



About Linking Hands Foundation (LHF)

Linking Hands Foundation (LHF) is a Nigerian registered non-governmental organisation. Our vision is to equip today's children to become tomorrow's leaders and our mission is to make positive and lasting impacts on humanity and society.

LHF promotes solid education, sound health and strong values for children.

LHF's No Limits Education Project (NLEP)

Background

LHF has been carrying out charity activities to support the pupils of Topgoodness School, Otodo-Gbame since 2016. This support includes donation of text books & reading books from our Book Drives, donation of school shoes, bags and supplies from our School Supplies Drive and donation of school desks and chairs through our Education Support Drive. We also carried out our Adopt-A-Buddy and Share-A-Snack Initiatives by taking privileged children to the slum school to interact through playing and teaching with the pupils there, as one of our efforts to bridge the gaps across classes of Nigerian children. We organised celebrations of Children's Day 2016, as well as Christmas 2016 & 2017 with the pupils of Topgoodness School. Sadly, in November, 2016, the OtodoGbame slum was demolished for the first time. After the families moved back, LHF started our "Rebuild Topgoodness School OtodoGbame Initiative". The project was in its execution stage when there was a second and final demolition of the slum community in March, 2017, causing the families, who had lost the little they had left to be displaced across different parts of Lagos, and adding about 350 children to Nigeria's already highest number of out-of-school children in the world.

Pedagogy

As most of our enrolled children were not well conversational in English, Mathematics, Science/ Real Life Activities, Social/ Civics Studies and Ethics & Etiquette were taught in English, and supported with Egun language (their mother tongue), as needed. English Language as a subject was taught intensively as a second language (twice daily) without the use of any other language during these classes, and in time, less Egun language was used in the other classes. Classes on ethics & etiquette, Circle Time and Games Period were included for a rounded learning experience.



Learning Centre Location

The venue was deliberately situated away from the environs of the Shogunro/Makoko slum community where the children live to allow them see daily another (positive and progressive) side of life, and thereby begin to aspire for same. It was also to allow for them to get used to walking some distance safely as a commitment to their education. This was mainly because they would need to walk about same distance to the nearest public schools to their homes.

Our rented space included 2 furnished classrooms, a storage room that had an outer space for meal preparation and water storage, and 2 toilets.

Learning Centre Schedule

Being that our NLEP children had only been to a community school, as part of our efforts to adequately prepare them for the public school system, LHF's NLEP Learning Centre ran between common school hours of 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. The children were expected to arrive at the learning centre between 7.30 a.m. and 7.55 a.m. and there was assembly time (during which the children learnt and sang the National Anthem and recited the National Pledge) from 8.00 a.m. to 8.30 a.m. before lessons began.

Learning Centre Provisions

The children received 2 sets of uniforms each, school bags, shoes, socks, water bottles, exercise books and stationery. The children, with the support of their parents were responsible for caring properly for all items given to them and their appearance had to be clean and neat at all times.

A Meal-A-Day

With parents who had been recently displaced from their homes, losing the little they had, feeding their children was difficult, such that many of these children had at the time joined their parents in trading/ selling in the market to add to their families' income.

In addition to strengthening the children's minds and bodies to learn through the provision of good nutrition, this also served as an incentive to parents who do not place due value on education, to send their children to LHF's NLEP Learning Centre. Upon realisation that most of the children came to the learning centre on empty stomachs, we provided biscuit or other snacks in the mornings and a nutritious lunch, daily.



Staff

We had qualified and experienced staff as follows:

- 1 supervisor and lead teacher, with backgrounds in English Education and Guidance Counselling
- 1 teacher with a background in English Language who DID NOT speak Egun, and also taught Social Studies
- 2 Mathematics & Science Egun speaking teachers

And

- 1 Cook who had a niece and nephew enrolled in the program
- 1 Janitor

Collaborations

- The Education Partnership (TEP) Centre & LearNigeria for competency tests and education advisory
- Corona School Victoria Island for teaching curriculum and book donations
- Newcastle Foods Limited for the donation of NauNau Foods ready-to-eat meal packs
- The Nigerian Child Initiative (TNCI) for a partnership medical drive which evaluated and treated (as needed) the children before resumption in public schools

Others

- Visit by Proprietor of Addlo Montessori School to provide advisory on teaching methods, and make donations of books and Montessori learning materials
- Volunteer teaching by LHF teenage volunteers
- Visit by Founder of Reaching Out For Love Initiative to teach art

Funding

- LHF Anonymous donor



Conclusion

At our NLEP Learning Centre, academic tutorial classes and ethical lessons were provided to 60 (and 1 mechanic child) of these precious children from February to August, 2018, after they had been out-of-school for about a year. Through the invaluable support of the **Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB)**, they were then integrated into 3 Lagos State Public Primary Schools, namely, Adekunle Primary School, Makoko Primary School and Aiyetoro Primary school, in September 2018, at the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic session, to continue with their education.

Within weeks of being in these schools a sizeable number of our children had been moved to classes higher than we had enrolled them in through Lagos SUBEB, based on their performances at our NLEP Learning Centre. Also, a good number of them had been selected as their class captains.

Our NLEP children thrived throughout the school year and maintained commendable levels of excellence in character and academics, comparative to their school mates, throughout the 2018-2019 academic year.