

Ugandans farewell ‘Mama Irene’

By Ashlee Betteridge

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An Australian missionary [has been farewelled](#) by some 10,000 Ugandans after dedicating 20 years of her life to helping children affected by war.

[Irene Gleeson](#), who died of cancer aged 68, started her own [faith-based foundation](#) in Kitgum, Uganda, in 1992 after parking her caravan under a mango tree in territory occupied by rebels in Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army. More than 20,000 children have since been educated, fed and clothed at the schools she established. She was named an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2009 for her sustained humanitarian work for children affected by war and HIV/AIDS.

In a [tribute](#) from Foreign Minister Bob Carr on behalf of the Australian government, he said “her life charted an inspirational path from Sydney to Kitgum”.

“She leaves an enduring and remarkable legacy, not only helping thousands of children who attended the schools she established, but their families and wider communities. She was committed to helping build hope and new dreams in the aftermath of conflict,” Carr said.

[Irene Gleeson Tribute](#) from [Irene Gleeson Foundation](#) on [Vimeo](#).

About the author/s

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