



# Loreto Rumbek Newsletter



JUNE 2017

**Starting Somewhere:** Preventative healthcare is unheard of in the Maker Kuei community, and throughout most of South Sudan. Sr Penina, in her work with the Loreto Primary Health Care Unit (PHCU) has reached out to the children of the community through the students at the school. Providing primary health care and treatment. At the beginning of this term, both the primary and secondary school students received treatment for deworming, as well as a general physical which allowed Sr. Penina's team to diagnose and treat hundreds of cases of iron deficiency, vitamin A deficiency, fungal infections, malaria, respiratory infection, gastritis, anemia, and provide general treatment for wounds.

While this may not seem significant, for this community, this type of treatment—treatment before the deficiencies, illnesses, or wounds become life altering or threatening, is unheard of. And the benefits to health have already started to be seen in the community, as children and community workers, parents, and leaders encourage their peers to go to the clinic before it becomes a significant issue, and before seeking traditional healers. There is still much work, but small changes like this are extremely encouraging.



**A Bridge of Food:** Late in June, the UN announced that hunger levels have subsided below famine levels in South Sudan—despite this, more than 6 million people are on the verge of starvation. 6 million people in crisis levels of hunger or higher, 3 million people displaced—over half the country does not know where their next meal is coming from. Children are one of the most at-risk populations in this young nation. In our community, one of the most difficult trends to witness at the Loreto Primary School here in Maker Kuei, is that students do not have food at home.

During days when the school is open, our student know where their next meal is coming from. So what are they to do when the school is on break? Even a 4 day weekend becomes a monumental challenge, the 3 week term break becomes insurmountable—and par-

ents are left with few options.

It is during these breaks, that Loreto—Rumbek sees the highest levels of dropouts, as food is scarce at home, the students' families rely on traditional coping mechanisms, sending the children to other, more stable family members, or to the cattle camps. This will deprive the child of an education, but will guarantee a steady food source and increase chances of survival.

To help combat this, the Loreto Schools gave out 2 bowls of flour to each student—providing a small bridge of food for them and their families, in the hopes that they will be able to cross the term break and return to school.

**Celebrating Success—** The Loreto Girls Secondary School in South Sudan is committed to providing opportunities for the young women of South Sudan to educate and empower themselves and works to ensure that each graduate is a strong, competent, and empowered women— working to meet the growing need, if not demand, for female professionals, law-makers and leaders. Claire Ayok Deng is one of Loreto's Recent graduates (class of 2015) who has dared to dream, and worked hard to achieve it.

Claire was one of the top students to graduate from Loreto in 2015, She has dreamt of becoming a doctor but lacked the opportunity. She took advantage of the Loreto Professional Internship (Gap Year) program funded by CRS, where she worked as a nursing assistant.—providing valuable experience and an opportunity to search for scholarships to pursue her illusive dream. Starting this summer, through the support of NLW, she will be starting a 4 year medical school program. She plans to return to her home community to work as a doctor. She will be the first doctor from her home community, as well as the first female doctor.



**Loreto In the News** — the Loreto Programs in South Sudan had a wonderful visit from Paul Jeffrey, a very talented Photographer who was photographing South Sudan and collecting information for a number of stories on the state of the country and the work being done here. Unlike so much of the news coming from South Sudan—Paul's story on Loreto—South Sudan is one of hope and potential. Read more [here](#).

**A Special Thank You to all of the donors , advocates, and supporters of the Loreto Programs in Rumbek.**

**Without your hard work or support none of this would be possible.**