

UPDATE FROM APATUKU COMMUNITY | NIGERIA

Seven dedicated local volunteer Care Workers, coordinated by Mama Taiwo, support the most vulnerable children in the community of Apatuku. The love and care they provide ensure that each child is physically, emotionally and spiritually cared for.



Shortly after he was born, Victor's* father abandoned the family and his whereabouts are currently unknown. Despite Victor's mother, Joy*, having issues with her eyesight, she still works hard to provide for her children. Joy sells packed sandbags and firewood to make some income. However, with the rising cost of living in Nigeria, it has been increasingly difficult for Joy to afford food. Thankfully, Victor and his siblings come to the Apatuku Care Point where they are guaranteed a hot and nutritious meal daily. This has been such a gift to Joy, who no longer has to worry about whether her children will eat. Joy is also a committed Primary Caregiver in Apatuku and helps at the Care Point when she can, where she also receives a meal. Victor loves coming to the Care Point where he is able to play football with the other children.

Community Update

Over the years, the Care Workers have struggled to holistically care for the children, but this year there has been some tremendous growth in this area. The local Hands at Work team in Ibadan has been instrumental in that progress, as they faithfully support the Apatuku Care Workers. With the development of a small Ibadan team and two volunteers moving there, this has improved the ease and consistency of visiting the Apatuku Care Point. The Ibadan team has helped the Care Workers understand the importance of Holy Home Visits, which ensure that children receive emotional care alongside physical care. An exciting step for Hands at Work this year was obtaining a house in Apatuku to provide a place for extra volunteer support to stay when needed. As mentioned above, one of the biggest challenges facing the community is the cost of living in Nigeria. Many of our families do not have the money to afford basic things like food or rent. There is also a huge lack of jobs which has resulted in even greater extreme poverty.



Activities and Projects

This year, items like soap and washing powder were supplied to the children. This helped to ensure they remained healthy and hygienic. Additionally, school uniforms and school supplies were purchased and distributed to the children in need – ensuring that they are able to attend school. Quarterly, the children are given deworming medication, ensuring they are receiving the proper nutrients from their daily meal. The community received a visit from two long-term volunteers in April and May – Jackie Okindah and Xolani Makwakwa - who are part of the Zambian Regional Support Team that supports the Hands at Work communities in Nigeria. This visit went very well and the local team in Ibadan were encouraged and uplifted by the support that Jackie and Xolani brought.



Graduation Update

From the beginning, Hands at Work has been focused on serving in the most vulnerable communities. As the Community Based Organisation (CBO) and the local church mature and develop in their understanding and capacity to care for the most vulnerable, there comes a time when they are ready to take the next step and take ownership to care for vulnerable people. This step is called graduation and this is where we find the community of Apatuku.

As the CBO seeks to support the most vulnerable children in the community of Apatuku, the number of children being cared for has decreased to 30. Mama Taiwo, the Coordinator of the CBO, is a church leader in the community and her church has really taken responsibility for these children. Though the situation in Apatuku is still difficult and extreme poverty still exists, the local church endeavors to be a light to the most vulnerable.



- Please pray for wisdom and strength for Mama Taiwo as she continues to serve these children through ongoing challenging situations
- Pray for Mama Taiwo's church to continue serving the children faithfully, as well as for more churches to get involved
- Pray for more Care Workers to be involved, and for unity, strength and confidence for the existing Care Workers

