



Loreto Rumbek Newsletter



April 2018

Seeds of Knowledge —

For the last 6 months, Loreto Rumbek has worked closely with Misesan Cara and the local community of Maker Kuei to implement the ambitious “Seeds of Knowledge” project. This project focused resources on 100 participants from conflict affected and economically destitute families, who had few options and resources to survive the upcoming lean season. The project combined agriculture training and health education, with a food for work aspect that produced an influx of food and income into each participant’s household.

The project concluded at the end of April, just in time for the rainy season. Each of the participants left the program equipped with 2 watering cans, 1 jembe (hoe), a small stock of seeds (sorghum, groundnuts, kudra, and other vegetables), and a number of fruit tree seedlings. While many food security initiatives attempt to increase access and intake, this project was the first to introduce early recovery and resiliency techniques in this area, to address the ongoing food crisis.



Water: One Borehole at a Time —

At the beginning of April, Loreto was able to contract a drilling company to implement 3 new boreholes to benefit the community. Two of these boreholes were placed in communities whose residents did not have easy access to an improved water point. The third water point was placed next to the new Loreto Primary Health Care Unit facility scheduled for completion in August 2018.

South Sudan has a 6 month dry season that can be extremely brutal to families that are already borderline or severely food insecure. These new water points become a centralized point for community gardening, water collection, and sanitation—a lifeline for a community during the harsh realities of the dry season.

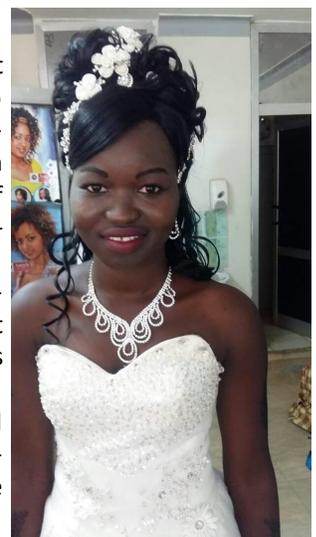
“This new borehole is a blessing to me. Even if I am late I can get water. The children can pump water too. I plan to plant kudra, okra and pumpkin.” - Mary Akol, community resident

Changing minds, changing hearts —

Rebecca Nyanadong Maker (pictured left), Class of 2013, was one of Loreto Rumbek’s first graduates to study computer science at the university level. She was able to secure a scholarship to support her studies in Nairobi, Kenya. Rebecca has repeatedly faced down many obstacles and challenges. She not only completed her secondary school education—a monumental feat for a girl in South Sudan—but also earned a degree in Computer Science, and secured formal employment. At the end of 2017, Rebecca graduated and was able to find a job working with the state-owned Nile Petroleum Company in Juba, South Sudan.

In April 2018, Rebecca was married at the Catholic Church in Rumbek town. This was a significant event because many people in the community refuse a ‘church wedding,’ due to the prominent practice of polygamy. In Rumbek, a “church wedding” is seen as a commitment to monogamy and it is often very hard for families to accept a “church wedding” and a monogamous future.

In Rumbek, bride prices are paid in the form of cattle as part of traditional practices around marriages negotiated among the men of the respective families. As a demonstration of gratitude, Rebecca’s father and husband gave one of the cows from her bride price to Loreto, in recognition of the role we played in her education.



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 news & info about the programs, our students, and how you can help, please visit our website: Loretorumbek.ie