



misean cara
Mission Support from Ireland

**How the
Missionary Approach to
Development Interventions (MADI)
addresses the concept of
Reaching the Furthest Behind First
(FBF)**

Conceptual Framework and Guidance Table

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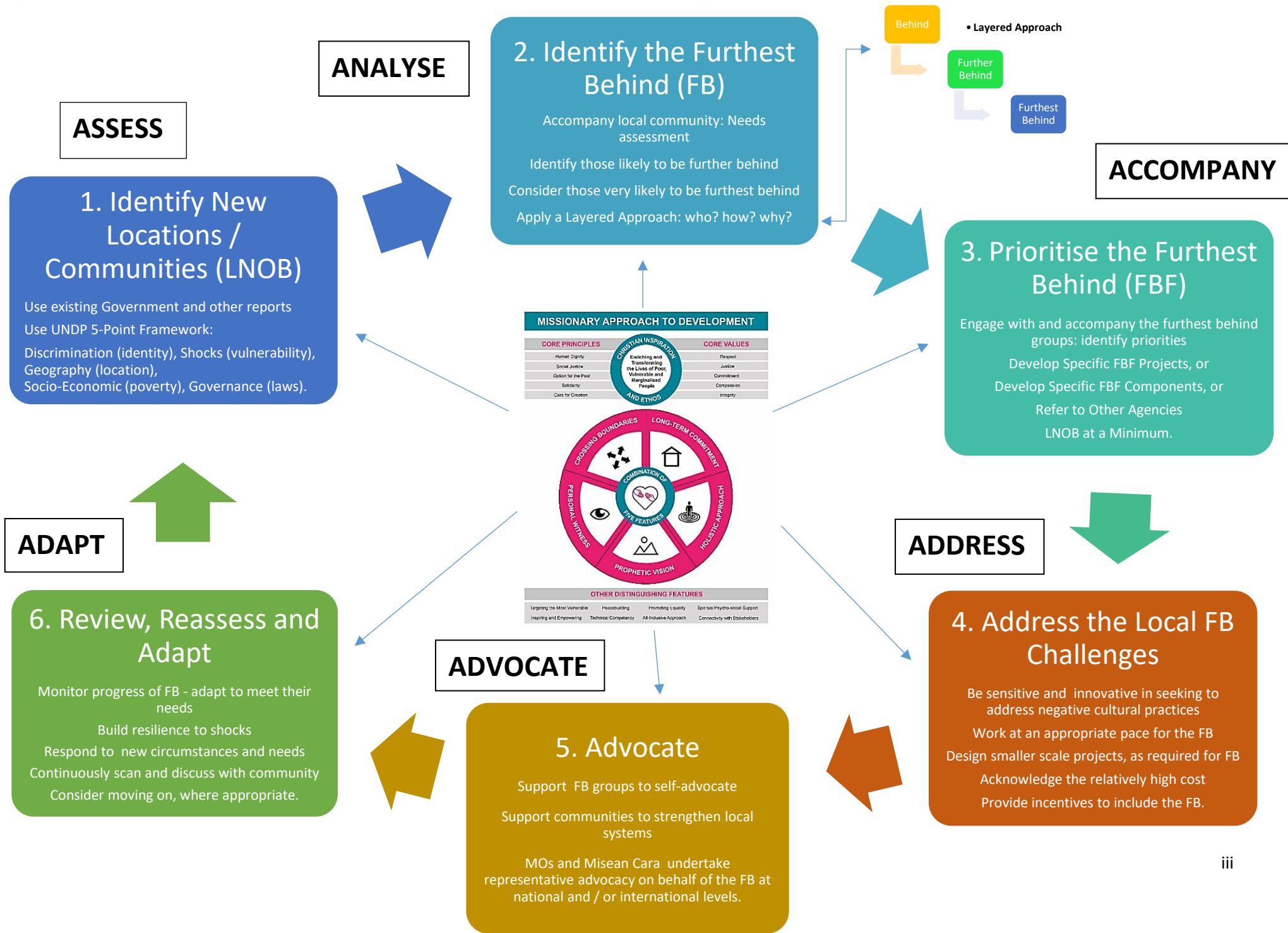
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List of Acronyms

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| COVID-19: | Coronavirus Disease 2019 |
| DP: | Disabled Person (also referred to as Person with a Disability (PWD)) |
| FB: | Furthest Behind |
| FBF: | Furthest Behind First |
| FGM: | Female Genital Mutilation |
| GBV: | Gender Based Violence |
| IDP: | Internally Displaced Person |
| LNOB: | Leave No One Behind |
| MADI: | Missionary Approach to Development Interventions |
| MC: | Misean Cara |
| MO: | Member Organisation (of Misean Cara) |
| NGO: | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| PLWHA: | People Living with HIV and AIDS |
| RBM: | Results Based Management |
| SDG: | Sustainable Development Goal |
| UNDP: | United Nations Development Programme |
| VfM: | Value for Money |

The content of this paper is based on the results of a research exercise undertaken in late 2020 on How the Missionary Approach to Development Interventions (MADI) Addresses the Concept of Reaching the Furthest Behind First. The research study was undertaken by independent consultant Mike Williams on behalf of Misean Cara and builds on an earlier research project undertaken by the same author in 2017 to develop the Misean Cara MADI framework. The research process included a review of core Misean Cara organisational documents and a wide range of missionary project documents and evaluations. Following the inception meeting, a range of interviews were conducted with key informants, including missionaries and staff from several Misean Cara member organisations, Misean Cara staff and management, a representative of Irish Aid and other external stakeholders. A detailed discussion paper was presented and reviewed at an online workshop for 50 people in November, following which this conceptual framework document was developed in December 2020.

Figure 1: MADl and Reaching the Furthest Behind First (FBF) Framework: The 6As Approach



1. Introduction

Misean Cara (MC) is an Irish faith-based missionary organisation of 88 members (MOs) that work with some of the most marginalised and vulnerable communities in over 50 countries. The Mission Statement of Misean Cara is *'To facilitate missionary development work with the marginalised and most vulnerable in the Global South.'* An initial research exercise undertaken in 2017 led to the development of a conceptual framework on the Missionary Approach to Development Interventions (MADI). The conceptual framework outlined in this paper builds on the initial MADI research to describe how the missionary approach contributes to reaching the 'furthest behind' people as referred to under the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda.

2. Origin of 'Reaching the Furthest Behind First' (FBF)

The commitment to Leave No One Behind (LNOB), including the promise to 'reach the furthest behind first (FBF)' was described by the UN as *'the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).'* It was further described as *'an unequivocal commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and of humanity as a whole.'* The concepts and thinking behind the LNOB and FBF terms were not new to the development sector, but the positioning of these principles at the core of the SDGs was designed to re-emphasise and re-invigorate the work of development agencies in relation to the most marginalised and most vulnerable people on the planet.

In 2018, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed a framework for implementation of the LNOB commitment. The framework, identified five intersecting factors as being essential to understand who is being left behind and why:

- Discrimination (Identity: gender, indigenous, age, disability etc.)
- Shocks and Fragility (Vulnerability)
- Geography (Location)
- Socio-Economic Status (Disadvantage)
- Governance (Laws, policies, processes, budgets)

The framework proposed that those at the intersection of these factors were likely to be among the furthest behind people in society (see Figure 2 below):

Figure 2: UNDP Framework on Leaving No One Behind



Source: What does it mean to leave no one behind? A framework for Implementation. UNDP, July 2018.

3. Defining the Furthest Behind from a Missionary Perspective

The commitment to reaching the furthest behind is deeply ingrained in the thinking of missionary organisations. Missionaries take their inspiration from the Gospels, and in particular from the manner in which Jesus always associated with and prioritised those who were on the margins of society and were often despised by those in leadership roles, or by the rest of society. A number of quotes from the Gospel of Matthew illustrate this preference for the furthest behind:

- *'So the last will be first and the first will be last' (Mt. 20:16)*
- *'Whatever you do unto the least of my brethren, that you do unto me (Mt. 25:40).'*
- *'For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost (Mt. 18:11)'*

When taken together, these three quotations are often referred to by missionaries as *'the last, the least and the lost,'* a term that has a clear resonance with and similarity of language with the SDG term of *'the furthest behind.'* Missionaries are also inspired by and deeply committed to the *'preferential option for the poor'* that first emerged from liberation theology in Latin America in the 1960s. In this context, *'the poor'* is understood in its broadest meaning to include the most marginalised and the most vulnerable people in society. This preferential option is, therefore, another clear expression of a commitment to what the UN now refers to as *'the furthest behind.'* The missionary understanding of the furthest behind also relates to other terms from liberation theology such as *'the oppressed'* and *'the voiceless.'* Hence, the faith-based missionary organisations have a very rich and distinctive language that reflects their particular understanding of the furthest behind, an understanding that long pre-dates the SDGs. The charisma, or particular founding vision, of each missionary organisation further defines the way that its members perceive and relate to the world, including how they prioritise those left furthest behind.

Within the Catholic Church in particular, the term *'human dignity'* that is described by the UN as a key driver for the SDGs is a core principle of Catholic social teaching, along with other concepts such as social justice, solidarity with the poor and care for creation. These are also the core principles of Misesan Cara. The call to *'read the signs of the times'* was a challenge that emanated from the Second Vatican Council. It was a call to Catholics to reflect deeply on the events unfolding before their eyes and to respond to them out of mature faith. The phrase is often associated with advocacy and political stances on development issues, but missionaries also refer to it in the context of actively observing what is happening within local communities, including the identification of who is being left behind and who is being newly marginalised, and then seeking to support those people.

4. The MADI Framework and the Furthest Behind

The faith-based missionary approach to development interventions provides a very distinctive and unique contribution to international development work. The research exercise undertaken by Misesan Cara in 2017 identified five key features of the MADI approach: Crossing Boundaries; Long-Term Local Commitment; Personal Witness; Prophetic Vision, and a Holistic Approach. These features are elaborated on in the MADI framework, as summarised in Appendix 1. The MADI framework is utilised internally by Misesan Cara and its members to deepen their analysis and understanding of the approaches and methods they apply to development projects on the ground, and to the people that they serve.

4.1 Long Term Local Presence

The long-term local presence of missionaries on the ground at community level is relatively unusual in an international development context, where short or medium-term programme funding cycles are the

norm. This long-term presence also supports the localisation agenda that is currently prevalent in the international development sector. The local presence enables missionaries to develop a deep understanding of the context and culture; to understand what is happening and changing within the community; and to identify how particular groups of people (e.g. widows, orphans or disabled people) are the most marginalised or the most vulnerable (the furthest behind) within an already marginalised community. The trust gained by missionaries because of their long-term presence and the way that they work as members of local communities is seen by both the communities and the missionaries themselves as a crucial factor in their work. Missionaries are particularly well placed to engage with local leaders who have a major influence on the community. The trust of local leaders and communities is crucial in enabling missionaries to challenge harmful local cultural practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriages and the widespread exclusion of girls from education.

In a development sector where scaling up for maximum effect is often seen as being highly desirable, the relatively small scale and localised nature of most missionary projects is sometimes seen as a disadvantage. However, the focussed nature of such missionary interventions, with a strong emphasis on the delivery of basic services and livelihoods activities in local communities, is a particularly suitable approach for prioritising the furthest behind people. Donor agencies also see the funding of missionary projects as a suitable means to transfer funds as efficiently and quickly as possible to the furthest behind groups.

4.2 Holistic Approach

The holistic approach that faith-based missionaries apply to their work is also quite unique to them, and is rooted in individual, person centred care, and care for the whole of the person and their families and dependents. This approach enables missionaries to see who is vulnerable or marginalised at any one time and to identify how best to support and empower those who are furthest behind. A holistic approach towards education is, for example, a defining feature of how missionaries undertake education work, and includes physical, emotional, moral and social dimensions in addition to the intellectual one. Such education work incorporates components on self-discipline, personal development, self-confidence and leadership skills. An **accompaniment** approach towards local communities is a defining characteristic of missionary work and is supported by their direct long-term presence in those communities. The process of accompaniment has been described in Catholic social teaching as *“walking together in solidarity which is characterized by mutuality and interdependence. Found in the God-human relationship in which God accompanies us in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.”* The spiritual and psycho-social support provided by missionaries at times of great crisis is highly valued by local communities, a factor that is often neglected in the broader development agenda.

4.3 Prophetic Vision

The prophetic vision related in the first instance to the pioneering work of the early missionaries who were very action-oriented and solutions-focussed in their approaches. They often took great risks, sometimes even at the expense of their own lives. In the current era, many missionaries continue to take great risks in seeking to support the furthest behind people, who are often found in areas of great conflict or those subject to natural disasters. Missionaries tend to stay on with local communities in emergency situations when outside agencies might be required to leave for security reasons. The faith-based prophetic vision of missionaries drives them to initiate projects for the most marginalised people even in situations of great uncertainty. Missionaries do not necessarily wait to get funding for their project, or to have all of the solutions to hand, before they intervene. These initiatives are adapted or modified over time as situations evolve, sometimes with unpredictable results. Missionaries are well

aware that development interventions often do not evolve in a linear and predictable manner, particularly in complex environments.

4.4 Personal Witness

Missionaries believe in giving witness to their faith beliefs in everything that they say and do. They do not see development work as a job, but as an integral part of their way of life. It therefore involves a very high degree of personal commitment on their part. The accompaniment approach is a two-way process that involves learning and building trust on both sides. In moving to new locations and new communities, the first priority for many missionaries is not to start projects immediately, but to embed themselves fully in the community and listen respectfully to what the people are saying. Communities and people who are furthest behind are accustomed to being told what to do by others, often without any consultation. Missionaries seek to inspire and empower the most vulnerable and most marginalised people by acting in solidarity with them at all times, in a spirit of mutual learning, and in demonstrating their own values on areas such as respect for human dignity, care for the environment and the preferential option for the poor.

4.5 Crossing Boundaries

As part of a global missionary movement of great scale and diversity, missionaries learn from and influence each other across geographic, cultural and political contexts in supporting the most vulnerable and marginalised people. In addition to the very distinctive work on the ground, missionary organisations are well connected into broader advocacy agendas at national and international levels, through which they seek to advocate for systemic change on behalf of the furthest behind. Crucially, missionaries seek to adopt an **all-inclusive approach** to their work, so that nobody is left behind (LNOB), including members of communities from other faith backgrounds or those with no faith background. Acting on inter-faith dialogue, particularly in situations of conflict, is an important aspect of missionary work, as is developing new models of working to address crisis situations (e.g. a cross-congregation joint missionary initiative in South Sudan).

5. Conceptual Framework: MADI and Reaching the Furthest Behind

The research study has led to the development of a conceptual framework that outlines how the missionary approach to development addresses the concept of reaching the furthest behind first. The framework is illustrated graphically in Figure 1 at the beginning of this paper, where it is presented as a **cyclical process** with **six key stages**, as follows:

1. Identifying new locations and new marginalised communities to work with (LNOB);
2. Identifying the furthest behind (FB) people and groups in those communities;
3. Prioritising the furthest behind people / target groups (FBF);
4. Addressing particular challenges that arise in working with the furthest behind people;
5. Advocating on behalf of the furthest behind and supporting self-advocacy;
6. Reviewing, reassessing and adapting to evolving furthest behind situations and groups.

The framework is also summarised in the diagram as a 'six As' approach: **Assess, Analyse, Accompany, Address, Advocate and Adapt**. The practical use of the framework as a **guide** to missionaries in seeking to identify and prioritise the furthest behind people and groups in their development work is outlined later in Section 7 and Table 1.

5.1 Identifying New Locations and New Communities to work in

Significant numbers of projects implemented by Misesan Cara members are located in countries such as Kenya, India, Brazil, and South Africa - countries that, based on their UN Human Development Index

ratings, would not be considered to be amongst the poorest or the least developed in the world. The strong presence in these countries is mostly related to the large number of missionary organisations that established a presence in these locations in the distant past. Because of their long-term commitment to the communities that they serve, the missionaries have remained in-situ in these countries for several centuries in some cases.

When the missionaries initially established their presence, they sought out the poorest, most marginalised and most vulnerable communities to work with. To this day, a large majority of missionary projects are located in areas of extreme poverty and marginalisation, typically in remote rural locations, or in urban slums or squatter settlements, with many of these locations also being subject to conflict and / or natural disasters on a regular or recurring basis. So, while the missionary projects may not always be located in the furthest behind countries, a large majority of projects are addressing the needs and rights of furthest behind communities due to the enormous levels of **inequality** that exist in these countries.

When seeking to identify new locations and new target populations to work with in-country (Stage 1 in the framework) missionaries can utilise existing macro-level indicators, data and analyses that are available from government sources and international or national development agencies. The five-point UNDP Framework (see Section 2 and Appendix 2) is recognised by missionaries as a useful tool for conducting **an initial scoping analysis** of those who are left behind and furthest behind.

5.2 A Layered Approach towards Identifying the Furthest Behind

The analysis to identify the furthest behind communities or groups, as outlined below, is illustrated in Stage 2 on the MADi and FBF Framework in Figure 1.

Those Likely to be Further Behind

Within any particular target population or community there are likely to be particular groups or cohorts of people of significant size that are more **likely to be further behind** than others in the same population. It is difficult to classify an entire population of women as being furthest behind as they represent approximately 50% of that population, but, in the vast majority of situations women are more marginalised or 'further behind' than men. Similar groups that are likely to be further behind within the general population include children, youths or a minority ethnic or religious group in a particular location. The specific circumstances of these 'further behind' groups will be considered in the first instance. It cannot be assumed that these groups will always be further behind as for example, an existing women's empowerment project in the same area may be already addressing many of the gender inequality issues in the target community. Similarly, a minority ethnic or religious group in a particular locality may, in some circumstances, be better off than the rest of the community.

Those Very Likely to be Further Behind

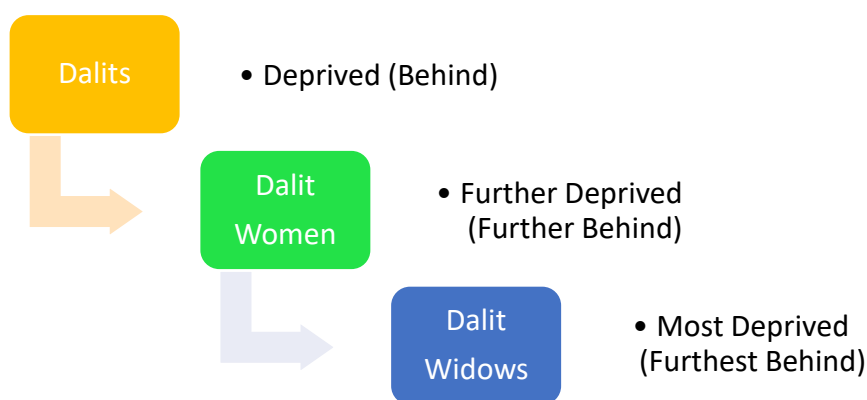
There are other groups of people who are **very likely to be in the furthest behind cohort** in any particular community. These include disabled people, widows, orphans, child-headed households, street children, the elderly, refugees or IDPs, people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) and minority ethnic or religious groups, persons affected by trafficking or victims of sexual violence, among others. Many of these groups have already been identified as priority groups in the Misesan Cara strategy and project approval processes. Again, it cannot be assumed that members of these groups are automatically amongst the furthest behind in all situations. In some cases, an existing project run by another agency or NGO may be catering very well for the disabled group or a group of PLWHA, in which case this group may not require additional support as a furthest behind group. In other cases, some of these groups (e.g. refugees or IDPs) may not be present at all. The level of marginalisation within these groups may also vary. For example, international statistics suggest that disabled people represent approximately 13-16% of the population of a typical community, but the level of impairments may vary

significantly within this group. Hence, **the identification of the furthest behind, and how and why they are being marginalised, is very context specific.**

Layers of Deprivation

Missionaries will generally conduct a participative analysis with the community in seeking to identify **who is furthest behind in a particular location or community, how they are being marginalised and why this is happening.** Having identified the 'likely to be further behind' groups and considered the 'very likely to be furthest behind' groups, as referred to above, a **layered approach**, based on layers of deprivation can be utilised to confirm the furthest behind groups. An example from India of the layers of deprivation approach is outlined in Figure 3 below, where the baseline survey identified (unsurprisingly) that members of the Dalit caste (ethnic group) were very vulnerable and marginalised. Within this group, the women were identified as being particularly marginalised (further behind). Within this sub-group of women, the widows were identified as the furthest behind group.

Figure 3: Layers of Deprivation for the Furthest Behind in a Project in India



5.3 Prioritising the Furthest Behind

Having identified the furthest behind group or groups, missionaries may choose to accompany and work in solidarity with them in a variety of ways, depending on their specific needs, the level of resources that are available and the particular contextual factors that relate to the project. These different approaches might include:

- A specific project that focuses exclusively on a furthest behind group;
- A specific project component to prioritise the furthest behind group within a wider community project;
- Referral of an FB group to another agency that is better placed to support them; or
- Where it is not feasible to undertake a specific project or component for the furthest behind, ensuring that they are, at a minimum, included in the project alongside everybody else (LNOB).

Approaches to prioritising the furthest behind are illustrated in Stage 3 of the MADi and FBF Framework.

Specific Projects for the Furthest Behind

Missionaries will sometimes implement **projects that are based exclusively on working with a furthest behind group.** There are numerous examples across the world of missionary projects that focus specifically on disabled people, prisoners, PLWHA, refugees, widows, victims of gender-based violence, orphans or street-children, among others.

Project Components for the Furthest Behind

In many other projects, the target group will be an entire community or a major section of that community (e.g. a women's project, or a youth project) with a specific component of that project being dedicated to supporting or empowering a more marginalised or deprived group, and perhaps a further sub-component to include the most marginalised group. So, in the India example above (Figure 3) a **particular component of the Dalit project** was designed to support widows, as the furthest behind group within the Dalit community.

Leave No One Behind at a Minimum

It may not be always possible to prioritise interventions for the furthest behind group where, for example, the budget may not be sufficient to allow for a special component to prioritise the furthest behind. In another situation, there might be so many highly marginalised groups that it is simply not possible to develop specific interventions or components for all of them. **A key principle for all missionary projects is that, at a minimum, no one is left behind (LNOB) while the furthest behind will be prioritised wherever possible (FBF).** In the India project above (Figure 3), if it had not been possible to develop a specific intervention for widows, they would, at a minimum, have been included alongside all of the other Dalit women in the project.

5.4 Advocacy with and for the Furthest Behind

In addition to supporting furthest behind groups with basic services and / or livelihoods projects on the ground, the Misesan Cara strategy also encourages members to provide support for furthest behind beneficiaries in terms of issues around sectoral system strengthening (e.g. within the health sector) and self-advocacy at local, district or perhaps even at national level. Representative advocacy and networking on behalf of furthest behind groups is also undertaken by the missionary organisations themselves and by Misesan Cara at national and / or international levels, as required and appropriate to do so. These advocacy initiatives are crucial in seeking to address the underlying causes of the marginalisation of furthest behind groups and in enabling them to attain their full rights as citizens. The advocacy dimension is illustrated in Stage 5 of the MADi and FBF Framework.

5.5 The Furthest Behind as an Evolving Concept

A significant factor in seeking to identify and prioritise the most marginalised or deprived people is that **the furthest behind is not a static concept or group of people.** Circumstances can change significantly over the course of a project implementation period, either gradually over time, or quite suddenly due to natural disasters or man-made emergencies. Communities living in flood, volcano or earthquake-prone locations can, in some instances, be relatively well off prior to the sudden onset of an emergency situation (e.g. Venezuelan refugees being supported by missionaries in Brazil and Peru). Man-made shocks due to a sudden onset of violence or conflict can often leave new populations in the furthest behind category. Another regular factor is a rapid deterioration in circumstances due to outbreaks of diseases such as Cholera, Ebola or Covid-19. Because of their long-term local presence and knowledge, missionaries are sometimes well placed to be first responders in these situations, in providing both material and psycho-social support to those who are suddenly left furthest behind. With some exceptions, missionary organisations do not generally have the operational capacity for large scale emergency responses, particularly in new locations, but they frequently engage with large NGOs and UN agencies to facilitate and support them in delivering local responses. The specific knowledge and experience of missionaries in the health sector can also be a significant resource in emergency situations.

The specific circumstances of individuals, families or particular groups can deteriorate more slowly over time also, for example due to chronic or recurring droughts, floods or low-level conflict situations, so

that they gradually end up in the furthest behind category. A **vulnerability analysis** is conducted to identify those at most risk, and a plan is developed to build resilience in the most vulnerable groups. Missionaries may consider **moving on** also in circumstances where the situation of a previously furthest behind group improves significantly, for example in a community that has recovered from a one-off emergency situation, or from a time-specific disease outbreak. For example, a missionary order in Peru indicated that when it sees the tarmac road arriving in the area, with related expectations of rapid development progress, it contemplates moving on from there to another marginalised community.

Due to the long-term local presence and the holistic approach to their development work, missionaries are very well placed to **continually re-assess and discuss what they are doing with communities on a regular basis** in order to identify and support the rights of newly-emerging furthest behind groups. Missionaries refer to this process as part of their obligation to *'read the signs of the times.'* The furthest behind as an evolving concept is illustrated in Phase 6 of the MADi and FBF Framework.

6. Challenges in Reaching the Furthest Behind First

Efforts to reach the furthest behind first involve a number of specific challenges for Misesan Cara and missionary organisations. These issues are addressed in Stage 4 of the MADi and FBF Framework (Figure 1 and Section 5 above).

6.1 Pace, Size and Cost of Projects

In working with the most marginalised and vulnerable groups in society, the pace of progress is inevitably extremely slow in comparison with what can be achieved with less marginalised communities. Lower educational standards and a lack of self-worth and self-confidence are key factors in slowing progress for the furthest behind. A sense of hopelessness and a lack of motivation to change are other major factors that arise for communities or groups that have been very marginalised for a long time and cannot see any way out of their current situation. A lack of trust towards external agencies can also be a factor where previous projects were utilised to exploit them. Self-stigma is also a significant factor for groups such as PLWHA and disabled people that have been oppressed and marginalised by their peers.

The costs of supporting the most marginalised and vulnerable groups are often much higher than for less marginalised people. It is well established that the costs of providing basic services and fulfilling the basic rights of disabled people are generally much higher than the cost of fulfilling the same rights for non-disabled people, for example in areas such as access to buildings and educational supports. The furthest behind cohort in any project may often be quite a small group, and there is, therefore, not much scope for economies of scale. In overall terms, projects that address the furthest behind will generally be slow-moving, with limited results in the short-term and are likely to be quite expensive to deliver. Missionaries working in these circumstances tend to take a long-term view and to think of progress in decades rather than in years, or in confined project cycles.

6.2 The Value for Money (VfM) Agenda

Over the last decade, donors in the development sector have placed a very significant emphasis on the concept of value for money (VfM). This concept is also closely related to the results-based management (RBM) and broader development effectiveness agenda. The issues relating to pace, size and cost of projects for the furthest behind groups, as outlined in Section 6.1 above, can have a very significant impact on what is perceived as VfM. Up to recently, major donors tended to see VfM as being a product of efficiency, effectiveness, economy and equity. In the context of reaching the furthest behind first, missionaries see **cost-effectiveness** as being the key defining factor in assessing value for money i.e. that **projects or interventions that are necessary to reach the furthest behind first are delivered at the lowest possible cost, while recognising the significant costs and timelines required to prioritise the**

rights of relatively small numbers of furthest behind people. In the context of wider debates around reaching the furthest behind, it would appear that the development sector as a whole is also coming around to a greater emphasis on cost-effectiveness than heretofore.¹ Missionaries are generally very cost effective in their approaches, as much of the labour that they provide for projects is free, and accommodation for missionary project managers and staff is usually provided free of charge to the project. Hence, the overall cost of inputs needed to deliver the expected results is generally at a low level.

6.3 Cultural Obstacles, Practical Issues and Creativity

One of the implications for Misesan Cara members and their projects is that a significant amount of **creativity** may be needed to prioritise the furthest behind. Missionaries have overcome local resistance to education for girls by negotiating special agreements with chiefs in South Sudan and by providing bicycles on a no-cost loan basis for girls to enable them go to school alongside boys in Ghana. School feeding programmes are another example of incentivisation of families to educate their children. Missionaries are not in a position to deliver major social protection programmes, but where the most marginalised people in society may not be in a position to engage in economic activities due to illness or incapacity, missionaries do provide direct links to social protection schemes delivered by other agencies. They also support people with practical issues such as obtaining national and local ID cards to enable them to avail of government services.

A further challenge for missionaries and their projects is that special projects for the furthest behind, such as some disability schools, may not be recognised or supported by the state, even though the state has an obligation to support these groups. In addressing these issues, missionaries attempt to negotiate with government agencies in order to obtain formal recognition at a minimum and preferably some supports to run their facilities also.

6.4 Issues in Education

Many of the missionary education projects funded by Misesan Cara are targeted at very poor communities. However, a significant number of education projects do not specifically focus on the furthest behind, but on private schools for children from middle-class families. The purpose of these projects is to develop a cohort of future leaders for the betterment of society as a whole in the longer term. Misesan Cara has a specific guidance document on equitable access to education that refers to the inclusion of at least some children from furthest behind communities within private schools, through various means such as the application of school fee reductions, grants or subsidies.

7. The MADI and Furthest Behind First Framework in Practice

The practical application of the conceptual framework on the missionary approach to the furthest behind (as presented in Figure 1) is detailed below in Table 1, overleaf. This table, based on the 6As approach, may be utilised by missionaries as a guide in working through the process of identifying and prioritising the needs and rights of the furthest behind people and groups. It can also be used as a monitoring or evaluation tool to check on whether existing projects have conducted a full and appropriate analysis in seeking to address the needs of those left furthest behind, and to improve that analysis where necessary.

¹ What do we mean by Value for Money (VfM)? UK AID, London, 2019.

Table 1: The 6As MADi and FBF Framework - Guidance Table

| A | No. | Stage | Actions | |
|-----------|---------|---|---|---|
| ASSESS | 1. | Identifying new marginalised communities and locations to reach (LNOB). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise existing analyses and reports from Government or other development agencies to identify very vulnerable or marginalised communities within a country or district. Use the UNDP 5-Point Framework for an <u>initial assessment</u> of the furthest behind: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discrimination (identity: gender, indigenous, age, disability etc.) Shocks and Fragility: (vulnerability) Geography: (location, environment) Socio-Economic Status (disadvantage, poverty) Governance: (laws, policies, processes and budgets). | |
| | ANALYSE | 2. | Identifying the furthest behind (FB) within communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with and accompany the local community to conduct a joint baseline survey and needs assessment. Identify the substantial groups / cohorts who are likely to be further behind in most cases in this particular context (e.g. women, children, youths and / or a minority ethnic or religious group). Consider the specific circumstances of particular groups that are very likely to be among the furthest behind within communities: disabled people, widows, orphans, child-headed households, street children, the elderly, people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA), refugees, IDPs, victims of trafficking, victims / survivors of GBV. Adopt a layered approach to confirm which groups are furthest behind in the local context (based on layers of deprivation). Identify how they are being left behind and the reasons behind this deprivation (who, how, why). |
| ACCOMPANY | | 3. | Prioritising the furthest behind (FBF). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with and accompany the furthest behind target groups to identify their priorities and overall needs. Where appropriate and possible, develop specific projects that address the rights and priorities of the furthest behind groups. Where appropriate and possible, develop specific components within broader community projects that address the particular rights and priorities of the furthest behind groups. Where appropriate, refer furthest behind groups to other agencies or service providers that are better placed to support them. Provide specific support to furthest behind groups to access other services or projects (e.g. Government or NGO social protection programmes). Where it is not possible to prioritise all of the furthest behind groups, ensure that they are at least included in the project alongside everybody else in the community. (LNOB at a minimum). |

| A | No. | Stage | Actions |
|----------|-----|---------------------------------|---|
| ADDRESS | 4. | Addressing local FB challenges. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work at an appropriate pace that acknowledges the particular context, circumstances and understanding of the furthest behind communities. Take a broad overview of progress over decades rather than years, where necessary. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the need to implement relatively small-scale projects for furthest behind groups, as necessary. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the relatively high cost per beneficiary of interventions for furthest behind groups in comparison with similar interventions for less marginalised populations, so that Value for Money is viewed from a cost-effectiveness perspective i.e. as the optimal use of resources for this particular intervention. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sensitive to local cultural and social issues in the community. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be innovative in seeking to address negative cultural or gender barriers. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where projects are primarily focussed on relatively well-off communities (e.g. in education), provide particular incentives and supports to enable at least some FB groups to participate. |
| ADVOCATE | 5. | Advocating for the FB. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support furthest behind groups with self-advocacy and system strengthening initiatives. • Missionaries and Misesan Cara engage in representative advocacy on particular FB issues at national and / or international level, as appropriate. |
| ADAPT | 6. | Reviewing and Adapting. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor progress of furthest behind groups and adapt interventions to meet their evolving needs over time. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build resilience of groups that are particularly vulnerable to being left furthest behind due to shocks arising from man-made or natural disasters. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to meet the needs of those who have suddenly been left furthest behind due to sudden onset emergencies (natural or man-made disasters e.g. drought, floods, diseases, earthquakes or conflict situations). |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to support people whose circumstances have declined gradually over time as they move into the furthest behind category (e.g. declining incomes, recurring droughts) |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously scan and discuss with the community to identify newly vulnerable or marginalised groups. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider moving on when the situation of previously furthest behind groups has improved significantly and others are now in greater need. |

8. Conclusion

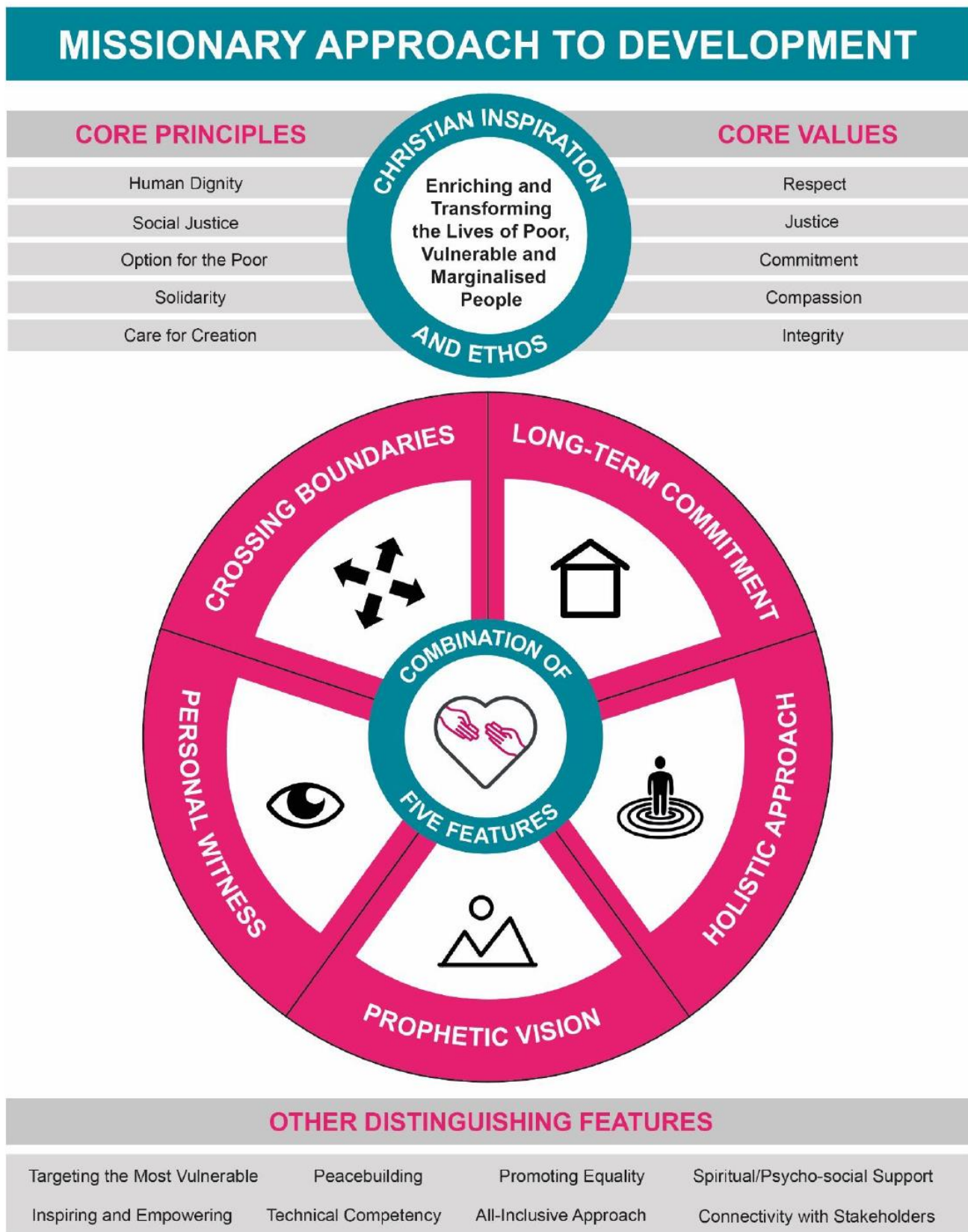
In taking their inspiration from the Gospels, from Catholic social teaching and that of other Christian traditions, and from the individual charism of each Misesan Cara member, the faith-based missionary organisations have a deep understanding of those who are furthest behind in society, and of how to prioritise them in their development work. References in St. Matthew's Gospel to '*the last, the least and the lost*' resonate closely with the 'leave no one behind' (LNOB) and '*furthest behind first*' (FBF) commitments that are at the heart of the Agenda 2030 process for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The '*preferential option for the poor*' that emerged from liberation theology and the commitment to '*read the sign of the times*' that emanated from the Second Vatican Council are key driving forces for missionary work. Each of the five components of the existing MADI framework (long-term local presence; holistic approach; prophetic vision; personal witness; and crossing boundaries) helps to inform how missionaries prioritise the furthest behind in a very specific way.

The framework developed in consultation with Misesan Cara members to illustrate how the MADI approach contributes to reaching the furthest behind is based on a **cyclical six-stage, '6As' process**, as follows:

1. **Assess:** Identifying new locations and marginalised communities to reach (LNOB) based on existing external reports and initial assessments using the UNDP five-point intersectionality framework: discrimination; vulnerability; environment; socio-economic status; and governance (laws, policies and budgets).
2. **Analyse:** Working with local communities to conduct participatory baseline surveys and needs assessments. Considering those who are likely to be 'further behind' in the community in the first instance (e.g. women and girls). Then considering the specific circumstances of particular groups that are very likely to be 'furthest behind' (e.g. orphans, disabled people, refugees). Based on this analysis, adopting a **layered approach** to confirm who is in the furthest behind category in the community, and how and why these people are being marginalised.
3. **Accompany:** Accompanying the furthest behind groups to identify their priorities and initiating specific interventions with them in a collaborative manner. Interventions may include full projects for the furthest behind groups; specific project components that target the furthest behind; and / or support to the furthest behind to access services from other agencies. In situations where it is not feasible to prioritise the furthest behind, they should at least be included in community projects alongside others (LNOB at a minimum).
4. **Address:** Working at an appropriate pace and scale that acknowledges the particular context, circumstances and understanding of the furthest behind groups. Acknowledging the relatively high cost of FB interventions, so that value for money is viewed as the optimal use of resources for this particular (highly necessary) intervention. Being particularly sensitive to local cultural and social issues and seeking innovative solutions to overcome cultural or gender barriers.
5. **Advocate:** Supporting furthest behind groups to self-advocate and strengthen local systems. Missionary organisations and Misesan Cara advocating to represent them at national or international levels also.
6. **Adapt:** Recognising that the furthest behind is an evolving concept. Adapting interventions to meet the needs of the FB on an evolving basis. Building resilience in the most vulnerable communities and responding to the needs of newly-emerging 'furthest behind' groups. Continuously scanning the environment with communities to identify newly-marginalised groups. Considering whether to move on where current target groups are no longer furthest behind.

The framework and related guidance table is intended to assist missionaries in identifying and reaching the furthest behind first in their development projects.

Appendix 1: MADI Framework



Summary Table: Key Characteristics of the Missionary Approach (MADI)

| No. | Feature of the Missionary Approach | Key Characteristics |
|-----|--|---|
| 1. | <i>Crossing Boundaries</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A global missionary movement of great scale, reach and diversity • Support from central level to the field • Advocacy and networking from field to international levels • Crossing borders in all directions: north to south; south to north; north to north; south to south; east to west; and west to east • Learning from and influencing each other across geographic, political and cultural contexts • New and evolving models of mission. |
| 2. | <i>Long Term Commitment and Local Presence</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rootedness in the community • Understanding of culture and context • Trusted by the community • Closeness to the community • Stay when others leave. |
| 3. | <i>Personal Witness</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving witness to beliefs and principles • Demonstrating values/ congruence • High level of personal commitment • A way of life • Solidarity with the poor • Care for the environment |
| 4. | <i>Prophetic Vision</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking risks • Action orientated – proactive • Pioneering - starting something, and letting it evolve • Availing of opportunities • Solutions-based approach • Faith in community, selves and others to deliver • Developing models of good practice. |
| 5. | <i>Holistic Approach</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual, person-centred care • Whole of person is considered • Accompaniment • Family and dependents are considered • Moving beyond sectoral (e.g. health or education) support. |
| 6. | <i>Other Distinguishing Features</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the most vulnerable • Influence on conflict-resolution and peacebuilding issues • Promoting equality for all • Spiritual / psycho-social support • Inspiring and empowering people • High technical competency • An all-inclusive approach: nobody left behind • Influencing and connectivity with other stakeholders. |