

Shingirirai Trust, Mabvuku, Tafara & Caledonia, Zimbabwe



The Early Childhood Education Program is of particular interest to ZimArt-in-Trust. The program is aimed at orphans and vulnerable children, aged 3-6 years, in a sprawling peri-urban community to the north east of Harare. It is carried out in six centers (mainly church halls) with two centers operating in Mabvuku, two in Tafara and two in Caledonia. Each center has three staff members teaching approximately 45 children. The 18 staff members are supported by a team of 22 caregiver volunteers.

A total of 270 kids are receiving a quality early childhood educational program that encompasses eight areas of learning through play. The philosophy of the program is to show the children love so that they can grow up with self confidence and self esteem. Around 10% of the children are HIV infected and there are also some children with learning difficulties. All of the children are orphans or vulnerable children (with terminally ill parents) and they represent the most deprived in the community. Their caregivers are mainly overstretched grannies with many orphans to care for and few resources.

Shingirirai Trust was founded in 2003 and registered as a Trust in 2006. The organization was formed to help mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS and poverty at the community level.

There are four programs which form the base of activities for the organization. Early Childhood Education, Youth Skills Development Program, Capacity Development and Economic Empowerment.

ZimArt-in-Trust has been supporting one of the Economic Empowerment activities for the past three years. We have been shipping and selling products in Canada made by the Fabric Printing Group, returning 100% of sales revenue to the group.

Shingirirai Trust offers life and vocational training to 97 vulnerable youth and ZimArt-in-Trust will be working with them to see how we can support art and craft related skills training for these disempowered young people. In 2011 we are also shipping crafts to Canada made by participants of their Youth Program. We will sell the work on their behalf and return 100% of the proceeds to the group.

The children all receive two meals per day at the centres and are given regular health checks.

Most of the children enter the program for a full two years which gives them a great head start in life and prepares them well for primary school.

In 2011 we will be delivering art supplies, crayons, paper, pre-school books, stuffed toys, educational games and preschool toys, collected in Canada and shipped to Zimbabwe courtesy of The Friends of Howard Hospital.

ZimArt-in-Trust would like to continue to support the Early Childhood Education Program going forward, responding to needs as they arise.



(top) Orphans and other vulnerable children from four communities attend an excellent preschool program.

(bottom) Vocational training is helping 97 vulnerable youth learn skills and earn income.