



CLM INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS



PRESENTATION

This document intends to expand the organizational bases agreed upon at the International Assemblies (including the continental agreements). We hope that this will allow us to have in a single document the organizational and identity aspects approved by all.

The objective of this document is not to dictate what should be the only way for us to be CLM. Rather, it is intended as a set of guidelines, agreed upon by all, through which we can recognize ourselves as CLM. It encompasses the essential elements of the CLM vocation while respecting the diversity of each country. Each CLM group has a charter or statute addressing more in detail what concerns their country specifically.

INTRODUCTION

In a vision of Church as communion, the charism of St. Daniel Comboni is a gift of the Spirit for the particular churches where CLM are present. As a Comboni Lay Missionary Movement, we are an expression of the missionary dimension of our respective local churches – both the churches that send and those that receive missionaries, and we witness for Christ in our everyday life and our economic, social, political, cultural realities, as we live by the values of the Kingdom of God. We do this in communion with the rest of the Comboni family.

And since we want to live our charism together, that is why we acknowledge, we declare, we pray: **One world, one humanity, one common response!**

CRITERIA TO BE A CLM

To be admitted as a member of the Association, the person must have clear that:

- a) The CLM have Christ as teacher and guide, who encourages them to go and meet the other. Their life must be consistent with their beliefs.
- b) We are defined by our choice to follow Jesus Christ in an ecclesial context.
- c) Prayer, the Word of God and the charism we share with the Comboni Family prompt us to make common cause with the poorest and most abandoned.



- d) Each CLM engages in pastoral and/or social activities, integrating themselves into the local Church.
- e) A CLM is a mature person, lay, with a missionary spirit and the necessary adaptability for him/her to live together with others and work as a team.
- f) A CLM must have an adequate human, Christian, Comboni and professional formation.
- g) A CLM must be able to work in a team.
- h) A CLM must commit to serving others as an expression of their Christian faith.
- i) A CLM is committed to fulfilling the aims of the Association
- j) To become a member of the Association, a candidate must have completed the formative stage of discernment as per the following guidelines:
 - In order for aspirants to be able to join the missionary action of the Association adequately, they will work towards a clear discernment of their missionary and Comboni vocation as lay people.
 - This period of discernment and accompaniment lasts about a year. During this time, the candidate attends the formation meetings of their local group and is actively involved in the group's activities. A missionary and Comboni formation is provided to complement their preparation.
 - During this stage, personal accompaniment is necessary, as well as experiencing faith as a community.
 - At the end of this period of discernment, the candidate applies in writing to the Coordinating Team of their country to become a member of the Association. The Coordinating Team will make a decision on the basis of this request, and the reports from the advisor and the candidate's group of origin.
 - The admittance of the new CLM must be ratified by the Assembly of the country of origin on its first occasion. This step should be celebrated or formalized through an external sign (usually during a Eucharistic celebration).

PURPOSE OF THE MOVEMENT

- a) To work for the evangelization, promotion and integral development of the peoples to whom our members are sent, preferably the poorest and most abandoned.
- b) To prepare and send Comboni Lay Missionaries on mission; to accompany their missionary service and attend to their needs in the place of destination and upon their return.
- c) To promote missionary animation and the involvement of our members in their local churches.
- d) To participate on a personal and community level in the different intra and extra ecclesial forums of proclamation and denunciation, in coordination with other related movements.
- e) To accompany and nourish the missionary vocation of our members throughout their life, wherever the Lord calls them in every moment of their life.
- f) To offer an environment for community growth and accompaniment, which may strengthen the CLM identity and the life commitment of our members wherever they are.
- g) To ensure that our communities create opportunities of communication, integration and common formation to maintain the bonds as CLM family.
- h) To pave the way for the laity in mission, by working on gaining autonomy, strengthening the different groups, increasing our level of organization and living our common identity while remaining open to the Spirit.
- i) To Be a Christian community of reference for its members, with each local community scheduling prayer meetings on their calendar, as well as retreats, participation to sacraments and evaluation of their community life.



CLM IDENTITY

The CLM movement was created to serve the missionary needs of the world. Going beyond our own personal, cultural and country boundaries in order to reach out to others and attend their needs continues to be our priority as CLM. We must respond in two ways to the call to go beyond our own culture: both on a personal level (to answer the call each one of us receives) and on a CLM group level (assuming, as a group, the responsibility of enabling others to go on mission and do so on our behalf), broadening the missionary dimension of the Church. We know that, nowadays, mission cannot be understood in geographical terms only. In the globalised world we live in, new realities have emerged, both outside of our countries and within, calling for a missionary presence. Recognising these new areas of intervention, responding accordingly as a CLM Family, and following through with this commitment, is essential in our service as a missionary movement, acting not only on the consequences but, above all, on the causes of injustice.

We believe that missionary outreach beyond one's own culture, language, etc. is a constitutive part of our missionary vocation and a moment of grace for every CLM. Like Comboni, we recognize that those who give themselves totally to missionary service, making it the center of their life, whether they leave or remain in their home country, are an essential part of our CLM family with equal rights and obligations. If we make mission the center of our life, and put ourselves at its service, we will form a large family, through which we will be better able to serve the poorest and most abandoned of our world in each historical time.

What should characterize us CLM, therefore, is the commitment to fulfilling God's mission, at the time and place that the Lord chooses for us at any moment, rather than just when serving on mission abroad. And this is our vocational proposal to all those wishing to join our missionary movement, whether willing to offer their life for the mission abroad or at home (through a variety of services: formation, mission promotion, fundraising etc.).

We also encourage our country groups to establish CLM communities within their own countries, to serve in different missionary fields (supporting immigrants, JPIC, indigenous peoples, pastoral work in areas not sufficiently evangelized, etc.)

Only by being united and accepting our co-responsibility in our common mission will we fulfill our nature of International CLM movement.

Our identity is defined through the following three aspects:

Lay

- We are mature men and women, single or married.
- Actively engaged in the secular world (work, family, ...).
- Aware of the value of cultural diversity, we are formed in a human, professional and Christian way.
- In our country of origin, we support ourselves by our own work.
- We work for the values of the Kingdom of God, promoting the liberation and evangelization of peoples.
- We have a Christian vocation and a sense of ecclesial belonging.
- We have mature faith and clear motivation for mission.
- We define ourselves by our option to follow Jesus Christ in an ecclesial and communitarian context:
 - Animating the local Church and the social context in which we live.
 - Dedicating ourselves to promoting human liberation, justice and peace.



Missionary

- We CLM live the mission as a response to our Christian vocation.
- We have a clear and positive disposition to go on mission among non-evangelized peoples or those still needing to strengthen their faith as Christian communities.
- We CLM want to share our life with the people to whom we are sent. This implies giving and receiving in all aspects, including our faith, abilities etc.
- As Christians, CLM announce the Gospel:
 - With our life testimony;
 - With our commitment in the civil society through our work and our effort to promote integral human development, human liberation, justice and peace;
 - With our commitment in pastoral activities, promoting a ministerial Church;
 - by engaging in Missionary Animation within the Church.
- We promote missionary vocations.
- We take the side of the underprivileged, making them protagonists of their own liberation.

Comboni

- As members of the Comboni Family, we CLM live our vocation according to St. Daniel Comboni's charism, adapting it to our lay status.
- In general, we work in co-responsibility and collaboration with the other members of the Comboni Family.
- This implies:
 - a) Identification with the charism, knowledge about our founder and his spirituality, as our chosen way to be witnesses of Jesus's Gospel.
 - b) "Saving Africa with Africa": being animators and promoters of local lay people.
 - c) Making a preferential option for the most excluded and impoverished, an option which, to be authentic, has to stem from our faith and aims at influencing the sectors of politics, education, economy, etc. as an expression of our willingness to bear the cross with the crucified of today.
 - d) Community life as a fundamental dimension of missionary life, to be carried out in CLM communities (where possible), and in the form of apostolic community with the Comboni Missionaries and other pastoral agents. It implies living in sobriety and sharing with the people.
 - e) Continuing the missionary work also in the country of origin, especially by getting involved in the promotion of justice and solidarity, by testifying our charism through our lifestyle and contributing to the continuation of our presence and projects in our missions abroad.
 - f) As members of the Comboni family, we believe that CLM, MCCJ, Comboni Missionary Sisters and Comboni Missionary Seculars should organise common moments of sharing, e.g. assemblies (where other members of the family are invited as observers), retreats, Comboni feasts, etc.

MISSION FIELDS

Our priorities in missionary action as CLM will be:

- As CLM, we are called to awaken the missionary consciousness of the Church by promoting missionary vocations within the Church.
- We are called to be in a frontier situation, which doesn't mean necessarily a geographic location, but rather for us to choose to stay where no one else wants to.
- Empowering leaders in Mission places: "Saving Africa with Africa".
- Strengthening and giving continuity to our CLM presence in the communities where we are active.



Criteria to take into account in the choice of a missionary field:

- The needs of the local Church;
- to give preference to places of first evangelization and among the poorest;
- The preparation and talents of the particular CLM available for that service / who will serve there/ has given his/her availability for that service/to be sent;
- That the projects where we are involved are approved in the country that welcomes the CLM community;
- To design Clear and sustainable projects that guarantee continuity;
- Places where the CLM may live in a community, so as to facilitate mutual help, formation, internationality, testimony of the Gospel, and where everyone can find their place;
- Attending to the reality of families with children where necessary.

Possible modalities of intervention:

- **Pastoral modality:** Where the CLM community has a high level of responsibility in the pastoral action of the parish, being a reference for the local Christian community. We consider an advantage the possibility this gives us to engage in the explicit proclamation of the faith, as well as the possibility to represent a model of Church which is closer to the people. Examples of pastoral activities that the CLM community can engage in: accompanying local groups or communities, formation of the laity, family ministry, life testimony, pastoral organization etc., so as to implement the pastoral plans of the parish.
- **Social Modality:** the CLM community should be involved in the problems of justice and peace, community development, etc. This modality encompasses a very large field of action, and the related activities allow us CLM to better introduce ourselves in the community and the reality where we live. Examples of activities we can engage in: support to community initiatives of human formation (cooperatives etc.), social action activities in the line of justice and peace, activities with disadvantaged groups (street children, etc.).
- **Professional Modality:** Working in the local structures on the same level as locals. In this way we do not create new things, but we support what is already in place and the work is done from inside, strengthening the local structures, engaging in the professional training of local people, etc. We try not to steal jobs from the local laity but to strengthen the local structures from inside by exercising our profession.

We can adopt one or more of these modalities within the same community or area of action.

FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE CLM METHODOLOGY

"Saving Africa through Africa"

- acknowledging people's dignity;
- developing a listening attitude, and an attitude of cooperation, co-responsibility and fraternity;
- Empowering local leaders in evangelization and human promotion;
- Empowering local people and accompanying them so that they themselves become protagonists of their own lives;
- Promoting people's maturity, not their dependency.

Making common cause with the people

- Avoiding falling into the temptation of creating superstructures or personal projects;
- Being at the service of the people, living in simplicity;
- developing Projects based on the needs and possibilities of the local Church;



Inculturation and Interreligious Dialogue

- Respect for people's culture, traditions and religion; it is therefore important that we know the language, the country, the area where we are called to serve;
- introducing ourselves in the new cultural environment with an attitude of humility;
- To know and respect the beliefs and rhythms of the people;
- To be sensitive to their spirituality and to transmit solid certainties based on the Word, and not our own doubts;
- To be a sign of communion and to favor interethnic and interreligious dialogue;
- A sense of giving and receiving.
- Only by accepting that the poor do evangelize us will we be in the condition of being good missionaries.

Evangelizing as a community

- To create an apostolic community of men, women, children, singles, married, ordained, etc.
- to be models of evangelizing communities;
- to remember that the Gospel, when read, assimilated and lived in the community, acquires its proper coherence and becomes a solution for our concrete situations;
- to engage in dialogue and offer mutual support. Dialogue should be a constant element in the formation process of a CLM and a way to resolve conflicts;
- to enhance our own formation and internationality;
- to ensure the presence of a coordinator in each group. This should become regular praxis.
- We aim at embracing a community lifestyle where we may feel free to share who we are, what we experience, and what we have.
- It is important that we remain in touch with the local Church of origin.

How we live

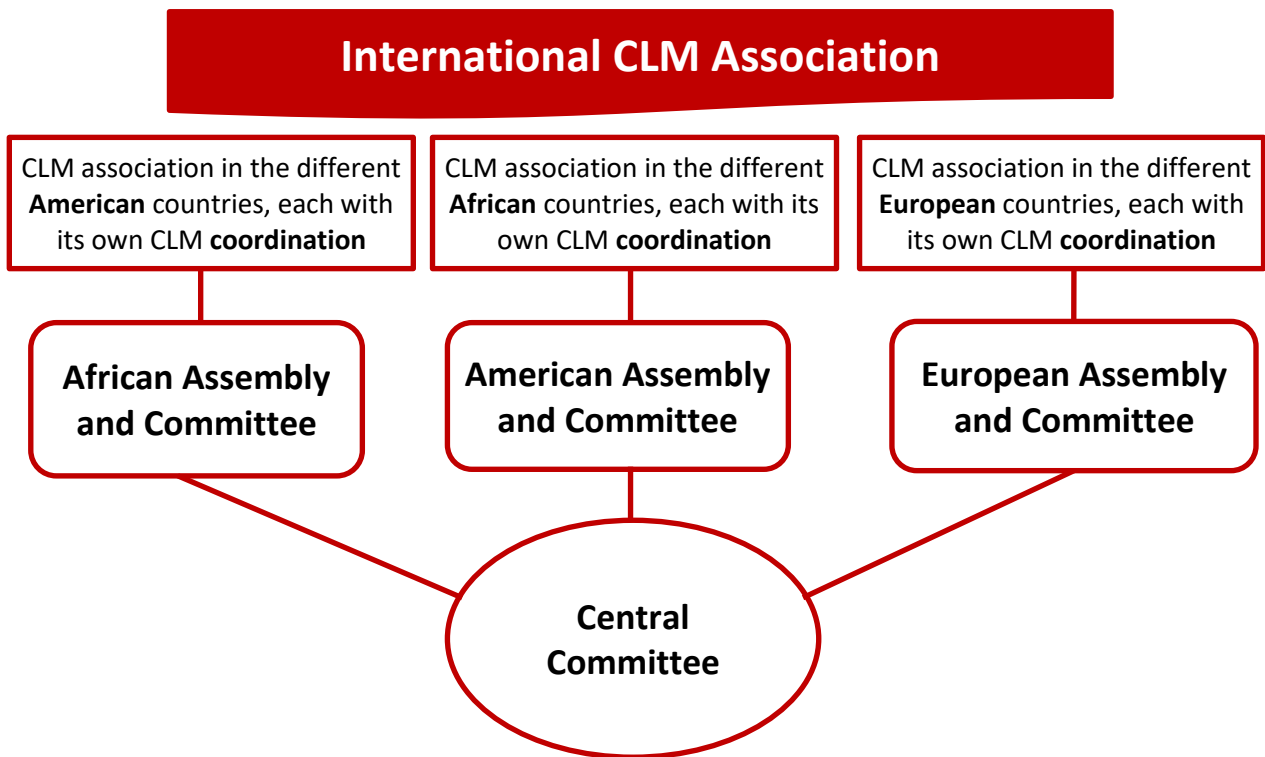
- We CLM should be characterized by our availability, that is, putting ourselves at the service of the Mission.
- Adjusting our lifestyle to the reality of the people around us, living a modest and simple life. Yet, without denying our own culture and identity.
- An evangelical lifestyle adopting poor means.
- The clear choice we have made of living in solidarity with-the poor implies that we should be there, with the poor, minimizing any gap between us.
- Austerity of means and structures should mark our lifestyle and our presence in Mission.
- The community should be the center of the Mission and of our missionary style. Where there is a family, this should be the first domestic community to be cared for and the starting point for our work of evangelization.
- We should avoid having only two people in a place of mission, since it can cause isolation. Therefore, it would be convenient to form larger teams.
- In whichever professional activity the CLM might be involved in, this should be done as a form of evangelization and as an expression of their Christian faith, to avoid being perceived simply as technicians or aid worker. Also, our intervention should always aim at promoting the integral development of the person.



GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Organization Chart of the Comboni Lay Missionaries (CLM) Association

The statutes of each country, as well as our continental and international agreements, define the different responsibilities we have in the Association.



International CLM Association:

The structure of our Association was created to facilitate our common mission as CLM. We think it is vital that we all understand that this mission can be carried out only through the effort of each CLM, with their life testimony, through our communities and our groups in each country, as well as the collaboration we may have at continental and intercontinental level.

For this reason, at the top of the organizational chart stands our association - which takes shape in the missionary life of each CLM - so that our coordinating teams at all levels may not forget that they should be at the service of our common mission.

The international General Assembly is the arena we can use for our common discernment and for sharing new ideas on what we want to achieve as an international CLM family. This is the organism which produces the general agreements guiding our activity at international level. It is then up to each country, community and individual CLM to acknowledge, to adopt these guidelines and put them into practice in their life and missionary service, according to their particular circumstances and concrete realities.

International Assembly

Convocation of the International General Assembly

The Ordinary General Assembly is held every six years and is called by the Central Committee, at least three months in advance, by means of a written convocation sent by the secretary to all the CLM country groups. The convocation shall indicate the date and place of the meeting, as well as its agenda.



Participants:

It is constituted by the representatives of the different countries where the CLM association is active. Each country will be represented by two CLM with voting rights. If necessary, depending on the circumstances of a group, their MCCJ advisor may attend.

The participation of CLM representatives from each country in the assembly is essential.

The Assembly is validly constituted when two thirds of those convoked are present at the first call; otherwise, it meets at the second call, half an hour later, regardless of the number of attendees.

Extraordinary General Assembly and its convocation

The Extraordinary General Assembly shall be convened whenever the Central Committee or one third of the members of the Association consider it convenient for the good of the Association, indicating the day, time and place of the meeting and the agenda of the same, giving at least fifteen days' notice.

An extraordinary assembly may be convoked online for the purpose of discussing or approving an urgent matter that cannot be postponed until the next ordinary assembly.

Tasks of the International General Assembly:

- a) The international assembly is the body responsible for approving the general proposals of the CLM association at the international level for the next 6 years.
- b) To safeguard the aims of the association.
- c) To elect and dismiss the members of the Central Committee.
- d) To evaluate the implementation of the proposals established at the international level in past assemblies and the management of the Central Committee.
- e) To authentically interpret the Statutes of the Association.
- f) To modify the Statutes of the Association, submitting them to the competent authority for approval.
- g) To propose the dissolution of the Association.

The voting system in the Assembly:

Decisions must be taken, as a general rule, by consensus.

- Voting shall be by a show of hands (unless a CLM member requests a secret ballot), requiring an absolute majority in the first ballot or a simple majority in case of following ballots.
- In order to elect the Central Committee, an attempt shall be made to reach a consensus, or at least a debate shall be held with proposals, so that the general impressions of the members of the assembly on suitable candidates and possible composition of the Committee may be known. Subsequently, the candidates will be presented and a vote will be taken. The vote shall be by secret ballot. An absolute majority is required on the first ballot while a simple majority is sufficient on subsequent ballots.
- To vote on decisions that modify the consensus of previous assemblies, the approval of 2/3 of the assembly is required.

The general assembly shall meet every 6 years.

In preparation for each general assembly, a working document will be prepared and distributed well in advance to each country group, to facilitate as much as possible the participation of all CLM in the decisions to be taken at the assembly itself.



Central Committee:

The Central Committee shall be composed of 4 CLM and 1 MCCJ advisor delegated by the General Council of the MCCJ. From among the members of the Central Committee the assembly shall elect a coordinator.

Substitution:

- In case the MCCJ delegate of the General Council is replaced, it is up to the MCCJ General Council to appoint another person in his place.
- In the event that any of the four CLM members should quit their role before the end of their term their replacement will be sought by the Central Committee itself.

In order to avoid excessive centralization of the Association, the Continental Committees and the coordinating teams of each country must be active and implement their specific tasks.

The Central Committee meets regularly, based on a calendar it will determine itself, in the form and with the agenda that it determines.

The Central Committee normally functions by consensus. If consensus is not reached, a decision shall be taken based on the majority of the votes cast. The coordinator shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.

The members of the Central Committee are elected for a term of six years and may be re-elected for a consecutive term.

Tasks of the Central Committee

The following tasks pertain to the Central Committee. Its members shall discuss together how to perform and distribute them among themselves.

- a) To convoke the International Assembly, inviting the representatives of CLM groups of all countries to attend, as well as representatives of the branches of the Comboni Family.
- b) To disseminate the international documents and agreements.
- c) To reflect on the agreements approved by the assembly and on the best way to carry them forward.
- d) To stimulate reflection on the commitments taken at the international general assembly, in order to encourage all CLM everywhere to follow through on the agreements made.
- e) To promote communication among all countries.
- f) To foster exchange of experiences among all.
- g) To maintain regular contact with the coordinating teams of the CLM groups in the different countries.
- h) To Maintain contact with the continental committees.
- i) To maintain contact with the international communities.
- j) To Represent the Association externally.
- k) To liaise with the General Councils of the Comboni Family.
- l) To mediate between the different CLM groups and provinces, realities, etc. in order to further the aims of the association.
- m) To Manage the website, blog and international formation platform.
- n) To sign contracts and obligations on behalf of the association.
- o) To draw up and keep the minutes of the Central Committee and the General Assemblies, as well as their convocation.
- p) To draw up the letters, documents and certificates to be issued by the Association at the international level.
- q) To take care of the files and archives of the Association at the international level.
- r) To encourage discernment and financial commitment within the Association.
- s) To manage the funds of the Association at the international level as decided by the International Assembly.
- t) To prepare, each year, a financial report and the budget for the following year. It shall also send the annual financial report and budget to all CLM groups.
- u) To Coordinate the external fundraising for the needs of the association at the international level.



- v) To Coordinate the sending of CLM members to international missions, and organize visits to international communities when necessary.
- w) To endorse the statutes of the groups in each country and their renewals, in agreement with the statutes or international agreements.
- x) To Assist new members in countries where the CLM has not yet been established in their process of discernment.

The MCCJ advisor and his duties

The Comboni Lay Missionaries shall request the Superior General of the MCCJ to appoint a MCCJ advisor, who may attend and intervene in all the meetings of the Central Committee. His mission is to accompany the team and the running of the association in general, offering an external point of view, which will help us in our missionary choices and in the way we live our charism.

Commissions

We are open to the possibility of creating commissions at the international level to enhance the growth of the association. These commissions will depend on the Central Committee.

If the assembly approves a permanent commission (for example, a commission of economy, communication, etc.). the coordinator of this commission may be elected during the General assembly, after the election of the new members of the Central Committee.

In order to strengthen the groups in each country and the continental organization, we propose that:

1. We must strive more to achieve autonomy in all fields.
2. Each CLM should take charge for whatever needs to be done which falls within their responsibility, and do it well.
3. We acknowledge that the path towards autonomy goes through the effort of strengthening ourselves in terms of organization, economy and formation;
4. All the CLM and the MCCJ advisors should know the international and continental agreements. These should be included in the statutes of each country group and in their continuous formation.
5. Following the conclusion of any continental or intercontinental meeting, the commitments made should be acknowledged by each country group, adapted to their specific situation and included in their statutes or action plans.

Continental Assemblies

The continental assemblies will meet at least every 3 years.

Each continental assembly shall be made up of representatives from the different countries where the CLM Association is established within that specific continent. Each country shall be represented by two CLM with voting rights. If necessary, depending on the circumstances of a group, their MCCJ advisor may attend.

Each continental assembly will elect a Continental Committee, formed according to what has been decided in each continent.

Responsibilities of the Continental Assembly:

1. To elect and dismiss the Continental Committee.
2. To evaluate the progress of the implementation of the proposals established at the international level and their fulfillment within the continent.
3. To Evaluate the continental proposals of previous assemblies and elaborate proposals for the coming years.
4. To evaluate the management of the Continental Committee.



Responsibilities of the Continental Committee:

1. To Convene and prepare the continental meetings;
2. To carry out the decisions taken at the previous assemblies (continental or international), taking into account the various topics dealt with by the Assembly itself (identity, organization, formation, communication, finances, Comboni Family, ...);
3. To be in constant communication with the Central Committee and with the groups within the same continent.
4. To promote communication among the different countries. Maintaining communication between us, as members of the same family, is fundamental.
5. To Promote meetings between the coordinators of the different countries, for them to be able to exchange experiences, formation, organization... in order to follow the agreements made. Special meetings could also be organized for those involved in different services within the groups such as economy, formation, communication, etc.

CLM group of each country.

We are aware of the diversity of our groups, in terms of structure, number of members or their historical background. In this sense, the following proposals are given to guide our internal organization. It is up to each group to find the best way to implement the tasks according to its possibilities and particular reality:

1. To create a coordinating team composed of: a coordinator, a secretary and a treasurer - elected during the national assembly by the CLM themselves – and an MCCJ advisor delegated by the Provincial Council. The coordinating team should send its reports to the Central and Continental Committee.
2. A person in charge of communications (Web, Blog, Social Networks...).
3. A formation team that should: plan and prepare the themes of the formation; ensure the follow-up and evaluation of the formation given.
4. Each local group must have someone in charge of training who will liaise with those responsible at the national level.
5. There is only one CLM group in each country, which includes local and expatriate members. Therefore, we should have a common program decided in the assembly of each country, a coordinating team that takes the important decisions together, sharing responsibilities among its members. Those CLM who live close to each other should also try to do some activities together, organize moments of prayer and formation, share meals...
6. The CLM assembly of each country should meet annually (or every two years in exceptional cases).
7. The CLM coordinating team of each country shall meet at least twice a year.
8. CLM members living in the same country should meet at least once a year to organize and reflect on the CLM path and share the work done by each community/group. We should also use any available online platform to make sure we meet more often.
9. In those countries where both local CLM and CLM from other countries are present, we urge them to merge their activities and meetings.
10. All CLM in the same country are part of the same association and therefore it does not make sense for them to go different ways. Our common path should combine and respect the rhythm of the different CLM realities of origin, working along a common line based on international agreements and mutual support. We also encourage inviting CLM from other countries to our meetings or assemblies, usually online, to listen to their testimonies, and/or share moments of formation or reflection together. Listening to other voices can help us better understand how CLM from other areas conceive their life as CLM, and create connections.



FORMATION

We Comboni Lay Missionaries are keen that our formation may give credibility to our vocation (holy and capable). Formation must be taken seriously and last long enough for a candidate to mature in their vocation: the call, as a gift from God, to be at the service of the mission.

Formation should prepare the candidate for a lifelong commitment as CLM.

We have approved an "**International CLM Formation Guide**", which all our groups must follow when creating their own programs for the different stages of formation in their country. This guide gathers the previous agreements, explains everything that has to do with our formation and becomes the reference in everything that has to do with it.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

- We want to approach economy in a spiritual way to live a life rooted in trust in Providence and prayer. In this sense, we ask the groups to consider including in their formation programs the topic of how we can develop a relationship with money which implies relying and trusting in God.
- The International Common Fund is a fundamental tool of the CLM movement. Each country group must regularly make a free, annual contribution, decided after appropriate financial discernment, as a way of assuming its co-responsibility in the common mission.
- Knowing that we belong to this CLM family, we are called to responsibly sustain the group. In this sense, all CLM should contribute to the local fund of the group. From this local fund, the group must also contribute to the International Common Fund, managed by the Central Committee. We are aware of the difficulties and differences between the realities of each country where we are present, but we also believe that everyone can contribute in some way. Each member must assume its responsibility for the sustainability of the movement. This can be done with contributions of money, but also with goods or work.
- Do not wait until the end of the year to make contributions to the ICF, and inform the treasurer of the Central Committee.
- The treasurer of the Central Committee will send the annual budget and the annual expenditure report to the different countries. Transparency is very important and will motivate groups and individuals to increase their contributions.
- We must feel co-responsible for the mission. We invite countries with more possibilities to help CLM in other countries because we are one movement.
- In the process of building our financial autonomy, we invite the different groups to train their members in the different financial aspects, such as: realization of development projects based on local needs, fundraising, accounting
- We are also called to encourage the local Church and every person of good will to support our missionary activities.
- Not only should we commit ourselves to developing projects, but we are also encouraged to keep transparent records of our accounts (cash books, bank accounts with more than one signature...).
- The money that is contributed to communities in mission must be transferred through the ICF. If not possible, the Central Committee should at least be informed of the amount sent.
- Each country group should establish their own goals to raise funds for the ICF, based on the budget presented by the Central Committee, and should send a report to the Central Committee each year by the end of March with details on how they are planning to collect these funds, through which concrete activities, or whether they have chosen to contribute to the ICF a certain percentage of the group's annual income.



- The international communities should send the economic information (budget and reports) to the Central Committee, to the local country, and to the country of origin, at least annually, so that the real cost of our missionary presence will be known.
- Each country should prepare its budget and economic report each year (it will be convenient to share it with the Central Committee).
- We should encourage individuals to send personal contributions to the ICF. A nice occasion for collecting such contributions could be, for example, the International CLM Day. It could be a way of consolidating our sense of belonging to our international CLM family. This contribution will be done through one's country group, which then will transfer it to the ICF.
- It is recommended that all treasurers meet online at least once a year. The meeting should be scheduled for the middle of the year. (in case two meetings were to be scheduled for a particular year, each could be held at the beginning of a semester)
- The Central Committee should be informed when a CLM group has requested money to a CLM group of another country or the MCCJ of another province in order for the CC to know and help coordinate this.

Every movement needs financial resources to function.

International financial support:

We have an International Common Fund, which the Central Committee uses to organize its activities.

Based on the budget prepared by the Central Committee, each group will reflect and decide on the amount they can contribute, according to their own means and circumstances (Choosing how much to contribute to the ICF is at the discretion of each country group and the MCCJ provinces where there are CLM, according to the reality of each one).

CLM members, as well as other benefactors, may also make their own individual contributions to this fund.

Projects can be presented, where it is deemed appropriate, to the CLM movement of a country, or the General Council, a Comboni Province or an independent organization that may be able to offer support).

Continental financial support:

How the expenses generated at the continental level are met is something which should be clear. This should be done in accordance with the criteria established by the association, and taking into account the different realities of each continent.

In order to carry out certain activities at continental level, the continental committees may request financial support from the International Common Fund, without exceeding certain limits. After making their request, the Central Committee shall analyze the viability of the financial support to the respective activity and the availability of funds, and shall respond to the request according to its possibilities. The request must be made at least 1 month in advance. To promote transparency, the applicant will be required to send a report, on completion of the activity, with details on how these resources were used.

Financial support of each country:

Each country group must have a local common fund to use for their expenses and for the contributions to be sent to the International Common Fund. It should be clear how the expenses generated at the country level will be met. This should be done in accordance with the criteria established by the association, and taking into account the different realities of each country.

We should aim at achieving the maximum level of participation of national CLM members in a communitarian economic discernment, which should lead to establishing how each member can make a fair contribution to



the expenses of the movement. External resources may also be obtained to enable the CLM activities in the country, the support to the places of mission and the international commitments.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF COMBONI LAY MISSIONARIES

Without material nourishment the body loses strength, without spiritual nourishment the spirit also becomes weak. Our missionary life needs to be constantly nourished. Nourishment that we seek personally and within the community. Food that we find in the Word, in Prayer, in Meditation, in the Sacraments... in the Community.

The reflection carried out in the assemblies has brought up the following principles:

1. We CLM have Christ as teacher and guide, encouraging us to go and meet the other. Our life must be consistent with our beliefs.
2. Prayer, the Word of God and the charism we share with the Comboni Family prompt us to make common cause with the poorest and most abandoned.
3. Each group should establish a calendar of prayer, retreats, sacraments and evaluation of their life as a community.
4. If we want to change the world, we should start by changing our hearts, because the first evangelization starts with us (proclamation and denunciation). The spirituality of the CLM needs to be nourished and deepened in the context of a journey of ongoing formation in the spirit of St. Daniel Comboni and in the light of the Gospel. A personal and community formation path, through local and international meetings.
5. The core of the spirituality of the CLM is to be witnesses. For this reason, we encourage missionary animation in the churches of our territory (promotion of missionary awareness).
6. Hold fraternal meetings with CLM at the local level (spiritual retreat) to share prayer and the Word.
7. The CLM should live their sacramental and spiritual life with coherence.
8. We encourage all CLM to know and pray the prayer of the Comboni Family.

Through these commitments we are called to merge faith with life, to journey through life and history knowing that God and the spirit of St. Daniel Comboni dwell in us.

LIVING THE COMBONI CHARISM

We are bearers of a great treasure, the vocation of Comboni Lay Missionaries, men and women, scattered throughout the world. This call and specific life commitment requires a long process of discernment; it is about shaping our own identity, and our own way of practising our Christian faith, through our personal encounter with Jesus and guided by the teachings of St. Daniel Comboni.

Therefore, we propose that we:

1. go back to the Comboni sources, we revise the biography, documents and teachings of St. Daniel Comboni;
2. strengthen or stimulate the creation of groups of lay people who want to share our charism (called "Comboni Spirituality", "Friends of Comboni" or other similar names) wherever we are present. These groups are based on a work of Formation, Missionary Animation and the commitment to JPIC. They may establish national networks, engage their members in national or worldwide commitments, support the mission beyond our borders, etc...
3. offer CLM members the possibility to participate in courses on Comboni Spirituality within the Comboni Family (face-to-face or online). The courses should include an in-depth study of the Comboni sources, which should give participants the chance to experience what it means to be



Comboni Missionaries today in their life and mission. It is also a time for reflection and to give new meaning to our Comboni heritage.

4. Disseminate information on our missionary experiences as Comboni Family.
5. Participate in meetings with other lay missionaries. This may strengthen our identity and help us to spread the Comboni Missionary identity.
6. We need to elaborate common forms of identification worldwide: CLM Day (Third Sunday of Advent – Sunday of Joy), CLM Logo, CLM Song, CLM Motto, CLM T-shirts, a calendar to remember our deceased CLM... In each country, we should engage in promoting identification as CLM.

CLM VOCATIONAL PROMOTION

The mission needs missionaries who can bring God's love to the farthest corners of the world and to the neediest people.

We know that the best vocational promotion is **life testimony**. That is why being present, as lay people, in the ecclesial and social realities of our environment should be an important part of our missionary activity.

While we know that the missionary call doesn't depend on us but on the Master of the Harvest, we recognise that facilitating the vocation of those who have received this call is in our own hands.

As indicated in the text "CLM Vocational Promotion" of 2015, we encourage each group to establish and implement a **systematic plan of vocational promotion**. The following proposals may help the groups in this:

Concrete proposals:

1. share our plans and material for vocational promotion on the formation platform.
2. Collaborate with other missionary groups in vocational promotion and especially as Comboni Family.
3. Let us pray for vocations, with patience and trust.
4. That vocational promotion may lead to the involvement of the youth in our activities.

COMMUNICATION AND NETWORKING

We have approved the document "**Communication Guidelines for CLM**", which is a general plan that should be used by all groups to understand and create their own communication plan. It should also be used to understand how we want to develop our communication either internally or externally.

JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

In a world where there are still many injustices, inequalities and violence, we are inspired by the encyclical "Laudato Si" of Pope Francis and our own Comboni charism to commit to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, which is a sign of the times of mission today.

In order for the CLM groups in each country to progressively enter into a process of collaboration and coordination on JPIC issues, we formulate the following proposals to be adopted gradually:

1. we should encourage a debate and reflection in the different CLM groups to see how to organize the JPIC topics and related activities in each country, beginning by questioning ourselves about our own lifestyle.
2. The CLM groups in each country could nominate a JPIC promoter, according to their needs and circumstances.
3. We should promote the creation of a JPIC commission in each country as Comboni Family (if it is not already in place).



4. We should get involved in the ongoing activities already started by the Comboni Family in each country and at the international level (for this we can count on the CLM promoter of JPIC at the international level, who can be our representative in the Comboni Network and will be responsible for facilitating collaboration between CLM involved in similar JPIC topics). We encourage our members to enter in the networks already created by other social organizations, since the work of JPIC is something that must be approached globally.
5. We may choose a specific JPIC theme (for example: ecology, mining, immigration, violence against women...) and work on deepening it, but without forgetting that global thinking is necessary in JPIC.

COMBONI FAMILY

Our dream is that the Comboni Family (Brothers, Fathers, Sisters, Seculars and Laity) may develop a closer relationship among all its members, for us all to be able to work together in co-responsibility; truly as brothers and sisters, living and sharing the spirit of Comboni.

To achieve this dream, we propose that:

1. we coordinate the work of the Comboni Family in each country: elaborating proposals, joint activities or a common project, moments of prayer, retreats, formation... where we all work in co-responsibility.
2. We try to celebrate relevant feasts together as Comboni Family, especially the feast of St. Daniel Comboni, and we the CLM should organize a particular meeting to which we will invite the other members of the Comboni Family. (for example on the occasion of our CLM Day).
3. We should organize a meeting of the Comboni Family in each country, according to the circumstances.
4. Where there are other lay groups with whom we share the same charism, we should get to know each other and find ways to collaborate.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

Communities on mission

1. In mission, if a family is part of a community, it is important that they have their own place to stay, physically isolated from the others, for them to have privacy in their own family times. This doesn't mean that they should withdraw from experiencing community life with the other members. For this reason, it could be useful for the CLM community to design a schedule which will include specific moments that the members of the family and singles will spend together. This may guide, but not limit, the common activities.
2. Once a family is in the process of preparing themselves to go on mission, the coordinating team should discern together with them which is the most appropriate destination. They should assess how the specific needs of their children will be met in the area of mission, considering in particular aspects like the possibility for them to attend school and receive pediatric care, when needed. When drafting the agreements with the province of destination, the needs of the children should be taken into consideration, and the economic responsibilities should be determined together with the parents. For each case, the various possibilities and their viability should be evaluated. Children and adolescents accompanying their parents on mission should receive adequate preparation (including psychological training).
3. For cases of pregnancy occurring while on mission, it is important that the parents always maintain a dialogue with the CLM coordinating team of the countries of origin and destination, and together they look for the best solutions, particularly for what concerns the prenatal care of the expectant mother.
4. Community life is a blessing, but sometimes our personal attitudes can create difficulties. We should do our best to follow the international agreements on international communities and discuss the



different issues that may concern our missionary presence as a community with openness and knowing that the Lord has called us together to serve his people.

5. Each CLM community may schedule on their calendar joint meetings with CLM members living close by. This can guide, but not limit, common activities.

International communities

At the Maia 2012 international assembly it was approved that “We are committed to ensure the continuity of the communities, especially the *International Communities*, so this will be a priority in our discernment”.

Concrete proposals:

1. Some of our international communities have a priority character, which does not mean that they are better than the rest of our missionary presences, simply that we consider it a priority to ensure their continuity.
2. Let us try to internationalize our missionary presences. We should ensure continuity to missions where we have an international presence and bring to internationality the other places/communities where we serve as CLM.
3. While giving continuity to our presence in places of mission is a value for us, we should not forget that the particular needs of a certain mission, and the professional skills of a candidate for the mission, are also important factors in determining which destination is the most suitable for that person.
4. Should a possibility arise, it is better to open a second community within the same country rather than in a new country.
5. The decision about the placement of a CLM in a mission will be taken through the Central Committee in dialogue with the CLM groups involved, the CLM provinces involved and the Continental Committees when possible.
6. We will try to review our collaboration agreements with the MCCJ provinces. In these agreements, The CLM should be considered as missionary agents with whom to collaborate as Comboni Family. They should be involved in decision making processes as key players. The agreements should entitle us to keep our presence in the place of mission active by simply notifying the MCCJ province about the sending of new individuals.
7. To ensure that our communities on mission are functioning and stable, every CLM to be sent to an international community should undergo a period of community experience as part of their formation, and study the “Charter for International Communities”.
8. Any decision concerning an international community should be taken by involving the community itself in the first place, then the CLM coordinating teams of the countries of origin and host country, the MCCJ provincials and the Central Committee.
9. We must be more careful with transitions in our places of mission. The CLM community members of a particular mission should not be changed all at once. We should allow the newcomers to spend some time together with those who have been there longer, to facilitate their introduction to the culture and reality.
10. the Central Committee, according to its possibilities, should visit the international communities whenever necessary.

Some important aspects to be taken into consideration when creating new International CLM communities and to ensure they function well:

- New Comboni Lay Missionaries sent to a mission should be given proper introduction to the new reality.
- We should encourage collaboration between local and foreign CLM in the host country.
- Existence of a common fund in each country, administered by a CLM, according to the agreements of each country.



- To ensure the continuity of the project.
- Maintain good communication.
- Knowledge of the work and reality of these communities to facilitate the involvement of all.
- The statute of each country should be constantly updated based on the recommendations approved each time by the continental committees and international assemblies.
- There should be annual meetings among all the CLM of the country.
- The CLM coordinator should be a lay person.
- At the beginning of each year, a community life project should be prepared.
- If possible, the communities should try to plan joint activities with other members of the Comboni family.
- The language spoken in the community should be the official language of the country in which we work, and the language of missionary service should be the language of the people we serve.
- There should be a permanent dialogue between the provinces involved.
- There should be a MCCJ advisor in each province assigned to the CLM.
- We should be careful that our work does not take away employment from the local population, nor leadership from the agents of evangelization.

RETURN TO THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Reinsertion

Reinsertion in the country of origin and evaluation of the experience are the fundamental last steps to bring one's missionary experience abroad to a proper conclusion and to prepare for the future. The process of reinsertion is a difficult moment for a missionary. We need to care for it and deeply reflect on it.

Some elements to keep in mind:

- an evaluation should be done upon re-entry.
- A certain amount of money should be given to the CLM returning to their country, to facilitate their reinsertion (for about three months...).
- the group should choose someone to be responsible for welcoming the returning CLM, either a member of the local group or someone at national level (an individual or the coordinating team). This person should act as a bridge and mobilize the whole group in support of the returning CLM (both affectively and practically, for example in the search for employment, etc.).
- the returning CLM needs to be helped in the process of social and cultural reintegration, healing of wounds, etc.
- it is recommended that the person take time for themselves and their family, participate in refresher courses, etc.

Commitment as and with the CLM

1. As part of their vocation, upon their return, the CLM continue to be involved in their local Church and in the movement. Our missionary vocation demands that, after a period of readaptation, we discern the mission to which the Lord is calling us in this new stage of our life.
2. Sectors in which we can commit ourselves:
 - Joining the CLM group in our country, getting involved in their activities.
 - Getting involved in JPIC initiatives, for example reception of migrants, and actions of social justice and solidarity;
 - Giving testimony of our experience in different groups, ecclesial and civic;
 - Participating in initiatives of the Comboni Family and the local Church aiming at raising awareness and training Christian communities and the larger society on the reality and situations of people in impoverished countries with whom one has shared his/her time in mission;
 - Participating in missionary animation, in the field of vocational pastoral work;



- participating in the coordination of CLM activities, in welcoming, accompanying and training new candidates;
- Collaborating with diocesan mission offices;
- Collaborating with associations that support the mission and in particular the projects of the CLM.

SOME PRACTICAL ASPECTS

Legal recognition

We must continue to take steps to achieve juridical recognition both within the church and the civil society in the individual countries where we operate and at the international level as well.

Insurance

All those who go on mission outside their country of origin should have health insurance and social security for retirement, but the modalities to ensure this will depend on the situation of the country and the group.

Contracts

1. Whenever a person is sent on mission, contracts should be drafted and signed by the parties involved.
2. Fundamental points that should be part of the contract:
 - Project and areas of work in which the CLM will be engaged.
 - Signatures of the persons of reference of the project (Provinces and CLM).
 - Economic aspects: participation of the various parties (NGOs, the sending province, the receiving province, the local Church...).
 - Duration of the project.
 - That all interested parties are involved and sign the contract.
 - The commitments, rights and duties of both parties should be specified.

Involving all parties implicated

- Involvement of the CLM going on mission.
- Involvement of the CLM movement (coordinator, NGO...).
- Participation of the local Churches (the one of origin and the one receiving).
- Participation of the provinces (sending and receiving provinces).
- Participation of official entities (NGO's, Government, ...).
- Participation of friends and benefactors.
- Participation of the projects where CLM work.

Relationship between all the agents

Role of the CLM Central Committee

- To know the situation of the missionary communities.
- To accompany the missionary communities.
- To Receive requests from the different communities and the availability of people to go on mission at any given moment.
- To Coordinate the sending of new CLM to the communities in our places of mission.
- To Facilitate communication.
- To mediate in the conflicts that may arise within the communities or between the communities and a CLM country group and/or MCCJ province.



Role of the sending CLM group

- To maintain – through the coordinating team - a dialogue with the Central Committee, the CLM group of the receiving country and the province (and the entities responsible for the projects) to find suitable projects for the CLM.
- To Prepare and send CLM to the mission countries.
- To Accompany their experience and attend to their needs at their destination and upon their return.
- To Promote missionary animation and disseminate information, within the home country, about the experience of CLM currently on mission.
- To accompany their families, parishes, etc. during their period in mission.
- Find an appropriate moment for the official sending (assembly, Comboni feast...).

The sending province

- Collaborates in the preparation of the CLM as a major part of its commitment to the CLM;
- Introduces the CLM to their home diocese for collaboration and sending;
- Introduces the CLM to the province of destination within the scope of the project worked out by common agreement;

The Church of origin

- The CLM feels part of a local missionary church which constitutes for them a privileged environment and helps them in their missionary commitment, before their departure and upon their return.
- It supports them both materially and spiritually.
- In return, it expects to be continually encouraged through frequent communication (letters, photographs, ...), and through its involvement in missionary animation upon their return.

The CLM group and/or the receiving MCCJ province

- Knows the candidates or has sufficient information about them;
- Welcomes the CLM cordially;
- Offers a formation and inculturation program to the CLM;
- Helps the CLM to get to know the people and respect their culture;
- Appoints an advisor from the province for the CLM.
- Promotes collaboration between local and foreign CLM.
- Encourages a simple lifestyle and closeness to the people;
- Guarantees their independence as a group and at the same time their communion with the province.

With the receiving Church

- It is important that the project is born from an awareness and need of the Christian community and the local Church where the CLM is going to work;
- It is therefore important that the people and animators of the community be involved as much as possible, both in the elaboration of the project (objectives, participation of local people, economic participation...), as well as in its implementation and evaluation;
- To avoid assistentialism and dependency, the priority must be to strengthen the human and material resources of the place, and the training of local agents who can carry the project forward.

These elements should be taken into account in the training programs (basic and permanent) and in the contracts.