



December 2025

Dear Friends of L'ESPERANCE Children's Aid,

Once again, we can look back with gratitude on the year that is drawing to a close, thanks to your faithful support. With this newsletter, we would like to give you a brief insight into recent developments and say a heartfelt thank you for your valuable contribution. As a token of our appreciation, this year's calendar—filled with beautiful moments from our projects—is enclosed once again.

Ethiopia



Paul Kowoll at Akaki Children's Village, 1987



Edith Kowoll at Akaki Children's Village, 1989



Paul Kowoll with the children, 1988

40th Anniversary Celebration at Akaki Children's Village

It has now been 40 years since Paul Kowoll founded the Akaki Children's Village in Ethiopia. At that time, he travelled to this famine-stricken country with almost no money, without sufficient language skills and without knowing anyone there—carrying only God's calling in his heart to establish a children's village with a school and a farm.

In Ethiopia, he met fellow believers who had been praying for help and who supported him. And then the miracle happened: just six hours after his first contact with the government, he was granted 15 hectares of fertile land by the river—free of charge—only 20 kilometres south of the capital city. Soon afterwards, the first orphaned children could be welcomed.

In November 2025, after 40 years, Paul (88) and Edith Kowoll (84) travelled once again to Ethiopia to take part in the anniversary celebrations.

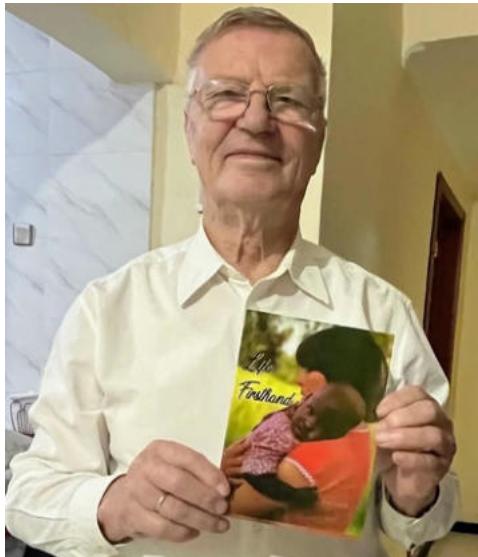


Reunion at the 40th anniversary celebration





Back row: Gerhard Hermann, Paul and Edith Kowoll, Anita Tun



Life Firsthand - Autobiography now available in English

Countless former orphans travelled from near and far to see the two once more—the people who had become mother and father to them over many years. One former orphan even made the long journey from Australia. These were deeply moving moments.

For this special occasion, Paul's autobiography *Life Firsthand* was translated into English so that "his" children could now read this moving life story themselves. In addition, the book serves to strengthen the faith of the more than 1,600 students at the children's village in Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

The German edition is available from L'ESPERANCE Children's Aid via info@lesperance.de; all proceeds go 100% towards our children's aid work. This book encourages trust in God—even in difficult times.

Venezuela



Children on the future children's village site

Children's Aid in Venezuela

This year, we were able to witness particularly encouraging developments in Venezuela. What for a long time was only a wish and a matter of prayer has now become reality: the local association has officially become part of the L'ESPERANCE family.

Venezuela



Poverty in the country is widespread.



1,200 children across the country received daily meals.



Children's feeding programme in seven federal states

A dedicated local board leads the work on site, and important administrative processes have been initiated so that, following the upcoming registration of L'ESPERANCE International in Venezuela, we will finally be able to purchase the land. This brings the admission of the first children within reach.

At the same time, infrastructure development continued: the water system was improved, construction work on the site progressed, and several neighbouring properties are available as possible future extensions—an important building block for the children's village to come.

Throughout the year, our soup kitchens in several regions of the country provided daily meals to more than 1,200 children, becoming places of hope for many families in difficult living conditions. In addition, children and their families received clothing, shoes and small donated items; on special occasions such as Father's Day, bread and hygiene kits were distributed.

Economic and practical areas of work are also developing well: agriculture is growing step by step and supplies the kitchens with fresh vegetables. In the tailoring workshop, school uniforms and clothing were produced, and the small bakery made nutritious products such as bread, muesli and peanut butter. Furthermore, the first guests were able to receive holistic care—showing just how diverse the work already is.

Bolivien



Bolivia – San Mateo Children's Village

Our youngest child in care at San Mateo Children's Village is named Luis*. He was found as a nameless baby—weak and ill—and was first taken to hospital. His 13-year-old mother left him there that same night.

+Name changed for data protection reasons

Four weeks later, he was brought to the children's village. Despite loving care, he soon developed severe symptoms. After numerous examinations, the diagnosis was made: congenital hypothyroidism. Doctors said that he would probably never be able to walk.

From then on, Luis had to take medication every day. The house parents and volunteers also carried out exercises with great dedication—often in tears and with much patience. They held on to hope, even when hardly any progress was visible.

Then the unexpected happened: at the age of two years and six months, Luis took his very first steps on his own—a moment that brought everyone to tears.

Today, Luis plays, laughs, eats well and moves with increasing confidence. Every step is a victory over his difficult start in life and a testimony to what love, prayer and perseverance can achieve.

His story continues, and every step he takes speaks of new hope—and of God's loving care.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for making it possible, through your support, to help children like Luis.

With warm regards and God's blessing
Gerhard Hermann
Chairman, L'ESPERANCE

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