

Working together - the Batsiranai story

When is a doll more than a gift or plaything? When it's from Batsiranai.



Each of the dolls sold by Traidcraft has a twin in Zimbabwe, where it was made. So when you buy one of these handmade dolls, you keep one and its twin is given to a needy child from a family affected by HIV/AIDS. For many of the children, this is their first doll.

The dolls, which feature in Traidcraft's autumn/winter 2011 range, are made by the Batsiranai Mothers Group, which provides work for around 100 women in poor townships surrounding Harare. The members are mothers of special needs children, who are often shunned in Zimbabwe, not just by society but by their extended families as well.

Batsiranai means working together in Shona, the local language, and by working in this way the women aim to create a secure future for the children. The group is self-managed by a committee of seven elected members, with the group making decisions as a team. They are proud of the level of co-operation between the members.

During the last five years, Batsiranai has expanded and bought two houses that are used for daycare, physical therapy, workrooms, an office, and housing for three families. The centre provides hot meals and a vegetable garden for the members and children working there.

Last Christmas they provided a special lunch and party for the 100 Batsiranai mothers and their families, as well as a Christmas food basket.

The women are determined to see the business grow, which is why orders from organisations like Traidcraft are really important, to provide them with a market.

"The only wish I have now is for Batsiranai to grow bigger and become an even stronger business, so that we will be able to help others," member Mai Chiedza said, "because there are many people out there, just like us, wishing."

Related Links

- [Buy a Batsiranai Doll at our online store](#)
- [Download the Batsiranai story \(181kb\)](#)