

Chronology of EBM: Africa

The history of EBM officially begins with its foundation in September 1954. At the inaugural meeting which took place from 17. - 18. September 1954 in Zurich representatives from EBF (European Baptist Federation) as well as church unions from Germany, France and Switzerland were present. EBM has been a registered society under Swiss law since then with its headquarters in Zurich.

In addition there is also an interesting pre-history concerning the foundation of EBM. It begins with correspondence in December 1951 between Jacob Meister, the chairman of the board of the German Union and Henri Vincent, the President of the French Baptist Union. At that time the German Baptists asked the French brethren to support them in starting German mission work in Cameroon. In his response Henri Vincent warned that the French colonial authorities would probably not approve of a German mission and that in his opinion the time for it had not yet come. But in his letter of December 28, 1951 he then made a really revolutionary, pioneering proposal:

“ If the idea of an unified Europe is to grow and become a reality, it is very likely that all barriers will fall between our nations, and we may then be able to think on [in] all matters, including missions, in terms, not of Germany or France, but of Europe. I do pray for it. In that case, would it not be possible to organise an European Baptist Missionary Society, including French and German, and sending Missionaries where it wants?”

A great vision - only a few years after the terrible Second World War. In their meetings in Rome from 26-28 September, 1953 and in Munich from 15-16 September, 1954, the European Baptist Federation put this vision into action step by the step and finally founded this new European Mission in Zurich from 17-18 September 1954. May God help us that we as heirs of this great vision hold on to that vision and develop it - for the salvation and benefit of many people and for the glory of God.

Year	Country	Event
1954		Shortly after the EBF Congress in September the elected preparation committee meets in Zurich and formally constitutes the EBM. The legal seat of the mission remains Zurich.
1955	Cameroon	The first mission council sits in Zurich in January and decides to send the French missionaries Farelly to North Cameroon Mr. and Mrs. Kassühlke are sent to Paris for language training
1956	Cameroon	The Farellys start their ministry in Meri
1957	Cameroon	Unexpected termination of the work in Meri. The Baptists of Cameroon form an independent Union, the UEBC
1958	Cameroon	Foundation of the Dagai mission centre
		Foundation of a second centre in Zidim
1959	Cameroon	Purchase of premises in Maroua
1961		Herbert Mascher becomes full-time General Secretary
1962	Cameroon	Beginning of school work in Mokolo

1963	Cameroon	Departure of the Swiss missionaries Max and Susy Stäubli to the South of Cameroon
1964	Cameroon	Beginning of missionary work in Gamboura
1965	Sierra Leone	EBM is asked by the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) to take over the Missionary work in Sierra Leone. The former BMS missionaries Rev. and Mrs. Clifford Gill are taken on as EBM missionaries
1966	Sierra Leone	Herbert Mascher passes away in December. Departure Elizabeth Eckel as the first EBM missionary to Sierra Leone
1967		Helmut Grundmann becomes the new General Secretary (until 1984). The first "BBB" (reports, pictures and letters) is published in September
1968	Cameroon Sierra Leone	Departure of Swiss missionary Esther Binder to Mokong. Beginning of missionary work in Mokong. Foundation of secondary school in Mambolo.
1971	Cameroon	Mr. and Mrs. Stäubli go to North Cameroon
1972	Sierra Leone	Departure of the Hagens to Sierra Leone to promote the foundation of a church union
1973	Cameroon	Beginning of the Bible College in Ndiki, South Cameroon. Foundation of the "Centre Technique de Maroua" (CTM) in Maroua, North Cameroon through the Youthwing of the German Baptist Union
1974	Sierra Leone	Foundation of the Baptist Union in Sierra Leone
1977	Central African Republic	First visit of the General Secretary Helmut Grundmann to the Central African Republic at the end of the year
1978	Sierra Leone	(CBM) The eye clinic in Lunsar, Sierra Leone, is opened in cooperation with the "Christoffel Blindenmission"
1979		Merger of MASA and EBM as one missionary society
1984	Central African Republic	Horst Niesen becomes General Secretary (until 1990) The Baptist Union of the Central African Republic is officially accepted as partner federation Departure of the Vincents to the Central African Republic
1987		Farewell of Horst and Bertraud Borkowski from official employment in MASA
1990		Max Stäubli becomes General Secretary (until 1996)
1991	Mozambique	100th anniversary of German Cameroon Baptist Mission. First visit of General Secretary, Max Stäubli, to Mozambique.

1992	Mozambique Sierra Leone	The Baptist Union of Mozambique is officially accepted as partner union. 200th anniversary of Baptist church work in Freetown, Sierra Leone
1993	Equatorial Guinea Mozambique	Decision to begin missionary work in Equatorial Guinea Departure of the first missionaries, the Pires from Portugal to Mozambique
1994	South Africa	Beginning of missionary cooperation between EBM and the “Baptist Convention of South Africa” (BCSA) in South Africa
1995	Cameroon	150th anniversary of the beginning of missionary work, the ‘arrival of the gospel’ in Cameroon
1996		Hans Guderian becomes General Secretary.
1997	Malawi	Beginning of missionary work in Malawi with the support of local people
1998		The office moves from Bad Homburg to Elstal
2000	Mozambique	New structures for the work in Africa: two regional representatives for Central and South Africa work together with the Africa Promotion Secretary Flood disaster in Mozambique Support lent through construction teams and finances
2002		The “Hans-Herter-Indienhilfe” gets a seat and a vote in the Missions Council of the EBM
2003	Cameroon	Farewell of Esther Binder, most senior member of EBM missionaries, after 35 years in Mokong,
2004		Jubilee Conference in Berlin-Schöneberg

Currently EBM co-operates with seven (7) partner unions in Africa: Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, South Africa and Malawi. MASA is involved in five (5) Latin-American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Bolivia and Cuba. Furthermore, MASA supports a children’s Home in Porto, Portugal, until 2010. In the 90’s our mission supported church building projects of local missionaries in the Ukraine and Georgia for a short period of time. Cooperation with the Hans-Herter Indienhilfe is promising: by common trips to India, by participation of Hans-Herter Indienhilfe in the newly founded EBM-Foundation for world mission, by cooperation on the board of representatives of Hans-Herter-Indienhilfe and through mutual project support that has already currently been realized of the missionary and social work of “Bridge of Hope” in Gotlam, India.

Today we as European Baptists may participate in a worldwide partnership in world missions with believers in Africa, Latin America and India.

Hans Guderian