

INUA JAMII

UPLIFTING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY



ABOUT MAHALI MZURI

Mahali Mzuri is Sir Richard Branson's 12-tented Kenyan safari camp located in the world-famous Maasai Mara ecosystem and right in the path of the annual Great Migration. The camp sits within the Olare Motorogi Conservancy, which covers an area of 13,500 hectares.

The opportunities for game viewing are endless. Guests can experience the African bush and see its extraordinary wildlife on twice daily game drives, thrilling bush walks with Maasai warriors, and even from the private viewing deck of their tent.

Community tours and excursions offer the opportunity to explore the Maasai culture, by meeting local people and learning about their traditions and way of life. During these experiences, guests will see first-hand all of the inspiring work that's being done by Inua Jamii to support the local communities.

Mahali Mzuri is part of Virgin Limited Edition, Sir Richard Branson's collection of exclusive retreats and luxury hotels.

ABOUT INUA JAMII

Inua Jamii is Mahali Mzuri's charitable arm, committed to working with and supporting the local Maasai communities in the Olare Motorogi Conservancy to improve their standards of living. The name "Inua Jamii" means 'uplifting the local community' in Swahili.

Our philosophy is that people are most effectively helped if they are empowered to help themselves. Our aim is to nurture communities that thrive through our involvement, simultaneously fostering self-reliance and establishing sustainable resources for generations to come.

All of Inua Jamii's running expenses are covered by Virgin Unite, the Virgin Group's non-profit foundation and Virgin Limited Edition, so 100% of guest donations go directly towards much needed projects.

WHAT WE DO

We categorise Inua Jamii's work supporting the community into six focus areas, as follows:

1. PRIMARY EDUCATION

In the last four years, thanks to our incredible guest donations, Inua Jamii has invested heavily in the infrastructure for the Enkenju - Enkoirien Primary School, located about 4kms from the Mahali Mzuri camp. This includes seven new classrooms, dormitories for both pupils and teachers, a dining hall and kitchen, a solar energy farm, a rainwater harvesting system, a playground and an electric fence. Our most recent initiative was to build a computer lab for the children; the first such facility in the entire region.

Donations from our guests and Virgin Unite have also helped to fund essential items such as solar lights, computers and printers, stationery including books, pens and pencils, beads for bead-making, maps and dictionaries.

The school now provides education for more than 300 local children, a significant increase from just under 50 students only four years ago. It also has a daily feeding program, providing all of the schoolchildren with a healthy meal, which helps to combat malnutrition and saves many of the children from having to walk long distances home for lunch.

2. SECONDARY EDUCATION

We have created a bursary kitty that supports the children with their fees for secondary school and college

after they leave the primary school. The kitty is funded by donations from Mahali Mzuri guests, the conservancy management and from the proceeds of our community tours.

3. HEALTHCARE

Inua Jamii has built and equipped a healthcare clinic to provide medical services to our Mahali Mzuri team, the majority of which come from the local community. The clinic has a resident nurse, runs monthly community health programmes, and is a critically important first responder in case of community emergency. Helping to combat period poverty is also high on the agenda at Inua Jamii. In Kenya, a high percentage of girls struggle to afford essential sanitary items, which leads to high dropout rates in schools. We're currently running a programme to distribute sanitary products to as many girls as possible and to help keep them in school.

4. SUPPORT FOR LOCAL CHARITIES

Inua Jamii supports the Maa trust, a research based non-profit organisation, through contributions on behalf of each guest staying at the Mahali Mzuri camp.

The Maa Trust undertakes invaluable community projects all around the Olare Motorogi Conservancy, from building schools and hospitals, to rainwater harvesting tanks and troughs for cattle watering. They also play a critical role in supporting, local female empowerment, notably helping to reduce the FGM of local Maasai girls.

5. ACCESS TO WATER

Access to a sustainable water supply is a critical resource for local communities in the Mara. Over the years, we have invested in drilling bore holes and more recently in rainwater harvesting systems to maximise capture and storage of rainfall during the rainy season, to provide the schoolchildren and the communities with fresh, clean drinking water. Not only has this significantly reduced

the incidence of water-borne diseases, but many of the local women and children previously had to make lengthy roundtrips on foot to their nearest water source.

6. CONSERVATION

The conservancy now protects over 15,000 hectares of land in the Mara ecosystem. The conservancy management and Inua Jamii work closely with the local Maasai tribes to implement sustainable practices, that benefit both them and local wildlife. One of the most important initiatives is controlled grazing. This has resulted in significant increases in the vegetation cover and wildlife populations, whilst also ensuring the availability of grass for the Maasai's cattle all year round. Our guides also visit the Inua Jamii-funded school to teach the children, and future generations, about the importance of conservation.



HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

We're glad you asked...

We run several community tours and excursions, and there are also opportunities to volunteer, for our guests to interact with the local communities and to see and experience a different side to the Maasai Mara. You can book these on arrival at Mahali Mzuri, or ask our reservations team for more information when making your booking.



COMMUNITY TOUR

At Mahali Mzuri, we believe that no safari in the Maasai Mara is complete without meeting the Maasai and learning about their culture, traditions, and way of life. The Maasai tribe nearest to our camp is one of the few in Kenya to have remained true to its ancient traditions – and we feel very honoured and privileged that we can share this with our guests.

For the first part of our community tour, we take you to visit the local Maasai village, or 'manyatta'. Here you are given a warm and memorable welcome by Maasai dressed in traditional regalia, before meeting local families and touring their homes. You are treated to a performance of the 'Adumu' dance, a traditional fire-making demonstration, and a Maasai beading workshop.

The second part of the tour takes you to visit the Enkenju - Enkoirien Primary School – built by Inua Jamii - where you

tour classrooms, meet the children*, and can even join a game of football! 50% of the tour proceeds go to the families of the local village and 50% goes to the bursary kitty. Many of our guests tell us the community tour is one of the highlights of their stay with us.

**The children are not at school during their school holidays, so may not be present for your tour if you visit at this time.*

VISIT TO THE MAA TRUST

During this tour aimed at providing insights into The Maa Trust and its initiatives, you will have the opportunity to explore a commercial beading workshop.

This workshop, which is managed by the trust, plays a pivotal role in empowering over 100 women from the local community.

Creating intricate Maasai beadwork requires a high level of skill, but you can try your hand at crafting a simple bracelet

or necklace to take home with you.

VOLUNTEERING ON SAFARI

If you'd like to incorporate volunteering for Inua Jamii into your safari experience at Mahali Mzuri, we can create a bespoke itinerary with the opportunity to engage in various activities during your stay.

The specific opportunity will be tailored to align with ongoing projects as well as your individual skills and interests. If you are particularly interested in education for example, we may be able to arrange for you to spend time at the primary school teaching skills that may not be available locally.

Previous guests have got involved by teaching a cooking class, helping to install fences, and planting trees. Some have even bravely stepped in to referee a football match!





KENYA



GET IN TOUCH WITH US

If we have inspired you to get involved or you would like to understand more about a specific project, please contact Virgin Limited Edition or the Mahali Mzuri team.

You can keep up to date with Inua Jamii by following @mahalimzuri on Instagram.

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PACK for a PURPOSE
Small Space. Little Effort. Big Impact.

Inua Jamii is a proud member of 'Pack for a Purpose', which provides guests with a list of everyday items desperately needed by the community, like torches, books or reading glasses. Guests can then bring with them in their suitcase or in some cases, purchase them from the Mahali Mzuri shop. Many of our generous guests bring more supplies than are possible to take on flights within Kenya. If you plan to do this, you may drop them at Wilson Airport for Mahali Mzuri, and we'll ensure they reach the primary school. Kindly notify us in advance for a seamless process.

Virgin LIMITED EDITION

