

HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

KIKULA B COMMUNITY

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO | LIKASI REGION

With a population of over 200,000, Kikula is one of the largest slum townships on the outskirts of the bustling city of Likasi. In 1993, Kikula was at the epicentre of civil conflict, with rebel groups fighting for regional independence from the government. Eventually, the conflict passed, but in its wake left thousands of newly orphaned children. With the recurrence of war in other parts of the country, the number of orphaned children and vulnerable families has increased as they fled the conflict and headed south, many of them ending up in the poorest of the poor communities like Kikula. Although it hosts the largest market in the Likasi area, food is scarce in Kikula. Many people are unable to feed their families due to the high levels of unemployment. If people want to farm to provide for their families it is challenging, as the mines have polluted the land and the streams.

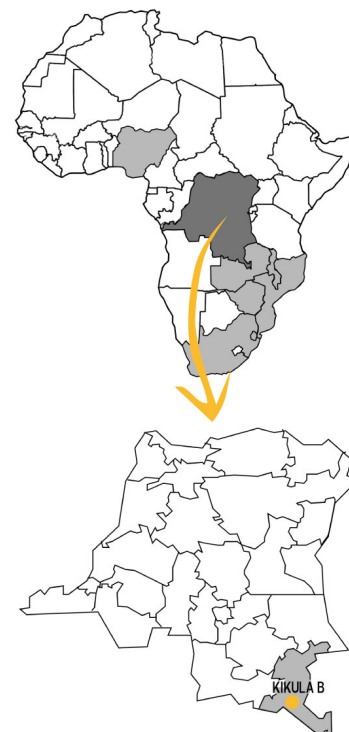
In 2018, a resident in Kikula was digging a toilet in their yard when they discovered a precious – and lucrative – mineral in the ground: cobalt. In a matter of days, word spread and people illegally moved into the community, in search of more cobalt. The lure of a cash windfall from mining brings detrimental effects to communities: drinking, drugs, abuse and child labour. Thankfully, the government ceased the illegal mining and miners have left the community, which is a huge answer to prayer. With Kikula being demarcated as mining land, the reality is that in the next few years it is possible that a mining company will start commercially mining, displacing vast areas of the community and forcing people to find other areas to live.

Seeing the immense vulnerability within their community, local volunteer Care Workers came together in 2011 and, partnering with Hands at Work, formed the Mapendo Community Based Organisation (CBO). Operating from a local church's property, Care Workers are committed to ensuring that 100 of the most vulnerable children receive a hot, nutritious meal daily and are supported with their education and basic health care. The local Hands at Work team is continuing to walk with the team of Care Workers as they grow in their understanding of what it means to holistically care for the vulnerable.

Understanding their call to answer the Biblical mandate in James 1:27 to care for the orphaned and widowed in their distress, the Care Workers meet regularly for Relationship Groups. Here they can share their personal stories, hear God's word and find His healing in their struggles, enabling them to pass this love on to the most vulnerable children in Kikula.

In 2018, a second feeding point (Kikula B) was started in Kikula, after the Care Workers and the local Hands at Work team in Likasi became increasingly aware of the distance that the children had to walk to attend the Care Point. They thought, "If we struggle to walk this distance to visit their homes once a week, imagine the children walking this every day."

Seeing the ever-growing need in the area of Kikula B, in 2022 the Care Workers, together with the Likasi team (supported by the Zambia Regional Support Team), decided to split the Kikula CBO into two official CBOs – Kikula A and Kikula B – with their own leadership and team of Care Workers.



Children Currently Supported **100**

Number of Care Workers **9**

Coordinator Name **Giselle**

Distance from Local Office **19km**

Basic Services Started In **2022**