



CHANGE STORIES



"The educational system all over South Sudan has been greatly affected by the war over the years. Schools have not been operational for a long time, and currently, there are very few qualified teachers, yet many children need to go to school. "

BINGO LOUIS, STTC GRADUATE AND EDUCATOR

Bingo Louis, a Solidarity Teachers' Training College graduate started from scratch when he established his school of 350 pupils. He personally built it using plastic sheeting, palm leaves for walls, long wooden benches for the older children to sit on and mats for the nursery. He also spent the little money he had to buy blackboards for each class. After some time, his friends joined him in the construction work. The structures are sufficient to hold classes for all his students and are cool enough to shade pupils from the scorching sun.

"I'm 35 years old. I was born and raised in Nzara, a town in Western Equatoria State 24 km northwest of Yambio and 25 km from the border



Rose Edward Zomai, 52 years old, member of Savings Group

This is an excerpt of a short document that Bingo shared regarding his personal experiences, thoughts and feelings while working towards education and opportunities for himself, his family, and many other children in South Sudan.



with the DR Congo. When I was older, I walked for seven days to a seminary in the Central African Republic because I wanted to become a priest so that I could be with the people and bring change to communities. I stayed for two years and decided to quit. I left for Uganda and rejoined primary school, class 7, and studied until Senior 6 of secondary school.”

“I returned to South Sudan in 2012 and applied for the Certificate in Primary Education at Solidarity Teachers Training College scholarship. After graduation in 2015, I got a government-paid job to teach at a primary school in Nzara for two years. Afterwards, I got another job in Yambio with BRAC, which supports Community-Based Education for Out-of-School Girls and Vulnerable Children. They were catering for orphaned children in nursery up to primary two. When my contract ended, I got another job with INTERSOS, which was also in education and was training primary school teachers. While still at INTERSOS, I enrolled for a Diploma in Secondary Education at Solidarity Teachers Training College. When I graduated, I got a two-year job as a tutor. The contract ended in 2022.”

“At that time, my children and other children in the community had no school to go to. The only school that we had been depending on was shut down. The community approached and requested me to start a school for our children because I was a teacher and already had experience teaching in many schools. On 22nd May 2023, I opened the school. On the first day, there were only eight learners. Five of them were family members. And the other three were from one family. By the end of the first



week, we had 11 children. At the end of the second school term, there were 41. We closed the year with 79 children. In 2024, the numbers shot up - over 400 children! The numbers dropped a little, and now we have 351 children.”

“The educational system all over South Sudan has been greatly affected by the war over the years. Schools have not been operational for a long time, and currently, there are very few qualified teachers, yet many children need to go to school. Resources to start this school were few. I’d asked some friends to come and teach, but they refused because I couldn’t pay them. It is difficult to find an older adult who can teach. The elders are uneducated because they have been either migrating or fighting in the military. I had to find secondary school graduates to be teachers. I have been guiding them, and they are teaching the children well. After being trained at Solidarity, newly qualified teachers are expected to fill in many gaps across the country.”



“Most children come from families that moved away from their villages, which had become battle zones. Some do not live with their parents, because either their parents are not alive or went back to the village without their children as they are unsure whether there will be another outbreak of fighting. They live with relatives who sometimes do not treat or care for the children as their parents would. At times, we have witnessed children screaming in fear. When you talk to them, they explain that they can remember seeing someone being killed. That’s why when they come to school, we do activities such as singing up to four songs at the morning assembly to cool their brains. We do more than teach them the normal subjects. We have to do some trauma healing too.”

“It is very important for the children to get an education because our community is lagging behind. I need this community to improve because if I don’t do it, nobody will come and do it for us. It is time to ensure that the current generation can read, write and speak for themselves.”



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Bingo's story is a testament to the power of education coupled with community resilience. Want to learn more about how we're making a difference? Stay connected with us! Follow our journey on social media, explore more stories, and discover how you can get involved. Together, we can help create more opportunities for lasting change.



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