

Impact Report 2025



making good
change happen

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Wasafiri has that rare ability to incubate transformative ideas and translate them into action. I've seen this in the African Food Fellowship: a dynamic initiative empowering hundreds of leaders to shape Africa's food systems and create the prosperous future we wish to see.”

Debisi Araba
Managing Director, AKADEMIYA2063

Wasafiri is a development consultancy that helps make good change happen.

From our HQ in Kenya, we operate across Africa and advise globally.

We offer a systems change approach to complex issues, especially at the intersection of food, livelihoods, climate, nature, peace and inclusion.

A message from our Executive Directors



At Wasafiri, we believe that good change is not just possible, it's necessary. Our work is rooted in the conviction that complex problems demand collaborative, systemic responses. Whether it's climate resilience, inclusive growth, or peacebuilding, we help leaders and organisations navigate complexity and unlock progress.

2024/5 has been a year of deepening our impact and broadening our reach. We've supported leaders in Kenya and Rwanda to build food systems that serve communities more equitably. We've worked with humanitarian actors to decentralise aid and strengthen local leadership. We've helped consortia prepare for climate-related shocks like flooding, advanced circular economy thinking in urban settings, and strengthened local supply chains through home-grown school feeding programmes.

Systemcraft, our open-source framework for systems change, continues to be a cornerstone of our approach. We're using it to strengthen learning, leadership, collaboration, inclusion, and action in complex systems.

As a certified B Corp, we remain committed to using business as a force for good. But we know that certification alone isn't enough. It's the daily choices we make, how we partner, how we lead, how we listen, that define our impact. We're proud of the progress we've made, and we're energised by the challenges ahead.

Looking forward, our ambition is clear: to help more leaders and organisations to advance systems change in Africa. Because in a world of complexity, good change doesn't happen by accident, it happens by design.



George Kaburu
Executive Director (Operations)



Ian Randall
Executive Director (Strategy)



Our Year



The year ended 31 March 2025 has been one of significant changes for our sector and for Wasafiri. Global politics has seen a collapse in the bilateral donor funding that dominates our development market. Most of our clients are Foundations so this had minimal direct impact on existing contracts, but competition heightened for the remaining opportunities. A second trend was for clients to prioritise funding development work by organisations based in the countries and regions they serve. Responding to these two trends, with the majority of our work managed from Kenya, Wasafiri embraced a strategic focus on the region, and prioritised its team in Nairobi.

Throughout the year, Wasafiri continued to deliver impact. This was achieved across our core portfolios: food systems, climate and nature, peace and inclusion. Our work remained anchored by the Africa Food Fellowship, which provides a stable foundation, ongoing opportunities for growth, and significant evidence that our work is making good change happen. We invested in stronger relationships across the region with clients, partners and consultants. Our more targeted geography strengthens our ability to support systems change due to our deeper connections and contextual understanding.

Financially the year fell short of targets but demonstrated resilience in a tough market. Turnover reduced from the previous year so to manage overheads, and strategically become more rooted in our African work, we reduced UK-based staff while maintaining capacity in Kenya. This included layoffs affecting about 20% of our team, the first time in our history we have had to take such a step. We recognise the impact of these changes and took steps to support affected employees, including severance and job search assistance.

Short-term outlook is uncertain, but long-term offers promise. The market remains in turmoil. Competitors are closing up or reducing in size. With a secure pipeline of work until mid-2027 and disciplined financial management, Wasafiri is well positioned to navigate the turmoil and emerge as a trusted African development consultancy with strong growth potential. Our culture remains a key strength: kind, open, supportive, agile, and underpinned by trust and integrity. The team has demonstrated remarkable adaptability and commitment, ensuring that Wasafiri is well placed to deliver sustainable growth and positive impact in the years to come.

Our Impact



We live in a time of profound complexity. Climate disruption, inequality, fragile food systems, forced migration, and social injustice are not isolated issues, they are deeply interconnected and systemic. These challenges cross borders, sectors, and disciplines, and they demand responses that are collaborative, adaptive, and grounded in lived experience. At Wasafiri, we believe that business has a vital role to play in shaping a better future. As a certified B Corp, we are committed to using our consultancy and institute to help leaders and organisations make good change happen. Our work spans food and livelihoods, climate and nature, peace and inclusion, always with a focus on systems change.

In 2024/5, we've supported initiatives that decentralise humanitarian aid, strengthen climate resilience, and build inclusive leadership networks. We've helped design and evaluate programmes that tackle youth unemployment, circularity in urban waste, and conflict mitigation in extractive regions. Through Systemcraft, our framework for systems change, we've equipped hundreds of leaders to navigate complexity and drive transformation, from postgraduate classrooms to global consortia.

We've also deepened our commitment to learning. Traditional monitoring and evaluation tools often fall short in complex environments. That's why we've invested in dynamic, systems-based MEL approaches that help us, and our partners understand what's working, adapt quickly, and stay accountable to the communities we serve.

Our impact is not just measured in deliverables or metrics. It's reflected in the relationships we build, the voices we amplify, and the systems we help shift. We're proud to be part of a global movement that sees business as a force for good, and we remain committed to becoming a more inclusive, adaptive, and human-centred organisation.



Our B Corp Journey



At Wasafiri, our work is rooted in supporting leaders and organisations to serve communities facing some of the world's most complex challenges; poverty, insecurity, inequality, and exclusion. We believe that meaningful impact comes not from maximising profit, but from delivering value to all our stakeholders: our clients, our team, our partners, and the communities we work with.

Becoming a certified B Corporation in 2018 was a milestone that affirmed our commitment to using business as a force for good. It recognised the principles we already lived by, and challenged us to go further. Since then, we've embedded our values into our legal structure, strengthened our environmental practices, and formalised our standards of conduct and accountability.

In 2025, we were honoured to receive our highest ever B Impact Score of 116, placing us in the top 20% of B-corp businesses. Our B Corp certification continues to guide our evolution. It helps us stay accountable to our mission, reflect critically on our practices, and push for greater transparency, equity, and sustainability in how we operate. As we look ahead, we remain committed to deepening our impact and growing as a human-centred, values-driven organisation.



Our Impact Areas

Working for a more peaceful, sustainable and equitable world



Inclusion & Peace

- Preventing violent extremism
- Tackling cross-border conflict
- Strengthening accountable governance



Climate & Nature

- Net Zero for high carbon economies
- Creating a circular economy
- Climate smart agriculture
- Climate resilience & adaptation



Food & Inclusive Growth

- Creating sustainable value chains
- Transforming Africa's food systems
- Graduation from extreme poverty
- Growing youth empowerment

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Wasafiri have helped improve our understanding of violent extremism in East Africa

Onno Koopmans - Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Our Services



Advisory, insight and leadership for systems change



Design & Implementation Advisory

Enhancing the impact of systems
change initiatives



Research & Learning

Improving decision-making for
system change initiatives



Systems Leadership

Catalysing the capacity of people
working on system change



*Wasafiri helped establish the cross-sector collaboration that is
now improving Africa's agricultural economies.*

Boaz Keizere - Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa

Systemcraft

Our practical framework for complex problems



wasafiri

Strengthens collective, adaptive responses to complex problems.

Supports decision makers to identify 'what next?'

Impels a shift from solution-provider to change-entrepreneur.

Ensures people affected by complex problems are at the heart of everything we do.

“ So, what next? ”

Our Approach: Ubuntu

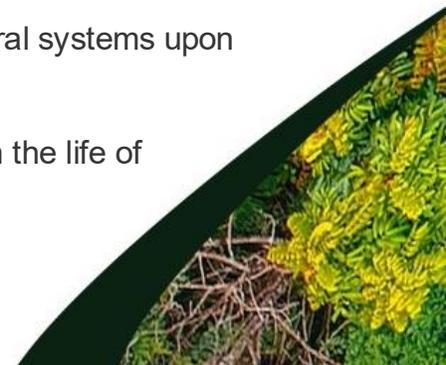


At the heart of Wasafiri is a veneration for People, Nature, and the profound interdependence that connects us all. Together we create joy and beauty in the world, and we also create struggle and hurt. Our collective work is to endlessly steward our human and ecological relationships into a state of balance in which all People and Nature can thrive.

This sentiment is encapsulated by the African philosophy of Ubuntu. Archbishop Tutu says Ubuntu "is to say, 'My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in what is yours.' We belong in a bundle of life." Liberian peace activist Leymah Gbowee defined it as: **"I am what I am because of who we all are."**

For Wasafiri, Ubuntu calls upon us to recognise that **we are in this together** - us, our clients, the communities we serve, and the natural systems upon which all life depends. It asks us to thrive by helping others thrive. And to do so with warmth, humility, and kindness.

We have co-created a set of Ubuntu Rules. These represent our accumulated wisdom about how to translate Ubuntu into practice in the life of the business. They provide simple handrails to guide decision-making across the business every day. Above all though, Ubuntu.



GOVERNANCE 19.7

Good governance fosters a culture of responsibility, transparency, and ethical behaviour. It is a fundamental element for achieving sustainable growth, building trust among stakeholders, and addressing complex challenges effectively.

What we said we'd do

- Increase the transparency of our decision making and performance through weekly engagement with all staff.
- Roll-out a new DEI reporting mechanism.
- Strengthen our project close-down process with the aim to reinforce accountability, highlight gaps and improve transparency.
- Encourage fast paced and intentional experimentation, learning and adaptation.

What we've learnt

- As our team has become smaller, we've learnt the need to adapt our governance so decision-making remains inclusive and transparent, ensuring diverse voices continue to shape our direction even as we seek speed and efficiency.
- Conversely, involving too many voices in every decision, can slow progress and risks becoming inappropriate for a small organisation with limited resources. While increased sharing and transparency help us harness collective intelligence, it's essential to maintain clear roles and responsibilities to avoid decision fatigue and keep momentum across our work.

What we have done

- We have implemented a regular team call that engages the whole company. These calls are designed to connect, celebrate, commiserate, support as One Team. Covering all areas of the business from the quality of our delivery to our financial health.
- We rolled out a DEI report that is shared with the board and wider team. It explores and measures our DEI strategies, goals and commitments. Both long term and short term.
- We reviewed and improved our project close-down process. Ensuring the things we learn from the project level is captured and shared across the business.

What we plan to do next

- Seek more board representation of people based in Kenya so we can further strengthen our East African leadership and senior decision-making structures to reflect the context we work and the communities we serve.
- Build on our weekly engagement rhythm by introducing more structured moments for reflection and learning, fostering shared accountability and enabling the team to respond collectively and adaptively.
- Make our decision-making processes more visible and inclusive, by sharing key outcomes from board meetings and creating space for staff input on strategic priorities.
- Establish a monthly session for sharing financial and commercial updates across the organisation to improve transparency, build real-time understanding of our business performance, and strengthen collective ownership of our financial sustainability.

WORKERS 30.4

The value workers bring to an organisation extend beyond their roles. And a culture that promotes social responsibility and ethical leadership will help organisations effectively navigate the challenges of making positive change in the world.

What we said we'd do

- Improve our approach to professional development for staff supporting and managing projects.
- Develop mechanisms to strengthen our bonds as 'one team'.
- Curate a development programme to support staff in finding and developing external partnerships through a deeper understanding of; facilitation, sense-making/analysis, bid writing, blog writing, and our core offering, Systemcraft.

What we have done

- We launched the second year of our License to Lead (L2L) Programme, a five-year professional accelerator designed to strengthen leadership across Wasafiri. Each year, one team member is selected for tailored development support to grow their leadership practice.
- A new weekly team call was introduced to foster stronger connections across the organisation. This regular rhythm has helped reinforce collaborative behaviours and align our work with shared goals.
- In response to the rapid evolution of AI, particularly LLMs, we appointed a domain lead to guide experimentation, learning, and responsible adoption. This ensures our team remains informed, empowered, and aligned.
- We provided targeted mentoring and support in partnership development and proposal writing. Helping staff build confidence and capability in external engagement.

What we've learnt

- We've learnt that investing in staff development through leadership programmes, team-building rhythms, and partnership skills strengthens our culture of learning and adaptability. We can see tangible impact as these efforts have improved organisational performance, deepened collaboration, and boosted confidence in navigating complexity and decision making.
- We've realised that commercial pressures create incentives that make it difficult to sustain time for reflection, skill-building, and development.
- We've found that hybrid working, and dispersed teams make maintaining strong connections challenging, even with weekly calls and deep dives.

What we plan to do next

- Create leadership roles within Wasafiri and our networks so that those leading the organisation better represent the communities we serve.
- Run workshops, webinars, and publish blogs that share lessons learned, promote systems thinking, and influence policy across East Africa.
- Build internal capacities for AI and digital tools that enhance sales, project delivery, monitoring, and stakeholder engagement to boost efficiency and innovation.
- Create a culture of open dialogue around capacity and wellbeing, where we collectively manage workloads and support flexible working arrangements that reflect both organisational needs and personal realities.

COMMUNITY 16.6

By contributing positively to the community's welfare, business acknowledges its role as a responsible and caring member of the broader social fabric, fostering harmony and shared prosperity.

What we said we'd do

- Integrate DEI conversations into our weekly company meetings.
- Invest in our License to Lead programme and advance with a second candidate.
- Complete an inaugural DEI report, including performance against goals and DEI metrics.

What we've learnt

- Over the recent years, we've learnt that achieving meaningful progress in DEI requires more than just ambition and commitments and resources need to be made. However, over the last year, as our team and resources have reduced, it has been challenging to balance our commitment with what is realistically achievable. At times, we've had to resist dedicating excessive time and resources to DEI, instead focusing on a sustainable, phased approach. This has helped us remain intentional and ensure our efforts are embedded in everyday operations.
- Clarity and consistency in how DEI concerns are handled is foundational to trust and fairness. By codifying a DEI reporting protocol, we have taken a proactive step toward psychological safety. This move has helped staff feel more confident in raising concerns and contributed to a more transparent and accountable culture.

What we have done

- We entered the second year of our License-to-Lead programme, designed to support under-represented staff in developing leadership capabilities. This initiative has helped shift perceptions of who leads at Wasafiri and how leadership is cultivated.
- We codified a transparent and accessible protocol for reporting DEI concerns. This has strengthened psychological safety and accountability across the organisation.
- We issued our inaugural DEI Report to set a baseline for our efforts and make DEI more explicit in our culture. The report has helped clarify our ambitions and provided a foundation for future progress.

What we plan to do next

- Deepen our partnerships with grassroots organisations and civil society actors, especially those working in fragile or underserved communities, to ensure our systems change work is grounded in lived experience and local leadership.
- Explore how to better support youth-led and women-led initiatives, particularly in regions where exclusion and vulnerability are most acute. This could include mentorship, funding pathways, or capacity-building support.
- Invest in documenting and sharing stories of community impact more consistently, helping to amplify voices from the field and inspire others working on similar challenges.

ENVIRONMENT 5.0

Protecting the environment mitigates climate change, preserves biodiversity, and ensures a sustainable future for generations to come.

What we said we'd do

- Have active discussions and share resources with staff about how we can positively shift our individual and family behaviours to support sustainable living.
- Include environmental impact as a consideration when arranging and running events.
- Continue supporting hybrid working for all staff to reduce car pollution.
- Invest in and grow a climate fellowship programme in Africa as part of a determined effort to grow partnerships and impact to improve nature and climate outcomes.

What we've learnt

- Staff engagement grows when there is practical action. Conversations about sustainability gained traction when linked to tangible actions, like hybrid working or localised event planning.
- Environmental impact is complex to measure. Whilst we understand the challenges around operating with complex problems we continue to learn as we go regard increasing our impact. And while intentions are strong, tracking and quantifying environmental impact across operations remains a challenge.
- One of the key practical lessons when it comes to our work, is that sustainability needs to be embedded, not added on. Integrating environmental thinking into existing systems (e.g. procurement, travel, project design) is more effective than standalone initiatives.
- It has become evermore clear that partnerships amplify impact. Collaborations through the climate fellowship and external evaluations have shown that Wasafiri's influence grows when working with aligned partners.

What we have done

- We have continued to offer flexible, remote-friendly working arrangements across teams, reducing commuting-related emissions.
- We invested in the concept of an Africa climate fellowship initiative, strengthening partnerships and impact on nature and climate outcomes.
- Incorporated environmental considerations into event planning, including venue choices and travel arrangements.
- Embedded sustainability into core workstreams, particularly through the Climate & Nature portfolio, which includes projects like WWF evaluations and nature-based solutions.

What we plan to do next

- Look to deepen staff engagement in our sustainability challenge. Recognising that impact and behaviour change are accelerated and taken up when the action is collective and cocreated.
- Strengthen our climate fellowship outcomes. Document and share the impact of the fellowship programme to attract further support and scale.

CUSTOMERS 44.8

Serving customers goes beyond meeting a set of deliverables. It is also about setting high standard for the service provided. This include ensuring keeping data private, marketing data ethically and encouraging strong feedback loops.

What we said we'd do and what we have done

- Conduct multiple consultation processes with our current and potential partners to better understand the challenges they face and understand how we can best support them.
- Introduce project managers into more of our smaller projects to ensure better service is provided.
- Explore whether we can co-host a 3 day in person network event to deepen relationships and credibility with philanthropic organisations interested in systems change.

What we've done

- We conducted multiple consultation processes with current and potential partners, including structured team workshops and strategy circles, to better understand their challenges and co-design support approaches.
- We introduced project managers into more of our smaller projects, to enhance the service quality and responsiveness to our clients and project beneficiaries.
- We explored opportunities to co-host a network event with philanthropic organisations, and while the event did not materialise, we deepened relationships through targeted partnership proposals and learning sessions.
- We embedded systems thinking and co-design principles into our client-facing work, helping partners prototype solutions and iterate based on real-time feedback

What we've learnt

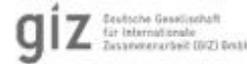
- We've learnt that consultation is most effective when it's ongoing and embedded into project cycles, not just a one-off exercise. Regular engagement with partners has helped us better understand their evolving needs and co-create more relevant support.
- Introducing project managers into smaller projects has improved client experience, but we've also learnt that clarity of roles and communication is key. Where roles are well-defined, service quality and responsiveness have noticeably improved.
- We've seen that clients value not just delivery, but partnership. Our efforts to deepen relationships through learning sessions, strategic dialogues, and co-design have reinforced the importance of trust and shared purpose in systems change work.

What we plan to do next

- Deepen Partnerships with Co-Creative Organizations establishing long term strategic partnerships with organizations that share Wasafiri's systems change approach and values, emphasising joint design and delivery.
- Build on our consultation efforts by developing a lightweight feedback mechanism that allows partners to share insights throughout the lifecycle of a project not just at the start or end.
- Improve how we communicate our systems change approach to clients, making it more accessible and actionable especially for philanthropic partners who are newer to this way of working.
- Explore ways to better capture and share client success stories, helping to build credibility and demonstrate the impact of our collaborative work.

Our Clients

We work with some of the world's most respected organisations



making **good change** happen

