

# HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

## TEMITOPE 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.

Hands at Work is committed to ensuring that the younger siblings of the children attending the Care Points across Africa are being cared for. Hands at Work recognised that the children attending the Eagles Wings CBO were aged 6 to 12, therefore leaving children under 5, and over 12, not receiving care. At the end of 2015, the pursuit to start a Care Point that would care for children ages 0-8, began. Several of the South African Regional Support Team leaders started walking in the community alongside the local Hands at Work team in Lagos. They took time identifying the most vulnerable children and mobilising new Care Workers to serve at the Temitope Care Point. Officially in 2017, the Care Workers began caring for the most vulnerable children, ensuring that they are receiving a hot, nutritious meal daily and support with their education and basic health care.

Currently, the Temitope CBO is being operated out of the local church which is a beautiful example of the Hands at Work coming to life. A highlight for the Care Workers is the involvement of a community nurse, who has been helping to bring desperately needed medical treatment to our children. With the children being under the age of 8, and unable to attend school, Care Workers Mercy and Eberé have committed themselves to teaching the children about Jesus, playing games and singing songs with the children, and helping the children develop the necessary social skills. In 2021, a shade shelter was constructed at the Temitope Care Point, protecting the children from the extreme weather and giving them a safe place to play and eat their daily meal.



Children Currently Supported **125**  
 Number of Care Workers **13**  
 Coordinator Name **Mercy**  
 Distance from Local Office **14km**  
 Basic Services Started In **2017**