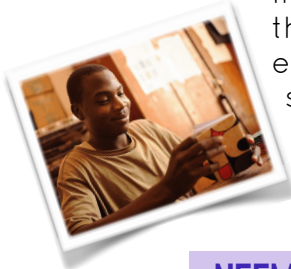


OUR HISTORY

In 2003, our director, Susie Hart worked 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, on a startup budget of £400.



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

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. **Neema Crafts has transformed the way that disabled people are perceived in Tanzania.**



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 locally and globally, starting with a therapeutic craft workshop in Harrogate, followed by Ripon and Leeds.



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 social 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 and trained a skilled design volunteer to work full-time at the project.



In 2016, CAI trained and sent out two more skilled volunteers to work at the Peru project, where the employees are beginning to earn a wage, so they can support themselves and their families. CAI was also invited to establish a similar project in Santo Domingo, Ecuador, where young people with disabilities are in great need of training and employment. CAI began planning the project and interviewing potential volunteers.