



Loreto Rumbek Newsletter

May 2020



Agriculture

The rains have started in Rumbek, signaling the beginning of the cultivation season. Sadly, it is the first time in our history that Loreto Rumbek is planting groundnuts without the help of our students. Normally, our students begin cultivating our farm before going home for their term break in May. This year, because of the Covid 19 outbreak, our students are no longer on our compound and we are using a tractor to help with the planting process. Our local workers have cultivated groundnuts and we are looking forward to an abundant harvest this year.

Distance Learning

Although our schools are currently closed, learning continues at Loreto Rumbek. Due to the Covid 19 crisis, learning institutions in South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya have closed. As a result, many beneficiaries of the tertiary education and professional development scholarships offered by Loreto Rumbek, have returned to our compound. Here, they are able to continue their studies using online platforms that would be inaccessible in their homes because of limited electricity and internet infrastructure. Helen Sora, who is studying nursing in Nairobi, is one of 8 people participating in this initiative notes, "We are grateful to have the internet and power that enable us to continue studying." Abraham and Emmanuel are home from Solidarity with South Sudan Yambio teacher training college and are happy to be able to study online; "though we are home in Rumbek we can continue our studies, this is a great opportunity for us".



GESS Support

The Covid 19 crisis has increased the risk of forced marriage and early pregnancy for the girls at Loreto Primary School and Loreto Girls Secondary School. Our schools serve as a protective factor for these girls, and during this crisis they are unable to receive the protection usually offered by our school community. As families deal with the negative effects of this crisis on their health and finances, they are likely to adopt negative coping mechanisms such as early/forced marriage. To help girls in this situation, Girls Education South Sudan (GESS) - a DFID program, provides direct cash transfers to girls in our community to help ensure that their needs are met. Loreto Rumbek serves as a disbursement site for these cash transfers. Recently, our female students were invited back to the compound to receive their cash transfers to support them during this difficult time.



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 and our Facebook page [Loreto Schools Rumbek](https://www.facebook.com/LoretoSchoolsRumbek)



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Mobile Clinic

The Mary Ward Health Care Centre has been providing medical outreach to our local communities to ensure access to vital health services. Our nurses and our Covid 19 health education team have been going out into the community as a mobile clinic unit for three days every week. The mobile clinic has focused on communities that are located far from health care facilities to help those who would have to walk very far to access critical care. During outreach sessions, the health education team gives a brief talk explaining the health implications of Covid 19. This is then followed by individual medical care for those gathered. Serious cases are referred to Mary Ward Primary Health Care



Providing Health Support over the Radio

As the number of Covid 19 cases has increased in South Sudan, it has become very important to educate our communities about ways to prevent the spread of this virus. To reach a larger audience, the Covid 19 health education team supported by the Mary Ward Primary Health Care Clinic has been using radio broadcasts to spread awareness. Each week, Mary Aluel (nurse), Martha Puor (nurse trainee) and Rebecca Atong (graduate intern) have been facilitating a radio broadcast program for two local radio stations - Good News Radio and Rumbek 98 FM. These weekly broadcasts are presented in the local Dinka and Jur Bele languages to target the majority of the population in Rumbek and Wulu. While promoting awareness about the prevention of Covid 19, these broadcasts also highlight ways to prevent and treatment common ailments such as malaria.



Protective Masks

Homemade cloth masks have been shown to be effective in lowering the risk of transmission of Covid 19. To help prevent the spread of the virus, our graduate interns have been making masks under the supervision of Sr. Baiada at Loreto Rumbek. Sr Baiada has tailoring experience and has made masks for everyone currently living on the Loreto Rumbek compound. For 4 days every week, groups of interns receive training in mask making from Sr. Baiada and each intern is expected to make 10 masks at the end of the training program. Of the 10 masks made by each intern, 5 will be donated to their families, while the other 5 will be donated to the Mary Ward Primary Health Care Clinic. To help with the mask making process, our interns have been using a sewing machine do-



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