

HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

EAGLES WINGS 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.

Since Hands at Work began partnering with the Eagles Wings CBO, the local Hands at Work team in Lagos with support from the South African Regional Support Team (RST), have been helping the Eagles Wings CBO transition from not just being a primary school but also a Life Centre.

Today, 150 primary-aged children come to the Care Point where they receive a hot, nutritious meal daily and are supported with their education and basic health care. However, the care that they receive goes far beyond their physical needs. Coming to the Care Point, the children are able to connect and build relationships with the dedicated teachers who also visit the children in their homes. Over the past year the teachers have taken huge steps forward in providing even more holistic care for the children in the classes. They visit 4 days a week after school hours, praying with them, ensuring they are seen by the local nurse when they are sick and advocating for the most vulnerable primary caregivers who have needed support with starting small businesses (income generating activities) such as selling tomatoes or cooked foods.

As the teachers/Care Workers are growing in their relationships with the children, the Eagles Wings Care Point is becoming a safe and fun place for the children to learn, play and grow in their understanding of Jesus. Over the last few years, a number of projects have been completed at the Care Point including the repair of roof of the storage container by a local builder and two new safe, clean and hygienic toilets were constructed.



Children Currently Supported 150
Number of Care Workers 4
Coordinator Name Mrs. Joseph
Distance from Local Office 30km
Basic Services Started In 2007