



**Institute of the
Blessed Virgin Mary**



Invitation to Tender

Review

of IBVM Presence and Projects

in Rumbek, South Sudan, 2008-2022

1. About the Organisations

1.1 IBVM in Rumbek

The Loreto Congregation, also known as The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is an international religious congregation founded by Mary Ward, a Yorkshire woman, in 1609. In 1821 Teresa Ball, a Dublin woman, brought the Congregation to Ireland. There are Loreto Sisters throughout the world working where the needs are greatest.

After the 2002 General Chapter, each province in the congregation, throughout the world, was challenged by the General Leadership Team in Rome to have the courage to open a new foundation in a place where Loreto was not established. The Irish Province chose South Sudan. While this was a significant challenge, the province was inspired by the words of their founder Mary Ward, that 'Women in time to come will do much'. In 2006, the Loreto Sisters of the Irish Province established a new foundation in Rumbek, South Sudan at the invitation of the Bishop of Rumbek. The mission was to focus on establishing a girls' boarding secondary school in the village of Maker Kuei, 8km from Rumbek town centre.

Over the years the mission has expanded greatly. Today, Loreto Rumbek has three core programmes: a community based co-educational Primary School, an all-girls Secondary Boarding School, and a woman and child-centric Primary Health Care Centre. Other projects such as Agriculture, Internship and Vocational Training serve to support the main three programmes. All projects in Loreto hold education as their central focus.

1.2 Misesan Cara

Misesan Cara is an Irish and international missionary member organisation supporting development, humanitarian and emergency projects in over 50 countries in the Global South. The organisation works with some of the most marginalised and vulnerable communities to realise their human rights through delivery of basic services in the areas of education, health, livelihoods and income generation, as well as advocacy, networking and community mobilisation. Through the work of 88 Irish-based member organisations, Misesan Cara's work is guided by its Strategy 2022-2026.

Each of our member organisations is a missionary congregation of sisters, brothers or priests; a religious organisation concerned with missionary development work; or a lay volunteer sending organisation. While registration as a charity in Ireland is a prerequisite of membership of Misesan Cara, many members are themselves part of a global congregation implementing relief and development projects in dozens of countries. Others are of a more modest size, reach and means. All are valued and respected members of Misesan Cara. In keeping with the principle of subsidiarity which characterises missionary development work, Misesan Cara responds to funding proposals submitted by members, and allocates funding on the basis of strategic relevance, need and quality.

Our Strategy sets out key goals in upholding rights to climate resilient livelihoods, education, health, and raising awareness of and mobilisation for human rights and social accountability. The overall funding to projects supported across these areas in 2021 is outlined in the table below. For further information about Misesan Cara, visit www.misesancara.ie

Sector	Education	Health	Livelihoods	Human Rights	Emergency Response	Member Capacity Development	Total
<i>Number of projects</i>	111	75	69	44	36	26	361
<i>Funding amount (€)</i>	5,137,485	2,974,721	2,631,307	2,653,144	506,556	529,421	14,432,634

Each year, Misesan Cara commissions different pieces of evaluation work focused on thematic or geographical areas. While it contributes to Misesan Cara's overall accountability agenda, the emphasis in this work is on the learning opportunities for the individual projects, the members implementing, the wider organisation and the wider sector.

Misesan Cara has been a significant contributor to the work of IBVM in Rumbek since 2012. This review is being commissioned through a collaboration between Misesan Cara and IBVM. The tendering process, finalisation of the terms of reference, accompaniment of the review and finalisation of deliverables will all be conducted jointly by the two organisations.

2. Background

2.1 South Sudan

South Sudan gained independence in 2011 after almost 40 years of conflict¹. Hopes were high but did not last long as political conflict broke out again in 2013 with millions displaced internally or in neighbouring countries, more than 380,000 people killed and the forced recruitment of especially young people by armed forces. In September 2018, a new peace deal was signed between President Salva Kiir and Vice-President and former rebel leader of SPLA-IO Riek Machar, introducing a power-sharing arrangement.

¹ 1955-1972 and 1983-2005

South Sudan is ranked the third most fragile country in the world and scores third-last for human development.² The operating environment country-wide remains challenging for humanitarian actors due to the protracted crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact people and livelihoods across the country. By April 2020, 12,758 people had tested positive for COVID-19 in South Sudan, with 133³ deaths.

Widespread flooding also remains an operational and security risk for humanitarians who use air transport to reach communities cut off by flooding due to impassable roads. In May 2021, over 835,000 people were reported to have been affected by flooding in 33 out of the 78 counties⁴, the highest displacement being in Bentiu, Unity State with levels of flooding last seen over 50 years ago.

2.2 Rumbek

Rumbek is the capital of Lakes State, one of South Sudan's ten states. It is one of those most affected by decades of war and continues to experience sporadic communal conflict. The local community consists of two main groups: majority Dinka and minority Belle. The population is 84% rural, with pastoralism and small-scale subsistence farming as the key sources of livelihood. The population lives in scattered villages and is mostly unable to afford the basic amenities of life. The levels of poverty are dire with most families having to survive with almost no daily income. There are limited income earning opportunities worsened by lack of skills. The effect of this poverty is manifest in the difficulty that families face including challenges in accessing basic needs particularly food, clothing and health care. COVID-19 did not devastate this area as feared, but there has been a low up take of the vaccine. With an average household size of ten members, feeding the family is often a huge task and during periods of food scarcity it is not uncommon for members to be affected by nutrition related illnesses. Child marriage is widely practiced in the area, fuelled particularly by rising poverty and the loss of livelihood; people feel that they have no choice but to marry off their daughters to receive a bride price.

Generally, Lakes State is plagued by localized violence, including intercommunal violence linked to cattle raiding and revenge killing. The abundant availability of weapons escalates even the simplest conflicts, especially during periods of major stress such as prolonged food insecurity and economic hardships. The conflict shifted the way that child marriage is perceived. The militarization of the population and a huge proliferation of small arms over the years have also led families to use early forced marriage to protect their daughters against sexual violence, rape and pregnancy before marriage as a way of upholding family honour.

The extreme weather and climatic conditions experienced in Lakes State have a significant effect on the local population. Traditionally, the area experiences two annual weather seasons, the rainy season from June to October and the dry season from November to May. As a result of climate change, torrential rains often lead to flooding in parts of the state, inhibiting access, affecting agricultural activities and leading to crop losses. During the dry season, daytime temperatures can reach up to 40 degrees Celsius, limiting productivity.

2.3 Loreto in Rumbek

As mentioned above, the Loreto Sisters came to Rumbek, on the invitation of the Bishop, in 2006. From the original intention of establishing a girls' secondary boarding school, the Sisters have responded, in a considered and careful way, to manifest needs within the local community and have

² Human Development Index of UNDP: analyses of education (mean of years of schooling), health (life expectancy at birth) and standard of living (gross national income per capita). <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>

³ UNOCHA- South Sudan Humanitarian Snapshot November 2021

⁴ UNOCHA- South Sudan Humanitarian Snapshot November 2021

developed complementary programmes while retaining education as the central focus of all activities. The evolving responses may have been organic in nature, but that is not to say that the programmes grew in a haphazard fashion.

Today, there are 127 staff in total across the various activities in Maker Kuei.

Project	Total staff	Of whom			
		Religious	Lay		
			South Sudanese	Expatriate	
				Kenyan	Ugandan
Loreto SS Rumbek	16		3	4	9
Loreto primary school	12	1	5	4	2
Agric. Training	1		1		
Primary Health Care and Nutrition	3		2		1
Administration (including finance, development, pastoral, logistics etc)	17	2	7	4	4
Interns (including 5 males)	35		35		
Contracted – support staff (cooks, cleaners, watchmen, drivers etc)	43		43		
Totals	127	3	96	12	16
<i>Note: the 127 staff are contracted workers with at least a one-year renewable contract. In addition, there are at least 50 casual workers at any given time, all local and mostly working in the agricultural sector</i>					

The three main programmes and associated projects are described below.

2.3.1 Girls' Secondary School

The school opened its doors in 2008, admitting 35 girls in its first year. The first students graduated in 2010. As of December 2022, there are 356 girls enrolled in the school, with a teaching staff of 16. Based on results, the school ranks in the top five schools in the country.

In the period since 2008, a total of 345 girls have graduated from the school. Currently, there are 71 graduates enrolled in third level education, the majority pursuing degrees in education, medicine, business and IT.

The decision to establish a boarding school instead of a day school was not taken lightly. In the first instance, the Sisters wanted to attract students from throughout South Sudan, conscious of the need, after decades of conflict, to promote a culture of acceptance and cooperation. In addition, having girls within the secure environment of a boarding school and away from their families mitigates the danger of early and forced marriage. Even though the school enters into a contract with senior males in the

girls' extended families, committing them to allow the girls to complete their education before marriage, the threat of early marriage is still very real and part of the school's success rests on this family contract.

2.3.2 Co-educational Primary School

The primary school opened in 2010. It does not have a boarding facility, taking in children from the surrounding area. As of December 2022, 1,402 pupils are enrolled (610 girls, 792 boys), with 12 teaching staff, 13 interns and six support staff. Seven watchmen and two drivers are shared by all the programmes in the Loreto compound.

2.3.3 Primary Health Care Centre

The Centre started work in 2016 and had over 40,000 consultations in 2022. In addition to general primary health care, there are regular clinics for maternal and child health, nutrition and the Expanded Program on Immunization. There are three clinical staff at the Centre as well as eight support staff. The recruitment of additional qualified medical staff is under way.

In the feeding programme, over one million nutritious meals were provided in 2022, mainly for students of both the primary and secondary school, very vulnerable people in the community and staff at Loreto compound. In 2022 more than 200 children under five benefited from nutrition support provided through the nutrition feeding programme.

2.3.4 Associated Projects

Agriculture Project

Agricultural production in South Sudan remains significantly low and is heavily reliant on rainfall. Erratic or delayed rains often result in poor or no harvests. Conflict and mass displacement continue to force farmers from their fields during key times in the planting season, rendering most households food insecure for large parts of the year.

Agriculture and internal food production have been identified as key components of ensuring sustainability in the Loreto programme, particularly in food security. Agricultural activities in the school are implemented with the active participation of both students as well as community members working as casual workers. The promotion of non-traditional farming methods including irrigation and green house farming is a key element in ensuring that there is produce from the farm all year round.

Professional Internship Programme

The Professional Internship Programme provides a platform for young women who have recently graduated from secondary school to have an experience where they get to improve their skills and knowledge working in various areas, learn basic computer use as well as obtaining English language accreditation. Supporting these recent graduates in the one- or two-year programme improves their awareness of the available career opportunities beyond secondary school, as well as helping their approach and preparation to studying at third level. In 2022, 50 secondary school graduates enrolled in the programme.

Vocational Training

Lack of relevant market-oriented skills has been a big contributor to unemployment in South Sudan, where over 50% of the youth population is unemployed. This high unemployment is driven by low

levels of education, limited skills among the youth, as well as few opportunities offered by the weak national economy. Loreto Rumbek seeks to provide a platform for the local youth to chart their own paths to sustainability through linking them with opportunities to learn skills in their areas of interest. Opportunities available in the Loreto mission include learning computer use and applications, tailoring, block making, and masonry. Fifty-four participants availed of vocational training in 2022.

2.4 Loreto Rumbek Strategic Plan 2022-2025

The current Loreto Strategic Plan aims to move away from emergencies and expansion and into a five-year period of internal growth, sustainability, advocacy and the delivery of holistic education. The plan has four goals, targeting all departments within Loreto Rumbek. The goals are:

- Goal 1: Provide holistic quality education to the students, staff and workers of Loreto Rumbek
- Goal 2: Loreto Rumbek is a place where every student, teacher, health worker and farm worker is aware of and accountable for the impact they have in creating an environmentally, economically, and equitably sustainable future.
- Goal 3: Loreto Rumbek has strengthened organisational capacity with strong governance, leadership and succession planning in place.
- Goal 4: Loreto Rumbek will be guided by its values and ethos across all its programmes, and will be a place where all people are treated with dignity regardless of ability, creed, or ethnic background.

2.5 Misesan Cara Support to Activities of Loreto Rumbek

Misesan Cara funding to the Loreto Sisters in Rumbek is summarised in the following table (all figures in €).

Project	Misesan Cara Funds	IBVM Funds ⁵	Total
Loreto SS Rumbek	1,134,025	€1,759,553	2,893,578
Maker Kuei PS	450,000	€1,134,114	1,584,114
Agric. Training & Nutrition	74,960	€25,200	100,160
Primary Health Care	334,500	€474,326	808,826
Access to Clean Water	75,000	€94,419	169,419
Capacity Development	7,015	€7,136	14,151
Emergency Funding	27,078	€25,853	52,931
Totals	2,102,578	€3,520,601	5,623,179

⁵ This includes funds from other donors and from IBVM. It does not include all funding but included the co funding for Misesan Cara funded projects where information is available.

3. Brief

3.1 Summary and Scope

After sixteen years, during which significant work has been done in Rumbek and support provided by Miseen Cara, both the Loreto Sisters and Miseen Cara are interested in assessing the challenges met, the impact achieved and the prospects for the future. In particular, the Loreto Sisters are concerned with the consolidation of programme activities into the future.

3.2 Strategic Purpose of the Review

The review is expected to address the following strategic objectives, to which explicit and detailed answers are expected in the final report:

1. To assess how the programmes in Rumbek have evolved to date and to propose how they might continue to evolve in the future
2. To assess the impact of the girls' secondary boarding school on the lives of students, both those who have passed through and those who are still attending.
3. To assess how best the Sisters can plan for the localisation of programme activities.

3.3 Specific Objectives

Through collection and analysis of evidence (qualitative and quantitative) from a wide range of sources, using appropriate methodologies and drawing on existing data sets for comparison where possible, the review is expected to answer the following questions:

Question 1 – How has the presence of the Loreto Sisters in Rumbek impacted on surrounding communities in terms of knowledge, attitudes and practices related to education, health, livelihoods and the position of girls and women in society.

Question 2 – What has been the impact of the girls' secondary boarding school on the lives of students, both those who have passed through and those who are still attending, and also their families?

Question 3 – Has Loreto Rumbek supported the development of regional and national policy in terms of girls' education and girls' rights? If so, in what ways? And has Loreto Rumbek supported the development of the Catholic Church's approach to education at national and diocesan level? If so, in what ways?

Question 4 – What has been the contribution of the programmes in Rumbek, and the presence of the projects there, to the promotion of peace and inter-community harmony in South Sudan?

Question 5 – Considering the current situation in South Sudan, and the strategic objectives to reduce donor dependency, increase local contributions and increase the number of local qualified staff, suggest a realistic approach and time-frame for the localisation of programme activities. In this context, localisation is understood to include significantly reducing the reliance on expatriate personnel and increasing self-reliance while maintaining equitable accessibility to education and health care.

Question 6 – To what extent has the Missionary Approach to Development Activities (MADI) as described by Miseen Cara⁶, contributed to the evolution and implementation of activities in Rumbek?

⁶ <https://www.miseancara.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Missionary-Approach-Conceptual-Framework-and-Current-Context-July2018-2.pdf>

It is anticipated that the review will involve a significant amount of field work in Rumbek.

4. Expected deliverables

For the accompaniment of this review, a Steering Group will be formed of representatives of IBVM and Misesan Cara. While individuals may be made responsible for dealing with the consultant on a day-to-day basis, any substantive discussions with the consultant, including the pre-inception, Inception and Validation meetings, will be held with the full Steering Group.

Inception Report

In line with the overall brief, this report will outline a detailed, finalised methodology as well as a work-plan, suggested approach, data collection tools and timeline. This report will be developed in collaboration with IBVM and Misesan Cara. A draft report should be developed first, and feedback incorporated, before the final Inception Report is submitted. The Inception report should be around 8 – 10 pages excluding annexes (please avoid unnecessary annexes; only add them if essential).

Final Report

One report collating evidence, key observations, and learning, taking into account all the activities reviewed, and also including targeted recommendations to IBVM Rumbek. A draft report should be developed first, shared with all stakeholders and feedback incorporated after the validation workshop, before the final Report is submitted. This report should be around 20-25 pages long (excluding annexes) and should make clear reference looking ahead at the coming 10 years.

Summary PowerPoint Presentation

A PowerPoint presentation capturing the key insights and findings from the review in terms of overall learning (20-25 succinct PowerPoint slides).

5. Timeframe

It is expected that the preferred tender will be selected by the end of March 2023 and contracts issued by early April 2023. Prospective consultants may propose what they feel are appropriate methodologies, taking account of risks and restrictions associated with travel in South Sudan and with COVID-19. While it is anticipated that interviews and meetings will take place through a mixture of face-to-face and virtual encounters, it is up to the tenderer to propose what they feel is feasible in this regard. Final reports will need to be submitted and approved by mid-October 2023.

Milestone	Timeframe	Activity focus (as per expected deliverables)
Pre-Inception	April 2023	A meeting of the successful tenderer and the Review Steering Group to ensure a clear understanding of the purpose and scope of the review.
Phase One: Inception	To be completed by May 2023	Includes inception meetings, initial interviews and first scan of strategic and project documents. The Inception Report submitted at the end of this phase will finalise agreed methodology and assessment framework, data collection tools and project visit schedule, with provisional agreed dates for Phase Three.
Phase Two: Desk study	To be completed by end of July 2023	Review of key documents and establishment of key objectives to be verified

Milestone	Timeframe	Activity focus (as per expected deliverables)
Phase Three: Primary research and drafting of preliminary report	To be completed by end of August 2023	Interviews and information collection from key stakeholders and interviewees, principally through field work in Rumbek
Phase Four: Drafting of preliminary report	To be completed by the end of September 2023	
Phase Five: Validation	To be completed by mid-October 2023	Drafting of final report, with roundtable discussions with the Rumbek team on validating the findings presented by the consultant. Final report to be submitted after these discussions.

6. Tender Outline and Assessment Criteria

Tender proposals will not exceed 12 pages (excluding annexes) and should be structured according to the following assessment criteria:

Evidence of relevant expertise in the evaluator(s) (Max. 10 Marks)

- Methodological expertise;
- Project cycle management;
- Contextual understanding of South Sudan, politically, socially and economically, together with a knowledge of the sectors in which the Loreto Rumbek projects are active.
- Excellent written and spoken English (local language skills a plus);

The tender proposal should include a full curriculum vitae for every member of the proposed evaluation team.

Evaluator's experience conducting reviews of a similar scale and type (Max. 10 Marks)

- Experience conducting high-budget, country specific reviews;

Demonstrated understanding of the brief (Max. 20 Marks)

- The tender proposal, overall, must demonstrate a detailed understanding of the strategic purpose and specific objectives of the review; and of Misesan Cara's/IBVM's expectations and intended use of deliverables.

Quality of proposed methodology (Max. 20 Marks)

- Robustness of proposed methodology and data collection techniques;
- Feasibility in the given timeframe;
- Meaningful participation by key stakeholders.

Clarity and feasibility of proposed plan for the review process (Max. 20 Marks)

- Provide a detailed, phased work-plan with milestones, key dates and a timeline for completion of all tasks.

Proposed number of consultancy days and value for money (Max. 20 Marks)

- The fee proposal submitted shall be in the form of a lump sum in Euro (€), inclusive of VAT and all expenses, with a detailed breakdown of logistical costs, expenses and billable consultancy time (cost per day and number of days required for each task, the daily or hourly rate for all

members of the proposed evaluator/evaluation team, as well as the amount of hours/days each member will contribute to each task);

- Total budget, including fees, VAT and all other expenses is to be in the range of €15,000 – €22,000;
- Once a fee has been agreed in Euro, no account will be taken of subsequent currency fluctuations.

Proposals should also include:

- Name and contact details of individual/organisation submitting the tender;
- Identification of lead person carrying overall responsibility for the work;
- Confirmation of acceptance of the conditions described in the invitation to tender;
- Confirmation that the consultant/organisation is tax compliant;
- Any further information which the tenderer deems relevant.

7. Terms

The successful tenderer will sign the contract for this review with Misean Cara.

7.1 Budget

The total budget, including fees, VAT and all other expenses is to be in the range of €15,000- €22,000
The overall fee will be paid on a phased basis, as follows:

- 20% upon completion of the inception phase;
- 40% upon completion of Phase Three (primary research);
- 40% upon acceptance of all deliverables.

7.2 Freedom of Information Regarding Tenders

Misean Cara operates under the Irish Government's Freedom of Information Act 1997 and all information held in relation to this tendering process (including queries and proposals submitted in response to this brief) may be subject to requests under the Act.

7.3 Copyright and Ownership

Copyright and ownership of all documentation relating to this evaluation must be assigned to Misean Cara and IBVM. All documents produced by the successful tenderer in connection with this appointment and submitted to Misean Cara and IBVM will be considered the property of Misean Cara and IBVM and may be used by either at any time, including for other projects, without prior approval.

7.4 Insurance and Tax

A copy of a valid, current Tax Clearance Certificate will be required prior to formal appointment of the successful tenderer and all matters in relation to insurance and tax affairs will be the successful tenderer's responsibility. Also, as noted earlier, all fees and costs outlined in the proposal must be inclusive of VAT.

7.5 Child Protection and Safeguarding

The evaluator(s) will be expected to adhere to Misean Cara's Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy, Misean Cara's Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy, and to the related policies and procedures of IBVM.

7.6 Governance and Accountability

A steering group will be formed from Miseen Cara and IBVM representatives. The evaluator(s) will report to the Steering Group, which will meet on a regular basis. For all logistical and practical issues requests and queries, the evaluator(s) will liaise with IBVM in Rumbek. The evaluator(s) will also work with other relevant Miseen Cara and IBVM staff where necessary.

8. Tendering Procedure and Timeframe

Requests for additional information can be made via email to tender@miseancara.ie in advance of submitting a tender proposal. A log will be kept of such queries and any additional information provided will be shared with other prospective tenderers. Preliminary indication by email of an intention to submit a tender proposal will ensure you are on this communication list.

Tender proposals will not exceed 12 pages in length, excluding appendices, if relevant, and will form part of the Terms of Reference in addition to this Invitation to Tender document. It is envisaged that the preferred tenderer will be selected within 2-3 weeks of the submission deadline and a contract issued immediately thereafter. Tender proposals must be submitted by email to tender@miseancara.ie with the subject line 'IBVM Rumbek Review'.

The deadline for receiving tenders is midnight (Irish Time) Sunday, 26th February.

Annex 1: Documentation for desk review

As part of the desk review the consultant will be expected to review the following documentation from IBVM

- Loreto Rumbek Strategic plan 2022-2025
- Loreto Rumbek Annual Reports 2008-2022 (as available)
- Secondary School registration, results and graduation records, 2008-2022
- Primary School registration, results and graduation records, 2010-2022 (gender disaggregated).
- Health Centre records 2016-2022 (respecting anonymity)
- Effectiveness review by Out of the Box (2018)
- Proposals and reports to Misesan Cara
- Case studies of project participants

Annex 2: Suggested list of interviewees

As part of the evaluation, the consultant will be expected to interview the following stakeholders. However, the list is not exhaustive and might include more people depending on need.

1. Representatives from IBVM

- Director and other staff from the team in Rumbek
- Representatives from the Irish Province Leadership team, including the Missionary Development Officer.

2. Donors

Misesan Cara:

- CEO
- Funding manager
- Education Project Officer

Other Donors:

- Representatives from other donors to be identified

3. Relevant government officials, including the state governor and representatives of relevant state-level ministries in Lakes State.
4. Local community leaders
5. Current students of the secondary school, individually and in groups
6. Past students of the secondary school (individually and in groups, in-person and remote)
7. Staff of the schools and health centre
8. Diocesan representatives