

# HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

## KISUNKA COMMUNITY

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

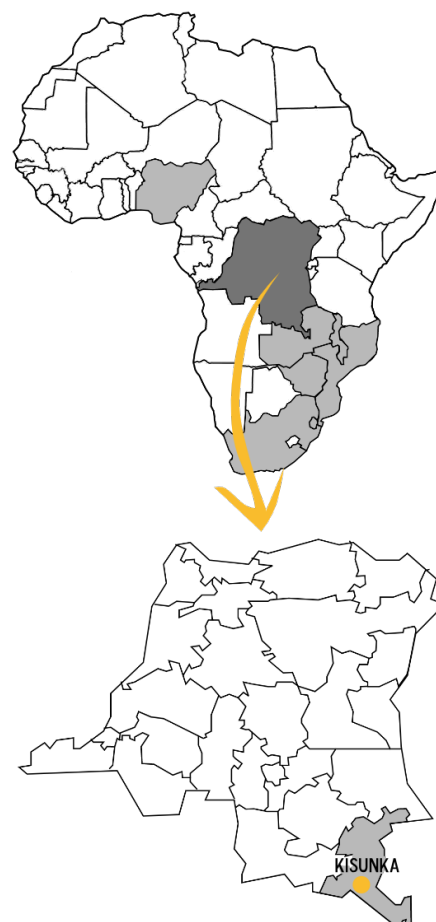
Kisunka is located fifty kilometres east of Likasi, on the shores of Lake Changalele and consists of five smaller communities that together make up a wider community of about five thousand people. This region in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is known for its exceptionally high rates of leprosy, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

People living in Kisunka depend on the most basic means of survival and their diet is restricted to what can be grown or caught, with fish and maize-meal being the staple food. Being far removed from trading centres, markets, health care and educational facilities is one of the greatest struggles for people living in Kisunka to overcome. As the cost of living continues to rise, the poorest of the poor are hit hardest and being able to provide for one's family becomes impossible.

Since the Shibukeni Community Based Organisation (CBO) was formed in 2012, it has grown rapidly. Initially, volunteer Care Workers from the local church were caring for 50 of the most vulnerable children, however, over the years, as the vulnerability within Kisunka continued to grow, the number increased to 200 children. Within Kisunka, four Care Points operate under the umbrella of the Shibukeni CBO. The purpose of having multiple Care Points is to limit the distance that the children have to travel between their homes and the Care Point.

The Care Workers have built relationships of love and trust with each child, knowing their family situation and individual needs. In knowing the children by name, the Care Workers are giving value and worth to each child. The Care Workers are passionate about advocating on behalf of the children they care for; identifying their needs by visiting them in their homes and spending time with them at the Care Points. In addition to supporting the children's emotional and spiritual needs, the Shibukeni CBO is committed to ensuring that the children receive the three essential services of food security, education and basic health care.

Across the community, utilities have been updated and solutions to problems found. At Kitondo, one of the zones where a Care Point operates, children struggled to attend school during the rainy season, as a big river would form, cutting them off. The local Hands at Work team in Likasi mobilised the community and built a bridge; a solution beneficial to all. At the Care Point in the Kasepa zone, a new toilet was constructed in 2019, which along with the provision of a secure, covered well to provide clean water, helps to ensure the health of the children and prevent disease.



Children Currently Supported **200**  
 Number of Care Workers **22**  
 Coordinator Name **Marie**  
 Distance from Local Office **45km**  
 Basic Services Started In **2012**