

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
Christian Family Life Education Program (FLEP)
SUMMARY OF FLEP REPORT 2002

Christian Family Life Education Program (FLEP)

In the growing Mekane Yesus Church many people have family related questions, some even acute problems. But many church workers do not have either the knowledge or experience in Family Ministry to help those members.

The EECMY started in the year 2000 a program in order to strengthen Family Ministry. The Advisors of the Program have been Sr. Anna-Kaarina and Rev. Matti Palmu. They are sent by the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), which also has granted the FLEP Budget (ETB 120.000 for 2002).

The Program is for the time being under the framework of the Hossana Mekane Yesus Seminary (HMYS). According to the original plan the Program will be transferred to the EECMY Gospel Ministry Department.

The first three years of function have clearly shown that there is a big need for teaching and training additional teachers for various fields of Family Ministry on different levels of Church work.

Training of Trainers (TOT)

The crucial question concerning this Program is the one of sustainability. In the long run this kind of work cannot be run only by Central Office or by foreign missionaries. The program must be integrated into ordinary church activities on all levels of the church.

Year 2002 was a milestone for FLEP Program. The 1st Training of Trainers' Course (TOT) for Family Ministry was held in Hossana in April. God willing two more TOT's will be held during 2003. The local instructors in all Church Units either take the responsibility of the Family Ministry - or the Program will prove to have been a needed, but temporary feature in this church!

Other Trainings

There have been three other kinds of Courses during the year: A) The FLEP Advisors have taught courses in Theological institutions of the Church: ONS (Onesimos Nesib Seminary, Aira) and MYTS (Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary, Addis Abeba). The starting point has been the Christian understanding of Marriage and Family life. The students have been encouraged to serve also as Marriage Counsellors in their future service. B) There have been "Basic Marriage Courses" in six Synods / Work Areas. These courses have been for couples only. The emphasis has been on Marriage Enrichment, helping couples in their own family life. But the participants have also been encouraged to teach similar issues in their work / home areas. C) There was also a course on Family Ministry for EECMY Aira Nursing School students.

During the year altogether 120 couples attended the Basic Marriage Courses. The total number of participants of 11 different courses was 310.

The following were the different FLEP courses during the year 2002:

| Num- ber of cour- ses | Synod, School etc | Place | Date | Days of the Week | Type of Course | Coup- les / Per- sons | Oth. par- tici- pants | TOTAL par- tici- pants |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | SCS, SWS, SCES, SS, SEAW, WWBS | Hossana, Community Health Center | April 15-26 | Tue- Sat; Mon- Fri | The 1st Training of Trainers' Course (TOT) for Family Ministry | 8 / 16 | 3 | 19 |
| 2 | BDS | Aira Nursing School | May 13, 24; two days, 16 periods | Mon & Fri | Intensive Course on Family Ministry at EECMY Aira Nursing School (ANS) (upgrading students, dressers to be nurses) | | 24 | 24 |
| 3 | BDS | Aira | May 14-17 | Tue- Fri | Marriage Course for Church Workers and their wives (15) | 19 / 38 | | 38 |
| 4 | ONS | Aira, ONS Seminary | May 20-23 | Mon- Thu | Special Course on Marriage / Family Ministry at the Onesimos Nesib Seminary (ONS), Diploma Classes, 1st and 2nd year | | 23 | 23 |
| 5 | ONS | Aira, ONS Seminary | May 21, 23, 5 periods | Tue, Thu | Teaching on Marriage and Family Life at the Onesimos Nesib Seminary (ONS), Diploma Students with their wives | 5 / 10 | | 10 |
| 6 | CES | Woliso | Sep 16-20 | Tue- Fri | Marriage Course for Church Workers and their wives (16) | 19 / 38 | | 38 |
| 7 | MYTS | Addis Abeba | Sep 30 - Oct 4 25 periods | Mon- Fri | Intensive Course on Family Ministry (as part of Pastoral Care III Course) for 4th year Degree Students; Participants: 16+3 students and the Seminary Chaplain | | 20 | 20 |
| 8 | CGS | Ijaji | Oct 15-18 | Tue- Fri | Marriage Course for Church Workers and their wives (17) | 20 / 40 | | 40 |
| 9 | WS | Bodji | Nov 5-8 | Tue- Fri | Marriage Course for Church Workers and their wives (18) | 18 / 36 | | 36 |
| 10 | GJS | Gimbi | Nov 12-15 | Tue- Fri | Marriage Course for Church Workers and their wives (19) | 16 / 32 | | 32 |
| 11 | BGAW | Begi | Dec 10-13 | Tue- Fri | Marriage Course for Church Workers and their wives (20) <i>(estimated participants:)</i> | 15 / 30 | | 30 |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF COUPLES / PARTICIPANTS DURING THE YEAR 2002 | | | | | | 120 / 240 | 70 | 310 |

TOTALS OF 2000-2002

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|--------------|
| (2000) 17 courses | | | | | COUPLES / PARTICIPANTS 2000 | 97 / 194 | 191 | 385 |
| (2001) 15 courses | | | | | COUPLES / PARTICIPANTS 2001 | 157 / 314 | 107 | 421 |
| (2002) 11 courses | | | | | COUPLES / PARTICIPANTS 2002 <i>(estimation, full year)</i> | 120 / 240 | 70 | 310 |
| TOTAL 43 COURSES | TOTAL PARTICIPANTS IN 3 YEARS: | | | TOTAL NUMBER OF COUPLES / PARTICIPANTS DURING 2000, 2001, 2002 | | 374 / 748 | 368 | 1.116 |

The Trainers' Handbook

The first Draft of "Handbook for Family Ministry" was finalized before the 1st TOT in April. It includes teaching aid for 17 lessons and 11 Bible Studies, consisting altogether 92 pages plus 27 pages of Appendices.

The FLEP activities expanding in different directions

The FLEP Advisors have taught the Basic Marriage Course in all 17 Synods. The people trained through TOT have taught in five different Synods or Working Area. This is the very positive sign of Family Ministry being expanded in the Church by the local responsible teachers.

Future Family Ministry within EECMY

The feedback from the Synods and Theological Institutions concerning the FLEP Activities has been very positive and encouraging. There is a great need for focusing in Family Ministry in EECMY.

The plan is to expand soon the Training of Trainers' Courses. This seems to be the only way to fulfil the tremendous challenge in strengthening the Family Ministry of the Church. Through this Ministry we are also improving the status of women and their service in our Church, and supporting the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Ethiopia.

Respectfully submitted, November 26, 2002

Sr. Anna-Kaarina Palmu
FLEP Advisor

Rev. Matti Palmu
FLEP Advisor



(Left:
The participants of the 1st FLEP
Training of Trainers' (TOT)
in Hossana, April 2002)

(Right:
Couple Discussion
during Basic Marriage Course
in Gimbi, November 2002)

