
COMIBAM International

A New COMIBAM For A New Missionary Era

**A document based in a profound analysis
about the necessary changes in
COMIBAM International**

Executive Summary
March 1, 2009

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1. What has led to this movement?

The Christian church in Latin America has grown in an explosive way. From 250,000 believers in 1900, growing to more than 60 million in the year 2000, and to date to approximately 70 million. By the year 1970, the Christians in Latin America had started sending a larger number of trans-cultural missionaries. But it wasn't until the COMIBAM 87 Congress, in Sao Paulo, Brazil, that missions in the Hispanic-Portuguese World took a large step towards maturity.

From that first Ibero-American congress, COMIBAM International has established its credibility in the world, establishing networking, organizing consults, producing tools and books in both Spanish and Portuguese, offering services and coaching to churches, leaders and missionary organizations.

COMIBAM has formed a representative body for the Missionary Ibero-American movement composed by each of the 25 National Missionary Movements, and it was projected as a resource center, where a transfer of experiences, ideas and connections, could serve for the learning, growing and maturing of the movement as a result of its own efforts.

The projected proposal is based in the analysis of the work of COMIBAM in the last 21 years, as with the proposed objectives and the results obtained. The historic reason that gave a start to COMIBAM in the great meeting in San Pablo-Brazil 1987 was the need to create consciousness, mobilize and train the Ibero-American church in the fulfillment of the great commission, particularly in the area of trans-cultural missions. This goal that was proposed more than 20 years ago has been partly fulfilled in different and varied ways.

2. Why to do an internal evaluation?

Our analysis has to begin by understanding that the church in missions is currently facing a different world than the one before it. The last decade of missions has been touched by multiple and drastic changes that have led to the missions we now know:

- International economic crisis
- Diasporas from Africa, Latin America and China
- Globalization and terrorism.
- Missions from poverty to poverty
- Migration and missionary opportunities.

In the middle of this scenario, we celebrated our third Ibero-American Missionary Congress (Granada – Spain, 2006), which became the platform for a new phase of COMIBAM International. After receiving the results of the first investigation phase of the project COMIBAM III, we have an irrevocable challenge in our hands to generate the necessary changes to be able to confront the challenges that the mission will have in the coming years.

3. Why we have to renew our vision and strategy?

We see ourselves now to be heading for new challenges due to the logical and normal paths faced by the missionary process. A key contribution of COMIBAM over the years, and that which affirms its value to the Body of Christ, has been its ability to be on forefront of missional thinking and helping to find answers to the questions that are constantly arising in missionary work. It is for that reason, due to the growing missionary vision, we are forced to grow with it, and focus our major efforts in the advanced steps of the work to continue to be at the cutting edge guiding the process in its new stages.

Through this process we want:

- To increase the number of workers on the field

- To add to the efficiency of the missionary work among the unreached peoples.
- To improve the quality of pastoral care and other sensitive areas among the workers.
- To develop tools for the church based on experience on the field that will guide it to face the missionary challenges in a better way.
- To go from Ibero-America to more unreached nations of the world.
- To improve our understanding of the mission and how we can carry it on from our own context.
- To act as a channel of communication between the senders and the workers sent.
- To guide the Ibero American missionary movement to join with the Global Missionary force.
- To increase alliances between Latin and international churches and organizations.

4. Proposal for change

Demand from the continent is overwhelming our capacity to provide the answers needed at the present level framework of work and at the same time, the missionary movements need to be heard more and also get more intentionally involved so as to give strength to the idea of becoming regional facilitators, conveners and participants, keeping strong relations with the missionary movements in each country.

Strategic Declarations	Currently	New proposal
Vision	<i>“To see the evangelical Ibero-American church converted in a missionary force”.</i>	<i>“Ibero-America taking the whole gospel to all people”.</i>
Mision	<i>“Help the churches of Ibero-America become a missionary people capable of taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations”.</i>	<i>“Serving the Body of Christ in Ibero-America, cooperating in the generation of reflection, service and opportunities so that the Gospel can reach the ends of the earth”.</i>
Value proposition	“To glorify God, strengthening the national missionary movements through the provision of the necessary services so that local churches may fulfill the Great Commission”.	COMIBAM allows for spaces of encounter, reflection and connection to strengthen the missionary processes.
Public Objective	National missionary movements	“The Body of Christ in Ibero-America needing the Services of COMIBAM”.
Strategic axis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening of the national missionary movements. 2. Focusing the church towards the unreached. 3. Increase communications, networking and cooperation. 4. Develop an economic support base and construct services capacity. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consolidate, equip and develop the missionary movement in each country in Ibero-America. 2. Establish a sustainable economic base that allows COMIBAM International to accomplish its goals and objectives. 3. Update and strengthen the structure and institutional image of COMIBAM

	5. Development of the evangelical missiology in Latin America.	International.
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Analysis of the vision

One of the most challenging changes proposed is that in the previous version the main subject was “the evangelical church in Ibero-America”, while now, it is a more universal concept, being the main subject the idea to “evangelize the world”.

Other implications that exist include, for example, the fact that COMIBAM is part of a complex network of international and trans-cultural organizations that have similar goals, and therefore, COMIBAM must insert itself as part of this network to be more efficient on a global level and be able to impact more effectively the nations and its people.

Analysis of the mission

In the current version the verb “to help” in this proposal has been advanced and redefined as “to serve” –denoting a more cooperative attitude. The first one refers to the churches in Ibero-America, and the second one to the missionary movement in Ibero-America, as if this was an autonomous structure generated by the churches.

In essence there is a historical continuation to the work and service offered by COMIBAM, but it is evident that there is a different emphasis depending on the needs for movement and periods, times and circumstances that impact the missionary tasks.

5. Proposal for an operative structure

Thematic –strategic axis of services for the movement

The thematic **axis** must represent a totality of the missionary process so as to cover all actual missionary work needs. Each of the areas represents in a relevant way each of the actors that are present in the fulfillment of the evangelization of the World. COMIBAM must operate with influence in all and each of the phases of the missionary work and not only in the mobilization of the church. It is expected that this movement can direct the whole missionary Ibero-American force so as to find the answers to each of the challenges are present in preaching the Gospel in all nations.



1. MOBILIZATION

Public Objective: Churches, pastors and leaders.

Working Areas.

- a. Providing information, education and mobilization
- b. Training of pastors
- c. Assisting in missionary committees formation
- d. Researching
- e. Praying

2. TRAINING

Public Objective: Training centers and mission professors.

Working Areas.

- a. Training of trainers
- b. Developing professional missionary professors
- c. Providing professional advice to update the curriculum
- d. Producing materials

e. Facilitating missional reflection

3. RECEIVING AND SENDING PROCESS

Public objective: Sending agencies and missionary leaders.

Working areas

- a. Training on missionaries sending and receiving.
- b. Providing for strategic alliances creation
- c. Building a channel of communication with the global force
- d. Producing materials

4. FIELD PROCESS

Public objective: Unreached ethnos and missionaries.

Working areas

- a. Accumulating statistics and research
- b. Communicating with the missionary field
- c. Facilitating the formation of Ibero-American missionary networks
- d. Producing publications and information distribution

6. Final conclusions

The process we are going through in COMIBAM is not the result of a crisis, rather of an opportunity and the need to change in order to face with success the challenges of the future. We believe this process cannot be postponed and it comes at a historic time--responding to and with a spirit of change.

Let us come together in prayer for this process and for our leaders, asking the Lord to prepare the new Executive Director and to give him a sense of commitment and identification, as we also seek and wait upon new members to be appointed to the Board of Directors. Lets us pray as well for different leaders of the missionary movement, that God will enlighten all of us with the same understanding, so together we can see the light in front of us scattered amongst all nations, tribes and ethnos.

Carlos Scott y Jesús Londoño
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