

HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

APATUKU COMMUNITY

NIGERIA | LAGOS REGION

Apatuku is a rural village community on the outskirts of the city of Ibadan, Nigeria. With little commercial activity, a fluctuating network service and a lack of basic amenities like health care services, life for people living in Apatuku is a challenge. Unemployment is common and children are often abandoned or left with ailing grandparents whilst their parents go to the city of Lagos for work. More often than not, parents don't return, leaving their children to fend for themselves.

In 2009, a teacher from Apatuku and a group of local Christian volunteers decided to give a better future for the young children in their community. Together, they formed a community school which was committed to providing education and food for the most vulnerable children in their community. Together with the teachers, Care Workers cared for children at both the school and in their homes through Holy Home Visits. Some years later, the community school was closed due to the failing health of the founder. This situation led to the children being cared for from a local church.

It was Mama Taiwo, a committed Care Worker and Church leader in Apatuku, who offered her church as the Care Point. With the support of her church and after a visit from the Lagos Hands at Work team and the South African Regional Support Team, the new Care Point was started. Mama Taiwo challenged her church to help equip the new Care Point, and they responded by donating materials and their time to build a simple shelter so that cooking could continue. Recently, the Care Point's kitchen shelter, located on Mama Taiwo's church land, received new metal sheets for the roof and walls, ensuring that it is protected from the weather.

Today, 60 children come to the church building where they receive a hot, nutritious meal and care from Care Workers. Over the years, the Apatuku CBO has struggled in mobilising Care Workers who are able to holistically care for the children but are encouraged to see recent growth in this area. The local Hands at Work team in Lagos are faithful in supporting the Apatuku CBO as much as possible, despite being located several hours away. The Lagos team are committed to modelling Holy Home Visits to the Care Workers, ensuring that the children receive not only practical support, but also emotional and spiritual care. An exciting step for Hands at Work was having a house in Apatuku, enabling the Lagos team to be able to support Apatuku Community in a way that they couldn't before. This house ensures that the team have a safe and consistent place to stay while they support the community.

An ongoing challenge in Apatuku is a lack of access to basic health care services. Thankfully, the Care Workers are committed to advocating on behalf of the children, ensuring that they are receiving the medical care that they need. A breakthrough for the Care Workers was when one of the boys, who had been dealing with a life-long health challenge, was able to have the surgery he needed. Since then, his quality of life has been greatly improved – an amazing answer to prayer!



Children Currently Supported **30**

Number of Care Workers **7**

Coordinator Name **Mama Taiwo**

Distance from Local Office **140km**

Basic Services Started In **2009**