

# HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

## AMOKOKO COMMUNITY

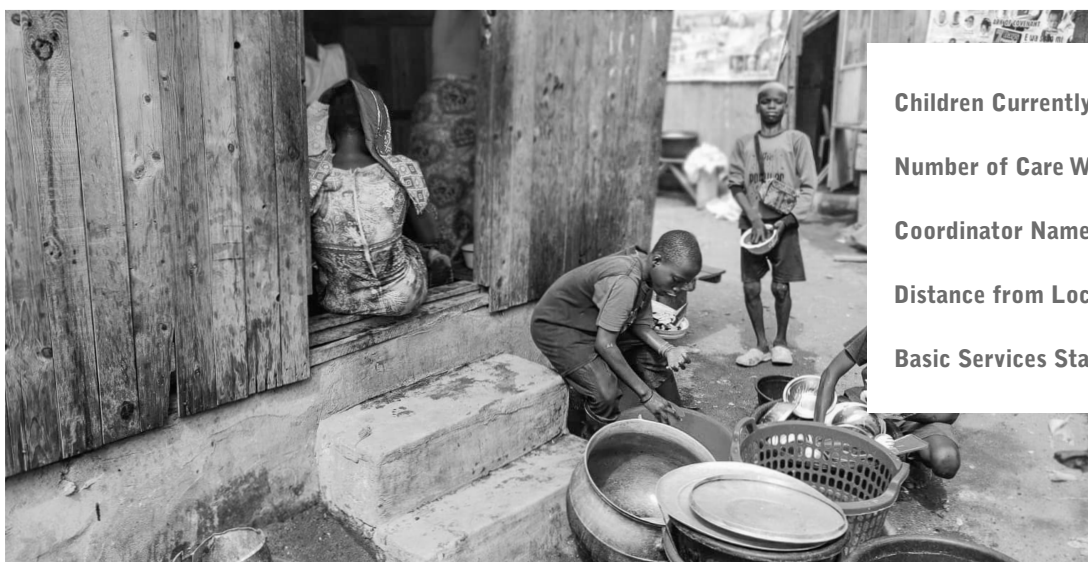
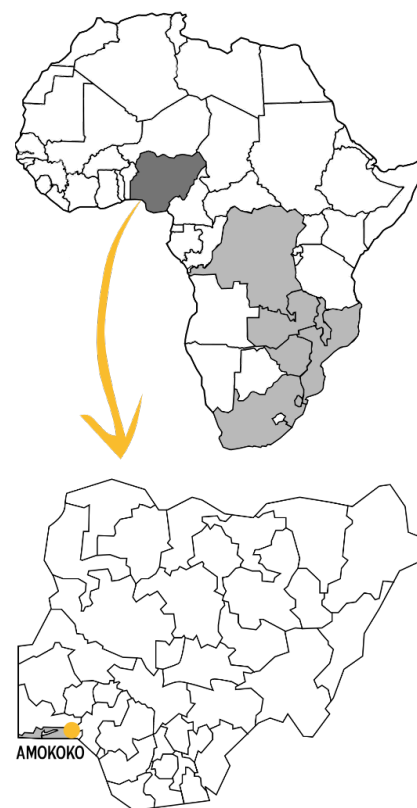
### NIGERIA | LAGOS REGION

Ilaje is located within Lagos, Africa's largest 'city', which is situated on Nigeria's southern coast. Ilaje is known for its perilous location, which is on the edge of an ocean bay and built on layers and layers of rubbish and sewage. The slum is amassed of makeshift shacks which are completely overcrowded. There are government schools in the area, but they cost money to attend, making them inaccessible for the most vulnerable children. Half-dressed children roam the streets during the day, working as peddlers to earn a small income. The ocean bay floods the community at most high tides, leaving residual sewage and rubbish-soaked water lying around homes, creating a high risk of getting diseases like malaria, cholera and typhoid. Aside from children, the community consists mostly of elderly and unemployed adults, many of whom are immigrants from neighbouring countries like Benin.

In early 2007, a pastor was transferred to take over a tiny church building in Ilaje. When he saw the community, he was shocked at the living conditions. Along with his wife, they challenged their congregation members, as well as others in the community, that something had to be done about the situation. It was then they began walking the streets as a team to seek out the most vulnerable among the children, widowed and sick. Eventually they formed an informal organisation that is today called the Eagles Wings Community Based Organisation (CBO) which includes the running of a community school.

At the time, the model only included caring for children of primary school age (around 6-12 years). After some time of building up Eagles Wings, after connecting with the local pastors, Hands at Work leaders decided it was time to expand the work in the slum of Ilaje in order to reach those children who landed outside this age group. It was then, in 2017, that 2 new Community Based organisations were birthed. First, Temitope CBO, a Care Point that cares for children from the ages of 0-5. As of 2021, 100 children are cared for at this Care Point. A year later, Amokoko came to life. This new Care Point focused on the second group of children, who range between the ages of 13 and 18. The work started when the Hands at Work team mobilised local Care Workers and started doing Holy Home Visits in order to identify the most vulnerable adolescent children living in the community. The first children invited to the Care Point were those who had graduated from the Eagles Wings Community School that were now in grades 7 and up. Next, they identified the children who were older siblings of the children attending the Eagles Wings and Temitope Care Points. Finally, the remainder of the children identified by the team were children whose immense vulnerability and desperate situations have forced them out of school into working situations. In 2018, 50 of the most vulnerable children began receiving a hot, nutritious meal daily and support with their education and basic health care needs from the loving Care Workers of Amokoko CBO. This number has since increased to 100 children.

Currently, the Amokoko CBO is being operated out of the local church which is a beautiful example of local community ownership. The pastor and his wife are supportive of what the Care Workers are doing, and frequently take time to pray for the children at the Care Point. A highlight for the Care Workers is the involvement of a community nurse, who has been helping to bring desperately needed medical treatment to the children.



Children Currently Supported **100**  
 Number of Care Workers **9**  
 Coordinator Name **Moji**  
 Distance from Local Office **14km**  
 Basic Services Started In **2018**