

Business trip to Peru and Bolivia – 05. - 25. July 2013

1. Introduction

As usual I went on this trip together with Arturo Köbernck, EBM Representative for the Spanish speaking countries in Latin America. Once again we felt overjoyed after talking to our missionaries, meeting the quetchua-churches and seeing what God has been doing there. It is always wonderful to see that Jesus is building and strengthening his church in all nations, cultures and realities. Whether poor or rich, with or without education, with more or less resources - he uses his people to proclaim the gospel of salvation of mankind in word and deed. During the first two days of the trip I met our regional representatives Airton Nickel and Arturo Köbernck for a Latin-America team meeting in Foz do Iguaçu, Brasil. There we worked on the strategy "EBM MASA 2020" and finished putting it together. Now it will be carefully examined by our partners in the countries as well as our executive.

2. Peru

The first part of the trip was **Jimbe and region**. Once again a missionary conference with our brothers and sisters from Jimbe and another seven villages took place. Last year the missionary work was present in the small town of Jimbe and another four villages. In one year EBM MASA missionary Hugo Mondoñedo started a mission in three new locations.

About 150 people came together for the conference in Jimbe. There was much singing, the Word was preached, seven people were baptized, children were blessed, and there was much and good companionship.

Three years ago we motivated Hugo to arrange such meetings in order to reinforce the awareness of the small groups of believers in the often remote villages, which are located up to an altitude of 4,000 m, that they are "one" church in that region, that they are a big group, and



that together they can be strong. In the beginning we gave Hugo and his young team advice in this matter, but now they do it nearly on their own and they are doing a great job. The people from the missions in that region now already count on this celebration every year, which now has a major significance for them. We are overjoyed with the development of the work here and are very grateful to God for Hugo and Carlota Mondoñedo, who do their ministry with much love and passion.

In the days before and after this conference we had many meetings. One of them was with Patricia Canessa in Chimbote. She is our financial administrator for the projects in Peru. The other one was with the leaders of the regional Baptist Association of the north of Peru, in **Trujillo**. The last mentioned meeting was also attended by the EBM MASA missionaries Hugo and Carlota Mondoñedo, Silvia Azabache and Santos Domingues, from **Otuzco**, as well as



Patricia Canessa. Results of the projects were evaluated, decisions were made for practical and necessary actions, and goals and strategic ways were discussed for the future. One example for that is the decision to evaluate until the end of 2013 the possibility of initiating a missionary church-planting work in Chimbote itself. The goal is for it to become a strong church, with the function as mother-church for all the missionary projects in this region, which is a great necessity. Chimbote has about 350,000 inhabitants and no Baptist church. There used to be one, but

went into a Pentecostal direction years ago. We took this challenge to the leaders of the regional association. They are excited about it and share this vision with us. After the evaluation we want to decide together, if and how this project can be started.

Andreas and Isabele Griesser, together with their daughter Esmeralda, came along with us on this part of the trip, as well as to the missionary celebration in Jimbe. They are Swiss Baptists and have a social missionary project in Juanjuy. Their intention is to train people from the congregations in the work with children and youth. I have been in contact with them for several years now. I invited them to accompany us on this trip to support them in getting better relations with the Baptists in Peru. **One purpose was** for the leadership of the Baptists to get to know their work, and **the other**, to promote the exchange and the good use of their offer. We spent much time together, had many conversations with them and hope that good initiatives for the missionary work in Peru might originate out of this.



From Trujillo we went on to Lima and then to Cuzco. Here the EBM MASA-missionary Adrian Campero was already expecting us. First we spent many hours talking with him. These conversations did not only comprise of the evaluation of the missionary work in the regions of Apurimac and Cuzco (in which are most of the missionary projects supported by EBM MASA) and preparation for the several meetings and services on the following days. For us the missionary himself is of primary importance. His physical, emotional and spiritual health, his struggles, his worries, his achievements and failures and what moves and affects him.

We were able to listen to each other for a long time and pray for each other. Adrian's health is not very good. He is receiving medical treatment and we hope that God touches him, so that he soon recovers completely.



For the church-planting project in **Curahasi** we had to make an important and somewhat difficult decision. We asked the missionary Tomas Chaparro to end his responsibility for this project. For over three years we have been investing much in him through advice, training and supervision for this task. It is of great importance to us to give co-workers all possible opportunities to develop positively. He has made some progress, which however was not sufficient compared to the challenges the missionary work needs to face in this place. Tomas will be backed up in the next months and will be offered advice, so that he can orientate himself towards a new ministry. This decision was made together with Adrian, the leaders of the regional convention for the missionary work among the Quechuas and the church leadership of Curahuasi. We are hopeful and optimistic that this decision will help the mission as well as Tomas to move forward positively. Adrian Campero is going to assume direct responsibility for this church-planting project on an interim basis until a new missionary is appointed.

Another important decision we had to make for Curahuasi was to build a simple building on the bought property up to the end of the year, where the church can celebrate their services and events. About a year ago the property was completely walled off for safety. We hope and pray that churches may support us also in these new challenges (a new missionary and the chapel) through prayer and donations. The church has about 40 members, but most of them are very poor.

For June 2014 we are planning an educational/missionary trip to Peru. Cuzco/Apurimac is going to be the most significant region of this trip. We spent a whole day planning the many details. I am sure it will be a very exciting trip. At the end of the tour we will join a missionary conference in Concacha, in which most likely more than 1000 people will participate. Those interested can already start exercising in order to join the Bible-Race on an altitude of 4,000m. Another challenge will be not only to visit the Puente del Inca but to cross it.



"The last stop on our trip on Peru was in Yanaoca and its Region. The EBM MASA-missionaries Modesto and Lourdes Puñal were fully engaged in the organization and realization of two major

events: the first one was a mission conference with our brothers and sisters of Winchiri and of the missionary work of another three villages. The time we could spend with our brothers and sisters on that Friday deeply touched me. They are very poor families, who walk many kilometers to be there, **but/and** who stand with much love and passion for their Lord Jesus Christ and his church. They are God's people, who take the gospel to the people in these mountains and valleys in word and deed, and cannot be stopped/held up/hindered by their own needs or limitations!"



The second event was the celebration of a joint service on Saturday morning in Yanaoca. About 60 people gathered from eight missionary works/projects. There was much singing, the Word was preached, testimonies were given. The closure was as usual a joint lunch. We give glory to God for the progress of the missionary works in this region. Modesto Puñal is doing a highly constructive work, always in agreement with Adrian Campero and with much commitment and own initiative.



In Yanaoca there is a chapel being built now. The walls are already standing and in a few months the building should have a roof, doors and windows. Additionally a kitchen and a few rooms are going to be built, so that the trainings for the missionaries and co-workers from that region can take place.

When we took the flight from Cuzco to Lima and then to La Paz, Bolivia, we were grateful to God for his guidance and direction of all conversations and important decisions regarding the planning and the goal setting for the future. Our hearts were also filled with gratefulness for the deep spiritual experiences with our Quechua-**brothers** and our missionaries. We were endowed, encouraged, edified. It is simply amazing to walk with Jesus and to be part of his mission.

3. Bolivia

We spent the last two days of our trip in La Paz. Here we had three meetings of major importance. The first one was with Martin and Agustina Fernández, parents in the small children's home of El Alto. This project is coming to an end. In 2012 there were only 4 teenagers and youth living with the Fernández'. Two of them are already completely autonomous. The other two (Jonathan and Jorge Luis) are now living independently but keep receiving assistance from Martin and Agustina. They also receive the needed support from EBM MASA for living, sustenance as well as the vocational education.

For health grounds Martin and Agustina moved to Cochabamba, together with their own two sons, where Jonathan and Jorge Luis will also live from now on.

The second meeting was held with Duane Guthrie, missionary of the Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM). At the moment he is also a helper for EBM MASA, as a representative of the Baptist Association of Bolivia (UBB). With him we discussed the important and specific topics, which we wanted to talk about and decide with the UBB at that point. It was a very successful conversation, in which the important attributes of the vision and mission-concept of EBM MASA were stressed once again. This common ground is needed for working side by side in a project. In this regard EBM MASA and CBM are very close, but still we can learn from each other.

The third meeting was held with the leadership team of the UBB, at which we once again spoke about the two projects which were agreed upon last year. Unfortunately there was very little done by the UBB in this period. However, recently there was a new leadership team elected (president: Reyes Baltazar Kiske Yapita), who works in a more proactive way, which gives us hope.

The conversation was not only positive, but we were able to make good and important decisions. In the beginning of 2014 both of the discussed projects will start. Because of this there are tasks and dates set for evaluation and preparation causing extensive communication. The projects: 1.) Pepe-Project in EL Alto, together with a local church, and 2.) a church-planting project in Sucre-Yotala. Sucre is the capital of the Chiquisaca province, Yotala is a town nearby. Here evangelism and social work are to walk hand in hand. This project should be supported together with the CBM. The social involvement here focuses on fighting against the Chagas-disease (transmitted by the Chagas-bug), which is a big problem for the population. It is the "red" marked region of Bolivia that suffers from the disease. We look forward to the positive future perspective for EBM MASA in Bolivia. It took longer than we had hoped to settle these new projects and strategies with our brothers and sisters in Bolivia, but now there are good prospects.

For us it is of great importance not to start supporting a project until there are very clear agreements, an alignment with our mission concept is guaranteed and responsibility is shared.

4. Conclusion

I invite you to rejoice with us about the many good results and give thanks to God for them. I also invite you to keep praying for the missionary works in Peru and Bolivia, as well as the many responsible missionaries and co-workers. Each prayer, each cent that is invested as a financial support for it, is worth it. At this point once again our heartfelt thanks to you for your loving support.

Heartily, Your



Carlos Waldow
Mission secretary for Latin America



Mission meeting in Jimbe



Work with children,
mission meeting in Huinchiri