



WAITROSE FOUNDATION SOUTHERN AFRICA

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE: 4 | DECEMBER 2025



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS

Foreword by Charlotte Di Cello

"Proving business can be good" is a real driving force for me in my job as Waitrose Chief Commercial Officer, which makes it even more of a privilege to be the Chairman of our Waitrose Foundation globally. A unique initiative that takes 2% of our retail sales from over 200 fresh fruit, vegetables, flowers and wine, and invests it back into sustainably improving the lives of workers, their families, and communities across 10 countries.

During our visit to South Africa in October, we celebrated our 20th anniversary, with 253 brilliant people from across this unique supply chain initiative. Over 20 years, we've grown to 10 countries, generated £25m, and touched 1000's of lives through worker committee-led projects, as they know what's best for their communities. It was great to meet Gordon Fairbrother, the Waitrose buyer we must thank for coming up with the idea back in 2004. He didn't think our Foundation would have survived this long, let alone thrived.

For me the trip highlights were the visits to some of the projects we have supported over the years and the tangible impact. I saw true leadership, courage, community, empowerment, the best of the human spirit, joy, and gratitude - all despite enormous challenges and inequality. Humbling. Inspiring. Motivating. We met with some incredible young leaders too, so the next chapter of the Foundation is in good hands! So, together, let's prove that business can be good and that **trade, not aid**, is the step towards the better world we need right now.

Waitrose Chief Commercial Officer & Waitrose Foundation Global Board Chairman

WELCOME TO THE FESTIVE SEASON EDITION OF OUR NEWSLETTER!

In this special December edition, we feature our truly memorable 20th Anniversary Celebration Conference held in October.

We also reflect with gratitude and joy on incredible partnerships, projects, and people who have shaped the two decades of impact across Southern Africa. We look forward with hope and renewed purpose for the journey ahead in 2026.





Our **20th Anniversary Conference**, held on the 13th of October 2025 and themed **Celebrating 20 Years of Improved Livelihoods: Deepening Engagement, Igniting Motivation**, brought together 253 participants from across the supply chain, including Waitrose, importers, exporters, growers, workers, partners, and youth. It marked a significant milestone, with the excitement palpable as we witnessed twenty years of impact brought together in one room. Guests gathered at Ashanti Wine Estate in Paarl to celebrate two decades of a supply-chain initiative that has grown into a movement!





253 participants attended the 20th Anniversary Conference





An Inspiring and Inclusive Gathering: Participants described the conference as inspiring, well-organised, and deeply impactful, with meaningful sessions, engaging speakers, and valuable networking across the supply chain.

The Future Took Centre Stage: The youth panel and bursary story emerged as clear highlights, reminding us that investment in young people continues to spark hope.

Stronger Together: Across all partner groups, feedback reflected a shared sense of collaboration, empowerment, and renewed commitment to shaping the Foundation's future together.

A Model of Ethical & Sustainable Development: Participants reaffirmed the Foundation's work as highly positive, citing real community benefits, worker empowerment, and long-term social change across the agri-supply chain.

Motivated for the Next Chapter: The stories shared stirred something in all of us. Participants left inspired, encouraged, and committed to growing this work together into the next twenty years.





Global Board: South Africa visit - Highlights

"Looking back I experienced so many wonderful and humbling moments during our visit in October. From the amazing conference celebrating 20 years of WFSA, the incredible Youth Panel session focusing on the future, to the many wonderful projects we visited. So great to see how the Foundation is helping to improve so many livelihoods in the communities that we rely on to grow, pick and pack our fantastic fresh produce. A moment that stood out for me was the opening of Mother Eunice's new extension to the Majakaneng School and Orphanage, creating a dedicated room for 350 children to eat 3 healthy meals a day - a safe space before and after school. Seeing the excitement and joy from everyone was very special." **(Russell Crowe, Waitrose Trading Manager and WFSA Steering Group Chair)**

"The Waitrose Foundation's 20th anniversary was such a great celebration of achievement over the years, and really demonstrated the rare gift that we have in being able to see the long-term impacts that our work has. Meeting some of the original beneficiaries and hearing their stories and how it had a positive impact on their journey were truly inspirational." **(Sam Ludlow-Taylor, Ethics & Sustainability Lead, John Lewis Partnership and Waitrose Foundation)**

"It was a real privilege to spend time with the Waitrose Foundation 20th year Celebrations held in South Africa, the country where I grew up. I saw truly inspiring work through the Foundation across all parts of the country, meeting the incredible people who have been touched by these projects. It's very positive and motivating to see that doing good can also be really good for business, for skills development and most importantly to ensure we have a sustainable business going forward! My favourite moment was seeing the children's happy faces as we donated school books for them in a village near one of our farms." **(Liam McNamara, CEO Primafruit)**

"It's hard to sum up the impact that this visit had on me. When reflecting, my mind goes to the visit with United Exports and Nyami Berries to Majakaneng Primary School & Orphanage. It was so moving to see the number of children who, through unconditional support of Mother Eunice and her wonderful team, are given a safe space to learn, play and grow. During the conference we were reminded that it doesn't matter where you come from, but the focus should be where you're going. It's through the work of projects such as these that children are given something I will no longer take for granted: hope." **(Beth Wakeling, Commercial Manager, Primafruit, and WFSA Steering Group member)**





Global Board: South Africa visit - Highlights

"The entire trip highlighted 'the power of possible'. A single great idea, when nurtured by unwavering dedication and the collective commitment of individuals driven to make a difference, can evolve into something truly inspirational. It highlighted the power of change - transforming lives and shaping the future. Through the leadership of the youth panel, a new generation has been empowered to leave their mark. Their vision, energy, and passion have paved the way for future growth, ensuring that the Foundation will continue to thrive for years to come. By providing young people with the tools, opportunities, and platform to lead, we are not just creating change - we are fostering the leaders of tomorrow." (**Hannah McIlfratrick, Commercial Director, Worldwide Fruit and WFSA Steering Group Vice-chair**)

"The most memorable moment was the happiness on the children's faces at De Vlei, not just during the show they put on for the visitors but throughout the time we spent with them. Seeing so many happy children being supported by the Foundation and the dedication of the De Vlei team was truly inspiring and a fantastic example of what can be achieved through collaboration, imagination, and commitment." (**Tony Harding, Technical Procurement Director, Worldwide Fruit**)

"My highlight was the computer room at De Vlei where the Foundation had funded computers to support children's education. It was such a memorable moment for me because the children were laughing and smiling so much while learning." (**Chris Wynn, Director of Communications, John Lewis Partnership**)

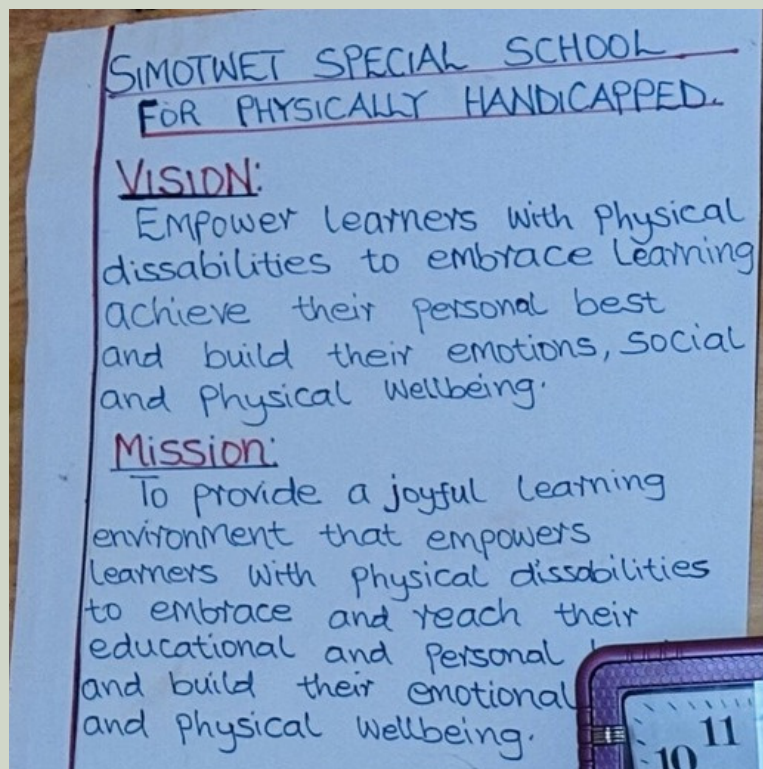
"What a fantastic event. It offered a wonderful opportunity to look back and celebrate the pivotal individuals who established the Foundation 20 years ago, and to witness the remarkable journey that has led to the current scope and reach of the projects. The youth panel was a particular highlight, their stories, coupled with their sheer energy and commitment to community improvement, were really inspiring." (**Ben Newmarch, Head of Fresh Produce & Horticulture Waitrose and WFSA NPC Board**)

"The trip to South Africa really enabled me to see the real difference the Waitrose Foundation is making to so many lives. The visits, especially to the schools, really brought this to life, and the conference was a great opportunity to reflect and celebrate on the collective impact." (**Louise Dolan, Trading Director, Waitrose**)



Chairman's Award

During our 20th Anniversary Conference, Waitrose and Partners Chief Commercial Officer, **Charlotte Di Cello**, presented the first **Waitrose Foundation Chairman's Award** to **Joan Jepkemoi Keter**. Joan is the Special Educational Needs School Head Teacher at **Simotwet Special School in Eldama Ravine, Kenya**. The Foundation has previously supported the school to build five new classrooms, complementing a classroom and dormitory built by the local government. The new funding will help the school provide specialist furniture and equipment, renovate the kitchen, and improve access between the classrooms and dormitory. The school serves children with a range of disabilities, including physical handicaps, mental impairments, visual impairments, mild autism, mild cerebral palsy, and muscular dystrophy. The school's mission is to provide a supportive and inclusive environment for children, ensuring they receive the necessary care and education. The school's motto is: "Education develops the mind. Disability is not inability".



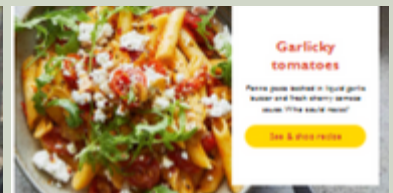
Global Focus

Positive impact stories about the Waitrose Foundation projects are not only communicated via our website and social media, but also through multiple channels to Waitrose customers and Partners around the world.

- www.waitrose.com (Waitrose & Partners website)
- Branding in Waitrose retail stores and on packaging
- Features in the Weekending in-store publication
- The Weekend Food Magazine
- 'What's in Season?' email to 1.4M customers
- Internal communications - in shops and in the Gazette
- Social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram (@waitrose @Team_Gazette @waitrosepr), TikTok, YouTube and Pinterest
- John Lewis & Partners Partner Intranet and Mobile app internal communications



IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS ACROSS THE GLOBE SINCE





During **2025**, our **Central Programmes** made significant progress in strengthening social development structures, psychosocial wellbeing, and family wellness across farming communities in Southern Africa. We reached 283 worker committee members through our standardised three-day **Social Development Committee Training**. Committee members could participate in their mother tongue, enabling deeper engagement and understanding. The programme was delivered across four provinces, reaching 45 farms.

Through our **Psychosocial Resilience Programme**, we reconnected with 106 seniors in the Kouebokkeveld over three days using storytelling to reconnect with retired seniors. Their reflections offered profound insights. One participant captured the essence of the programme with the following words: *"The earth is like a child who grows through phases - from childhood to old age. What did I plant and harvest, what do I get in return and what do I plough back? Art and being human live together."* (Translated from Afrikaans) This wisdom reflects the depth of experience shared by our senior participants and highlights the interwoven nature of humanity, growth, and community.

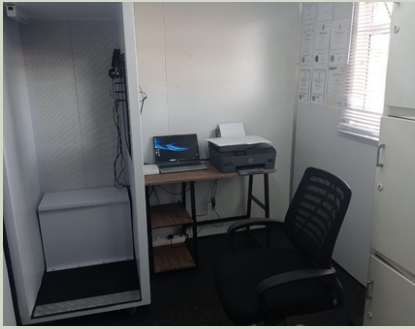
We engaged 27 men from the Northern Cape - specifically from Karsten Mosplaas and Green Valley Nuts - in our **Family Wellness Programme** under the theme: 'Productive Role Models and Positive Influencers'. The programme focused on strengthening emotional wellbeing, responsibility, and positive male leadership within families.

The **Waitrose Foundation** as an implementing partner of **YearBeyond** in the **Ceres** area, is proud to celebrate the successful culmination of the group of YeBoneers' journey to graduating Class of 2025. The graduation ceremonies were held in November at the Dutch Reformed Church in Op die Berg and at Winterberg Inn Restaurant. These ceremonies marked a significant milestone for **63 graduates**, each of whom has demonstrated exceptional resilience, unwavering dedication, and a profound commitment to serving their communities. Their achievements stand as testament to the transformative power of perseverance and purpose. We cherished the final day with the YeBoneers, celebrating their growth, the meaningful connections forged, and the lasting impact they have made.



Community Voices

"Small Space, Big Impact! Here's a little glimpse into the waiting room at our farm clinic - a place where care, community, and support come together. Thanks to the Waitrose Foundation, this clinic has become a calm and reliable space for workers and families to access essential healthcare right here on the farm. Every certificate on the wall, every tool on the desk, every seat in this room represents progress toward a healthier, stronger community. Grateful for how far we've come - and even more excited for what's ahead." (Northern production sites of **United Exports's Health Facilities**, including **Waterberg Berries**, **Nyami Berries**, **Lepalala Berries**, and **United Exports Packhouse**)



The **Two-a-Day clinic extension** in **Elgin** was opened by Russell Crowe, Waitrose's Trading Manager and WFSA Steering Group Chair. During the opening, Doctor Hess remarked: "We wanted to create something with a spacious feel, with natural light and different types of seating that lends itself towards personal space as well as group interaction. The workers and entire compliment of Two-A-Day are extremely appreciative of the facility. They value it. When you find workers from the plant coming here - they would open the door and they step back again, because they can't believe that this facility is for them. And I'm sure that this feeling of being valued will contribute towards production here at the plant. Thank you to our project manager, Dimitri, and the Waitrose Foundation. We really appreciate it. The team will do their utmost to service the people and do our best to keep the clinic operating optimally."



On the 8th of November, **Buffelskraal farm** in **De Doorns** hosted their **Annual Sports Day** together with **De Vlei**, **Abante** and **Sandhoek**. Around 300 participants competed in rugby, soccer, netball, athletics, fun outdoor water-sports, as well as indoor events including darts, snooker and dominoes. It was a wonderful sunny Saturday event that brought the community together in support of their teams. The overall winner (Abante Farms) was awarded the coveted **Waitrose Cup**. The sports day has been running for many years with teams competing for the Jan Rabie Cup, but 3 years ago it was changed to the Waitrose Cup. Feedback from the day was extremely positive. Worker Committee Chairman Quinton Matolla: **"This day is important for me personally and for our community. We're not seeing it as only a sports day anymore. It is our Family Day!"**

"We come from the **Hex River Valley** and grew up on **Naudeshof farm**. Our mother was a seasonal worker and our father was a driver. While both our parents were working, we attended the crèche on the farm. In 2008 we met Faith Brown of the Waitrose Foundation.

From that point on, many things on Naudeshof started to change. It was all made possible through a community hall established on the farm. After school, we were able to go to an aftercare centre where our parents knew we would be safe and where we also received valuable education.

We were passionate about sports, and the Waitrose Foundation provided us with sports facilities. In high school, we also received computer training, which gave us an advantage in our education. We were exposed to learning opportunities and outings. Alistair Cook, a well-known English cricket player, also visited our centre and taught us more about cricket.

In our matric year, our father passed away in a car accident. It was one of the hardest burdens to carry as young boys. Thanks to Mr De Villiers Graaff, we were able to get back on our feet and move forward. We worked for almost two years on the farm after matric so that we could help our mom. One day, we decided to move away and try something new. Today, we are both hairdressers at Partners Hair Design in Somerset West Mall. We are not yet where we want to be, but we are also no longer where we used to be. I thank our Heavenly Father for using people like the Waitrose Foundation to meet the needs of us farm children."

This story about **brothers Graeme and Granville Benjamin**, was shared by De Villiers Graaff as part of his speech at our 20th Anniversary Conference in October.

Inspirational Stories



We're delighted to welcome two new members to our Steering Group - **Maggie Hlakola** and **Arise Monareng**. Arise and Maggie both attended our conference in October and formed part of the 'Voices of the Future' youth panel discussion.

Arise (33) is the Human Resource Manager at Ambrosia Citrus Estate, an agricultural company based in Hoedspruit, Limpopo, that specialises in processing and packing blueberries. He holds a degree in Human Resource Management with expertise in Industrial Psychology and Labour Relations and is known for his confidence and eloquence. Raised by a single mother, Arise embodies resilience and professionalism. He has a deep passion for people and also for youth development.

Maggie (31) is Community Development and Stakeholder Coordinator at Westfalia Fruit Estate. She's been instrumental in building and maintaining strong relationships with land claim beneficiaries and key community stakeholders since 2021. She manages socio-economic assessments, oversees Corporate Social Investment projects, and leads a team dedicated to sustainable community development. With a background in HR and a Bachelor of Commerce in Economics and Accounting, Maggie also holds multiple professional certificates. Her experience combines people-centered leadership with a strong grasp of governance, engagement strategy, and social impact. Deeply empathetic and driven by a desire to uplift others, Maggie's challenging childhood shaped her into a resilient advocate for people and their struggles.



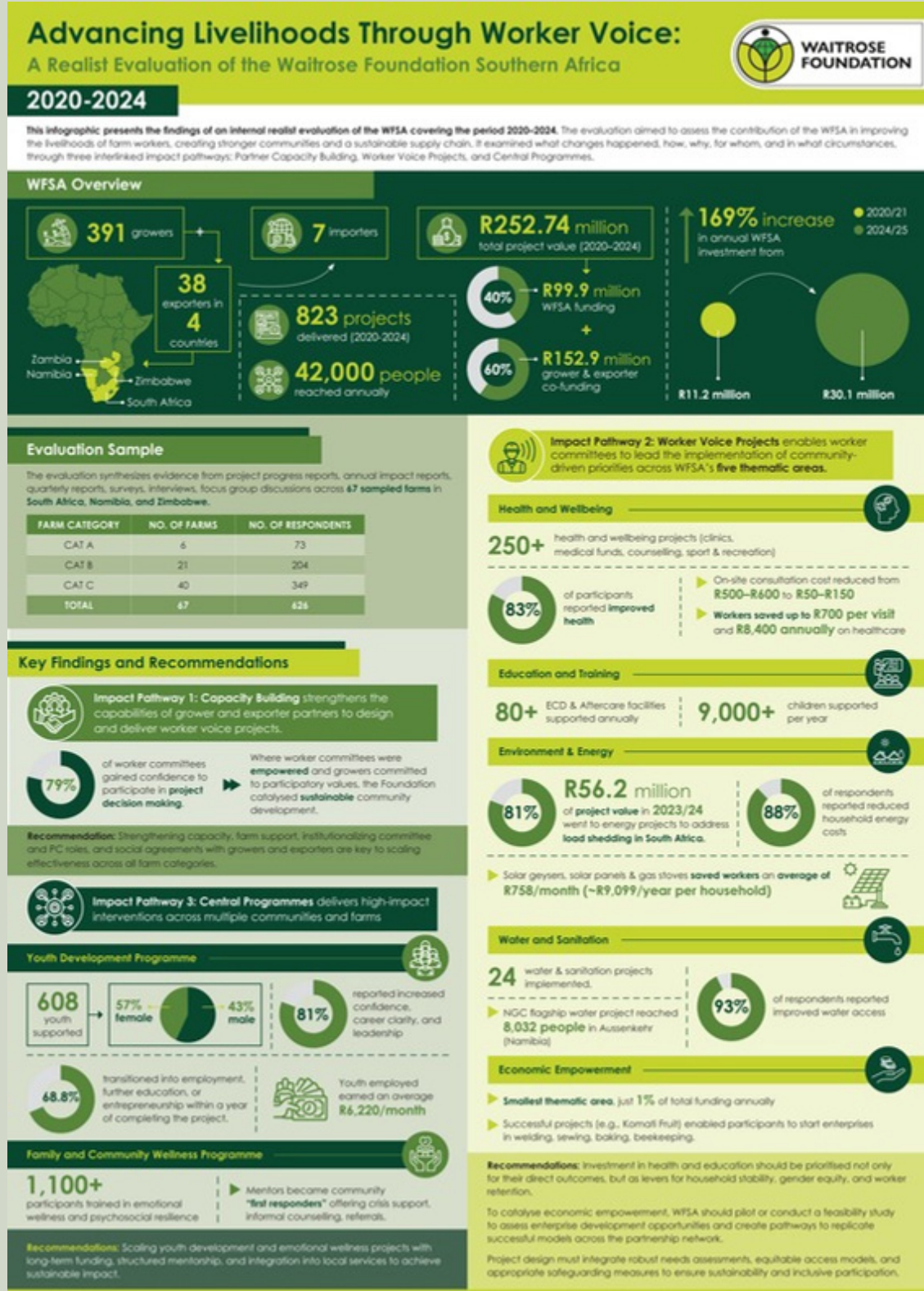


Knowledge Hub - WF-SA Evaluation Report 2020 - 2024

This Evaluation Report presents the findings of an internal realist evaluation of the WFSA covering the period 2020 – 2024.

Conducted by the Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation (IME) Manager over eight months, the evaluation was timed to inform strategic reflection ahead of the WFSA's 20th anniversary.

It synthesizes evidence from project progress reports, annual impact reports, quarterly reports, surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions across **67 sampled farms in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe.**





In Closing

As we close this very special anniversary edition and our final newsletter for the year, we do so with deep thankfulness. This year has truly been a year of bounty for us at the Foundation. We have made progress in leaps and bounds and were able to celebrate our 20th anniversary in a truly meaningful way. What made it even more special was having some of our founding members with us on the day, sharing in the celebration and reminding us where it all began. We honour our founding members and all those who have contributed along the way.

As De Villiers so fittingly reminded us, "We are not yet where we want to be, but we are certainly not where we were." This speaks to both our progress and our responsibility. There is still so much work to be done. And as I reflected at the conference: if you want to go fast, go alone - but if you want to go far, go together. The next 20 years will require us to continue showing up for one another, to deepen our engagement, and to keep going.

To every partner - Waitrose, importers, exporters, growers, workers, staff members, and supporters - thank you. The impact of the past twenty years is a shared one. We look ahead with great motivation and a shared commitment to all that still lies ahead.

Faith Brown - General Manager

We are coming to the end of a very productive and rewarding 2025 and our Team is looking forward to some well-deserved time off over Christmas to enjoy with family and friends.

Please note that our office will be closed from the 25th of December 2025 and reopening on Monday, the 5th of January 2026. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year as we continue the life-impacting work of the Waitrose Foundation in Southern Africa!



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