

OUR HISTORY



In 2003, our director, Susie Hart partnered with the Diocese of Ruaha in Tanzania to found and establish Neema Crafts Centre. The centre started with just three young deaf men learning how to make paper from elephant dung.



NEEMA CRAFTS CENTRE NOW EMPLOYS OVER 120 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY LIVING IN POVERTY.

The centre has transformed the way that disabled people are perceived in Tanzania. The centre has eight craft workshop areas, a physiotherapy unit for children with disabilities, an award-winning cafe, a conference centre entirely staffed by deaf people and a welcoming guesthouse staffed by people with disabilities.



In 2012, Susie handed over the management of Neema Crafts Centre and returned to Harrogate, where she set up Craft Aid International to similarly serve people with disabilities both globally and locally, starting with a therapeutic craft workshop in Harrogate.



WE WANT TO PASS ON THE NEEMA CRAFTS MODEL TO OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHERE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE STILL LIVING IN ABJECT POVERTY.

In 2014, a small church in Arequipa, Peru, invited CAI to begin a craft-based social enterprise in their community to serve people with disabilities, who are currently living in isolation and are unable to find employment; many of them reduced to begging on the streets.



In 2015, Susie visited Arequipa and began establishing a social enterprise. CAI appointed a skilled design volunteer to work full-time at the project, who we continue to mentor and support.

