

HADITHI

OUR JOURNEY OF CHANGE: A DECADE WITH HADITHI CRAFTS

2014-2024 Impact Report



Our Journey of Change

Hadithi noun | /ha-di:-θi/. *Kiswahili language*
Story, narrative

If there's one thing we value at Hadithi Crafts, it's a good story. "Hadithi" means story in Swahili – and for the past decade, we've been part of one that continues to unfold in powerful ways. It's the story of 1,900 women in Tsavo shaping their futures with creativity, resilience, and skill.

It's a story of what happens when women are connected to opportunity – when they can earn through their craft, receive support from Hadithi Crafts, and organise into strong women's groups. It's about income, yes – but also about confidence, solidarity, and the ripple effects of women learning, leading, and lifting up their families and communities.

Structured around the People, Planet, Profit (PPP)

framework, this report offers a window into the impact of our work.

We hope it deepens your understanding of how artisan women are earning, learning, and leading – and how traditional craft, when valued and supported, becomes a driver of gender equality, conservation, and economic resilience.

We share this report to celebrate those at the heart of it, to reflect openly on our growth, and to invite continued collaboration. Whether you are a partner, customer, funder, or friend, we hope it informs, moves, and inspires you to remain part of this shared journey.

People

Artisans with tools, skills and market

Planet


Natural materials and environmental stewardship

Profit

Economic impact, growth and innovation

Written by Lore Defrancq, the trustee of Hadithi Crafts Support CBO and one of our founding members.





Our Journey of Change 2014–2024

Two Page Summary: People. Planet. Profit.

PEOPLE – Women with tools, skills and market

Artisan Growth:

- Between 2014 to 2024, we went from supporting 552 to 1,902 female artisans, and from 24 to 64 active women's groups, reaching 10,000+ lives through household and community impact.

Skills & Capacity Building of artisans:

- Delivered 1,200+ training sessions across 24 topics, including basket weaving, natural dyeing, financial literacy, reproductive health, and gender-based violence.
- 100% of the trainings led by fellow artisans, local experts, or Hadithi staff, encouraging grassroots leadership.

Skills & Capacity Building of group leadership:

- Facilitated registration with the social services for 15% of the groups
- Strengthening group structures by funding of group projects (11.5 million KES), leadership trainings on ethical compliance and recordkeeping, advise from liaison officers
- Hadithi Crafts invests on average 8% of turnover on group & artisan capacity building projects every year

Income & Empowerment:

- Artisans cite Hadithi Crafts as their main income source.
- Over 1.18 million USD paid directly to artisans in cash over 10 years.
- 200,000+ handcrafted items purchased from artisans.
- Women report being “stronger individuals,” more confident decision-makers, and more financially independent.
- 99% say Hadithi has positively impacted their lives.

Poverty Reduction:

- Artisans' likelihood of living in poverty decreases by 1.9% for each year of Hadithi membership (based on the Poverty Probability Index).

Ethical Crafting Standards:

- Entire beadwork collection certified as Ethically Crafted by NEST.
- All groups trained on Hadithi's Artisan Manual, covering fair wages, child protection, health, and equity.



PLANET – Sustainable Materials & Conservation

Craft for Conservation:

- Hadithi Crafts operates in a wildlife corridor between Tsavo East & West.
- Handicrafts offer an alternative income to subsistence farming and charcoal burning, and can reduce human-wildlife conflict.
- Certified Wildlife Friendly – part of the global Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network.

Sustainable Materials:

- Sisal & Palm: organically & locally grown, pesticide-free.
- Leather: locally and ethically sourced.
- Beads: long-lasting Czech glass integrated into Maasai culture.
- Conservation Collection: recycle elephant dung and poachers' snares

Eco Dyeing Breakthrough:

- 2024 Launch of the Hadithi Dye Centre for centralised dyeing, helping to address health and environmental risks of home dyeing.
- Traditional natural sisal dyeing research and knowledge sharing with artisans



PROFIT – Economic Impact, Growth, and Innovation

Business Growth:

- Revenue has surpassed 150,000 USD annually since 2018.
- Average of 70% of sales revenue spent on purchase of artisan crafts
- Sales revenue represented more than 70% of every year's turnover
- Sales peaked in 2021 during the global home decor boom but declined with market shifts and rising competition.

Global Market Reach:

- 80+ Wholesale customers in Kenya, USA, Europe, and beyond.
- Online shop since 2020 and first US trade show attendance in 2024

Innovation in Product Design:

- New seasonal collections enabled by dye centre.
- Expanding from sisal baskets to palm weave, beadwork on leather, and sewn safari animals.

Job Creation & Infrastructure:

- Grew from 1 to 10 full-time employees, including community liaison officers and production.
- Established HQ, Youth Enterprise Centres and village satellite shops.

Funding & Support:

- Received 250,000 USD in grants, plus years of in-kind support from Wildlife Works and other partners.



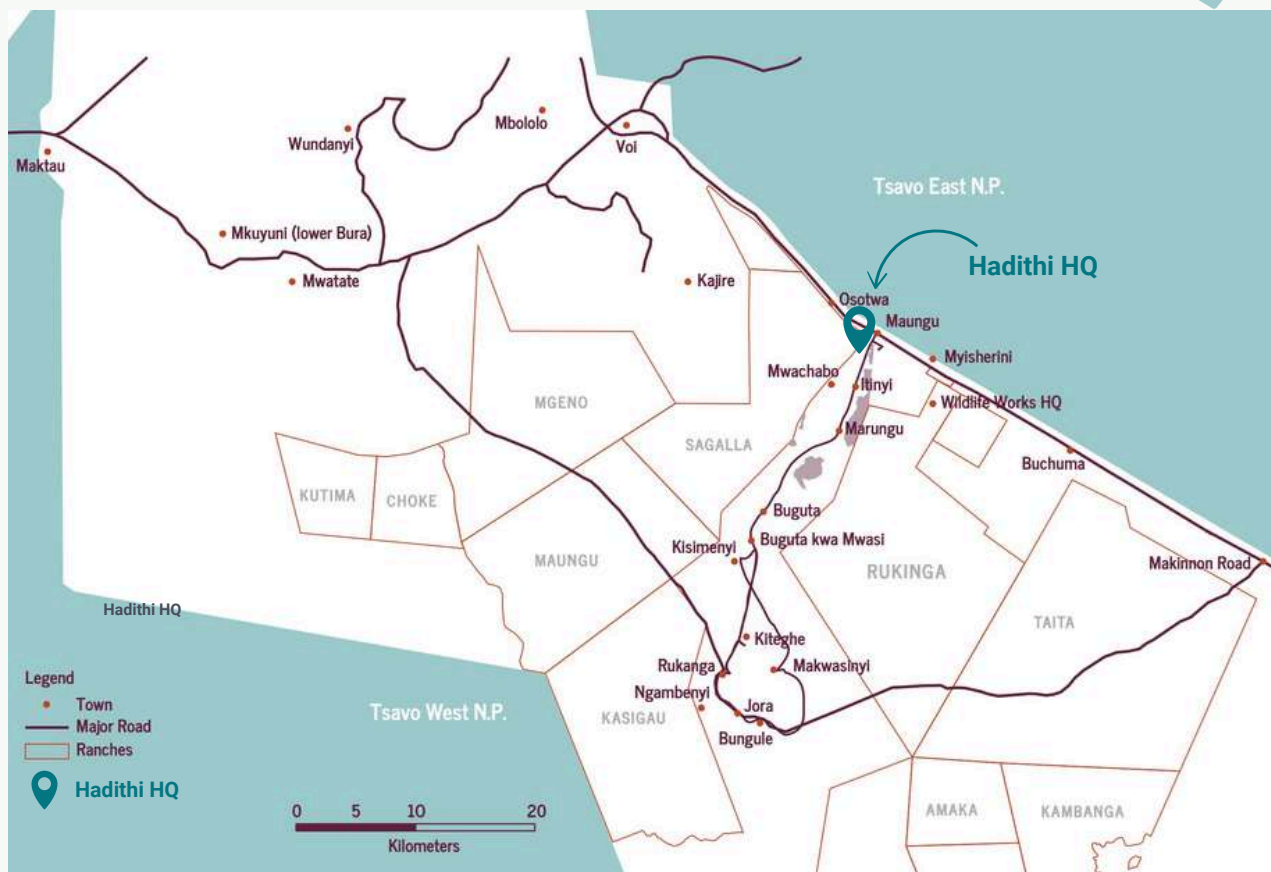
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Introduction

Where - Our Home

Hadithi Crafts' story begins in April 2014, as the chairladies of 24 women's groups, representing 512 artisans, came together with a shared mission to support the female artisans in Tsavo, Kenya. They sought to create sustainable income opportunities through the sale of their traditional handicrafts, helping women strengthen their livelihoods and communities.



Hadithi Crafts specifically works with rural communities living in a vital wildlife corridor, interspersed by villages between Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Park. This is one of the most economically marginalised counties of Kenya.

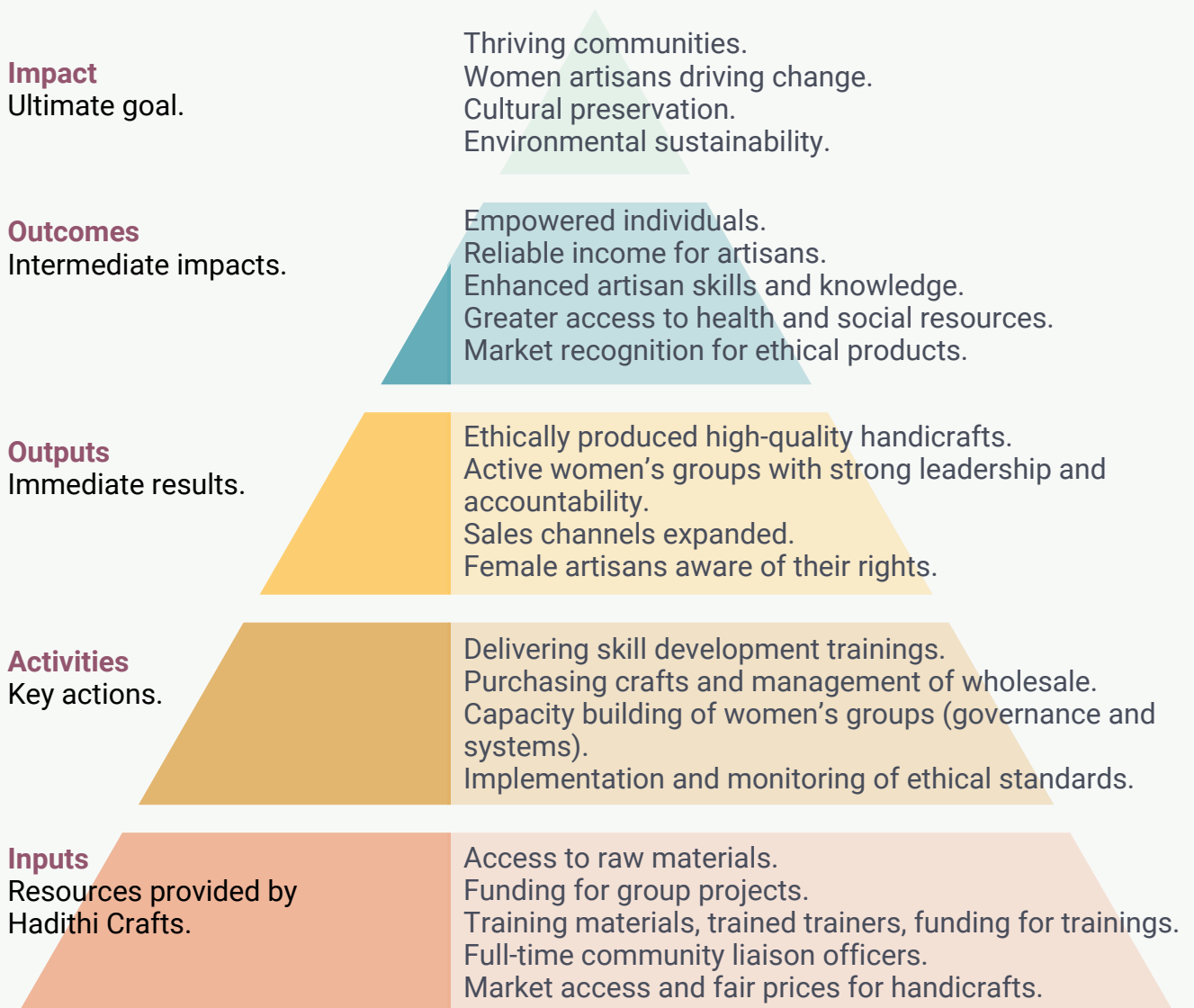


Introduction

What - Hadithi Crafts' Mission

Hadithi was founded with the core purpose to be an empowering platform for female rural artisans in Tsavo, Kenya through production and sales of high-quality, environmentally-conscious crafts.

Why and How becomes clear below, with the outline of **our Theory of Change**, a framework that maps out the steps required to create meaningful change, starting with the issues being addressed, the actions taken, and the desired outcomes, with each layer building on the previous one.



The Issues We Address

Poverty among rural communities - Environmental degradation - Limited market access for artisans - Lack of capacity building and skills development - Barriers to financial inclusion - Social challenges linked to economic insecurity

Introduction

Who - Our Artisan Community

Hadithi Crafts works with registered women's groups in Tsavo that make diverse handicrafts. Hadithi Crafts maintains a regularly updated member register, reviewed quarterly with group leaders, to reflect changes such as members joining, leaving, or transferring groups. Between 2014 and 2024, the number of women's groups, artisans, and communities impacted has increased overall by +260%.

Our Hadithi Artisan community has grown in terms of groups 👥, artisans involved 🖐️ and lives impacted 🏠.

BETWEEN 2014 & 2024

👥	24	->	64	GROUPS	👥
🖐️	552	->	1,902	ARTISANS	🖐️
🏠	3,036	->	10,461	IMPACTED	🏠

BEADWORK	SEWING	PALM BASKET
1 -> 6 👥	1 -> 2 👥	1 -> 6 👥
18 -> 160 🖐️	3 -> 7 🖐️	19 -> 105 🖐️
99 -> 880 🏠	16 -> 39 🏠	104 -> 578 🏠

SISAL BASKET PRACTICAL WEAVE

8	->	38	👥
452	->	1,180	🖐️
2,486	->	6,215	🏠



SISAL BASKET FINEWEAVE

2	->	13	👥
60	->	451	🖐️
330	->	2,338	🏠

Introduction

10,461 lives impacted, what does that mean?

In rural Kenyan settings, families are typically large, with an **average household size of 5.5 people**. Each artisan in Hadithi Crafts contributes not only to their immediate household but also to an extended circle of dependents. **1,902 female artisans, through the income they generate and the skills they learn, create a ripple effect that directly impacts roughly 10,461 people, and likely more, through supporting extended family and the broader community.**

1. Direct Financial Support for Families

The income earned by artisans is often the primary or sole source of cash flow for their households. With 63% household dependency (data from a 2019-2020 hadithi survey), most family members—including children, spouses, and elderly relatives—rely on the artisans earnings for essential needs such as education, healthcare, and food security.

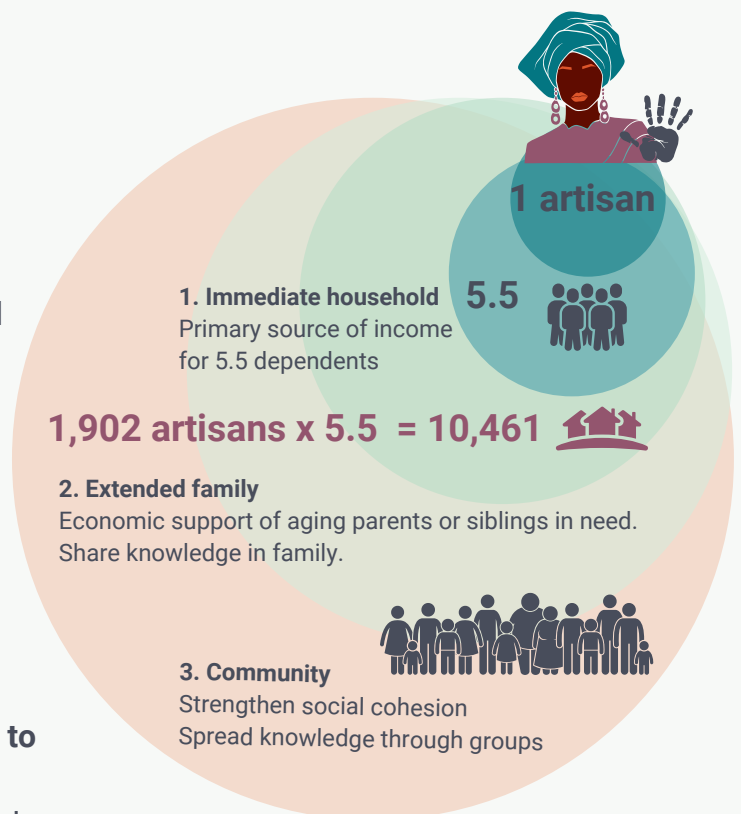
2. Offer knowledge and financial support to extended family

In rural communities, women play a pivotal role in building economic stability.

Women typically reinvest a significant portion of their earnings into their households and communities, creating widespread benefits. This might include improving living conditions or supporting extended family members, such as aging parents or siblings in need. They also pass knowledge on within the household.

3. Community-Level Impacts

The artisans' participation in groups **strengthens social cohesion and communal support systems**. By sharing knowledge from Hadithi Crafts' or other training programs, women extend the impact of their learning beyond their households, positively influencing the broader community.



People

Artisan Groups with Skills, Tools and Market



Hadithi Activities Overview

In **the people section of this report** we outline Hadithi Crafts' key activities and their input and outputs. We show how Hadithi Crafts, by implementing four core activities, has created access to skills, fair markets, strong group structures, and ethical working conditions – driving the long-term change envisioned in Hadithi Crafts' Theory of Change.

Activity 1. Skill development trainings for artisans

Delivering training on crafting skills.

Delivering training on personal skills.

Activity 2. Purchasing crafts and wholesale management

Artisans receive cash in hand for their handicraft production from Hadithi Crafts.

Hadithi helps artisans source raw materials for their crafting.

Activity 3. Capacity building of Women's groups

Strengthening group structures.

Delivering trainings aiming to build capacity of women's groups.

Funding group development projects.

Activity 4. Implementation and monitoring of ethical standards

Developing ethical production strategies.

Certification and monitoring of ethical production.



Activity 1

Skill development trainings for artisans

Hadithi Crafts has provided trainings on a wide range of topics, detailed below. These trainings give artisans access to essential life skills that can help them achieve their personal and economic goals.

These trainings have been delivered through a collaborative approach:

- **Artisans Training Fellow Artisans:** By paying experienced artisans to train others, we create opportunities for income while building local capacity.
- **Community Liaison Officers:** Our own team of dedicated community liaison officers has led many of these sessions.
- **Local Partner Organizations:** Collaborations with local experts, such as trainers from [Kujuwa Initiative](#) & [Zawadisha](#), have enriched the learning experience.

This approach has proven very valuable and effective - as local women learn to teach these subjects, it further amplifies and increases the local knowledge.

**OVER 24
TRAINING TOPICS
DEVELOPED AND
CONDUCTED**

Hadithi Crafts has delivered trainings on 24 different topics in over 1,200 sessions between 2014 and 2024.

- **Crafts skills** (14 trainings) helping to build the skills to make handicrafts that are ready for market,
- **Personal skills** (10 trainings), which are skills that are not related to the handicraft making.

Gladys Shauri from Buguta Disabled Group

"I joined Hadithi in 2015, when I learnt how to make stuffed safari animals. Since then things have been different in my life. I used to carry water jerricans on my head to take home because of water shortage. But now, the money I make helped me to buy a water tank - and now whenever it rains, water is collected in my water tank.

We have had so many trainings as well, in which I have learnt a lot. Especially on topics of health e.g. on menstruation and knowledge on cancer in general."



Activity 1

Skill development trainings for artisans

Craft Skill Trainings facilitated by Hadithi between 2014 & 2024

Topic	Trained by:
Basic skills in Crafts	
Sisal basket weaving from scratch	Rose (fellow artisan)
Palm basket weaving from scratch	Jane (fellow artisan)
Beading on leather from scratch	Esther (fellow artisan)
Elephant dung paper making from scratch	Monica (fellow artisan)
Leather crafting from scratch	Ezra (fellow artisan)
Advanced skills in Crafts	
Quality training	Aggy (Hadithi Team)
Patterns and designs	Aggy (Hadithi Team)
(Natural) Dyeing of sisal	Aggy (Hadithi Team)
Fire safety when natural dyeing	Aggy, Angelina, Eliza (Hadithi Team)
Innovation & new techniques	
PW herringbone weave	Fellow artisan
PW specific patterns	Various fellow artisans
FW square mats	Gladys (fellow artisan)
FW round mats	Gladys (fellow artisan)
PW patterns with holes	Hadithi Team and Ethical Fashion Initiative



Training on new shape and technique (herringbone)



Training on natural dyeing

Margaret Mkala from Marere Village

"Before I joined Hadithi, I would weave baskets just to pass time or someone would ask me to make them a basket.

Then came along Hadithi and trained us on how to weave better quality baskets in order to attract a wider market - which has been a great journey. There is nothing worthwhile that does not have challenges. There are times I have had my baskets returned because it had mistakes. I simply take it back and redo it and that is how one betters themselves."



Activity 1

Skill development trainings for artisans

Personal Skill Trainings facilitated by Hadithi between 2014 & 2024

Topic	Trained by
Financial and Business Skills	
Financial and Debt Management	Zawadisha
Business Management	Zawadisha
Record Keeping	Zawadisha
Table Banking - Best Practices	Zawadisha
Chicken Rearing (3 Trainings)	Zawadisha
Health	
Staying Safe from COVID	Hadithi Community Team
Female Reproductive Health STI's, HIV and Cancer	ToT zawadisha & health volunteers
FRH Conception and Menstruation	ToT zawadisha & health volunteers
Child-Parent Communication	ToT zawadisha & health volunteers
Gender-Based Violence	ToT zawadisha & health volunteers

Training on Female Reproductive Health, FRH conception and menstruation, and Gender based violence



Ruth Michael from Osotwa group

"The recent trainings on menstruation and health were very interesting topics for me.

It was so valuable to learn about different sanitary towels, our different stages of the menstrual cycle, and about conception and ovulation. That particular training stood out for me."



Outputs of Activity 1

Skill development trainings for artisans

Jennie Lester wrote a Masters thesis in 2021 about the impact of handicraft production on the artisans from Hadithi Crafts. This provided us with a wealth of knowledge about the outputs and outcomes of our core activities, as presented in this chapter*.

The thesis mentions a **strong connection between handicrafts and women's empowerment**. Handicraft production provides women with opportunities to **earn income, develop skills, and build confidence**. Craft training is mentioned by 79% of the artisans as one most valuable support activities of Hadithi Crafts. 95% of artisans say they enjoy crafting very much, with 89% eager to spend more time on their craft.

99 % **YES**

'Being a member of Hadithi Crafts benefits my life'

Jennie gives the following definition of **Individual Empowerment**: *it is a multi-faceted and dynamic process by which individuals gain the knowledge, skills, confidence, and self-awareness needed to take control of their lives, make informed decisions, and pursue personal growth. It is foundational for other forms of empowerment, as it equips individuals with the resources to participate meaningfully in social and economic spheres.*

Key benefits of craft & life skills trainings



83 % I've become a stronger individual

I've become more skilled



86 %



96 % I'm more able to make money

70 % of Beaders have no other source of income

50 % of Weavers also produce farm produce for own use

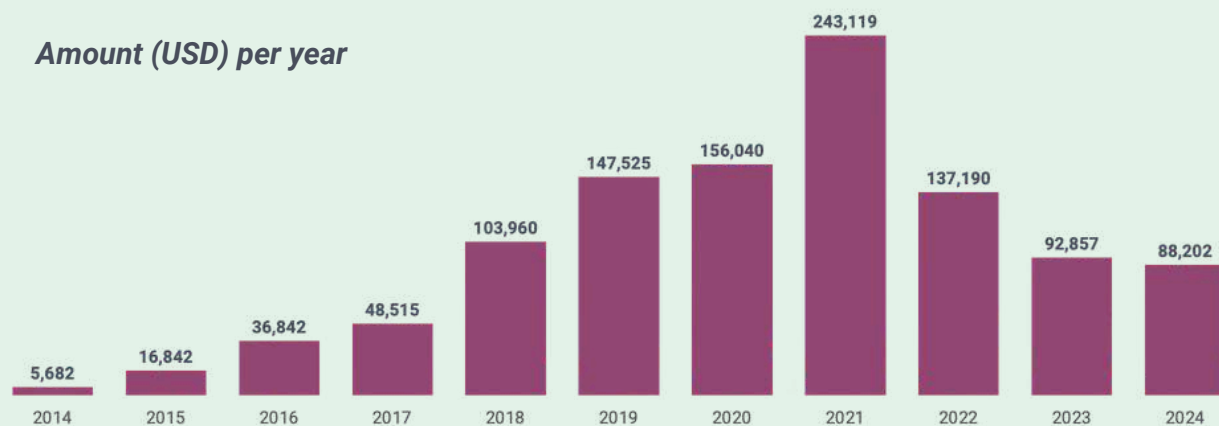
* Jennie's masters thesis analysed 900 artisan surveys conducted in 2019 and 2020. Its titled "[Poverty, Empowerment and Gender Equality, through the voices of female handcrafters, belonging to SHGs and Hadithi Crafts support CBO, living in Taita Taveta County, South East Kenya](#)" published November 2021.

Activity 2

Purchasing crafts and wholesale management

Over this decade, Hadithi Crafts expended a significant amount of cash into the artisans hands by purchasing their handmade crafts. On average 107,400 USD per year.

Graph: yearly cash in hand for Hadithi artisans for handicraft purchases



Between 2014 and 2024
Hadithi Crafts has purchased
over 200,000 pieces of handicrafts
for a total of 1,180,734 USD
paid cash to Hadithi artisans.

THANKS A MILLION!



Hadithi Crafts prices per piece are by discussion and agreement with the chairladies of the women's groups, and reviewed annually. Comparably in Kenya, our prices are higher for every size. In 2023 we introduced to Time Motion Studies method (TMS) to guide our price setting.



Hadithi's average price per piece paid to artisans have doubled over the last decade.

Activity 2 Purchasing crafts and wholesale management

Access to raw materials

Access to raw materials used to be a significant challenge for our artisans. Sisal, the primary material for basket weaving, is grown on scale in Taita-Taveta county, but was not always available for in walking distance in rural villages, limiting production and income opportunities. To address this, Hadithi Crafts liaison officers began carrying sisal and dyes when meeting with artisan groups on buying days, allowing women to purchase materials directly and continue their work.

In 2019, we strengthened this initiative by establishing designated shops, '**Satellite Shops**', in nine villages, ensuring that sisal and dyes became consistently available. This was a solution for production efficiency, reduced travel burdens for artisans, and supported the growth of local handicraft businesses. In 2024 we stopped supplying the chemical dye powders. Instead we supply the shops with undyed and dyed sisal, to reduce health and environmental risk. Read more on those changes on [p33 of this report](#).

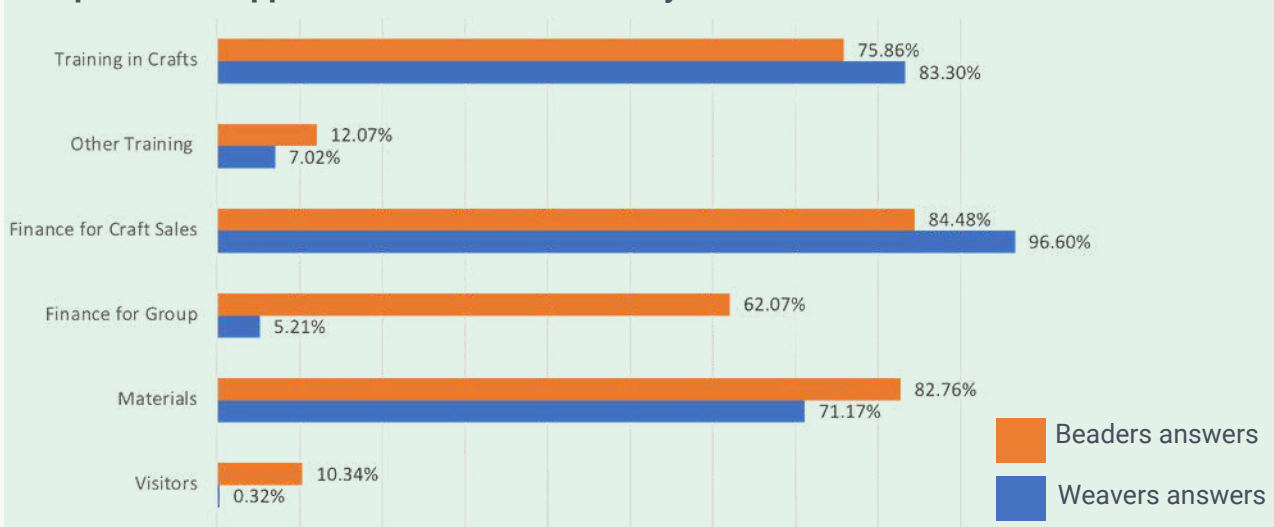
Photo 1. Transporting a Sisal bale of 250kg
Photo 3. Sisal delivery at a women's Group

Photo 2. Bundling sisal into 400g parcels
Photo 4. Two bundles of sisal on an artisans lap



In the 2019 survey, Hadithi artisans mentioned purchasing of baskets and access to raw materials as the most useful activities of Hadithi Crafts, along with training in crafts.

Graph: 'What support from Hadithi Crafts do you find the most useful?'



Activity 2

Purchasing crafts and wholesale management

Access to market

Creating a sustainable livelihood opportunity is the cornerstone of Hadithi Crafts' work, enabling artisans to earn, manage, and control financial resources. By facilitating sales, we help artisans achieve economic stability, improve their quality of life, and exercise greater control over their futures.

Jennie's research states: *"The material economic benefits for the women from earning an income are clear, through the improvements they can make to their lives and their families. 92% of the weavers use their money to buy food, 56% to pay school fees, and, 31% to pay loans."*



Martha Saki from Osotwa group

"I joined Hadithi Crafts when my child was still breastfeeding, and now he's about 13 years of age. Hadithi has really empowered me as a woman in my community and I have managed to do a few things of my own from the earnings I have made so far. I hope and pray for more market opportunities as we soar in to the next decade."

Ndinda Kitonyi from Kisimenyi village

"I joined a basket weaving group in 2021. I was keen to do so because I could see that basket weaving has positively impacted the life of the other ladies involved."



Magdaline from Kisimenyi group

"Life has changed since I started to weave baskets. My children now go to school, I can buy food, clothes, life is better now. I feel good, it gives me money and I sleep well at night. When I didn't belong to the self-help group and Hadithi CBO there were problems. The children didn't have any food, no school, clothes. It is not the same as before now. Belonging to Hadithi has definitely made life easier than before."

Outputs of Activity 2

Purchasing crafts and wholesale management

Effective Poverty Reduction

A Poverty & Equity Brief Report for Kenya (World Bank, 2020b), reported that in 2015/2016, **36% of the Kenyan population are living below the national poverty line**, which for rural dwellers, is 3,252 KES per person per month. This is **less than \$1.9** per day!

The majority of the population living in poverty in Kenya are **women** (Statista, 2021a) and in addition, Africa Sustainability (2021) report that the majority of the poor in Kenya live in **rural areas**. Significant to Hadithi Crafts' mission and impact, our data showed that indeed **49% of our artisans are at risk of living below the poverty line**.

Poverty Probability Index (PPI)

The Poverty Probability Index or PPI score uses 10 simple questions to assess the likelihood someone lives in poverty. We asked 900 artisans these questions and more in 2019-2020.



Over the past 7 days, did the household purchase/consume/acquire any meat or fish?

Does your household own any thermos flasks?

What fuel do you use to cook on?

The PPI responses of our surveys were analysed for Jennie's masters thesis.



Jennie's research shows that age, location, and how long the group has existed did not have a significant impact on the PPI score.

The only significant factor influencing the PPI, was how long the artisan had been part of a registered women's group involved with Hadithi Crafts CBO. For every year the group is a member of Hadithi Crafts, the artisans are 1.9% less likely to be living in poverty.



It means the handicrafts provide a vital source of income for artisans AND that female artisans spend their income wisely: their living situation is improving, and their PPI score is diminishing. It means that our collective efforts are having a real impact. Slowly but surely.



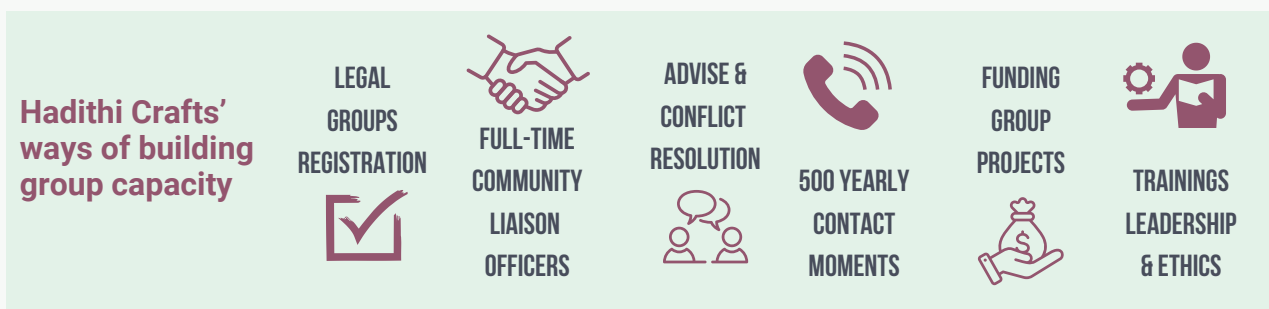
1.9%

Hadithi membership decreased the poverty likelihood by 1.9% per year.

Activity 3

Capacity building of Women's Groups

Strong group structures are the foundation of lasting independence and impact. Hadithi Crafts supports Women's Groups by strengthening internal governance, funding self-led development projects, and delivering targeted leadership trainings – helping women organise effectively, manage orders, and make decisions with confidence. These structures support their work with Hadithi Crafts, and also enable them to take on new opportunities independently.



Strengthening group structures

Legal Foundations for the group

Hadithi Crafts works with formally registered women groups. This means they are registered with the Department of Social Services. This registration essentially enables groups to open bank accounts, access training and funding, and to engage independently with government or NGO programs.

Some groups of women were not a registered group when they applied for Hadithi membership. We **facilitated legal registration of 10 of our member groups** with guidance and resources.

During our 2023 Annual General Meeting, member groups collectively decided to **pause the addition of new groups** until sales growth justifies the investment in adding more groups. This strategic decision allows us to focus on deepening support for our current members while maintaining quality and cohesion.



Eunice from Rukanga Village

"I joined Rukanga Basket Weavers because the leaders work for the betterment of their members. The group is hardworking and united, and many of my baskets have been sold through my association with them."

Activity 3

Capacity building of Women’s Groups

Governance Support and Conflict Resolution

Hadithi Crafts works closely with all member groups to strengthen leadership, support fair decision-making, and help resolve internal conflicts when they arise.

Our **community liaison officers** play a key role in this guidance and support . They visit groups regularly, help refine leadership roles, offer practical advice, and step in as neutral mediators when needed. As Hadithi grew, so did our team – from one liaison officer in the early years to **four full-time staff by 2024**, maintaining a close and supportive presence with around 500 direct contact moments each year.

Tabitha Wuganga from Wayani Village

“I am happy to see that we have more unity and togetherness as a group. These are things we had to perfect as individuals. We had to learn we make more progress when we unite and not divide ourselves.

I have learnt in the recent trainings how important it is to let our children be children. They shouldn’t weave with us in order to make more money - that is child labour.”



Capacity building trainings for Women’s Groups

Capacity Building Trainings facilitated by Hadithi between 2020 & 2024

Topic	Trained by
Ethical Policy: Discrimination, Harassment, and Child Labour	Hadithi Community Team
Ethical Policy: Human Rights and Ethical Working Conditions	Hadithi Community Team
Good Group Governance & Leadership	Hadithi Community Team
Human-Elephant Conflict	Wildlife Works
Hadithi environmental policy	Hadithi Community Team
Group Committee training on record keeping	Hadithi Community Team

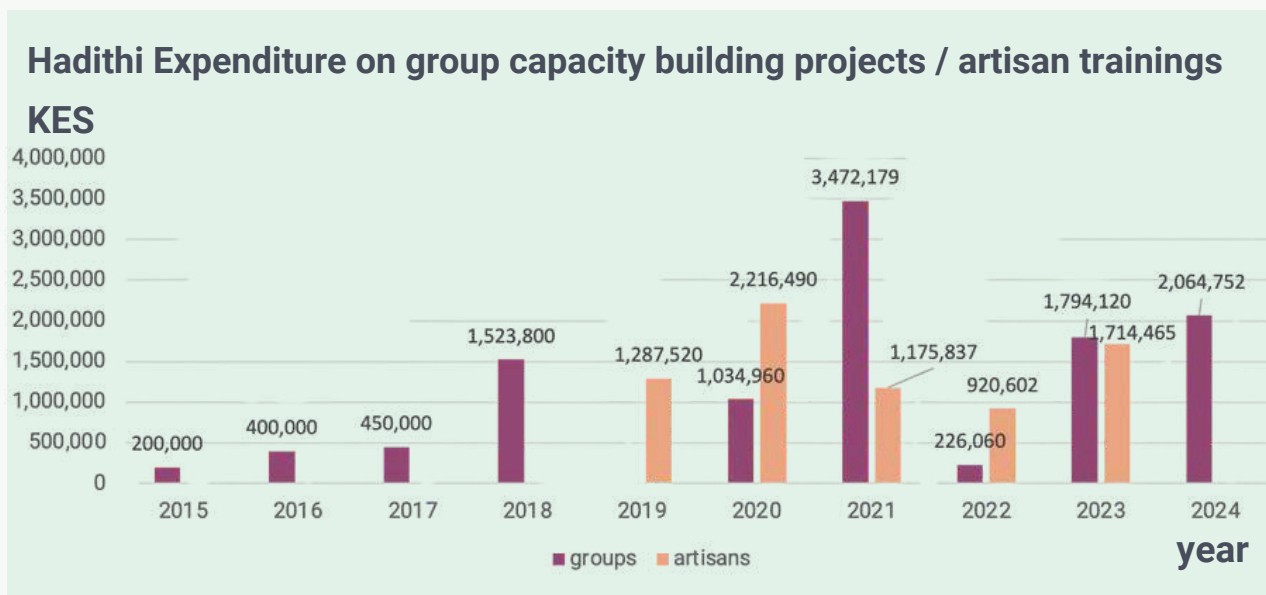
These six trainings above were developed and conducted by Hadithi crafts between 2020 and 2024 to further build the capacity of the women groups we work with. The trainings are designed to equip women with confidence, manage their groups effectively, and contribute to ethical and sustainable production. They strengthen women’s roles as leaders and entrepreneurs and aim to grow the collective agency of the groups.

Activity 3: Capacity building of Women's Groups

Funding of Group Projects

In addition to the income from purchasing crafts, our member Women's groups have received **11.5 million KES for specific projects** from Hadithi Crafts between 2014 and 2024, of which 36% was handed over in cash to the groups. The groups have agency deciding how best to use those resources.

Each group reports back on their expenditures, which has included purchasing chairs, materials, meals for meetings, maintaining group facilities, or collectively contributing to table banking initiatives.



Example of Kisimenyi Group House

Five Kisimenyi groups came together to establish a shared meeting space. This was made possible through a grant Hadithi Crafts obtained through our partner in Belgium, called Solid Crafts. The group house has provided numerous benefits to the Kisimenyi groups.

Photo of Kisimenyi artisans at the inauguration of their group house in 2018.



Outputs of Activity 3

Capacity Building of Women's groups

Promoting Collective Agency

Collective agency refers to a group's ability to act together toward shared goals. It involves individuals within a group pooling their skills, resources, and decision-making power to create change that benefits everyone involved. Collective Agency is a vital mechanism for achieving social empowerment, as it enables women to influence the social and economic structures around them.

Hadithi Crafts' activities support women's groups in ways that promote collective agency:

By strengthening group structures

Training women's groups on governance, leadership, and decision-making gives them the tools to organize effectively, resolve conflicts, and set shared goals.

By providing resources for collaboration

Examples like the Kisimenyi group house illustrate how shared resources, like a dedicated meeting space, facilitate cooperation, communication, and coordinated efforts, enabling groups to achieve more together.

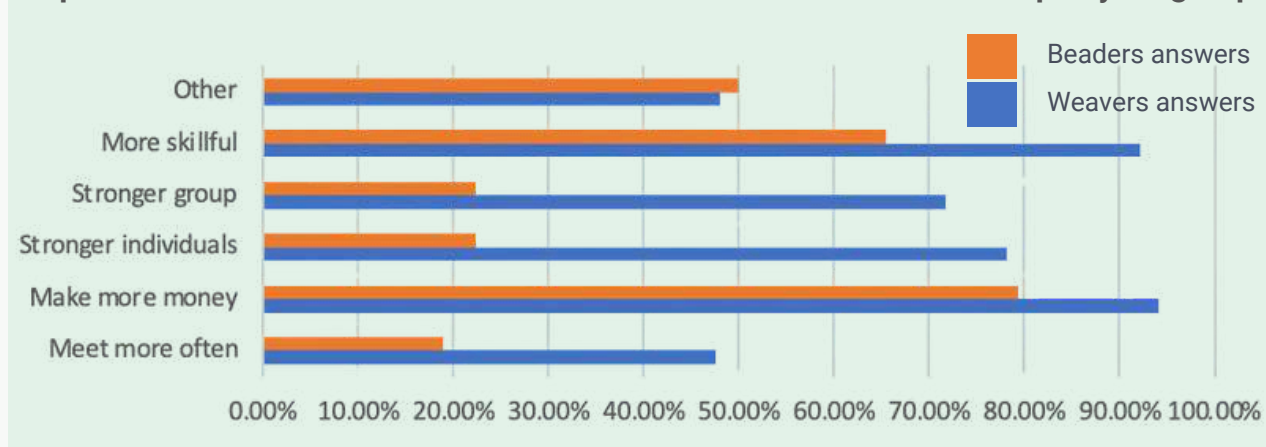
By encouraging advocacy

By helping women understand their rights, e.g., through ethical policy training or workshops on discrimination and harassment, Hadithi Crafts gives groups tools to challenge societal norms, advocate for better conditions, and influence their communities.

By creating economic opportunities

Hadithi Crafts connects groups to markets and training, helping them achieve financial stability. This strengthens group solidarity.

Graph artisans answers to: 'What are the benefits of Hadithi membership to your group?'



Activity 4

Implementation and monitoring of ethical standards

Certified Ethically Crafted

The [NEST Ethical Handcraft Standard](#) is a globally recognized framework that aims to ensure ethical practices and fair treatment throughout the artisan economy. It sets **rigorous guidelines for transparency, accountability, and worker well-being in home and small workshop production, focusing on areas such as fair wages, safe working conditions, and the prohibition of child labor.** The standard also emphasizes gender equity, non-discrimination, and environmental responsibility, creating a foundation for ethical sourcing and sustainable development.

December 2024: Hadithi Crafts entire Beadwork Collection has been successfully certified Ethically Crafted by NEST!



Hadithi Crafts' pursuit of NEST Ethical Craft Certification has guided our efforts to equip artisans with the tools to organise effectively, make equitable decisions, and advocate for their rights.



In this certification all our BEADWORK is included: bracelets, keychains, magnets, dog collars and beaded jewellery. Our other product categories of baskets and sewn animals are NOT included in our Certification (YET) as this pursuit will require more efforts and funds. Read more on our website www.hadithicrafts.com.

Central to this initiative is our **Hadithi Artisan Manual**. **The policies and structures outlined in our Manual are followed with all our 65 artisan groups, and helpt to develop essential skills for group management, accountability, and conflict resolution.** The manual includes all our policies on topics such as harassment prevention, child labor eradication, and workplace rights. It also introduces confidential reporting structures, growing trust, safety, and open communication. To ensure these values are reinforced, **training** on the manual is conducted annually and **inspected** quarterly.

Outputs of Activity 4

Implementation and monitoring of Ethical Standards

Ethical Crafts as Foundation for Equality

While Hadithi Crafts was not founded as a gender equality initiative, our work has had a meaningful impact gender norms in our rural community.

The most direct contribution comes through **financial empowerment**: women earn income in their own names, often for the first time, allowing them to contribute to household decisions and plan independently for their futures.



In addition, **leadership roles** within women's groups have grown over the years. Women now chair, manage, and make collective decisions within their groups – roles they rarely held before. This development is rooted in the group's own capacity and structure, and supported by Hadithi's training in governance and record keeping. As women take on public leadership, they begin to reshape perceptions of gender roles within their communities.

Our trainings on health, reproductive rights, and financial literacy also play a role in shifting power. When **women better understand their health, their rights, and how to manage money, they gain more control over their lives** – and model this confidence for the next generation.

Many development and gender equality frameworks (including by UN Women, CARE, and Oxfam) explicitly link financial empowerment, leadership, access to knowledge, and bodily autonomy to changes in gender norms.



Singat from Miasenyi group

"Before I joined the women's group I had to wait for my husband to do everything. Now I don't have to wait for my husband. I can pay school fees, can do more things. I have more independence and now I am not waiting. Beading can be done in the home anytime – I love being able to do it in my own time and I decide. I like beading and love my job. I don't sleep hungry. I can take care of my family."

Outputs of Activity 4

Implementation and monitoring of Ethical Standards

A powerful documentary by Juma Majanga features Hadithi Crafts' work with Maasai beading artisans like Sinyat. It sheds light on the impact of climate change on our beading Maasai community and the change in gender roles it brings. Watch it on the Voices of America (VOA) [Kenya changing gender roles](#) or on our website - [artisan videos](#).



Hilder Mbuwa from Jora village

Hilder about gender equality; *“Since the Constitution 2010 and Kenya Vision 2030 I have seen changes, before women were at home, now they are looking for an income and more opportunities.*

But it is not equal – as women we are struggling a lot. Every village is different, but in my village so many women experience violence and getting out the house is good for us. The men don't contribute to the household. They can easily run away from the home. They can find a new life in Mombasa. Women use weaving to keep busy.”

Building Gender Equality: a long way to go

We recognize there is still a long journey ahead, as Hilder highlights in her above statement. True equality involves not only economic empowerment but also shifting societal norms and overcoming deeply ingrained barriers.

Moving forward, Hadithi will explore additional initiatives to support this journey. Achieving true gender equality requires collaboration with men in the community. Through awareness programs, we hope to increase understanding and support for the changes that empower women.

Samuel Makesi from Jora village

“I learnt from the Hadithi artisan manual trainings how we can all live together, especially when people who are differently abled are involved. We all have to be kind.”

Samuel is one of the leather craftsman trained by Hadithi Crafts, working at Bugata Disabled group.



Input to Activities

Distribution of Financial input

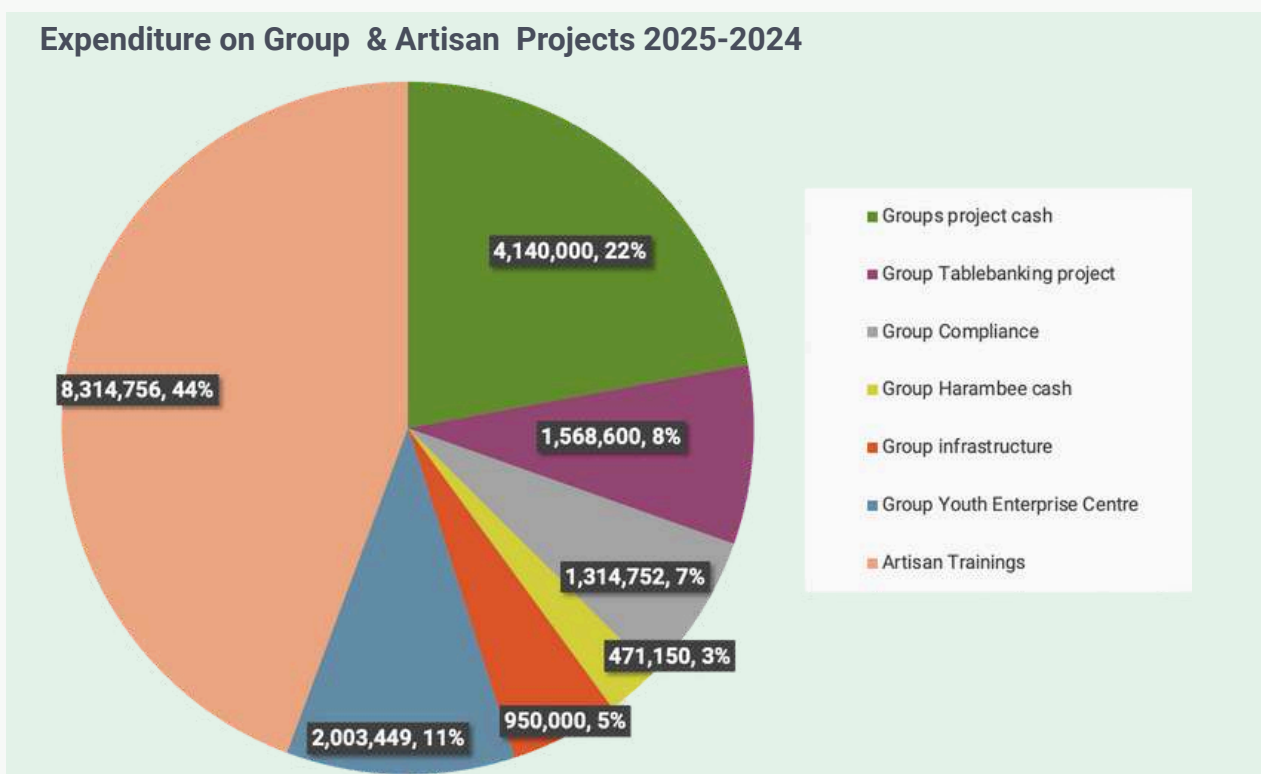
The chart below shows how 18.7 million KES (approximately 150,000 USD) was allocated to activities that directly build the capacity of artisans and their groups – specifically activities 1, 3, and 4 in the People chapter.

A few of the details of activities in the chart have not been explained yet.

Harambee is a Kenyan tradition of community fundraising, where people come together to support someone in need, especially during events like funerals or medical emergencies. In this spirit, for a couple years Hadithi Crafts contributed 2,000 KES to artisans who lost a close family member or to the family of an artisan who passed away, as a small show of solidarity and support during difficult times.

The Youth Enterprise Centres were established to equip young people – in contrast to Hadithi’s usual focus on women – with practical skills, access to workspace, and a market for their products. So far, Hadithi Crafts has launched three centres: a welding workshop, a leather tanning unit, and a leather crafting centre.

The Group Compliance budget was spent on series of artisan and group leadership trainings based on the Artisan Manual



In parallel, 39.43 million KES (around 330,000 USD) – of which 57% was in-kind support and 43% cash – was dedicated to activity 2: wholesale management and production – for activities aimed at increasing sales and income for the artisans we support. These investments included infrastructure development, essential staff positions, and systems to support our growing work. For more detail on funding sources, please refer to the Sales and Revenue chapter on [page 39](#).

Output of Activities

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

A highlight of our contributions to the global SDG's over the past decade:



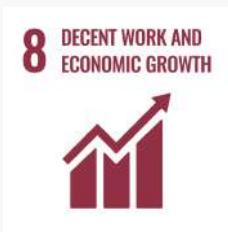
SDG 1: No Poverty

Hadithi Crafts provides artisans with sustainable income opportunities. This allows artisans and their families to secure basic needs and invest in their future.



SDG 5: Gender Equality

By supporting over 1900 female artisans, providing them with income, skills and governance support. This helps women achieve economic independence and strengthens gender equality in our region.



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Hadithi creates sustainable, decent work by providing fair and ethical working conditions. By expanding market access and building economic resilience, we contribute to economic stability for artisans and support inclusive economic growth.



SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Hadithi prioritizes sustainable materials and eco-friendly production. We are committed to minimizing waste and promoting responsible, low-impact practices in every product.



SDG 13: Climate Action

The sustainable livelihoods we offer in a rapidly growing rural community, contributes to the fight against climate change and a stepping stone to climate resilience.



SDG 15: Life on Land

By offering alternative livelihoods through crafts, we help reduce human-wildlife conflict, protecting biodiversity and fostering a harmonious relationship between local communities and wildlife.

Planet

Environmental Stewardship through Sustainable Craft



Craft for Conservation

Operating in a Wildlife Corridor

Hadithi Crafts operates in a wildlife-rich region between Tsavo East and West National Parks, where conservation and community livelihoods are deeply intertwined. Hadithi Artisans are part of the Tsavo community, where Wildlife Works has been protecting dryland forests, conserving wildlife, and engaging with communities since 1997.

Wildlife Works now partners with communities to protect a wildlife corridor of over 500,000 acres of dryland forest, as well as the diverse wildlife species that live and migrate through the corridor, including over 2,000 elephants. Funded mainly by carbon credit sales, this forest serves as a vital carbon storage, advancing global climate goals while conserving Tsavo's ecosystems.

Hadithi Crafts increases access to **alternative income sources** for artisans in this conservation area, which **reduces reliance on illegal activities such as poaching and charcoal burning**. Through the production of eco-friendly sisal products, we not only empower communities economically but also play a part in mitigating environmental degradation, reinforcing a conservation-focused economy that complements Wildlife Works' efforts.



Wildlife Works Rangers seizing bags of charcoal with an elephant carcass, and poached bushmeat

A Tool for Conservation and Climate Action

Income from carbon credits allows Wildlife Works to co-develop conservation-based initiatives with local communities, including building water reservoirs, improving schools, and planting trees. The Hadithi Artisans are part of these communities, allowing for a holistic approach to conservation that uplifts people while preserving natural resources. As Pascal Kizaka, a late village leader in Kasigau, once said, *"This is not charity. Carbon money helps us meet basic needs and improve our lifestyle. The money is earned through conservation activities that afford us the ability to protect our environment."* By linking craft production with conservation, Hadithi Crafts strengthens the bond between people and planet. Every purchase of a Hadithi product directly supports Tsavo's wildlife, its communities, and promotes a sustainable, conservation-centered future.

Craft for Conservation

Reducing Human-Wildlife Conflict

In the Tsavo region, elephants often raid crops, leading to tensions with local farmers whose livelihoods are threatened by the loss. **Human-elephant conflict arises as farmers take action to protect their land, sometimes resulting in harm to these iconic animals.** Elephants seek the highest-quality food available, even if it means venturing into farms, especially when droughts make wild forage scarce. This behavior is part of a broader struggle in Tsavo, where both small and large wildlife can disrupt agriculture, yet elephants, due to their size and strength, create unique risks and challenges for local farmers.

Hadithi Crafts helps to mitigate these tension on agricultural land between wildlife and humans. Subsistence farming is impacted by unpredictable rains and crop loss due to wildlife - not allowing much resilience and leaving these farmers vulnerable. This is exacerbated by the increasing aridity in this ecosystem due to climate change. Through the financial stability that Hadithi offers, families can reduce their dependency on farming alone, which eases the pressures on farmers and promotes a more harmonious relationship with the wildlife around them.

Hadithi's work complements long-term conservation and reduces Human-Wildlife Conflict, as communities can embrace sustainable craft as a livelihood.

Our efforts are certified by the Wildlife Friendly seal, a label that helps consumers to support products that match their values. The Certified Wildlife Friendly projects show systems and practices that allow people and wildlife to coexist and thrive.



Sustainable Production

Craft Materials and Resource Use

This chapter aims to show readers how Hadithi's choice of materials and methods reflect our values. As an organization that serves both the planet and our local artisans, we ensure that every material used in our crafts reflects our values of sustainability, conservation, and community support.

Sourcing Locally and Responsibly

Hadithi's Crafts are made with materials sourced directly from our local environment, including organically grown sisal, a local palm called magangachi and local or certified Kenyan leather.

We source as close to home as possible, reducing transportation impact and supporting regional economies, which keeps our environmental footprint small and our partnerships strong. Hadithi maintains a detailed list of local suppliers to ensure traceability and transparency in every product.



Sisal

Sisal, one of the central materials in our crafts, is organically grown and sustainably harvested. Sisal is the basis of our popular woven baskets, valued for their durability and unique texture. Sisal's organic cultivation means it requires no fertilizers or pesticides, making it an environmentally friendly choice. Some artisans grow their own at their homesteads, others prefer to purchase from the neighbouring sisal farm, still within the same county.



Palm

The magangachi palm, indigenous to our region, is another natural material used in our artisan crafts. Using this native palm for basket weaving, follows local traditions. The lightweight, flexible magangachi fibers are ideal for creating a very fine and strong basket.



Sustainable Production

Craft Materials and Resource Use

Beadwork: Glass Beads and Certified Leather

For our beadwork we purchase **Czech glass beads from Nairobi and work with certified processed leather**. While Czech beads are not indigenous, their use has been integrated into Maasai culture for over a century. This long-term adaptation means that modern beadwork using Czech beads is now considered a legitimate part of Maasai tradition. Despite its carbon footprint (they are imported from Europe) these glass beads are our artisans first choice for beading. They are of good quality, long-lasting and non-toxic, unlike plastic alternatives that are more harmful to the environment over time. Until today no comparable glass beads are produced in Kenya.



Hadithi Keychain

The Conservation Collection: Elephant dung and snares

Our Conservation Collection uses materials that are quite unusual and with a story. We use **elephant dung paper**, symbolizing the peaceful coexistence of people and wildlife, and beads crafted from **snares** recovered from the forest, disabling them for future harm and turning them into powerful symbols of conservation.



Neema Women's Group making Elephant Dung Paper



Elephant dung paper postcards



Snares recovered from the bush by Wildlife Works rangers



Snare Keychain

Sustainable Production

Resolving the Sisal Dyeing Challenge

The challenge explained

When Hadithi Crafts undertook a risk assessment and prioritization exercise in 2023, it became clear that one of the most pressing areas needing improvement was the dyeing process for our sisal products.

This analysis highlighted several significant issues associated with traditional dyeing practices. Under environmental standards, issues such as water management, waste disposal, and environmental excellence emerged as areas of concern. Social standards revealed equally concerning risks to artisan health and safety, as most dyeing activities were conducted at home with limited guidance on handling potentially harmful materials.

While natural colors like rusty brown, dark grey, and black were achieved using organic materials like tree bark and mud, the demand for a wider palette led artisans to synthetic dyes. These dyes, commonly sold in powdered form without proper labeling or instructions, presented risks when used without protective measures in uncontrolled home settings.

The dyes posed risks in terms of color consistency, durability, and toxicity, as most synthetic dyes are neither biodegradable nor environmentally safe. In addition, the dyeing process consumed significant amounts of water, a precious and limited resource in Tsavo's rural communities, who rely on rain collection and local wells.

No colour consistency...

No safety labels...

No instructions...

No safe disposable possible...

Toxicity...

Used in uncontrolled kitchen environment...

No exemplary sisal dye centre in Kenya



Sustainable Production

Resolving the Sisal Dyeing Challenge

Pioneering a twofold solution

Faced with these challenges, Hadithi Crafts prioritized the establishment of a dedicated dyeing facility: the Hadithi Dye Centre. This facility became possible only thanks to a grant from Everland and is a milestone in our commitment to sustainability, safety, and environmental stewardship.

Our solution was twofold.

First, we gathered local knowledge on **natural dyeing techniques** using local plants, soils, and trees. We then trained all Hadithi Weavers on these methods, along with health and safety practices. This allows artisans to continue creating at home while expanding their expertise.



Secondly, we established a **centralized Dye Centre** at our Headquarters in Maungu. This facility uses a controlled, efficient Sisal dyeing process that conserves water and protects local ecosystems. The dyed Sisal is then distributed to satellite shops in the village, offering both dyed and undyed materials.

The Hadithi Dye Centre is a significant achievement: it protects artisan health, promotes environmental responsibility, and maintains the highest standards in our craft. By embracing sustainable dyeing practices, Hadithi Crafts ensures the creation of vibrant, ethically made products that respect both people and the planet.



Profit

Economic Impact, Growth and Innovation



Sales and Revenue

Customers over the years

The number of B2B customers to Hadithi Crafts has steadily increased over the years. Combined with sales revenue data, it shows that although we have more customers in 2024, they placed smaller orders. If we look at the revenue that we made from distribution, wholesale and retail respectively, we see our distributors purchased significantly less baskets.

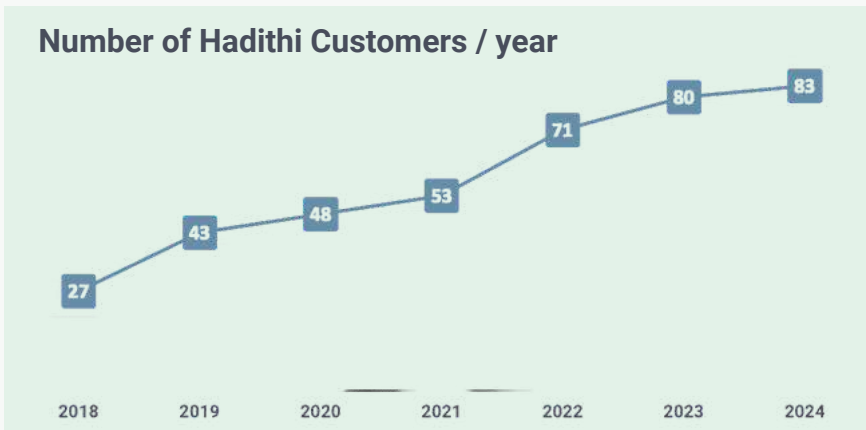


Photo: Hadithi baskets in Rigby's homeware, customer since 2018

Hadithi Crafts Customers per Country (2023-2024)

In the map below you can see where our customers are based. The majority of our wholesale customers are currently found in Kenya (44) and in the United States (30).



Sales and Revenue

We elaborated in the People Chapter on how Hadithi contributes to the local economy through purchasing crafts, now we can talk a little more about the sales and revenue and the relationship with handicraft purchases for Hadithi Crafts.

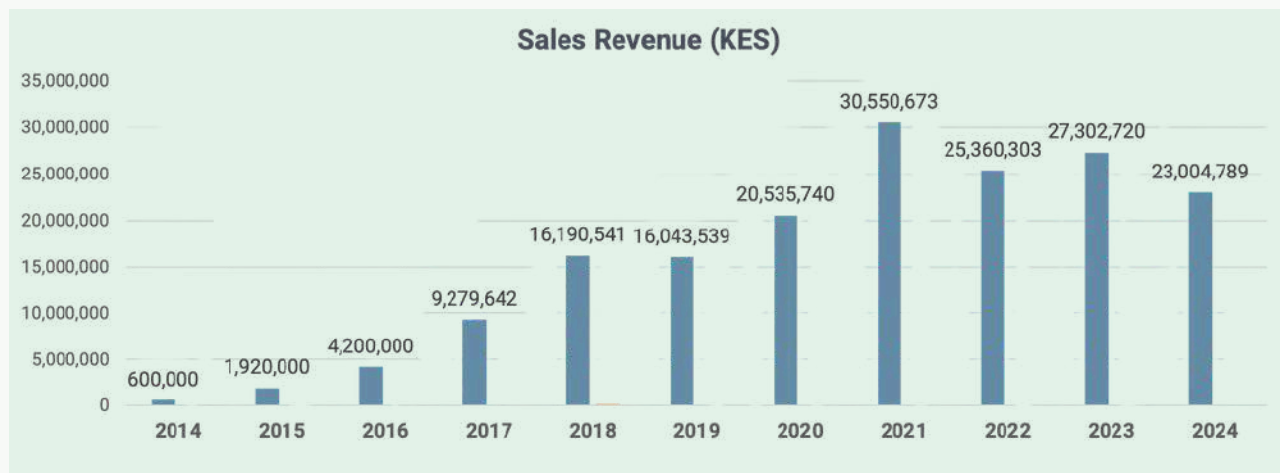
Employment at Hadithi Crafts

The number of full team employees for Hadithi Crafts gradually increased from **1 in 2014 to 10 in 2024**. These are all full time employment opportunities for local women. By 2024 Hadithi team has a community department of 4 liaison officers, Production and Sales department of 4 people, an accountant and a general manager. The dye centre also employs one person full time.



Revenue over the years

Tracking the journey of sales generated, demonstrates Hadithi’s economic value to artisans and communities. Between 2014 and 2024 Hadithi Crafts generated 175 million KES from sales.



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Sales revenue % Distribution	71%	63%	61%	20%	16%
Sales revenue % Wholesale	24%	33%	35%	68%	72%
Sales revenue % Retail	4%	4%	4%	12%	12%

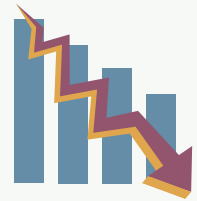
Sales and Revenue

Sales trends explained

Our Sales revenue shows a positive trend from 2014 to 2021. **In 2021**, Hadithi Crafts experienced its best year of sales, aligning with global market trends influenced by the Covid pandemic. This great performance can be attributed to an increased spending on Home Decor.

After 2021, Hadithi Crafts experienced a decline of sales. We think it was **influenced by a combination of global economic changes and shifts in consumer behaviour:**

- Shift of consumer behaviour. After Covid restrictions eased, people began **prioritizing experiences** over goods, investing in travel, dining out. The onset of a global recession made other consumers more cautious about their spending, prioritizing necessities over discretionary spending, directly influencing their purchasing power.
- Increased **competition** for baskets may have impacted sales, as similar products have entered the market at lower prices.
- The consumer shift to **online shopping**. For the online shopkeeper the unique baskets are challenging, as they need individual photographing and uploading. Our baskets are selling best in brick&mortar shops.
- Hadithi Crafts has raised its prices— due to increased costs of overheads, materials, inflation, and to **ensure our artisans can continue to receive a fair price**. This may also influence consumer purchasing behavior, particularly in a market sensitive to economic fluctuations.
- Considerable fluctuations arise from the **exchange rates** USD to KES, which went from 99 KES per 1 USD in 2014, to 128 KES per 1 USD in 2024, and as high as 159 KES per USD in the year 2023.



Thanks to significant improvements in marketing and design, and the fully operational Hadithi Dye Centre allowing for seasonal designs, we expect to increase sales in 2025.

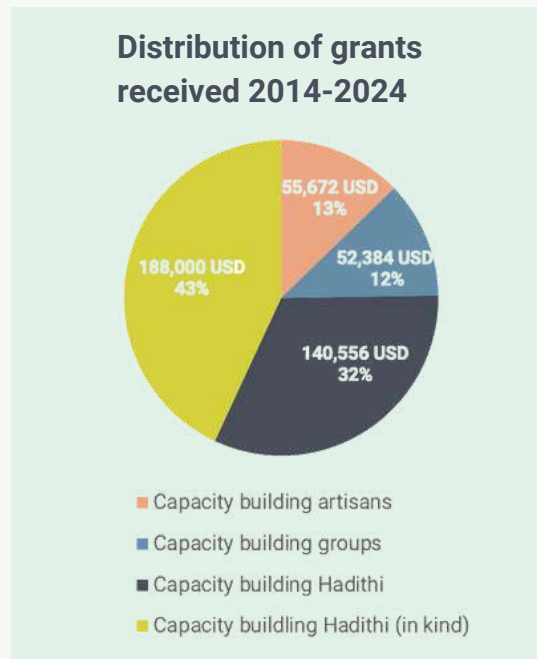
Sales and Revenue

Grants & Support

Hadithi Crafts has not done this alone. Over 10 years, **we have received circa 250,000 USD in cash grants, and 9 years of essential in kind support from Wildlife Works** (we estimate 188,000 in value), to support the growth of the business and the execution of all our activities. See the % distribution of our 11 wonderful financial supporters below.



32% of the cash grants we applied for, were sought to support business-building activities – such as employing key team members, and building the infrastructure like the dye centre that allows our model to thrive. Having allocated such a significant portion of funding to operations is what makes the rest possible. Without a functioning business, there would be no consistent orders for artisans, no stable income for women, and no long-term impact in the community. In other words, business-building is not separate from our social mission – it drives it. Special thanks to Wildlife Works and Solid Crafts, we could not have done it without you.



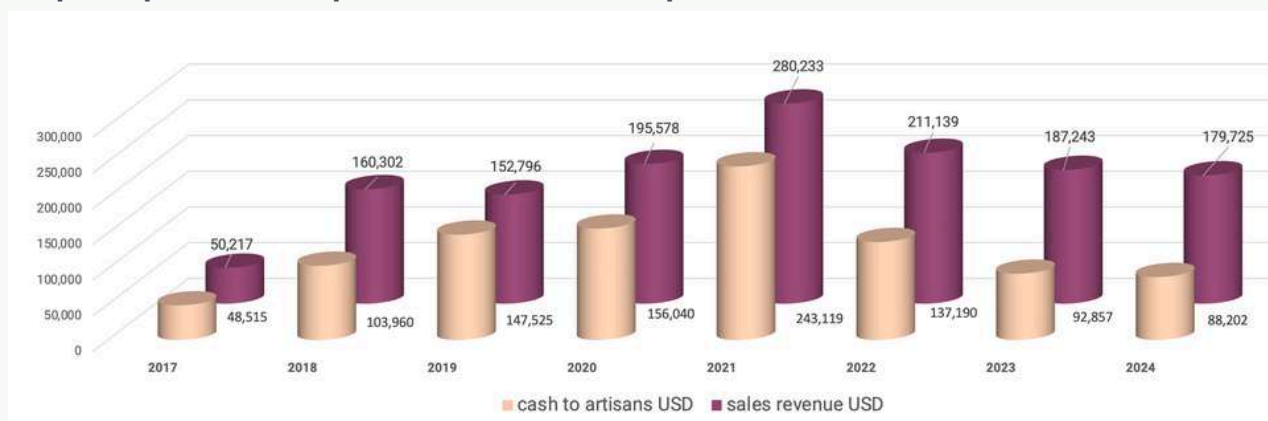
We also received valuable support from NEST, Byhand consulting and Powered by People. Their webinars and opportunities helped us to increase our market readiness and access, and we are grateful for their support.

Sales and Revenue

Sales and Handicraft Expenditure

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
% of sales revenue spent on the purchase of crafts	97	65	97	80	87	65	50	49

Graph: Expenditure on purchase of crafts compared to sales revenue



The chart above shows that until 2021 the majority of Hadithi Crafts' sales revenue has been spent on directly purchasing handicrafts. Within this there are a few key points to note:

- After the high sales of 2021, we made overly confident projections which resulted in excess stock. Therefore the amount of revenue spent on purchasing crafts lowered in 2022 and 2023.
- In the earlier years, much of our essential overheads were carried by Wildlife Works. - Gradually Hadithi Crafts took over these overheads and is now sustaining them all. This independence is important as we aim to be a self-sufficient and sustainable handicraft business. There is still progress to be made in this journey as external grants and donor funding is still needed for any extra projects in community development and capacity building.

**Old and new bestsellers:
Practical basket,
Elephant keychain,
Fineweave placemats**



Innovation and Product Design

Through our trainings and practical support, our artisans have been able to finetune their craft skills. The efforts and outcomes are summarised per craft category in this section.

Sisal Baskets

For many years, sisal baskets have been the backbone of Hadithi Crafts, providing artisans with a steady, reliable source of income. Today, our artisans have the skills and resources to produce more baskets than ever before, with a production capacity that has grown remarkably while upholding excellent quality standards. These baskets continue to represent not only the rich tradition of craftsmanship but also the resilience and innovation of our artisans.



Beadwork on wire in 2014

Maasai Beading

One of our most beautiful product lines comes from the skilled hands of our Maasai beading community. In the early days of Hadithi Crafts, we purchased and sold traditional Maasai beadwork on metal wire, often marketed along the highways and sold at low value due to issues like snagging closures.

In 2018, a pivotal moment came when the **Love is Project** partnered with us, placing a substantial order for over 1,000 items. This allowed us to invest in extensive training, inspiring our artisans to meet high-quality standards. They learned to weave intricate patterns on leather, elevating their craft. Since then, their production capacity and skill have continued to grow, allowing for increasingly sophisticated designs like dog collars, belts, and intricate keychains—each piece a source of pride and testament to their dedication.



Dog collars on leather in 2024



beadwork artisans at work



Innovation and Product Design



Palmweave Baskets

When we received our first large order for palm weave baskets in 2018 from Mifuko, we faced delays due to a limited number of artisans skilled in this intricate technique. Expanding from 19 to 105 artisans required months of searching for new talent, supporting individuals in forming new women's groups, and providing intensive training. Today, our palm weave baskets are not only durable and functional but also a popular choice in our collection, showcasing the unique and timeless quality that sets Hadithi products apart.



Sewing: Growth in the Buguta

The Buguta Disabled Group (BDG) is a testament to skill building and quality control. Starting with just three animal designs, this group has steadily expanded its repertoire to include over 12 unique animal shapes, each crafted with care and precision. Their sewing workshop has transformed from a small endeavor to a thriving hub of creativity and productivity, providing a stable income for members while enriching Hadithi Crafts' product offerings. Each item represents the group's dedication to perfecting their skills and reflects the diverse talents within Hadithi. These animals, cherished by customers, symbolize both the empowerment of artisans and the intricate craftsmanship that defines our products.



Mama Leah, Buguta Disabled Group



YES we have come a long way!

Innovation and Product Design

Leather Tanning and Crafting: Adding A Dimension to Basket Designs

Thanks to the support and facilities provided by local Youth Enterprise Centres, Hadithi Crafts has been able to integrate leather elements into our baskets, adding sophistication and value. By learning tanning techniques and leather crafting, artisans can now create handles, straps, and finishing touches that enhance the appeal of our baskets while making them more durable and unique. This dimension has increased production speed and quality, opening new markets and enabling our artisans to diversify their skills beyond traditional weaving. Through this innovative step, Hadithi has introduced a contemporary twist to our basket designs, appealing to a broader audience while honoring traditional methods.

Conservation Collection: Crafting with Purpose

The Conservation Collection is our extra meaningful product line, connecting art with environmental responsibility. Through partnerships with conservation initiatives, we've created products that raise awareness of local wildlife issues while providing artisans with an income. For instance, our paper products are crafted from **elephant dung**, turning an abundant natural resource into eco-friendly items. We also repurpose **metal snares**—previously used for illegal wildlife hunting—into beads for keychains and jewelry. Each piece in the Conservation Collection is a commitment to conservation and a showcase how creativity can transform waste into purpose-driven, beautiful products.



Innovation and Product Design

Start of seasonal collections

Now our dye centre is in place Hadithi Crafts can achieve a next level of consistent with colours and design, and adjust swiftly and gracefully with the trends of the seasons. Our collection will mean a new era for the online shopkeepers. We have launched our first Spring Summer Collection in January 2025!



Check out our latest
WHOLESALE
CATALOGUE

Email
sales@hadithicrafts.com
with questions or orders



Decade in review

Yearly milestones of Hadithi Crafts



Decade in review

Yearly milestones of Hadithi Crafts

2014 - Hadithi's story begins

17th June 2014 the constitution is approved and Hadithi Crafts Support CBO is officially registered with the Kenyan government.

Malengo / goals from our constitution:

We want to support all the women groups in our area that make handicrafts. We help them to build their capacity, improve the quality of the products, improve the sales through joint marketing efforts, learn business skills and improve their livelihoods.



Hadithi means a story in Kiswahili language. Our logo is as colourful as our baskets.



2015 - Practical weave baskets on the rise

200,000 KES was divided to the groups for group development.

This cash helped building a group house, maintenance, chairs, materials or table banking.

1.6 million KES (around 18,000 USD) spent on women group crafts, cash in hand to the individual artisans.



Decade in Review

Yearly milestones of Hadithi Crafts

2016 - Small but growing business

400,000 KES was divided to the groups for group development: building group house, maintenance, chairs, materials or table banking.

3.48 million KES (38,000 USD) spent on women group crafts, paid cash in hand to the individual artisans.

Hadithi supports 650 artisans from 28 groups



2017 - A container full of baskets

Hadithi supports 30 groups, 800 artisans by now.

In 2017 again 400,000 KES was divided to the groups for group development: building group house, maintenance, chairs, materials or table banking

4.9 million KES (490,000 USD) spent on purchasing crafts, paid cash in hand to the individual artisans.

Hadithi Crafts starts a website and an instagram account.



Decade in Review

Yearly milestones of Hadithi Crafts

2018 - Doubling sales and speed

2018 started with 32 groups and 850 women, and ended with 39 groups and 1,067 women

An additional 800,000 KES was distributed to member women groups as financial support. Next to that, another 700,000 KES was raised and spent, to build two group houses, respectively in Makwasinyi and in Kisimenyi.

10.5 million KES (104,000 USD) spent on women group crafts, as 20,000 baskets were sold in 2018.



2019 - Solid crafts propels us forward

Our distribution partnership with Solid Crafts (Belgium) boosts our sales and strengthens our operations.

We added 7 more member groups, to total 46 groups

14.9 million KES spent on crafts (about 150,000\$)

Practical weave basket weaving trainings:

- Six sessions are given in 9 new groups,
- 230 more artisans who can now weave to sell.

SOLID



Decade in Review

Yearly milestones of Hadithi Crafts

2020 - Covid hits our world

Hadithi made a good comeback after all orders were cancelled or postponed in March, April, May. Hadithi counts 51 groups and 1,506 artisans.

16.7 million KES spent on handicrafts (about 160,000\$)

100,000 KES for purchase of mouthmasks to distribute to all the artisans of the groups and 110,000 KES Funding from **Love is Project** for 5 watertanks and training in kitchen gardening for the 5 maasai beading groups.

The maasai beading receives more training, and receives more orders.



LOVE
IS
PROJECT

2021 - The market is hungry for our crafts

Home in covid times, consumers worldwide choose to spend some budget on home decor.

27 million KES spent on handicrafts.
Around 248,000\$, Waw!

Lots of projects and grants. Hadithi starts a Youth Enterprise Centre (YEC) in Sasenyi for leather tanning and a YEC in Makwasinyi for welding.



Thank to a **MEDA** grant we developed:

- satellite shops for raw materials
- Several trainings to all groups with empowering subjects, and with handicraft quality trainings.
- Set up Hadithi HQ for growth: a bookkeeper, marketing plan, financial planning

Decade in Review

Yearly milestones of Hadithi Crafts

2022 - First purchase decline

Hadithi counts 64 groups and 1854 artisans. We put a stop on adding new groups to Hadithi Crafts.

We purchased 39,917 pieces of handicrafts from our artisans for **16.6 million KES** (137,190\$)

We start a YEC in Buguta for leather crafting

We enroll with the NEST artisan business accelerator program

We fill our first container: for Rainpharma, a client of Solid Crafts our Benelux distributor.

A masters student Jennie published her survey results of 900 Hadithi artisans and found encouraging results: Hadithi Crafts is statistically significantly reducing poverty.



2023 - More milestones, but less sales


As part of our journey towards Ethical Craft Certification, we train all groups on our **Artisan Manual**, explaining the Hadithi policies of ethical business and workers rights.

We collected all ID card details to complete our artisan register.

We purchased crafts for **11.9 million KES** (86,000\$)

We were successfully approved as part of the WFTO supplier chain for Solid Crafts.



With a 20,000 USD grant from the  foundation and the help of Kujuwa Initiative we taught **4 modules on female sexual and reproductive health** in all 64 groups.

400,000 KES was divided to the groups for group development.

Decade in Review

Yearly milestones of Hadithi Crafts

2024 - Colours, Changes and Challenges

Huge leap forward starting the **Hadithi Dye centre** to tackle the environmental and health challenges surrounding sisal dyeing. Made possible only thanks to a grant from **EVERLAND**. The dye centre prompts us to move our head quarters to keep operations in one place, so we moved our HQ from the Wildlife works HQ to Maungu!

Big efforts by Radier, full time employed to keep us on track for **NEST standards**. October audit for NEST certification of ethical craft for our beadwork collection. We awaited the result till next year when we heard we obtained certification in January 2025!....



Hadithi Crafts adds more employees: a sales representative and a dye centre supervisor. Distributors are still significantly buying less baskets. We receive the R.I.S.E artisan grant to go to Las Vegas! This was a great opportunity as part of our efforts to find wholesale customers in the US market.

The **10th birthday of Hadithi Crafts** was celebrated with each of our groups by Hadithi liaison officer with dancing, cake and a present of flour to take home...



Our vision for the future

2025 - 2030 Expanding activities for continued impact

Looking ahead, we've mapped out the key actions we want to focus on to move closer to our long-term goals: empowered artisans, sustainable production, and building economic resilience. Here's a glimpse of what's on our to-do list:

1. Artisan Skill Development

- Offer repeat trainings tailored to request of individual groups
- Update all training manuals
- Add new trainings, topics from feedback or artisans (24 to 30)
- Engage men in community dialogues to support gender equality.



2. Craft Purchasing & Market Access

- Ensure steady purchases to stabilize artisan income across seasons.
- Diversify products based on market trends and artisan strengths.
- Launch a retail outlet in Nairobi and enhance online presence.

3. Group Capacity & Leadership

- Deliver repeat governance training to strengthen leadership and conflict resolution.
- Governance roadmap, levels of support tailored to the maturity of groups



4. Ethical Standards & Monitoring

- Maintain Ethical certification and expand to other product lines.
- Implement an M&E framework to track ESG
- Publish an annual impact report to share outcomes.

5. Environmental Sustainability

- Position the Hadithi Dye Centre as a model of safe, eco-friendly dyeing.
- Collaborate with Wildlife Works on research and education.



6. Strategic Partnerships & Income Diversification

- Build long-term partnerships with aligned brands, donors, and NGO's.
- Create a toolkit (pitch deck, profiles) to engage impact funders.
- Explore new income streams to reduce dependence on product sales

Conclusion

I end this report with an unchanged commitment to our Story of Change – a story shaped by the hands of women, the strength of groups, and, if I've written a little of it myself, then it's shaped with simple love for the beauty of craft, people, and nature of Tsavo.

Creating this impact report has been a joyful journey – one that reminded us of how far we've come and clarified where we want to go. We've seen that when female artisans are valued and supported, they can carry whole communities forward.

Thank you for being part of it. We hope you'll stay connected, stay curious, and help carry the story onward. There's still so much we can write together!

Lore Defrancq

20/05/2025



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and all our wonderful Supporters and Customers!

More reading

- *Shedding the shackles - Women's Empowerment through Craft* by Lynne Stein
- *Poverty, Empowerment and Gender Equality, through the voices of female handicrafters, belonging to SHGs and Hadithi Crafts support CBO, living in Taita Taveta County, South East Kenya, by Jennie Lester.*
- *UN women statistics spotlight the critical role of economic empowerment in advancing gender equality and driving sustainable development.*
- *Aid to Artisans (ATA), and Nest often publish reports on artisan interventions and their impacts. Exploring their publications may provide further relevant information.*

Contact

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