

People at the Heart of Conservation

In 1960, Dr. Jane Goodall arrived in Gombe, Tanzania with her sights set on studying wild chimpanzees. It was through her deep observation and ability to connect with the local people that Jane became intimately familiar with how the health of people, animals and the environment are interconnected.

In the late 1980s, Jane flew over Gombe National Park and the surrounding area in a small plane. What had once been lush was now a small island of green forest — the park — surrounded by bare, treeless hills. Local communities had cut down the trees for farmland, charcoal, or to sell to feed their families. Without the trees, the soil was washed into the lake with each rainy season causing severe erosion and landslides. Both the people and the ecosystem were struggling.

In 1994, JGI initiated the TACARE (Lake Tanganyika Catchment, Reforestation, and Education) project in 12 villages around Gombe, officially launching Jane's approach of community-led conservation. Tanzanian staff with varied expertise collaborated with village leaders to create a plan to restore the land while addressing the needs of the people and biodiversity. Gradually the work extended to other local communities in Tanzania, Uganda, Republic of Congo, Senegal, and DRC. The approach is now known simply as Tacare (pronounced "ta car eh").

"That's when it hit me that unless we could help people find ways of making a living without destroying their environment, we could not hope to protect chimpanzees, their forests, or anything else. And so, the idea for Tacare began."

DR. JANE GOODALL, DBE | Founder, Jane Goodall Institute, UN Messenger of Peace

Tacare's Impact

12M+
acres of chimpanzee habitat under management for conservation across JGI USA's Africa Programs.

$1.8M+
Income generated from sustainable livelihoods adopted by target communities since 2017

280K+
girls completing primary and secondary school since 1994 with support from JGI

What is Tacare?

Tacare is a community-led conservation and development approach that aims to protect the lives of animals, people and their shared environment. Unlike other community conservation models, Tacare strives to ensure that local people and communities drive development and conservation decisions in their own landscapes.



Five Fundamental Phases

Engage

The Tacare process starts with proper engagement. This could be as simple as an invitation by the community, or a meeting with community leaders and local governments, to begin a dialogue between our teams and key stakeholders.

Listen

Project teams engage in a reflective listening process with community members and government leaders to hear about their priorities, learn from their experiences, and build trust.

Understand

A shared understanding of the problem is established using economic and technical knowledge, and potential nature-based solutions are reviewed.

Facilitate

Tacare supports individuals, community leaders, and groups to implement their solutions; this phase could include land use planning, farming and agroforestry practices, tree planting and forest restoration, beekeeping, water management, primary health care, children's education, microcredit opportunities for women, scholarships for girls, and other solutions.

Step Back

The Step Back phase is pertinent to maintaining local ownership and stewardship. Because Tacare is offered, not imposed, the local people may choose to withdraw from the program. This always comes with an open invitation to the community to re-engage at a later point.

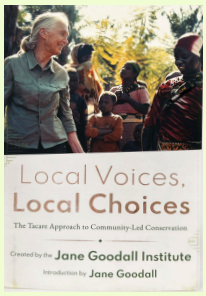
Grounded in Maps

Maps inherently provide a common language and a medium for foundational understanding. They visually demonstrate the innate interconnectedness of the land, the people, and the animals — informing and supporting different phases of the Tacare process. Maps help identify where engagement is needed based on conservation and community needs, satellite imagery sparks conversation from the community about their areas of interest and helps georeference and document local knowledge, geospatial analysis combines this local knowledge with scientific data and helps understand the problems, while geospatial tools like mobile apps could help implement solutions and facilitate the community's ability to monitor their own progress.



Want to Learn More?

To continue learning about Tacare and how to apply it to your own local conservation efforts, check out these resources:



Shop the Tacare Book: shop.janegoodall.org

JGI's Tacare Story Map