



# Loreto Rumbek Newsletter

November 2017



**An Early Start to Education**— In late November the young children of Maker Kuei, Loreto's host community here in South Sudan, showed up in droves with parents in tow for the annual registration for the Loreto Primary School. In the first 15 minutes of opening the gates of the school for registration nearly 300 students had come for enrollment; hoping for a placement. To meet this demand the Loreto Primary School registered 7 classes—2 Kindergarten and 2 Primary 1 classes in the morning program, and 3 Level 1 classes in the afternoon Accelerated Learning Program.



This month we celebrate the success of having so many students at or near the age of registration coming for school. Here, in the midst of conflict and starvation, placement in one of these classes means a modicum of stability as the children head into a year filled with a lot of uncertainty. Loreto Primary School has maintained an attendance rate over 90% and a dropout rate just under 5% in 2017.



**Celebrating Excellence** — This November the Loreto Girls Secondary School graduated 34 South Sudanese girls from our secondary school program. We marked this momentous occasion with a large celebration involving key government, community, and religious leaders from the Rumbek area. We enjoyed an impassioned speech from Chief Mangar Manyeal Dhal about the importance of girl child education. The younger students—our graduates' "daughters" - celebrated the success of their "mothers" by through a collection of dances from various Dinka clans, and the Nuer, Acholi, Bari, and Zande tribes.

Many of our recent graduates are hoping to go university to continue their education—building on the dreams they started when they came to Loreto. The Loreto Girls Secondary School Class of 2017 has been challenged by their predecessors to maintain the high standards they learnt while at Loreto.



**Capacity to Heal**— The Loreto Schools in Rumbek seek to provide a high quality and comprehensive education. To achieve this we work to meet the physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs of the students. In the local climate of violence, poverty, and trauma the students' needs for psychosocial support are great.

Capacitar came to Loreto in November to provide trauma resilience and healing techniques to primary school teachers and students, secondary school girls and teachers, and our graduate interns. The Capacitar training will be integrated in the schools' daily life as we establish a peace education curriculum with a focus on psychosocial support. This will complement the schools' reactive "Listening Circles" program through the Loreto Peace Club that provides safe spaces for students to talk about traumatic experiences within the community including deaths of classmates and violence in the community.

## Loreto In the News —

Sr. Orla Treacy IBVM, the principal of the Loreto Rumbek programs (seen left), was recently honored with the Father Hugh O'Flaherty Humanitarian Award for her work focused on supporting South Sudanese children, especially girls. Read more about the Award and our work—[here](#) and [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.**

**For more information about the programs, our students, and how you can help, please visit our website: [loretorumbek.ie](http://loretorumbek.ie)**