communities build resilience	Environmental protection clubs in schools	Technical support for education system
	Formation of curriculum write-up group – pilot tests for the curriculum	Lobbying and networking with government and stakeholders for curriculum development

Result	A national and international agreement will be implemented 3 Felm hearts 1 Felm exclamation mark	Government's transparency will increase
Activities to help communities build resilience	Advocacy campaign at all levels 3 Felm hearts 2 Felm exclamation marks	Lobbying at all levels 1 Felm exclamation mark

Result	Governments need to set budgets for Disaster risk reduction 1 partner exclamation mark
Activities to help communities build resilience	Negotiate 1 partner heart

FELM – TOWARDS A SHARED VISION

Result	Disaster risk reduction and mitigation plan in place at the community level 3 Felm hearts	Resilient livelihood 2 partner hearts 1 Felm heart
	Formation of DRR committee at the community level	Plantation 1 stakeholder heart
Activities to help communities build resilience	Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of DRR plan	Explore the climate-resilient livelihood option
	Awareness raising on DRR	Agro-forestry: climate-resistant crops
	Training and equipping the DRR committee	Renewable energy 1 partner exclamation mark 1 stakeholder heart
		Irrigation system/canal
		Establishing income-generating activities

Result	Local forest is protected 3 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark 1 Felm exclamation mark	Strict policy and practice (climate policy) for partner organisation 1 Felm exclamation mark
Activities to help communities build resilience	Promoting indigenous species	Mainstreaming climate change agenda in our organisations
	Indigenous skills	Implementation and evaluation / monitoring plan 3 Felm exclamation marks
	Village committee on forest protection established	Support for policy formation
	Tree nursery training and establishment	Staff rewards for best practice
	Awareness and education on forestry	

Plenary discussion and reflection on the Tree of Resilience

- ‘In the ideal world, everything is possible’
- The roots show why other communities are more vulnerable to climate change than others
- The leaves are activities to help communities build resilience
- The apples are the results of the activities
- The trunk is partnership: what can we do together to build climate change resilience in communities?



9.5.7. Feedback from partners concerning Bridge of Hope and Tree of Resilience groupwork

How did you feel about the ‘Bridge of Hope’ working session and discussion? What was missing and what did you appreciate? What else would you like to say to Felm?

‘It was participatory: opinions (suggestions and/or weaknesses) were expressed without hesitation. It was honest. The environment was good. Others and their opinions were respected without criticism, which was an indication of the trust and respect between Felm and its partners.’

‘Instead of listing many problems, there should have been a focus on major problems and developing an action plan from both sides (Felm and its partners) to deal with problems or gaps. Felm should maintain such consultation at the Helsinki, regional, and local levels.’

‘It’s a great opportunity for me to be involved in the discussion and hear stories from around the world, which are really very similar. I think political unrest around the world should be included in the discussion, because it’s the root cause of all the problems in the end. So, I hope Felm will also include this topic in its strategy.’

‘A wonderful way of discussing together, and getting to know people and their work more meaningfully. What was missing was that Felm was not given a chance to tell us about its work, challenges, and future plans. A lot of work lies ahead for Felm. It will be interesting to read how Felm strategises all this information. Good luck! It’s most important to say that Felm and the Finnish people are simply wonderful, and the country is so very scenic – thank you Felm for providing me with the opportunity to attend this extremely thought-provoking strategy workshop and being proud of 160 years of celebration. God bless you all.’ Jennifer Jivan

‘It’s a good opportunity to learn more about other partners, especially their needs, contexts, and challenges, besides discussing and exploring how to face challenges and overcome them together. I want to share the experience with my colleagues and local congregations. If possible, I’d like to learn more about Finnish culture, customs, and communication patterns – I think that will help to enhance the partnership.’

‘Raising the ideas on the charts killed the ideas. I’d prefer partners to write the remarks themselves. How would Felm proceed with our suggestions? We’d like to know which will be taken into consideration and which won’t. Thanks for giving us the opportunity to learn more about each other.’

‘I appreciate this space for discussion and learning about the work of Felm’s other partners so much. It was a great opportunity to share our challenges and make connections with other churches and faith-based organisations. I missed the opportunity to talk with Board members about their understanding of advocacy.’

‘I feel good and happy if it all happens. I say this because many consultations in many places talk about many things, but there is zero implementation. The discussion was fantastic: it needs more effort and commitment if we’re going to achieve the goal. I appreciate all the things Felm has done to gather these groups to discuss the issues. You’ve done what Jesus commanded. God bless you and your offspring, your generation and your country. The last thing I’d like to mention is ‘consistency’. It’s all-important. The topics have been touching. Women’s participation in all the activities was amazing. The workers are committed. God bless you all. I appreciate the weather in Finland (I haven’t experienced the dark). I like sauna.’

‘The bridges and group sharing are very supportive for understanding more about Felm and Felm partnership. I am very appreciative of the trust, respect, and support Felm shows in its partnership. It’s very important to work meaningfully and effectively together. Our work can have more impact on vulnerable people and their communities. I love the idea of consultation at strategy level for shaping the way forward together in partnership. Regarding climate change, in my own organisation, it would be great if we could agree on a common goal and strategic implementation for a climate change solution. And we need to strengthen our networking, sharing, learning, and support for each other (Felm and its partners) to bring about a concrete reversal of climate change.’

‘The session was very interesting. We learnt a lot from other partners. It brought hope, and encouraged our strengthening and working together as partners. It also highlighted the challenges we have as organisations and churches. The challenges very common indeed. Felm has offered great support to its partners. Without your financial support we could not have achieved so much. Thank you!’

‘I think all the important aspects were covered, and I really appreciate the fact that the Bridge of Hope is taken seriously by both Felm and its partners. The implementation should be the next step from here, and the success stories must be shared with all the partners. If there are any new ideas, there should be room for improvement in the future.’

‘The discussion was informative. I hope the outcome of the discussion will help Felm to change its strategy of doing its work in different ways. I’ve learned from my fellow partners about what they are doing. I thank you for the opportunity to discuss with my fellow partners. Felm should always ask the partner if it feels a specific project will benefit the country.’

‘I felt it was very good. The participants were active and openly shared their feelings. I thought everything was perfect. Felm should consider the local context’s priorities and increase support whenever possible. Mutual trust among the partners will enrich the partnership.’

‘I think it was very interesting to hear different opinions and realise that we all have the same goal – people’s wellbeing, the wellbeing of humanity. I also want to say how grateful we are to Felm and all they do in the name of God and in support of our church. We want the support to continue. In addition to financial support, we appreciate the emotional support we also need.’

‘The groupwork allowed for mutual learning. There are many similarities and differences in different contexts. The instructions weren’t very clear on what needs to be done. Felm’s partnership is respectful, and the consultation was proof of this.’

‘The sessions were organised in a very participatory way, and the partners’ views and ideas were always taken into account. I hope Felm will be able to translate these ideas into action that will benefit our work and the communities with which we work. Ultimately, I want to see a concrete summary of the directions and discussions. I hope the findings of the meeting will be shared later with the partners. Thank you!’

‘I personally feel the discussion was beyond me and my church as a young church – my church isn’t engaged in direct advocacy at all. However, the discussion was educational and inspired me personally and the church to open our eyes to see our role beyond just preaching the gospel and be a more prophetic voice for my country’s transformation. I also valued the other participants’ input.’

‘I enjoyed working with other partners and hearing what other institutions are doing with Felm. There was genuine openness. I’d like to thank Felm for the opportunity to work with partners and encourage it in the work it’s doing. Thank you.’

‘The groupwork was very participatory. I was able to contribute and be heard. I feel very good about it. As a woman, I’m grateful for the opportunity. Our voices are often unheard. I’m glad there are many female participants at this consultation from the partners. It was a time of reflection, sharing, and a learning opportunity. It was also challenging and at the same time inspiring and encouraging to know that we’re all facing similar issues/challenges and intending to do well or resolve problems. I’m grateful for the partnership. I believe it will create synergy.’

‘The groupwork was a good opportunity. I love the opportunity to establish dialogue with other participants and to find point of connection and new perspectives. Maybe it would be a good exercise to spend some time sharing common difficulties to find new and creative ways to solve problems. I really appreciate the fact that Felm listens to what its partners have to say. Thanks a lot.’

‘I liked the way the session was facilitated and the creativity of the facilitators most. It was also good that the leaders/directors of the thematic areas were there to personally hear part of the discussion. All the partners were given an opportunity to contribute to the discussions. Keep up the good work Felm!’

‘I feel the session went very well. The facilitator was very creative in helping us to think critically about the theme and allowing us to reflect on our experience. However, the people asking the questions were sometimes helpful and sometimes a distraction. If possible, in future sessions they should ask fewer questions and allow more discussion. I’d like to thank Felm for allowing this opportunity. This feels like real partnership.’

‘Very useful and informative. Time is too short for information sharing or exchange with other partners. I’m also interested to learn more about the other themes of discussions.’

‘Well-structured for many inputs and translating them into outputs and outcomes. Learning about other contexts and partners’ challenges. Many ideas and difficulties were discussed to draft them into specific successes, challenges, and opportunities. What was lacking was something about what Felm is doing in the thematic areas in different contexts. The objectives and results from working sessions were also missing. There are many good ideas on the board and we need to synthesise them in clear SWOT maps. I appreciate Felm’s methodology in its approach to the role of its partners in shaping its strategic planning. I appreciate your respect, modesty, love, and faith in working with your partners in one body in Jesus Christ. I appreciate your history and your valuable work in different contexts.’

‘I appreciate the opportunity for open sharing with each other. We’ve come together in good cooperation.’

‘I think it’s been good. Most questions/areas are covered by people from different parts of the world, with different expectations and ways of expressing themselves. On the whole, I think mutual respect and trust are the most important things. Everything can be worked out on such a basis.’

9.6. Our Partnership – general discussion

Working Session 10
Thursday 16 May

9.6.1. Partnership discussion group participants

Pitkänen group

Facilitator: Olli Pitkänen

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Vongmany Vongphachanh | Asia |
| 2. Jaloo Mpadhi | Africa |
| 3. David lilleka | Africa |
| 4. Emilio Aslla | South America |
| 5. Katri Leino-Nzau | Felm |
| 6. Matleena Kukkonen | Felm |

Takko group

Facilitator: Heikki Takko

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| 1. Channlyda Rhy | Asia |
| 2. Tomas Ndawanapo | Africa |
| 3. Amnuay Yodwong | Asia |
| 4. She Hongyu | Asia |
| 5. Pia Kummel-Myrskog | Felm |
| 6. Niko Humalisto | Felm |

Repo group

Facilitator: Ikka Repo

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Dhana Lama | Asia |
| 2. Ojot Ojulu | Africa |
| 3. Samer Laham | Middle East |
| 4. Prisca Higuera Cornieles | Europe |
| 5. Merja Alastalo | Felm |
| 6. Jarkko-Pekka Kärkkäinen | Felm |

Koskinen group

Facilitator: Arja Koskinen

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Thuzar Thant | Asia |
| 2. Happiness Gefi | Africa |
| 3. Mahmoud Ramadan | Middle East |
| 4. Adama Faye | Africa |
| 5. Kristiina Rintakoski | Felm |
| 6. Elisa Nousiainen | Felm |

Lind group

Facilitator: Juha Lind

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| 1. John Hernández | South America |
| 2. Emmanuel Shangweli | Africa |
| 3. Georgette Hazboun Rabadi | Middle East |
| 4. Anteneh Birhanu | Africa |
| 5. Erwin Chen | Asia |
| 6. Tanja Viikki | Felm |
| 7. Nea-Mari Heinonen | Felm |

Leppänen group

Facilitator: Jan-Eerik Leppänen

- | | |
|------------------------|--------|
| 1. Kenneth Mtata | Africa |
| 2. Daniel Orn | Asia |
| 3. Marieme Mint Ahmed | Africa |
| 4. Tirunesh Mekonnen | Africa |
| 5. Christine Stukaloff | Felm |
| 6. Miia Barrow | Felm |

Kallio group

Facilitator: Miikka Kallio

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Rev Atahualpa Hernández | South America |
| 2. Lorato Moalusi | Africa |
| 3. Bongji Zuma | Africa |
| 4. Simon Chow | Asia |
| 5. Leena Korpivaara | Felm |
| 6. Ruusa Gawaza | Felm |

Härkönen group

Facilitator: Pekka Härkönen

- | | |
|----------------------|--------|
| 1. Cipriana Vilombo | Africa |
| 2. Yaim Chamreun | Asia |
| 3. Surendha Shrestha | Asia |
| 4. Jennifer Jivan | Asia |
| 5. Roosa Rantala | Felm |
| 6. Elisa Nousiainen | Felm |

9.6.2. Results of discussion: the two claims about partnership

After general discussion about the nature of partnership we proceeded to discuss two claims about organisational partnership. These claims are:

1. ‘Genuine partnership grants extensions and sets requirements for tuning into the organisation’s or organisations’ mission, vision, and organisational behaviour.’

Extensions: Through partnership we acquire access to extended and enriched reality. We see, experience, and are enabled to do more through partnership than without it.

Tuning: Genuine partnership requires us to ‘tune’ our work to our partner. We need to plan, move, and work in sync with our partners. This tuning may also entail limitations or adjustments to organisational goals, activities, and behaviour.

2. ‘Partnership increases uncertainty (positive and negative) in an organisation.’

The purpose of these claims was to prompt discussion about organisational cooperation and partnership.

Claim 1 – Summary of the discussion in Juha Lind’s group

‘When we’re partners, it gives us something for our organisation, but we also have to give something ourselves.’

‘I didn’t like the word tuning. It means I let you choose my direction according to your mood. Extensions is positive. You grow up, do something positive. Whenever you tune a radio, you select something you want. You’re responsible for selecting.’

‘I liked the definition. We need understand from both sides of the partnership. It’s easy to understand that the donor gives opportunities to the partner and vice versa. The idea is that both partners should change how they do things. This is sometimes difficult because of cultural issues. Tuning isn’t about changing: it’s about finding opportunities to work together, not changing you as an organisation.’

‘It’s not for Felm or the partner to decide – you need both parties. Tuning is dominating the other. We need to work together.’

‘But here both partners need to tune in to each other, and they meet in the middle.’
‘Felm has the same standard for everybody – for example, in reporting. In some contexts, it’s not the best way to do things.’

‘In work, for example, you cannot interview people suffering from sexual abuse. You need to cater for this.’

‘The standard also needs to tune in. This should be done together. The other partner also has to do the same.’

‘Tuning things together is the way.’

‘Different partners have different needs. Tuning can become very complex. Who should do the tuning and adjusting; who should make the comparisons? We must also consider networking partnerships and their characteristics.’

‘Can it be positive too?’

‘Networks are also local and contextualised.’

‘We all think we get something from the partnership. How can we change? We need to work together. It’s very difficult alone. We also need networking.’

‘Partnership has requirements both ways, and you need to synchronise these requirements. We all know the challenges, but we should also look at the positive sides of the partnership. We need to build mutual understanding and learn from each other.’

Claim 1 – Summary of the discussion in Olli Pitkänen’s group

‘When we have two different ways to do things, we need to decide among ourselves to find a common way to achieve our goals. We need to go as one person – not as two, but as one – to move ahead.’

“Is the tuning same as doing compromises?”

‘In partnership we can achieve more with better quality when partners complement one another.’

‘Mission and vision are common goals – not going separate ways, but concentrating on the common goal.’

‘Tuning also has some limitations. There are differences between organisations, and there are also cultural differences. It’s problematic if we are unwilling to tune in and adjust.’

‘Partnership means working together. It’s impossible for me to walk alone. It’s also impossible for Felm to walk alone. Often the one with the money goes ahead, and the one who has nothing walks behind. This isn’t ok. We need to walk side by side together. When we walk together, our walk needs to have meaning.’

Claim 1 – Summary of the discussion in Jan-Eerik Leppänen’s group

‘Responsibility and mutual benefit isn’t one-way. Partnership goes two ways.’

‘Partnership can be parasitic when only one benefits.’

‘Partnership must involve mutual growth.’

‘Partnership must be nurtured.’

‘Evaluation is really important. Where have we been? Where have we gone?’

‘If partnership isn’t genuine, there’s no transparency. It will just be games.’

The group made a summary of how to be genuine in partnership: be transparent; be respectful; aim for open communication; be open to learning and transformation.

Claim 1 – Summary of the discussion in Pekka Härkönen’s group

‘Partnership requires tuning?’

‘Felm and its partners both need to be flexible – is this a prerequisite for partnership?’
‘Being in a partnership gives opportunities to do more than without it.’

‘Being a partner with Felm brings us added value: it makes us more credible and neutral. Some donors have required compromises the local partner didn’t want to make. In such cases the local partner has sought to work with Felm.’

‘We need to have a common or shared vision. You can’t change your vision to get money.’

‘Not all partners can have the same vision, but we need to have some sort of connection with our vision. We cannot change our vision according to what the donor wants.’

‘Felm gives freedom to its partners within certain limits.’

‘Felm also requires the partner to be loyal to Felm.’

‘Felm builds the capacity of its partners and learns from them.’

Claim 1 – Summary of the discussion in Heikki Takko’s group

‘We come together, we work together, we support each other. We have equality. There are no bosses.’

‘Supporting each other, walking together – all our successes and challenges are met together.’

‘Sharing the same boat, having the same destination, common vision, respect: in terms of capacity and limits it also means sharing risks.’

‘I don’t have much to say (laughs) because, well, the Bible says, if two people can’t work together, their hearts aren’t the same. This goes for partnership as well. So, partnership involves working together in sync, with the same goals.’

‘How is Felm different from other local partners? Yes, there are different levels and different partnerships. It’s certainly a balancing act. When an association is made, there are changes as well.’

‘In our local contexts we don’t have partners. We’re in a shared organisation. We can partner with our government. Organisations should have the same heart. So there’s no difference.’

‘Partnership is God’s mission. That’s where partnership begins. It’s also about rejoicing related to encounters and achieving things, and the grace of being able to do this together.’

‘Felm should be appreciated. It has a unique role. You’re always asking us what we want, and you provide support for us. But we’d actually like to hear what you would like to see us doing more. We need help in expanding our work. It would be perfect if Felm could see our work in practice and tell us if anything needs improving.’

‘Money isn’t the issue here – it’s about easy access for everyone and being open to working together. Knowledge is a good basis for cooperation.’

‘Felm is where the resources are; the local context is where our beneficiaries and other partners are. So, our organisation is like a bridge. Being a bridge between resources and needs is the key.’

Claim 1 - Summary of the discussion in Ilkka Repo’s group

‘The statement is very technical – and in that sense it’s a good statement. However, there should be more spiritual language in the statement since the work is motivated by faith.’

‘The reality is that the progression is usually from funder to recipient, but we can be supportive in both directions, sharing and complementing each other’s values. Financial support is not the most important thing: spiritual support is more important. Partners are working for God’s vision, not the funder’s.’

‘It’s important in partnership to have common values and goals. Organisations should not have to change because of the will of the other.’

‘Addressing issues and values is more important than organisational language.’

‘Joint decision making is an important part of partnership -> question of power (funder-recipient).’

‘What does partnership mean when Felm is ending its funding for our project in 2020? How can we tune ourselves to this? Values are the most important things in our partnership.’

‘We can be different but still be partners. It’s important to accept the other and understand their context. For example, Orthodox Christians are part of the WCC because they can accept the differences between different churches.’

Claim 1 – Summary of the discussion in Arja Koskinen’s group

‘Sharing why, how, and what we’re going to do is different from just going from partner to partner.’

‘It’s important to start from a shared understanding.’

‘Problems have global impacts, so the responsibility is global.’

‘Should partners lead, and Felm follow?’

‘In mutual understanding you need to agree to put some things aside so that you can move together.’

‘Partners are different. Local ownership is always strong. Sometimes it seems to be more about imposing one’s agenda.’

‘Respecting local ownership and its boundaries is important.’

‘In a good partnership both sides need to come together and not impose themselves on each other.’

‘Organisations with different visions and missions can come together to work on something.’

‘To discuss ideology, there needs to be some kind of basic understanding.’

‘You need flexibility, and you need to enhance your local learning: partnership is a necessity – and shared values are a prerequisite if you’re going to do anything.’

‘You know differences exist, but it takes time for societies to accept certain values. Change takes time.’

‘It’s ok if the marginalised have a choice, but they also need a voice.’

Claim 2 – Summary of the discussion in Juha Lind’s group

‘Uncertainty is both positive and negative, but it’s more positive. It allows us to face new opportunities and even new ministry together. There’s a positive uncertainty in creating something new. Sometimes a change of co-workers creates negative uncertainty. Missionaries are changing more often these days. We need to adjust our pattern to this new shorter type of cooperation. The new cooperative pattern will create something new.’

‘Peacebuilding is always uncertain. It’s impossible to predict what will happen. We should also appreciate uncertainty as a positive thing. You need to learn to live with it. Sometimes uncertainty can lead to something positive. It gives you an open future to choose the way to go.’

‘Partnership can sometimes be negative. PME gives us an opportunity to improve conditions. There’s always uncertainty in every relationship. You can’t do peace and reconciliation alone. There’s an alternative in partnership. You need partners too. For me this isn’t a negative thing. The future is always uncertain.’

‘Whenever you see the word uncertainty, you think it’s a negative term. For me uncertainty means there’s a problem. If you think partnership helps increase uncertainty, you need to do more work to solve this problem. When you’re uncertain, you look for a solution. The two parties work on an issue and look for a solution to solve the problem. They try to understand the situation and to get to a better place. Partnership increases uncertainty at first, but then it decreases it.’

‘There are positive things in the first steps of partnership.’

‘What is the opposite of uncertainty? Certainty, firmness, trust?’

‘The next step in partnership is very practical. It’s not just philosophical.’

‘The timespan should not affect the way you deal with different partners. If it does, it needs fixing.’

‘Uncertainty can still arise even if you’ve worked together for a long time.’

‘You need to build confidence and trust in a partnership.’

‘Another way to understand partnership is that some organisations have a colonial background. This isn’t the case with Felm. This means they can apply pressure to their partners. You have to find ways to trust your partner.’

Claim 2 – Summary of the discussion in Olli Pitkänen’s group

‘I disagree with the claim that partnership makes things more predictable, and that sustainability grows.’

‘I agree that there can be positive surprises too.’

‘When we do things as partners, there’s uncertainty when you don’t have any money, but the partner does and promises to give it to you. It’s uncertain. And the donor can never be completely sure the partner is using the money as agreed. This doesn’t mean that the partner isn’t to be trusted: it just means we lack a relevant and sufficient understanding of our common goal.’

‘For me this is a positive thing. In partnership we need to keep the promises we make. We need to know why a certain thing is financed. If I do not use the money as we planned together, I have damaged the partnership.’

Claim 2 – Summary of the discussion in Jan-Eerik Leppänen’s group

‘We feel the opposite – it reduces uncertainty.’

‘If we’re talking about livelihood projects – with chickens and so on – partnership gives us an opportunity to act.’

‘Positive uncertainty can give us opportunities to innovate.’

Claim 2 – Summary of the discussion in Pekka Härkönen’s group

‘New partnerships will bring uncertainties, especially when commonly agreed practices are being changed and unified.’

‘This is related to communication problems. The local partner doesn’t get the answers it requires.’

‘The local partner uses Felm reporting forms to get information and uses this for other donors as well.’

Claim 2 – Summary of the discussion in Heikki Takko’s group

‘What are your thoughts on the final sentence of the paper about partnership as a source of uncertainty? How should you recognise or react to uncertainty? Are we going to refuse funding?’

‘A problem emerges if power becomes unstable. But yes, we’re concerned about Felm stopping its funding because we won’t be able to implement our work. So, we’ve also thought about financial self-sustainability.’

‘Partnership works like a mirror – it tells you who you are. On your own, you may fall prey to delusion. Criticism is such an asset. We need reality checks. Accepting criticism is necessary.’

‘The sentence is complicated. If partnership is understood as dependency, no thoughts are given to the future. That’s when uncertainty arises. Contingency planning helps us to navigate this uncertainty. So, future uncertainty can be mitigated by planning. At some point we have to agree that there’s no purpose in continuing the work together.’
‘Even if there are uncertainties, it’s still better to have partners than no partners at all. It’s like a marriage – you have to put an effort into keeping it alive and adaptive. Organisations are made up of people. Risks always manifest themselves in the form of personal disasters, political changes, and so on. Planning and developing an ability to react is part of a healthy relationship. It’s people, people, people!’

‘Yes, partnerships can be negative and positive. Our activities have been reduced by an external actor cutting this and firing that in a top-down, deterministic way. Partnership should be about sitting down together and finding solutions to the problem.’
‘If funding stops, it’s not the end of partnership.’

‘Partnerships are beautiful, like a gift. But life is uncertain, and that also applies to partnership. Often, we somehow lose control, as in life. Work needs to be accepted on these terms. Transparency is important: openness in communication is the key, because it makes it possible to prepare and adapt.’

Claim 2 – Summary of the discussion in Ilkka Repo’s group

‘The statement is partly true – there are benefits sometimes. MECC used to have a lot of partners and some of them didn’t want to continue their funding. MECC still sends them invitations to the annual partner meetings. Some of them don’t participate, and

people at MECC wonder if partnership only means financial partnership to them.’
‘Every organisation assesses the possible partnership and partners before getting involved in a partnership.’

‘To ensure the sustainability of work, partners need support so that when financial support ends, they can continue working without the funding. These days in project planning funders demand planning for sustainability, but the timeframe is usually too short.’

Claim 2 – Summary of discussion in Arja Koskinen’s group

‘Yes and no: the same thing happens in NGOs and private companies.’

‘Most humanitarian and peacebuilding values were built in the West, so the mutual understanding of partnership and what is done together is important.’

‘Partnership can change the context and have negative or positive effects on the partner and context.’

‘Uncertainty is caused for both partners: donors need skills to talk peer to peer, for example.’

‘Partnership increases uncertainty: in cross-cultural communication polite ways of saying no differ. You might need to change your plans.’

‘Uncertainty isn’t a risk you can alleviate – it’s always there.’

‘Flexibility, trust, and localisation are important when you’re facing uncertainty.’

‘Some partnerships bring more problems at the local level than between the partners. For example, through partnership our community has received grain mills to alleviate women’s toil, but the community’s men have said they won’t eat their flour because it makes them sick. The machine reduces the time needed to produce the flour.’

‘NGOs should first be accepted at the local level to increase sustainability.’

‘The problem is often that you wish to achieve such a high planning level that you forget the grassroots, and the technicalities complicate things.’

‘Time for planning is short: there’s no time for a participatory approach. An example would be a clinic in Myanmar: it wasn’t properly planned and is now used for storage.’



9.7. Results of discussion: Partnership SWOT

After discussing partnership in general terms, the groups moved on to analyse the current status of partnership between Felm and its partners. This was done through a SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) matrix. The SWOTs were prepared by the Felm regional directors who had followed the Bridge of Hope groupwork through this perspective and constantly updated the SWOT matrix. Before the 'Our Partnership' groupwork the regional directors convened and shared their results. They then assembled one SWOT intended to summarise all the directors' individual SWOTs. The resulting SWOT was then used and shared as a point of discussion in all the groups, which were able to add more to the presented SWOT. All the participants were also given the opportunity to mark the SWOT with their own comments, using the heart, exclamation mark, and question mark symbols.

Summary of discussion and addition to SWOT from Juha Lind's group

'We've added to staff turnover in both Felm and in the partner organisation.'

'Someone didn't agree with the short duration of projects.'

‘You need to develop your project, not just repeat the same thing year after years.’

‘We need to distinguish between a long-term process/transformation from projects that are inevitably short term.’

‘Projects that are either too long or too short are a weakness.’

‘We’ve added to our strengths, and we have new funding flexibility – for example, in sponsorship-type funding or covering salaries.’

‘When opportunities arise, we need to use the expertise of others as well – not just Felm’s knowledge but also the knowledge of other partners.’

‘There’s an opportunity to systematise this. This information isn’t utilised as fully as it could be. How do we use this data?’

‘We need to utilise south-south knowledge.’

‘Good use of collected data needs to be even better, for example, in advocacy.’

‘A threat is that lessons aren’t learnt. This is connected to knowledge and staff turnover.’

Added to threats: Funding shortages. Governments can change, and they can change everything for your organisation. Political uncertainty.

Comment about methodology: ‘You need to change the threats into opportunities, and the weaknesses into strengths.’

Summary of additions to SWOT from Jan-Eerik Leppänen’s group

- Local and global work, advocacy
- Lack of resources
- Security – can be a threat and strength
- Climate change and natural disasters
- Skills sharing, best practice and south to south exchange visits
- Capacity building
- Apart from giving money, providing economic opportunities

Summary of discussion about SWOT in Pekka Härkönen’s group

Additions to strengths: trust, growing capacity together, versatile partnership, mutual respect, experience of learning together. Felm respects partners experience.

‘Capacity building and mutual learning are also opportunities – they never end, it’s continuous.’

‘Felm could do even more organisational evaluation and assessment to know where capacity building is needed to achieve more self-sustainability.’

‘It’s okay if the projects aren’t so long-lasting, but there should be partnership as well as the programme.’

‘A high staff turnover is a trend today, and it creates problems.’

‘In longstanding partnership, there may be more challenges in transparency than in other areas.’

‘Some partners in the region know a lot about each other; some know nothing at all.’

‘There should be more opportunities to cooperate with other Felm partners.’

‘Uniting partners under certain thematic themes in the region would make it possible for increased cooperation between these organisations.’

‘In advocacy work partners should be connected to different actors and create more opportunities for fundraising.’

‘There are many more threats: violence; bad governance; climate change. They all affect what we do.’

Summary of additions to SWOT from Olli Pitkänen’s group

Strengths

Long-term partnership -->commitment

Opportunities

Strengthening advocacy

Weaknesses

Political changes, local

Threats

Corruption – can be very institutionalised

Economic instability – financial support is sporadic, which compromises the work

‘How is mutual partnership seen in this analysis? What does Felm provide in terms of knowledge? Where do we complement each other?’

‘We are stronger in advocacy when we do it together.’

‘Long-term partnership – presence. Felm is a well-known partner.’

Summary of discussion and additions to SWOT in Heikki Takko’s group

‘Real support is a strength. And we need a variety of experts.’

‘It’s unclear whether these are internal (strengths/weaknesses) or external (opportunities/threats).’

‘Strengths are seen in the improved lives of people and communities.’

‘Why is the timespan of the projects short, and why does every action need to be a project?’

‘Felm isn’t always there when you need it. We especially need a local presence. It’s difficult to manage everything with emails and to tight schedules.’

‘It’s not just that politics causes conflict. There might be openings. It’s also threat to our grassroots partners when Felm has a high turnover of employees.’

‘Climate change is making the work of our partners more difficult – it should be a threat.’

Summary of discussions and additions to SWOT from Miikka Kallio’s group

Strength:

‘What does long-term mean? How long is long?’

‘Felm has been feeding the partner for a long time (like a parent feeding a baby), but the time comes when the partner grows up and no longer needs to be fed.’

‘Partnership should continue even when the ‘feeding’ – the money – stops.’

‘Long-term: At the beginning of the partnership we need to think about the time when the community is resilient enough for us to leave.’

Weaknesses:

‘A lack of resources in general – and not only human resources.’

‘A lack of mutual respect.’

‘Being inflexible can lead to a lack of mutual respect.’

Threats:

‘Poor communication is a weakness that can become a threat.’

‘Corruption is a serious threat, but what can we do as an organisation? If it’s at the top level, there isn’t much a small organisation can do. But what if the corruption happens at the grassroots level?’

‘Political or religious conflicts should include the shrinking space of civil society.’

Opportunities:

‘Capacity building? Where exactly are the lacks in capacity? Inadequate knowledge or resources? It’s an opportunity if it’s clearly defined.’

‘Shared knowhow, networking, and capacity building: all of them are very important.’

‘Would it be possible to have some exchange visits so we can learn from one another?’

‘Are there technological possibilities for sharing more? It needs to be as effective and cheap as possible, and technology could be the key.’

‘Even in one country Felm might have many different partners who don’t even work together, so we should start from there and organise meetings for different Felm partners within one country/region.’

‘“Our year in a snapshot” should be done by every partner and shared.’

‘Exchange visits should at least start within one country with Felm partners (e.g. all Botswana partners). They can then move to the regional and so on.’

‘At Felm level we should get our countrywide partners to get together and look for common ground, talk together, and bring us something you’re doing together where you push an issue like advocacy in one chosen topic. The Felm programme includes increasing south-south collaboration in disability inclusion, for example.’

‘The REVES project in West Africa is about south-south learning and sharing thematically, and capacity building. The development programme should start more of these projects in the next programme period, including advocacy, disability, and climate change themes or other common problem areas where partners in the south can learn from one another.’

‘I need to understand that my way is not the only or best way.’

‘Connecting partners: shared human resources between partners in countries where there are many Felm partners in e.g. administration, financial staff, etc. Shared resources in areas where they are scarce. South-south projects could have shared administration costs.’

Mutual respect:

‘It’s all about communication.’

‘Sitting down for genuine discussion.’

‘We have different cultures, so we have to communicate in different languages. Language is a source of power. In the old days there was a power structure between the missionaries and local workers. That no longer exists. But we need to enforce mutual respect. For example, Finns like to be direct, whereas Asians go around the topic before arriving at the point. But to achieve the same goal, we need to know how we talk, and we need to respect each other’s cultures. In Hongkong we have overcome this, but the challenge remains in many places.’

‘The power structure between the donor and receiver isn’t equality.’

‘Communication isn’t just about talking. It’s also about listening. If you don’t hear what your partner is saying but rush to speak yourself, you won’t understand.’

‘We have to get rid of the “big brother – little brother” roles. Each partner must know their role, but they need to forget about power.’

‘From the outset of a partnership we must understand our roles, which have nothing to do with superiority or inferiority. It isn’t the case that one partner is dependent on the more resourceful partner.’

‘The solution is to get it right at the start. But if it’s too late for that, we have to sit down. Partners need to be able to reach focal people when conflict or doubt arises.’

‘New Felm employees need better orientation. New missionaries need cultural education. At the same time, the partner organisation must be accountable for their actions. So, education is important for both sides.’

‘Sometimes the partnership isn’t about where you want to go together but starting from the same point and walking together.’

‘Relationship starts with the gospel – the realisation that we have the same vision. Two individuals walking in the same direction to reach the same vision.’

‘When we look back, we see that this might have not been the best possible way: the

power relationship where one is a donor and the other is a receiver isn't the perfect setting for partnership.'

'If you have a calling for the job you're doing, you will be able to "lower yourself" to the level of those who are illiterate or at the grassroots level, even if you're well educated.'
'It's more about values. If you share values, and you have them, you'll be motivated to work correctly. At the end of the day, shared values are what bring us together as partners. How have I interpreted the values of Felm and my organisation to function correctly in whatever I'm doing?'

'The core values might be the same, but we place a different emphasis on them. Could this be something for us to work on?'

Summary of discussion and additions to SWOT from Ilkka Repo's group

Strengths:

'Grassroots presence is a very important strength.'

'Neutrality is a strength to an organisation coming from Finland.'

'Knowledge of local cultures comes from a long presence in a country and with the knowledge of local situation.'

Threats:

'Is it really a threat (for Felm) if a partner suffers from corruption?'

'The number of church members is decreasing.'

Weaknesses:

'We aren't well known around the world – in MENA, for example. Felm should promote its values and history.'

Summary of discussion and additions to SWOT from Arja Koskinen's group

'Local capacity building changes the nature of the project.'

'Having an exit plan makes a difference.'

'Discussion on the length of projects and partnerships is weak. Felm isn't really doing it.'

'We should define success together.'

'The best practice isn't necessarily the best fit for all contexts and situations.'

9.8. Final SWOT with additions and symbol markings from all the groups

STRENGTHS

- Holistic approach
7 partner hearts
2 Felm hearts
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Grassroots presence
1 partner exclamation mark
3 Felm hearts
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Long-term partnership and commitment
6 partner hearts
2 partner exclamation marks
3 Felm hearts
- Knowledge of local context
1 partner heart
5 partner exclamation marks
2 Felm hearts
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Shared vision
6 partner hearts
4 Felm hearts
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Support for each other
3 partner hearts
1 partner exclamation mark
- Partnership enables both local and global advocacy
1 partner heart
- Partnership increases security
- Flexibility in peacebuilding (not in all cases)
1 partner exclamation mark
- Flexibility in funding
- Neutrality and accountability
- Mutual trust, respect, and understanding
1 partner heart
1 partner exclamation mark
- Learning and reputation
- Capacity building
1 partner heart
1 partner exclamation mark
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Diversity in partners
- Variety of expertise
- Improved lives

WEAKNESSES

- Felm has the same high (PME) requirements for all partners, with no flexibility
2 partner hearts
7 partner exclamation marks
2 partner question marks
4 Felm exclamation marks
- High turnover of staff in Felm and within partner organisation
1 partner heart
3 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm heart
3 Felm exclamation marks
- Lack of mutual respect
3 Felm exclamation marks
- Lack of human resources
1 partner heart
4 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm heart
- Short timespan of projects
3 partner hearts
2 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm heart
- Thin institutional memory
2 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm heart
2 Felm exclamation marks
- Not defining success together
2 partner hearts
1 Felm heart
- All work needs to be in projects
- Lack of Felm presence
2 partner exclamation marks

OPPORTUNITIES

- Networking of partners
6 partner hearts
4 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm heart
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Capacity building
4 partner hearts
3 partner exclamation marks
2 Felm hearts
- Utilisation of knowhow
2 partner hearts
1 Felm heart
- Improved use of Felm’s local teams
1 partner exclamation mark
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Mutual learning
5 partner hearts
3 partner exclamation marks
5 Felm hearts
- Wide area networking (WAN)
- Sharing best practice
- Exchange of skills – complementing each other
- Global networking
1 partner heart
1 Felm heart
- Good use of collected data and knowledge
- Stronger advocacy
1 partner heart
1 partner exclamation mark
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Diversity programme and projects
1 Felm heart
- Networking with likeminded organisations
2 partner exclamation marks
- Political and environmental change
1 partner heart
- Partnering with grassroots partners

THREATS

- Political and religious conflict
2 partner hearts
6 partner exclamation marks
- Shrinking space of civil society
4 partner hearts
2 partner exclamation marks
6 Felm hearts
2 Felm exclamation marks
- Poor communication
2 partner hearts
1 Felm heart
2 Felm exclamation marks
- Lessons not learned
2 partner hearts
1 partner exclamation mark
1 Felm heart
- Corruption and misuse of resources
2 partner exclamation marks
1 partner question mark
1 Felm question mark
- Lack of material resources
1 partner exclamation mark
- Climate change and natural disasters
2 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm exclamation mark
- Partnership is a threat of legitimacy
- Shortage of funding
- Economic instability
1 partner exclamation mark
- Political uncertainty
- Political changes obstacles to church
- Poor governance
1 partner exclamation mark
- Security



9.9. Strengthened Partnership 2023

The last phase of the discussion envisioned a future with strengthened partnership. The focus was to find improvements through imagining strategic decisions and actions, as well as thinking about what to reduce or cut. The exercise also tried to take a peek ‘outside the box’ – to imagine the things we will probably forget or postpone without good reason.

First, there is a summary of the discussions recorded by the groups’ secretaries. The reader will then be presented with a chart of all the ideas and votes.

The groupwork was launched with the following scenario and questions:

Use a time machine and transport yourself to 2023. Partnership between Felm and your organisation has strengthened markedly. Great! What has happened?

1. What have been the most important strategic decisions and actions partners and Felm have taken to achieve this goal?
2. What strategic decisions and actions concerning reducing or cancelling something (rather than starting something) have been the greatest relief to you in terms of this goal?
3. As always, some necessary decisions and actions have been postponed – which postponed decision or action has proved to be most problematic achieving this goal?

9.9.1 Report of discussions: Strengthened Partnership 2023

Summary of results from Miikka Kallio's group

All questions together

- Communication has greatly improved. There is regular contact with the regional coordinator and the Helsinki coordinator (even via Skype).
- Continuous learning is taking place.
- The regional staff is skilled and supportive, and continuously learning.
- We have learnt mutual respect.
- The International Advisory Board is functioning and networking.
- The International Advisory Board shares information with partners, and partners share information with it. It's very important to assure transparency and open communication both ways.

Summary of results from Olli Pitkänen's group

Question 1

- We have examined our past mistakes, identified the problems, and corrected them.
- The network has strengthened, and communication has improved.
- We have strengthened trust and commitment.
- The monitoring and evaluation has been carried out regularly.
- HR is more stable.
- We have partnership strategy development and follow-up.
- A long-term action plan has been developed and implemented.
- Sometimes Felm says they'll give you money for this project – do it. But the work they suggest is irrelevant for the community.

Question 2

- Felm has stopped proposing irrelevant things.
- The need for relevant staff is assessed regularly.
- Needs have been regularly assessed, and everything we do together is relevant.

Question 3

- What kind of things are critical and cannot be postponed?
- The exit plan needs to be there. It cannot be postponed.
- Climate change and disasters require us to have a plan to deal with uncertain situations.
- Evaluation recommendations are ignored.
- When the wrong personnel decisions are made, the work gets stuck.

Summary of results from Jan-Eerik Leppänen's group

Question 1

- Cambodian church: To be self-reliant, independent, not without partnership but in many ways more independent. The long-term goal isn't just finance, but how can we strengthen our human resources and be a bigger voice for the church?
- Zimbabwe: To be more financially independent, more established, more transformational and sustainable.
- Mauritania: If we're going to get to 2023, the most important thing is that FELM supports us more – it's crucial for us to receive strong and long-lasting aid from Felm. We need more financial resources.

Question 2

- Everyone spoke of wanting to be more independent and self-reliant, but they couldn't really see how this would work. What is the role of the partners, and what is the role of Felm? It's difficult to know the kind of help they will need in four years' time. No one knows what will happen in that time in terms of politics and peace.
- A fundraising plan should be made with a built-in partner plan for reducing funding as the project progresses.

Summary of results from Juha Lind's group

Question 1

- The knowledge of context and situations is increasing. In four years the partnership has improved because of the knowledge of the local context and communication.
- We are part of the strategic planning in the coming four years. We understand each other better.
- We do the strategy together.
- There are many things on the other sheet – capacity building, for example.
- Is the reduction of missionaries a good or a bad thing? (Asked by Felm)
- It's not only about the numbers but the missionaries. In Latin America we need more people – we serve an extensive area. We need more people working together.
- Critical mass: you need a critical mass, without it being too much (Felm).
- What do you need more from Felm?
- There are several projects to cater for. There aren't enough resources for monitoring, capacity building, etc. We need to be together more.
- If we just upgraded our contracts under Felm, it would be more sustainable, and the staff would stay in the projects. People keep leaving for better jobs. Why would they leave if the working conditions were good? We need permanent positions and salaries.
- It's too expensive to have a lot of people working in projects.
- These people are leaving because we do not have good standards (short-term contracts).

- There could be more networking. We could build networks with partners with similar interests – in peace and reconciliation, for example. We should have thematic partner networks.
- Felm's role here is to join partners together.
- We should have a dialogue and look for the possibilities of sharing.
- Why don't we assess our programmes in terms of weaknesses, then do strategic planning to do things better?
- We're doing this already. We have a strategic plan with Felm and other partners.

Question 2

- Not cancelling but modifying.
- I would modify the reporting, decrease the paperwork, and increase the field visits. We do a lot of reporting with nobody coming to see the work. There should be some kind of written report – but increase the visits and reduce the reporting.
- We can review together the type of reports we need. We can try to work together.
- How does this improve our partnership?
- Reporting is very important, but visits aren't enough. They'd know more if they visited. The regional director only comes for events.

Question 3

- Expanding the project, e.g. adding something to the project? Would that be problematic? Felm may not like new projects, and the partners are more burdened by a new project.
- This partner is postponing the question because we're not sure if a new project proposal will burden Felm or not.
- Why are you postponing it? Just submit a proposal. (Another partner)
- I wanted to expand one project a little, but they deducted from another. That's what happened last time.
- Maybe Felm is postponing taking new projects until they know what the new strategy will be.
- Dealing with negative changes is sometimes postponed.

Summary of results from Ilkka Repo's group

Question 1

- MECC: Project partnership is a new thing, even though Felm and MECC have been partners before. Of the four themes – peacebuilding, climate change, theology, and diakonia – Felm could help with capacity building and knowledge sharing. For example, sharing experiences on fundraising from the private sector would be beneficial. Felm should also listen to the experiences of the churches of MECC.
- This kind of partnership consultation is important. It builds mutual trust and communication. Prayer is important.
- Creativity in development work is important. For example, it is important to

hear from the partners in fundraising. Advocacy is important, so that we can address the root causes of problems.

- Nepal: Felm could expand the horizon to more holistic work. For example, there could be education, climate change, or disability work. Could one partner have more different types of projects and not just one type?

Question 2

- It's difficult to think about what could be reduced. It's easier to consider what could be done differently or ways of improving things.
- Felm should think about how it could benefit from its different partnerships. What can the partners do to support Felm? For example, MECC enjoys a good relationship with Janetta Vettenranta, and they really want to help Janetta as well -> real partnership.
- We need longer collaborations, not just short projects.
- LWF: we need more global advocacy together so that partners can be heard at the national and global levels.

Question 3

- The question is too unclear and difficult.
- Advocacy, equality issues, climate change.

Summary of results from Arja Koskinen's group

All questions together

- Agility has increased, and efficient processes attract resources.
- Networking: partners have better communication and networking.
- Thematic sharing across boundaries, opening multilateral partnerships.
- Multi-stakeholder partnership (businesses, universities, church donors, MFA).
- Better knowledge management and sharing improves institutional memory and the implementation of lessons learnt.
- Localisation: more local staff and working from a distance.
- Mutual learning and capacity building of both sides of the partnership.

Note: There are no notes concerning this discussion from Heikki Takko's or Pekka Härkönen's groups. However, these groups wrote their thoughts on the paper and voted, so their opinions are recorded below.

9.10. Strengthened Partnership 2023 – Table of all the results

After the discussions the groups wrote their suggestions for each question category on the Partnership wall. The consultation participants were then able to vote with symbols. The results are below.

What have been the most important strategic decisions and actions partners and Felm have taken to achieve this goal?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More localisation of Felm’s work: local workers and workers from a distance
1 Felm heart
1 Felm exclamation mark • Project visits have been increased
1 partner exclamation mark • Felm’s presence is stronger in the target countries
2 partner hearts
2 partner exclamation marks • More Felm people to work with partners in the local context
1 Felm heart
1 partner heart
1 stakeholder heart • More diversity in projects according to local needs
2 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm exclamation mark • Recognition of poor infrastructure resulting in IT problems, electricity etc...) • Using the opportunities we already have but aren’t using
2 partner hearts
1 partner exclamation mark
2 Felm exclamation marks • Felm is sensitive to the local context and needs (requires flexibility)
2 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm heart • Monitoring and evaluation has been carried out regularly
1 partner heart
2 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm exclamation mark • Constant assessment of needs and relevance of projects
6 partner hearts
3 Felm hearts • Longer-term (>5 years) projects and workers
1 partner heart • Trust and commitment has been strengthened
1 partner heart
1 partner exclamation mark
1 Felm heart
1 stakeholder heart • More stable HR
1 partner heart • The need for relevant staff assessed regularly
3 partner hearts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good knowledge of RBM systems and good motivation to use them • Stronger capacity of partner through Felm’s organised training • Increased training in fundraising for partners – leading to stronger self-sustainability
1 Felm heart • Continuous support from Felm (non-divorce principle) • Increased cooperation with private sectors, CSR projects • Mutual understanding of each other’s vision and mission strengthened – common areas and possible projects identified
2 partner hearts
2 partner exclamation marks • Mutual learning and trust level has improved
3 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm exclamation mark
1 Board member exclamation mark
1 stakeholder exclamation mark • We have learned to continuously learn from each other
1 partner heart
6 partner exclamation marks
1 Felm heart
1 Felm exclamation mark
1 stakeholder heart • The regional staff members have remained skilled, supportive, and beautiful :)
6 partner hearts
1 Felm heart • We have learned mutual respect
2 partner hearts
2 Felm hearts
1 stakeholder exclamation mark • Better knowledge of management and sharing resulting in better institutional memory and implementation of lessons learned.
3 Felm exclamation marks • Mutual learning and capacity building has improved and strengthened
2 partner hearts
2 partner exclamation marks
3 Felm exclamation marks • The partner organisation has developed through good management and governance
2 partner exclamation marks • Capacity of partners is where we want it to be
7 partner exclamation marks |
|--|--|

FELM – TOWARDS A SHARED VISION

<p>What strategic decisions and actions concerning reducing or cancelling something (rather than starting something) have been the greatest relief to you in terms of this goal?</p>	<p>As always, some necessary decisions and actions have been postponed – which postponed decision or action has proved to be most problematic in terms of achieving this goal?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PME – paperwork has been reduced 1 Felm heart ● Analyse together the data we really need (reduce) 2 partner hearts 1 Felm heart ● Felm has stopped inventing their projects for partners 3 partner hearts 2 partner exclamation marks 5 partner question marks 3 Felm question marks 1 stakeholder exclamation mark ● Partners don't propose unnecessary projects 4 partner question marks 1 Felm question mark ● Prioritising long-term partnerships to create global collaborations and advocacy 5 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark 2 Felm hearts 3 Felm exclamation marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bad exit strategies still exist 2 partner hearts 1 partner exclamation mark ● We did not follow our agreements ● Evaluation recommendations were ignored ● Wrong persons in place – don't know their work 1 partner exclamation mark ● No plan to deal with uncertain situation (caused by climate change etc...) ● Communication and dealing with changes of plans 2 partner hearts 2 partner exclamation marks

Appendix 10: Documents related to the consultation

10.1. List of all the consultation's participants

Country/ Region	Given name	Surname	Email	Organisation
Tanzania	Happiness	Gefi		General Secretary, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, South East of Lake Victoria Diocese
Botswana	Lorato	Moalusi	lrmoalusi@gmail.com	Chief Executive Officer, Kagisano Society Women's Shelter (KSWs)
Zimbabwe	Kenneth	Mtata	kmtata@zcc-eco.org	General Secretary, Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC)
South Africa	Florence Bongwiwe	Zuma	bongi.zuma@yahoo.com	Senior Advocacy Officer, Acting Managing Director, CBR Education and Training for Empowerment (CREATE)
Angola	Tomas	Ndawanapo	presidencia4@yahoo.com.br	Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Angola
Angola	Cipriana	Vilombo	ciprianiombo@gmail.com	Lubango Orphanage, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Angola
Namibia	David	lileka	diileka@yahoo.com	Finance, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Namibia
Namibia	Alina Yaloo Ndjam-beka	Seolwane	jmpadhi84@gmail.com	Department of Mission, Diakonia and Social Services, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Namibia
Senegal	Adama	Faye	pierread1@hotmail.com	President, Lutheran Church of Senegal
Mauritania	Mariem	M'Bareck	Marieme.Ahmed@lutheran-world.org	LWF Department for World Service (DWS) programme in Mauritania
Ethiopia	Tirunesh Mekonnen	Erena	trumoke@gmail.com	Vice Chairperson of the Board of Women's Ministry EECMY
Laos	Vongmany	Vongphachanh	vongmany.vongphachanh@lutheranworld.org	Programme Manager, Lutheran World Federation, Department for World Service, LAO Programme
Nepal	Surendra	Shrestha	s.shrestha@sahasnepal.org.np	Executive Director, SAHAS
	Dhana	Lama	dhana.lama@umn.org.np	Programme Director, United Mission to Nepal (UMN)
Pakistan	Jennifer	Jag Jivan	jenny_jivan@yahoo.com	Director, Christian Study Centre
Myanmar	Thuzar	Thant	thuzarthant@gmail.com	Euro-Burma Office
Cambodia	Chamreun	Yaim	chamreun@first-step-cambodia.org	Executive Director, First Step
	Daniel	Orn	orndaniel@gmail.com	Pastor, Lutheran Church in Cambodia (LCC)
	Channlyda	Ry	ry.channlyda@gmail.com	Accounting and Admin Officer, Continuing Learning Organisation (CLO)
Thailand	Amnuay	Yodwong	yodwong@gmail.com	Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thailand
China	Hongyu	She	shehongyu@amity.org.cn	Deputy General Secretary, Amity Foundation

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Country/ Region	Given name	Surname	Email	Organisation
Hongkong R.O.C	Simon	Chow	president@lts.edu	President, Lutheran Theological Seminary
Taiwan R.O.C.	Erwin	Chen	erwinc@mail2.cls.org.tw	Academic Dean, China Lutheran Seminary
Colombia	Atahualpa	Hernández	obispopresidente@ielco.org	Bishop President, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia
	John	Hernández	jhernandez@ielco.org	Pastor, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia
Bolivia	Emilio	Aslla Flores	eaf2000@hotmail.es	Bishop President, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bolivia
Middle East	Georgette	Rabadi	grabadi_22@yahoo.com	Principal, Evangelical Lutheran School in Beit Sahour, Palestine
	Mahmoud	Ramadan	mahmoud.ramadan@play-makers.be	Common Space Initiative
	Samer	Laham	samer.laham@mecc.org	Ecumenical Relief Service Regional Director, Middle East Council of Churches
France	Prisca	Higuera Cornieles	adpm@association-marhaban.org	Association diaconale protestante Marhaban
LWF	Ojot	Miru Ojulu	Ojot.Ojulu@lutheranworld.org	Assistant General Secretary for International Affairs and Human Rights, Lutheran World Federation
Felm	Matti	Repo	matti.repo@evl.fi	Felm Board
Felm	Jukka	Hautala	jukka.hautala@rko.fi	Felm Board
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Felm	Mirja	Niemi	mirjaliisaniemi@gmail.com	Felm Board
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Felm	Rolf	Steffansson	rolf.steffansson@felm.org	Executive Director
Felm	Tarja	Larmasuo	tarja.larmasuo@felm.org	Director, Department for Administration and Personnel
Felm	Satu	Kantola	satu.kantola@felm.org	Director, Department for Parish Relations
Felm	Juha	Savela	juha.savela@felm.org	Director, Finance Department
Felm	Tero	Norjanen	tero.norjanen@felm.org	Director, International Cooperation
Felm	Christine	Stukaloff	christine.stukaloff@felm.org	Deputy Director, International Cooperation
Felm	Tero	Massa	tero.massa@felm.org	Advisor, International Cooperation
Felm	Nea-Mari	Heinonen	nea-mari.heinonen@felm.org	Senior Advisor, PME
Felm	Karoliina	Tuukkanen	karoliina.tuukkanen@felm.org	Director, Development Finance
Felm	Saara	Karppinen	saara.karppinen@felm.org	Executive Assistant, International Cooperation
Felm	Pia	Kummel-Myrskog	pia.kummel-myrskog@felm.org	Director, Church Cooperation
Felm	Leena	Luukkonen	leena.luukkonen@felm.org	Manager, Church Cooperation
Felm	Leena	Helle	leena.helle@felm.org	Regional Manager, Church Cooperation
Felm	Elisa	Nousiainen	elisa.nousiainen@felm.org	Manager, Church Cooperation

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Country/ Region	Given name	Surname	Email	Organisation
Felm	Lotta	Gammelin	lotta.gammelin@felm.org	Manager, Church Cooperation
Felm	Katri	Leino-Nzau	katri.leino-nzau@felm.org	Director, Development Cooperation
Felm	Miia	Barrow	miia.barrow@felm.org	Manager, Emergency Relief
Felm	Ruusa	Gawaza	ruusa.gawaza@felm.org	Project Manager, Development Cooperation
Felm	Roosa	Rantala	roosa.rantala@felm.org	Manager, Development Cooperation
Felm	Leena	Korpivaara	leena.korpivaara@felm.org	Manager, Development Cooperation
Felm	Kristiina	Rintakoski	kristiina.rintakoski@felm.org	Director, Peacebuilding and Advocacy
Felm	Niko	Humalisto	niko.humalisto@felm.org	Advisor, Economic Justice
Felm	Tanja	Viikki	tanja.viikki@felm.org	Senior Advisor, Peace and Reconciliation
Felm	Riina	Isotalo	riina.isotalo@felm.org	Senior Advisor, Syria Initiative
Felm	Jarkko-Pekka	Kärkkäinen	jarkko-pekka.karkkainen@felm.org	Advisor, Human Rights
Felm	Pekka	Härkönen	pekka.harkonen@felm.org	Regional Director
Felm	Miikka	Kallio	miikka.kallio@felm.org	Regional Director
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Felm	Hanna	Hokka	hanna.hokka@felm.org	Manager, Marketing and Fund-raising
Felm	Katariina	Kiilunen	katariina.kiilunen@felm.org	Manager, Parish Relations
Felm	Katja	Tynkkynen	katja.tynkkynen@felm.org	Coordinator, Department for Parish Relations
Finland	Jaakko	Rusama	jaakko.rusama@evl.fi	Director, Global Mission, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Finland	Jukka	Kääriäinen	jukka.kaariainen@evl.fi	Mission theologian, Global Mission, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Finland	Elina	Hellqvist	elina.hellqvist@evl.fi	Advisor, Global Mission, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Finland	Timo	Frilander	timo.frilander@evl.fi	Advisor, International work, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Finland	Matti	Laurila	matti.laurila@evl.fi	Advisor, International work, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Finland	Anna	Väätäinen	anna.vaatainen@evl.fi	Advisor, International work, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Finland	Jukka	Jämsén	jukka.jamsen@evl.fi	Advisor, International work, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland

10.2. Consultation programme

Programme for the Partners' Consultation, 14–17 May 2019

Venue: Vesala Course Centre, Jyväskylä

Tuesday 14 May	
Noon–16:00 Arrival	Transport from Helsinki Airport and Felm head office to the Vesala course centre Welcome and Registration Accommodation
17:00	Dinner
18:00	Opening Service Rev. Rolf Steffansson, Rev. Satu Kantola
19:00	Getting to know each other better!
20:30–22:00	Sauna @Vesala Spa and evening snack

Wednesday 15 May	
7:00–8:30 (8:00–8:15)	Breakfast Morning Prayer (optional)
8:30–10:30 Shared Vision	Committed plan to strengthen our partnership towards realising a shared vision, by Director of International Cooperation, Mr Tero Norjanen Our Shared Vision – who are we? Partners introduce their organisation and their vision
10:30–10:45	Coffee and Tea
10:45–12:15 Our World	Operational environment – what kind of challenges are we facing? Representative from LWF Groupwork What kind of impact do the global changes have on our environment?
12:15–13:15	Lunch
13.15–14:30 Our Mission I: Themes of Hope	Themes of Hope – Part II: working in groups Participants work in groups according to the sent invitation
14:30 – 15:30	Coffee and Tea Partners Choir and House Band "Pitkänen & Hoppers" rehearsal
15:30 – 17:30 Our Mission II 'Bridge of Hope'	Themes of Hope – Part II: working in groups Participants work in groups according to the sent invitation
17:30–18:30	Dinner
18:30	Outdoor activities, enjoying a spring evening by the fire Service outdoors
21:00–23:00	Sauna @Vesala Spa and evening snack

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Thursday 16 May	
7:00–8:30 (8:00–8:15)	Breakfast Morning Prayer (optional)
8:30–9:30 Our Mission II – 'Bridge of Hope' continues	Themes of Hope – Part II: working in groups continues until finished
9:30–12:00	Discussion and reflection on the 'Bridge of Hope' findings
12:00–13:00	Lunch
13:00–14:15 Felm and fundraising from the Finnish perspective	Summary on the Bridge of Hope – groupwork (15 mins) Felm's work in Finland – Deputy Executive Director, Rev. Satu Kantola What is Felm? How does it raise its funds? International Fundraising by Manager of International Finance, Karoliina Tuukkanen
14:15–14:30	Coffee and Tea
14:30–16:30 Our Partnership	Partnership – groupwork 1: What does partnership mean? Partnership – groupwork 2: Status of Our Partnership Partnership – groupwork 2: Developing Partnership Group discussions led by Regional Directors
16:30–17:30	Reflections on the partnership groupwork
17:30–18:30	Dinner
19:00–19:30	Service
20:00–21:00 Stories of Hope	Event: 160 Stories of Hope, Playback Theatre

Friday 17 May	
7:00–8:30	Breakfast Morning Prayer (optional)
8:30–11:30 The way forward – what are we packing in our bags?	Felm and Partner Consultative Board – Executive Director, Rev. Rolf Steffansson The consultation report Our committed plan for realising our shared vision Conclusions – Mr Tero Norjanen
11:30–12:00 Packing	Pack your bags!
12:00–13:00	Lunch and farewell coffee and tea
13:00	Video interviews with selected partners Transportation to the Mission Festival

10.3. Example of Partnership Consultation passport

FELM PARTNERSHIP CONSULTATION

14-17.5.2019

Jyväskylä, Vesala, Finland

CONSULTATION PASSPORT FOR PARTNERS

Name of the passport holder

We wish you a warm welcome to the Felm partnership consultation!



Your presence and input at the consultation are highly valued and appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation!

More than 100 people will participate in the consultation. We encourage open discussion, but it's impossible for everyone to comment on every discussion out loud.

This passport is a tool to lead you more deeply into the consultation discussion. It will help you reflect and comment on each session. It is an exercise booklet, with individual questions intended only for you as a Felm partner. All participant groups have different passports with different questions: it is not intended that you share your passport questions or content with other participant groups.

It's unnecessary to read the passport before every session: instructions on how to use the passport will be given during every working session.

Most pages will stay with you, but there are a few pages intended to be cut out for further processing in Felm (the pages with the scissors symbol). Please write clearly.

During the consultation we hope you won't use your laptop or phone, but use the passport to make notes. This is to ensure a peaceful and focused atmosphere in the working sessions. Thank you for respecting this rule!

We wish you a fruitful and blessed consultation in Vesala!

Tuesday 14 May

Working session 1:

19:00	Getting to know each other better!
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Passport question:

What are your expectations of the Felm Partnership Consultation?

Wednesday 15 May

Working Session 2–3:

8:30–10:30 Shared Vision	A committed plan to strengthen our partnership towards realising a shared vision – Director of International Cooperation, Mr Tero Norjanen Our Shared Vision – who are we? Partners introduce their organisation and their vision
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Passport question A:

How would you summarise the vision of your organisation?

What are the other three things you wish to tell the other consultation participants about your organisation?

You can use this paper to draft your presentation for a flip chart paper to be presented to all the consultation participants. Please note that you are free to use drawings or symbols in your presentation.

Passport Question B:

Which vision caught your attention? Whom would you like to meet or network with and why?

Working Session 4:

<p>10:45–12:15 Our World</p>	<p>Operational environment – what kind of challenges are we facing? Representative from LWF Groupwork What kind of impact do the global changes have on our environment?</p>
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For your notes:

Working Session 5:

<p>13.15–14:30 Our Mission I: Themes of Hope</p>	<p>Themes of Hope discussion – Part I: Plenary session Directors of Felm’s international departments Keynotes from partners Themes of Hope 1–4</p>
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Passport Question:

What does Felm as an organisation look like to you? Is there anything surprising or anything you’d like to clarify? How do you feel about Felm’s strategic categorisation of four Themes of Hope?

Working Session 6:

15:30–17:30 Our Mission II 'Bridge of Hope'	Themes of Hope – Part II: working in groups Participants work in groups according to the sent invitation
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For your notes:

Thursday 16 May

Working session 7:

8:30–9:30 Our Mission II – 'Bridge of Hope' continues	Themes of Hope – Part II: working in groups continues until finished
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For your notes:

Working Session 8:

9:30–12:00	Discussion and reflection on the ‘Bridge of Hope’ findings
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Passport Question:

How did you feel about the ‘Bridge of Hope’ working session and discussion?
What was missing, and what did you appreciate? What else would you like to say to Felm?

When you’ve answered the question, please go back to your answer for Working Sessions 2–3, Passport Question B. During the free-time network with the organisation whose vision you found interesting.

Working Session 9:

13:00–14:15 Felm from the Finnish and fundraising perspective	Summary of the Bridge of Hope – groupwork (15 mins) Felm’s work in Finland – Deputy Executive Director, Rev. Satu Kantola What is Felm? How does it raise its funds? International Fundraising – Manager of International Finance, Karoliina Tuukkanen
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Passport Question:

What kind of fundraising initiatives or ideas could be beneficial for you and your cooperation with Felm?

Working Session 10:

14:30–16:30 Our Partnership	Partnership – groupwork 1: What does partnership really mean in practice? Partnership – groupwork 2: Developing Partnership Group discussions led by Regional Directors
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Passport Question:

For your notes:

Working Session 11

16:30–17:30	Reflections on the partnership groupwork
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For your notes:

10.4. Felm Strategy – Roadmap of Hope and the Themes of Hope with Goals for International Cooperation



The Vision: For the kingdom of God is ... righteousness

Theme of Hope 1:

We witness to God's boundary-crossing love. With our partners we boldly cross the geographical, cultural and social boundaries to witness to God's love in words and deeds.

Theme of Hope 2:

We defend the dignity and human rights of the marginalised. With our partners we work to strengthen the position and human rights of discriminated groups.

Goal for International Cooperation 1: Those who Have Not Yet Heard the Gospel Have Been Touched by Gods' All-Encompassing Love.

Goal for International Cooperation 2: Congregations Serve as an Open Community and Cross All the Boundaries as Part of the Global Church.

Goal for International Cooperation 3: Women and girls facing gender discrimination identify and grasp new opportunities.

Goal for International Cooperation 4: Persons with Disabilities Become Self-reliant and Live in an Accessible Environment as Part of Society.

Goal for International Cooperation 5: Minorities Live in Accordance with their Cultural Identity and Lifestyle in Interaction with and as Part of Society.

Goal for International Cooperation 6: The Exploited Recover and Are Empowered to Make Decisions about Their Own Lives as Part of Society.

and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit

Goal for International Cooperation 7: Children and Young People at the Risk of Marginalisation Learn Life Skills Needed for a Responsible Adulthood.

Goal for International Cooperation 8: Political and Financial Duty-Bearers Become Aware of the Shortfalls in the Realization of Human Rights and Take Action as Change Agents.

Goal for International Cooperation 9: Leaders of Civil Society Actively Advocate for the Rights of the Discriminated.

Goal for International Cooperation 10: Partner Churches and Organisations Operate Professionally and in Accordance with Good Governance.

Goal for International Cooperation 11: Conflict Parties Trust Each Other and Work Together for Joint Solutions.

Goal for International Cooperation 12: Peace Builders Ensure the Participation of Key Stakeholders, Especially that of Women, to Conflict Resolution.

Theme of Hope 3:
We strive for a more just world. With our partners we fight for economic and social justice.

Theme of Hope 4:
We build peace and reconciliation. With our partners we contribute to peace and reconciliation in local communities and societies.

**”For the Kingdom of God
is righteousness and peace and joy
in the Holy Spirit”**

