

SUSTAINABILITY:

*to keep in
existence,
endure*

A Delicate Balance

Sustainable impact – positive, fundamental and lasting change in people’s lives – is essential. For poor communities seeking to develop economically, finding and preserving the balance between people and nature is key to sustainability. In Zanzibar, a CARE project protects a forest, ensuring a future both for its rare animals and plants and for neighboring communities.

“Do not call the forest that shelters you a jungle,” goes an old African proverb. The meaning is clear: Things that benefit you should not be abused. Until recently, thousands of farmers bordering the lush enclave of a tropical rainforest in Zanzibar saw nature not as an asset, but an enemy. In doing so, they threatened not only the rainforest but also their own livelihoods.

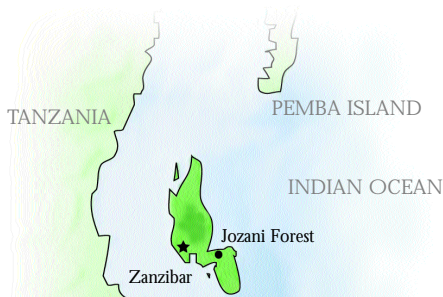
Jozani Forest lies in the heart of Unguja, the largest of dozens of islands that make up the archipelago of Zanzibar, Tanzania. Awash in a crystal ocean of blues and greens about 20 miles off the mainland coast of Tanzania, these islands have proven to be a natural haven for tourists, nearly 100,000 of whom visited Zanzibar’s white-sand beaches in 1999.

But the economic benefits of tourism came at a cost. As hotels rose on the coastline and mainland Tanzanians flooded the islands in search of tourism jobs, Zanzibar’s growing population and economy put pressure on rare and



(left) A banana farmer on the Uluguru Mountains of mainland Tanzania, site of another CARE conservation effort. (right) A Zanzibar sunset.





facts on zanzibar

Zanzibar's per capita income is \$230.

Zanzibar is home to all of the world's red colobus monkeys, half of which live in Jozani Forest.

Jozani Forest averages 15,000 visitors annually.

Thirty percent of revenue from Jozani Forest pays operational costs, 18% goes to local communities.

Jozani Forest generated \$6,000 in 1996; \$70,000 in 1999.

delicate natural resources such as Jozani Forest. Its five different ecosystems, including mangroves, coral rag forests and salt marsh, are potentially lucrative sources of construction materials and firewood. Its animals – including rare species such as Ader's duiker, Zanzibar leopard and the world's last 2,500 red colobus monkeys – are often perceived by local farmers as nuisances or even dinner.

Growing populations, liberalizing economies, nature under fire – this mix of development challenges is common to the continent and the developing world in general. Yet in Zanzibar, there is a fourth ingredient to add to the mix: success.

A Model of Conservation

“Attitudes have changed a lot. People are saying: ‘These animals have to live. These animals are bringing us money,’ ” says Ally Abdurahim Ally, an ecologist working in Jozani. “And these changes have come hand in hand with CARE. They've helped us. They've made all the changes happen.”

CARE worked with local communities, government experts, conservationists and the tourism industry to create a model that shows promise of being one of Africa's more successful conservation and development projects.

Initial efforts focused on solidifying Jozani's protected status. Then meetings were held with communities bordering the park to provide conservation education and to identify ways of using the forest without doing harm.

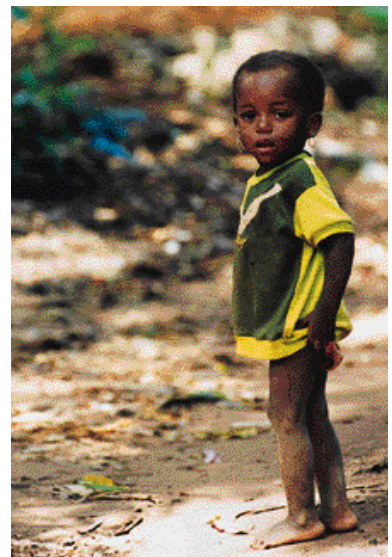
One of the solutions was to market nature walks. Before long, the park had thousands of visitors. Part of their entrance fee – now \$8 – is channeled back to members of adjacent communities.

Villagers, once skeptical of efforts to protect crop-raiding monkeys, got into the spirit. Community members worked together to build an impressive tourism boardwalk through Jozani's lush mangroves, and sell local handicrafts at Jozani's visitor center. CARE supported communities through programs to generate income, such as savings and credit associations, seaweed farming and handicrafts businesses.

"At our first meeting in Pete Village to discuss the forest, only two people showed up," says Thabit Masoud, head of conservation for Zanzibar's Commission for Natural Resources. "Now they are calling their own meetings!"

Tourists are equally enthusiastic.

"When they develop a place, they always ruin it," says Wang Lei, a Chinese tourist who visited the park in July. "But here it is obvious a lot of people are concerned; they're thinking about the problem. Maybe here they can



*(left) A tour operator advertises its services.
(right, from top) A rare red colobus monkey. This child
and Jozani Forest now share a brighter future.
Plying the waters of Zanzibar's Chwaka Bay.*



find a compromise. There's no way to go back, but we can do something for the future."

The revenue generated by the park not only covers the cost of six rangers who patrol and protect it but helps dozens of villages defray the pricetag of conservation. Nearby communities such as Pete Village, plagued by mischievous, crop-raiding red colobus monkeys, have developed a measure of acceptance for the creatures – aided, no doubt, by the addition of two school buildings, a new mosque and electricity. Tourism revenues from Jozani paid for all.

Protecting A Precious Resource

"Our children used to have to walk four miles to go to school," says Simai Ame Simai, a Pete Village resident and secretary of the local conservation committee, one of eight local conservation organizations formed with support from CARE. "We did not like the monkeys or the park, but now we do because we are benefiting. Every village should try and decide development initiatives of their own."

Villages such as Pete protect their investment. The Jozani Environmental Conservation Association – a local umbrella group of eight villages formed to help CARE and Zanzibar's government manage resources – now enforces rules on harvesting timber and other forest products and hunting. Trespassers are fined and expelled.

Equally important, the approximately \$70,000 generated each year by tourism allow a precious natural resource to remain intact for the benefit of future generations. Such sustainability brings its own rewards. Schoolchildren tour the park and thrill to the antics of the playful red colobus. Scientific research in Jozani – ranging from a monkey census to tree species studies – provides important data on some of the rarest flora and fauna on Earth.

"We've still got work to do," says Rob Wild, a CARE conservationist who helped develop the Jozani Forest program. "But communities are taking conservation into their own hands and generating their own solutions. Their success provides hope that the monkeys and their forest, as well as the people of Jozani, will have a bright future. And that's a very positive message not only for Zanzibar, but for the world."

— Article by Wendy Driscoll;
Photography by Tyler Hicks

*(below)
A woman harvests
her plot on
Tanzania's Uluguru
Mountains. (below
right) A fisherman
sports his catch from
Chwaka Bay,
Zanzibar. (right)
CARE promotes
conservation efforts
in the Ulugurus*



