

-- Speaker 1 00:00:11 Hello, fellow rewelded ologist. I hope you all are ready to get inspired. In this episode, I'm chatting with Judith Wanda, who is the international relations director and an assistant professor at St. Augustine university of Tanzania. She has been through more than you can possibly imagine. She was orphaned at a young age after losing both of her parents and her and her brother found strength through education. Her surviving family members encouraged her to work as hard as she could through her studies to become more than just a village girl. And that is exactly what she did. She studied internationally and lived abroad for a decade before returning to East Africa to make a greater impact in young women's lives. She explains the importance of including local women in conservation initiatives and what tourists can do to both impact themselves and local communities. Let me know what you think of this episode by hitting me up at <inaudible> dot com.

Speaker 1 00:01:08 Also remember to subscribe and review the show on your favorite streaming app. And now here's my conversation with Judith. I do this. Oh my gosh. Thank you so much for coming on. And I'm so excited that we're going to just really get deep into, I mean, what I experienced when I was there and then your whole life, you know, cause you were, you were born in Kenya, correct. And then you are currently working in Tanzania. So just tell, tell us more about your childhood. Um, I know you have quite an interesting story, so tell us, okay. Uh, my name is Judy Wanda. I'm currently, uh, I'm a lecturer. I teach public relations and I teach math communication courses. And I'm also doing my PhD in journalism and mass communication. So I was born and raised in the village when I lost my parents at the age of four and 11, my dad passed away.

Speaker 1 00:02:08 And then I went to the village because that's where my grandparents, that's where they raised me from. I mean, we went to two of us, me and my brother, my brother. And of course likely the village was not that to have because you know, there, there are no resources. Like, I mean, you'll walk a few kilometers to look for water. You have walk to look for firewood. You know, you don't have even enough a hundred. I said, we don't have, we didn't have electricity. When you go to school, uh, moaning, there's no breakfast breakfast, you can't afford to eat his dinner. So basically my life was, we wake up in the morning, go to the farm because farming was the only way I was of where

Speaker 2 00:03:00 Food will come from. And then you leave and go to school. And then during lunch hour, you will just be at school to come home still because grandparents could only afford one meal a day. So yeah, life was so tough. But as we went on things we used to actually have fun with during harvesting time lunch, or there'll be breakfast at home. It's not a life that any child would decide to have. And, uh, uh, what I can say, we've managed to read that through. We managed to stay strong and of course I bought a supportive my good brother to give up. And despite the fact that my grandparents never went to school, but they love school and they would encourage me like whatever you're going to, don't give up. Uh, you will have a good life if you have good education. That's the only thing I would remember.

Speaker 2 00:03:53 So of course I worked hard. I used to be a top in class and uh, I used to take part in debates. I always say my outspoken skills come from debate. I love taking part in debates. I used to be a leader in school. I was the last brief it, I became a club. I became a head girl. I mean the top head of the prefects in school. So at a very young age, I started learning leadership skills. Yeah. And then of course in Kenya we study until class eight on for primary school education. And then we're now I, when I finished my standard eight, I truly did not know how I'm going to move for my form. One because my aunt was already supporting my brother. So it was not like a guarantee that she has to come and support me. So I stayed home and luckily enough, my aunt took me in because she wanted support to have some support at our place.

Speaker 2 00:04:43 So I went into helper, but lo behold, that was my breakthrough because then my uncle who is my auntie's husband, he is just pass away. My histone rest in peace. Uh, he's the one who now took on and he really went his wh --

-- ole heart out and he kept telling me the only thing I will give you that I know your parents would have given you his education. So he paid for my, uh, or level studies, took me to Malaysia for my studies. And, uh, I, in Malaysia, I did my first degree, which was a bachelor degree in journalism and mass communication with Katina university Australia. I was a transfer student. And then I continued with my masters and I got a job. I was employed in Malaysia. So I decided, uh, while working out, go in for my evening classes. So that's how I did my masters degree.

Speaker 2 00:05:38 And then I continued on with my PhD degree. But, uh, after that, I moved back to Tanzania now, where am I? I am at? And I decided to transfer my studies back in Tanzania. So what I can say, a lot of people, especially those girls, I studied within the village. Whenever they look at me for them, it looks like a miracle because you don't live in the village. No one thinks of tomorrow because you look at your income, you look at what you have. And you're like, this is like, I don't think I can have a better life after this. So I, my friends keeps telling me that whenever they look at me, they can actually see hope. And I just want to inspire young girls out there. You know, like life is not about where you are raised. If I kept saying I'm a village girl, I'm a village and I will not be where I am today. When I tell someone I walked to go to school for eight good years with no shoes, no one will believe. I, first time I wore shoes to go to school is when I was going in my secondary school. You know? And I was raised in a place where I never had electricity, but life was life. And yeah, I'm very grateful.

Speaker 1 00:06:52 That's amazing. That's such an inspirational story. Um, and, um, thank you for sharing that too. Um, so where do you think that mindset, this powerful mindset was instilled in you, do you think that it just came from within you or was it your uncle that really gave you this mindset where like, you're not where you currently are? Like your current circumstances is not what defines you, what really got, because it sounded like that that gaming's use at such a young age, which is incredible, which most, a lot of people around the world can't say that same thing. So do you think that was from him that really gave you that mind?

Speaker 2 00:07:31 I, my mindset came from my mother. This is one thing I always will remember mom for because when I was very young, I remember when I was in kindergarten, when my mom was still alive. She used to tell me that you can, no one will ever understand you when you don't speak. And it's always good to express your mind. It's always, mom gave me that freedom to be of expression. And I always say, every child, if you give them a freedom of expression, you help them to realize their potential. So in that particular process, that's how I started realizing capabilities of like, I could be a good speaker. I started realizing that, uh, that's the time I started developing, actually my thinking and mom created this environment that every time I would stop in class, you would award me for that. Every time I would participate in something, she would give me an award.

Speaker 2 00:08:18 So, I mean, especially academic wise. And if I D if I was that good child and, you know, she kept encouraging me. So that's where it was put in me, right? From a very young age, a spirit of wanting to be better as spirit of wanting the best out of me, you know? So I started realizing that I actually have a lot of potential. And you see, of course, with mom's obsession and her not giving me presents. Now, when my grandfather was telling me that studying will help me have a better future. All this were falling in place because you see at a very young age, mum had already created that for me to be, to be recognized as a good gun. I have to work hard in class. And if I work hard, she would give me that reward. And every time I would come home, I will speak to want to hear from me. Like, what do I want? How am I, okay. Uh, what is it? You know, that act of being given freedom to communicate made me realize that I have capability in the, I will tell you everywhere I go, I've never been afraid. Like you never see me step, uh, begin to be afraid or be shy to speak up because I always believe the minute you speak up, that's when people get to understand. But when you keep quiet, people will start creati

--

-- ng different perceptions that are not there. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:09:37 It's incredible. Sounds like she was quite an amazing woman in your life.

Speaker 2 00:09:44 What thing, what do you think

Speaker 1 00:09:46 Gave her that mindset? Did she have a similar path to you? Um, or was it one of those where she saw that she didn't, she wanted something different for her children and you just happened to be the beneficiary of that. So where do you think she got that? Very different way of thinking.

Speaker 2 00:10:03 Okay. A little bit. It's just that my mom was first born in her family of like my mom, they like eight kids. So she's the first child. And then of course looking at our own background, her own mum passed away when she was one year old. So she was raised by no mother. And, uh, so she grew up with her dad of which half of the time the dad gave her freedom to, to say what she wants. So my mom grew up in a family where there was so much, and the good thing is her dad was educated with my grip, my grandfather. So because my grandfather had that education and he was one of those ingenious in the country. So my mom grew up in an environment knowing that for a child to be, to grow and to discover their skins, they need to be given freedom of expression. So that is one thing, one thing she, she got that from the father and second thing, because she was fast one. So she grew up not sharing her, his high other young siblings. So when we came in, so mom was like already used to that, you know, like knowing how to raise kids because high-end siblings were born way after mum was a little bit much while going to school. So she had been overexposure on her hand.

Speaker 1 00:11:13 Wow. That's pretty incredible. It sounds like you come from a long line of people that are trying to break this one particular mindset that it sounds like you see quite often around you, which that's incredible. Um, so after that, so you went to Malaysia was, so was that your first experience out of your home country?

Speaker 2 00:11:32 Yeah. I flew to Malaysia at an age of 19 years old. And, uh, that was the very first time I was living in Kenya. That was the very fast time I was going to stay alone without under the leadership of a guardian or a leadership of a parent. I was slowly going to a country where I didn't know anyone. The only thing I knew is the name of the university and the course that I was doing. That's incredible. How long were you in Malaysia? I stayed in Malaysia for 10 years. Wow. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:12:00 Was that all education or was that you just loved being there? Like it felt almost like a home. And so you wanted to stay

Speaker 2 00:12:07 <inaudible> country? I always say Malaysia will always be my second home. Uh, that is the place where I go to realize, like, of course I knew I wanted to be. I knew I wanted to go into, uh, public relations and mass communication career, but that's where I go to realize my potential. And therefore, that is a country where I did my first degree. And then I did my second degree. I worked there for seven years and started part of my PhD studies there. So Malaysia is a country where I connected with many people. I developed a strong friend network of friendship. I learned how to survive in different cultures because you understand this is a country where there's Chinese Indians, my leaves, and I was one flexible person where I would travel to the village and celebrate it. I would go to the Indian table to celebrate Hindu into, uh, the Hindu culture.

Speaker 2 00:13:00 I was there during Chinese new year. I was all weather because I realized to learn people. You have to be just, you must into their culture. And I tell you, I learned a lot. I have so many friends today. I say, I'm going back to Malaysia. I don't even need to think where I'm going to sleep because I have so many people who can it to me. I have a family, you know, I went to church, I went to tempos. I went to different places. I celebrated Islamic, uh, uh, I mean Muslim holidays. And it was just, I mean, that was just home. And it's a place where, of course I, when I left militia, it's not because I hit a pressure to leave Malaysia. But you know, one thing I will tell you is that I always had this desire that I needed to go home and be able to transform lives and be able to touch some young girls and boys.

Speaker 2 00:13:50 And especially my students. --

-- When I talk to them, when I'm able to tell them that look being born and raised in the village will not make you, they in the village, but it doesn't define who you are, where your future goes. And I share my own story. I tell you, a lot of people get encouraged, many come to me and they're like, Oh, I want to pursue my studies. And that's what I wanted. And I just want people to not lose hope and say, Oh, this is what I have is enough. Because if I would have said, it's enough, I wouldn't be where. Yeah, absolutely.

Speaker 1 00:14:20 Just like the definition of striving to be the best person of yourself. Like you're such an amazing person, Judith, quite honored to know you. Um, so, so it sounds like it was more of a calling that brought you back to Eastern Africa. Yeah. It was more of a calling, not necessarily Vic you had to, or, you know, your time was up in Malaysia or anything like that. So what made you decide to come to Tanzania versus Kenya? Was it the opportunity or, or what, what led that decision?

Speaker 2 00:14:53 Okay. Um, why Tanzania for me has always been on my mind because the level of exposure to a lot of young girls, intermediate is a bit compared to Kenya. You see, when you look at East Africa, Kenya, almost everyone is exposed to it and live alone education. The culture in Kenya is like, you have to work hard. And like the buses, the culture here, like here, a lot of women are meant to be moms, homemakers. Yeah. Finish education. The first thing they will think about is marriage. And then in my mind, I will be like, but this girls have a lot of potential, you know? So I realized that this is a country where people are so engrossed into culture, that they don't have space or other exposure to develop their own opportunity. And of course, with that desire, I got an opportunity to work with the universities in Tanzania, through various partnerships that I had while I was in Malaysia.

Speaker 2 00:15:54 And that's how one of the university gave me an offer to come and teach. And for me, I will always, always say it was a blessing because you know, sometimes God will not put you. What I say is, God will put you where he wants you to minister the way he wants you to serve him. Because this is for me, I believe this is the right place. God wanted me to be. Because every time I walk into those classes to teach these students and I still am, I'm doing my PhD. They're like, wow. You're not just them looking at me at my age, doing my PhD. They're like, I can do it. I did my one year certificate course when I arrived in Malaysia. And to them during my PhD, the students are like, well, we can also be the same thing. And I said, yes, you can be.

Speaker 2 00:16:36 You know, so it's not about, well, I don't have money. I don't have opportunity because even if someone gives you money and you don't have that desire, it's not going to work. That's what I always tell them. You know? So for me, this is the place I needed to be because the culture here has built women to be mothers. You know, that thing that a woman is not supposed to be overeducated or a woman is not supposed to be here. But I like that as time goes, the people are opening up. I do talk to a lot of parents too. And elders tell parents, you know what? Girls are now empowered. Having a girl, child, having a girl, child doesn't mean that she cannot be a leader. Nowadays. We have a lot of women who are leaders. Yeah. So we shouldn't oppress these young girls with the word marriage, marriage, marriage, and they drop off their career. They drop off their desires in their rushing for marriage. Because for me, I, I'm not saying marriage is a bad thing, but I believe it's good for you to also pursue your career. It's good for you to be who we wanted to be, you know, because at the end of the day, that's the life that you wanted to achieve. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:17:46 Yeah. That's incredible. And like, and what's really wonderful. You is you embody everything that you're saying like you did, like, you didn't settle down, you went and you pursued your dreams. You traveled across the world, you've got this incredible education. And then you brought that story back to show for real, like, you're a real person. Like I did it. It's like, you can do this too, which is beautiful, which is absolutely incredible. And having spent so much time with you in the community there, the, I mean, it was pretty amazing. The women looked a --

-- t you like when we were at, you know, like the dancing competitions and you were standing there and doing the translations for us and making sure that we knew exactly what was going on. Like you were this confident woman in the middle of everything that was going on and like sharing incredible information.

Speaker 1 00:18:38 Like you were the example. And it was beautiful to watch. I mean, there was plenty of women in the crowd that I'm sure were significantly younger than everybody in our crew and had multiple children already at that point. And then here you are. You're like, there is a different path. There is a different path. I am the example. Like I X I know you, you know me, they had, these might, these ladies might be foreign and they have a different life story, but you were the perfect example of you can make a different path. And I think that's why we liked Cod. We just completely fell in love with you. Cause you just, you're so inspirational.

Speaker 2 00:19:21 Yeah. I mean, what you're saying is true because I've met a lot of women. I mean, it was mostly in the villages and they're like, I would also want to be like, you, you know, I would want to, how do I say, I also want to speak English? And I'm like, yeah. You know, the truth is, is I was only used to speak in a local vernacular language. Like I didn't even know how to speak proper English, but because I told you yesterday, my students and they were laughing, I really used to love the generalist on BBC. You know, every time I, I would watch it TV, I get an opportunity to watch TV. And I see people in BBC speak English. And I'm like, that is me. You know, that is the only thing I would say. I would say, that is me. One day, I'll be doing this and you see it today.

Speaker 2 00:20:06 I'm not a generalist, but I teach students to begin. At least, you know, I've written my newspaper stories. I've worked a lot with generalists in different parts. So what I can say is that I have experienced and I love what I do. You know, for me, I never even get to her to teach you. I walk to class and I teach the student and I feel like I've done something. You know, it's not something that I struggled to do, but because it's something that I've always wanted to do. And I can tell you, is that one thing, whenever I go into these villages, when I work with this different, I, when we went to the village to this beehive stuff, it was just incredible. Because as you said, it's true. It's not difficult for women in the village to people who are from different countries, especially in the developed world. But then when they look at me with like, just like them, they are like, wow, we also want to be like you, but you know what? I feel so honored because I know they will encourage that daughters. Yeah. They're moms. Yes. But they will carry their daughters, their sisters, they will tell them to work hard. And that's the spirit that I want to put in them. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:21:15 You're definitely doing it. There's no, if ands or buts that you're not. Um, so when I was there, you shared some incredible stories of how you've actually brought in some young people into your home and really empowered them to make something of themselves and, and gave them a different path. Would you want to share a couple of those stories? I think they're quite incredible.

Speaker 2 00:21:43 And that is a story that I will always remember this girl. The only thing she knew how to cook was rice and beans. And when I looked at her, I felt she's a very good cook. But the only thing that this girl doesn't have is that she doesn't have education and she doesn't have exposure. So I brought her into my house and I took her to school and I took her to a vocational school where she was trained into cooking. I, so every time she will cook in school, she'll come home into the practical. I would be there with the teachers, will teach her different things. And then she went in for her practicals. And today after nine months of being in class and doing practical today, she works in a hotel. And she's one of our systems chefs in hotel, you know, one of the tourist hotel here.

Speaker 2 00:22:27 So for me, I, when I see people transform their lives like that, that is their main impact. You know, uh, when I took her to school, I thought that I had money actually didn't have money. But what was inside me is I had a desire of seeing this girl become someone better becau --

-- se she had, she had potential was in cooking. She had that potential in cookie, but she needed someone to help her realize how to make it more, better for her to better handle it. You know, I, that reminded me of my own life. I had a potential in broadcasting, but I needed someone to empower me to go to school in order to let of those skills, to become a reality. And that's why I say my uncle worked hard to make me who I am. And I really am grateful that I made an impact to this girl.

Speaker 2 00:23:15 It's not about the money. It's not about staying with her, but it's about who she is now. Yeah. She is someone who can cook. You can imagine a person who only knew how to cook rice and Vincent today. Now she's become a good Baker. She, she walks in a big hotel, truly. That is the kind of society we want. You know, this is a w if we didn't pick our skills at that age, or at that stage today, she will definitely be living a miserable life and not realizing that she has a lot of potential in her, especially when it into culinary area. So that is my greatest desire just to pick up skills, especially in women, you know, a lot of women have skills that women who are good in braiding hair, for example, you saw people who bring hair, women who are good in tailoring, the women who are good in embroidery, like they can do different stuff.

Speaker 2 00:24:04 They can do artworks. But the thing is, is that a lot of them, they don't know how to, they don't have the knowledge and the skills, how to transform these God-given talents into tangible products that can give them an income. Yeah. And that's why I always say that if they're empowered, you know, important someone is you're teaching them because like, you see this, when we sent her to this occupational school, it was not just about hooky, but she was even taught how to do, how do you turn into a product that when that can give you some sort of income yeah. That can give you some sort of profit. And she was taught the skills and the knowledge that she needed to put it as a whole pocket. So that's what they actually need. Yeah. So for me, at least that is one. And then I went further. I took in one boy after the gun I took in the boy, I sent him to our vocational school and this one, this time round, he did electric electricity and plan B. And we, he was, he loved doing electricity stuff. And now he's now walking is he back in the village is having his own place that he does this electricity. If it's things for people and you know, now he has become a resource.

Speaker 1 00:25:18 Yeah. That's incredible. And, and like, and that, that was just out of your own big heart. Like no one told you, you had to do that. These weren't necessarily like family members that you had to take in or anything. This is just who you are. And I'm really glad. And thank you for sharing those stories, because I think it just goes to show just the kind of heart you have. It's not, it goes beyond that. Like, you didn't have to do either of those, which is really incredible. So what now, so you are a professor, right? Like, so you teach in university.

Speaker 2 00:25:51 Oh yeah. You guys will call them, call them.

Speaker 1 00:25:54 Oh, nice. Yeah. Yeah. So what exactly is it that you teach?

Speaker 2 00:25:59 I teach, I teach public math.

Speaker 1 00:26:04 Perfect. Yeah. That's wonderful. Um, so what exactly do you review with your students? So what are like some of the big takeaways or, um, and your lecturers, like, what exactly are you teaching them?

Speaker 2 00:26:15 I teach students how to develop stories from a real ongoing issue. Like for example, we have golf, which is, let me give an example. Like we have currently we have challenges, a lot of young girls becoming pregnant and they're becoming men because they don't have that knowledge about pregnancy. They don't have that knowledge about challenges of raising a kid. So like they cannot speak up for themselves. They have reached a where women, uh, you know, it reaches a point in there, things that you realize when I do this, I'll get a mistake. So I teach them how they can ride stories, physical, edits them, how they can write stories on an orphan day and on an ongoing daily thing. So things that they get exposed to in their life, how they can turn them into stories that when people read, they're able to, to be inspired, to be educated, to be informed, you know, because when, eve --

-- ry time you read a story in a newspaper, there's something that it's either you're informing people or educating people, because that's the only channel of communication that you'll be able to use to reach out to the community and be able to transform lives.

Speaker 2 00:27:21 Yeah. So that causes where I worked them to do real life activities. Like I would tell them to look at what is going on within their environment. And then for example, if there's business, for example, they will tell them to go to the market and look at the kind of foods that are on season. And then look at the important of that food in terms of health. And how can you write a story that will help someone who never saw the value of that now will be able to appreciate that would integrate in their life for their health. So, and then there's another public speaking protocol. How do you develop your speech and how do you speak to people for them to be able to understand you? And that is one course that I love, because speaking to people, it's not just about standing up to talk to people, but you have to put yourself in the shoe of those people who are listening to you.

Speaker 2 00:28:10 Because when they're sitting there listening to the something that's spitting out of you, that's why they're there. You know? So if you're going to stand there and not be able to speak to them and imagine a certain community, or imagine a certain audience, then there will be no connection with those people. So I teach them to first understand the mindset of the people they're talking to. And then once you understand the mindset, then the issues that when you highlight you actually tied to them. For example, I always tell them if you're talking to a stay home, mom, who's not going to school. Remember this mother, all they're thinking about is having a meal on their table, how to do, to take care of the kids while at home, you know how to plant food, how to do shopping. So there are things that a mother who stayed at home will think, so if you're going to talk to her, make sure that you touch her day to day routine.

Speaker 2 00:28:58 Yeah. Don't go clocking things that she doesn't, he's not exposed to. And you tell her thinking that she will understand you. And then I teach another course into, I teach public relation customer care, especially to tourism students who want to take these courses. But this course with the whole essence is a lot of people do not understand the word public relation. You know, I mean, it's a, it's a career here that people never understood much. So I always tell them, when you say public relations, how do you build your connections with the people in regards to organization? Yeah. So the meaning relation means how do you relate to people and people are this the public. So what kind of activities do you do? How do you, how do you create an environment that people say, I still want to go back there. I still want to do this.

Speaker 2 00:29:44 I still want to go and watch a movie that's cinema. I still want to take my kids in that number because there's something that, that cinema provided to this person that he feels so little to eat compared to this other part. And then once you create that environment, then how do you create a good customer care so that this person would forever be able to remember you? So this is a course that I teach that year to autism student with the FM, that when they get to be employed in this different organization, they are able to develop a campaigns. They're able to develop platforms that will help this organization, relate people and be able to continue maintaining their customers. And of course, all my subjects, I try and measure that they get to do real life activities. Yeah. I don't tell them it might in this, imagine that I make them to go to this organizations.

Speaker 2 00:30:35 I make them talk to them. I make them to do a research to understand if it's a hotel, how does that hotel operate? Which kind of customers do they serve and then which kind of activities they do. And then I give them the freedom to devise, which activity would they have done? Should they have been given an opportunity to work in that? And I can tell you, it has worked because some of the students ended up getting jobs in those places. Some of them, whenever they present, they have gotten exposure. Some of them into other companies and they bring along the skills that I've given them becaus --

-- e they have something tangible and it has helped them to grow.

Speaker 1 00:31:09 Yeah. That's awesome. Like you've pretty much showed them the, the importance of networking and getting out of your circle and meeting with new people and the opportunities that arise when you do that. And that's really powerful, especially nowadays when we're getting so just drawn in on our phones and that's everywhere in the world where people aren't having as many face to face conversations. And so like that is very empowering that you do that with your students. Cause I mean, a lot of them are very theoretical. Like we haven't spent a lot of time in school. It's like, let's think about this. What is this theory that we're talking about? Like those kinds of things. So it's really cool that you make them go learn public relations. That's awesome. Um, and so I think that ties in very well. So we met last year by me and a group of incredible women from Colorado.

Speaker 1 00:32:00 We came out to make a woman in conservation documentary and really just highlight what's going on in the area. And we had the privilege of meeting you on that trip, which was incredible. Like you, you made our trip, we completely fell in love with you. And like, thank God we met Judith. Um, cause you made our trip. Um, and so you had an incredibly unique position where you actually understood what the women was going through. And I would love if you could speak on from firsthand experience, really what women's role is in conservation and Tanzania. Okay.

Speaker 2 00:32:40 Uh, when it comes to conservation, I need, you know, before we touch conservation, I need to tell you, culturally is in our culture,

Speaker 3 00:32:52 Our money

Speaker 2 00:32:52 In our culture is someone who is considered to be a mum. Yeah. It's someone who is considered to be not how to say someone. Who's going to say that to be, to be second, second, meaning that you cannot raise your voice or you cannot be, you know, you, you, you cannot, there's a word. I want to use it. Like you can't come out and lead. I mean, be on top of a man, you know, that is one thing that culture has created women to be most of African cultures. Yeah. So when it comes to area of conservation, women were never thought of from the very beginning. Yeah. There was nothing that people could see good out of them when it could come for them to help in conservation. And that really brought in a bigger challenge because, uh, a lot of women just where they could only take care of kids, I know even studying, you realize a lot of girls when they were taken to study in universities, no one entered to conservation because by then I never even had, if there were any in who would want their child to take and especially a girl to go into conservation.

Speaker 2 00:34:04 So this is an area that was only left for men. Yeah. It was not an area that was thought of for women, but only people do not realize that women are the good communicators in messages. You can see those ladies, how they danced the songs that they were singing, how they could exemplify these animals. You know, there are certain words when they could communicate, it will help you feel the touch. Like the love, like this elephant seems to be terrible animals, but it would feel like there's something that these women are trying to communicate. So what I wanted to say is that, uh, women have not been given the voice actually that's the one they have never been given the voice when it comes to conservation. Conservation has been an area that has been left to men. Yeah. Because it has, it was always perceived as a tough area.

Speaker 2 00:34:53 It was all sports perceived as an area that women are not strong enough. Yeah. So it was just like men who are stronger. They're the ones who have to go out and face the animal and walk into the, you know, walk into this, how they call it, walking to this, uh, national parks and zoos. I mean, it has to be a game reserve. Sorry. So it's an, it's a very young area, but it's an area that if women are given a lot of exposure and they're given a lot of skills, they can communicate, for example, women ever would in, in tailoring. Yeah. You know, doing conservation doesn't mean you go in and start running around with poachers, but just creating opportunities for people to work, creating opportunities will enable people to remove this idleness, creating like what kid Adamson is do --

-- ing, like doing all this beehive fences.

Speaker 2 00:35:46 I tell you this project, we just did few months down the line. They are already having these. They're now doing beef farming. Elephants are not crossing there anymore. So you see this community of women. I tell you in all those communities, the biggest percentage of people who were white with white women and it showed that women can even fix a beehive fence. You know, it didn't have to be men. So this is one thing I can tell you nowadays, when it comes to conservation, women are fully aware and fully ready to, they are ready to participate. You know? So one thing I realized from this more exposure that I've had with these communities that have gone into that nowadays, there's nothing about men and women. Uh, I mean, there's nothing about this is for men and this is for women. Everyone is ready to participate and women, they are very cooperative because at the end of the day, they also know that conservation affects them. It's not only the men, but it also affects them because if their farm is destroyed, mum will not have food give, put on the table and you see when <inaudible> goes out, how will mom be able to survive? You know, that kind of thing. So it's a win, win, win situation. That's wonderful.

Speaker 1 00:36:59 And how, like how does someone get into these communities to learn what they need and be able to create these conservation projects? Um, I know that you're really good at this and we've talked a lot about it. So from your experience, what is the best way to get conservation on the ground?

Speaker 2 00:37:19 Okay. You mean, how do we get to involve women in conservation, right? Yeah. Yeah. Uh, for me, how do we get involved women here in conservation? It's by it's by first of all, realizing their potential. Like every community, a lot of women have a lot of activities that they are doing. For example, there, there are those women who, the women who are good in tailoring, as I said, the women who are good in art they're women who are put in singing and dancing, the women who are good into cultural tourism, where you could go and stay into those communities, especially homestays, they teach you that women who are good in teaching you how to, you know, cultural values, how to, how to get. But I mean, to be involved in to family, how to do a lot of activities down into this village, that women who can nowadays, they can't even create their own soaps.

Speaker 2 00:38:12 Yeah. So what I can say, and they now, and every mom has a child and every, a lot of kids in the village, they're very challenging. So for me, I always say, if we want to empower a mother, you have to start with the child. So if there are different activities that both mum and mothers and kids can take, but that will be the right way. Because when you are able to empower them, to develop their talents and to realize their potential, they can now turn, turn it into a product. And when they turn it into a product, it will be a source of income. And once they have a source of income with them, they are able to grow. You know, they're able to now do more activities. They're able to expand their area of comfort and be able to grow economically and financially need to understand every community have their own.

Speaker 2 00:39:03 Uh, how do I say, like the communities who are into family, their communities who are into fishing, their communities who are into different types of economic activities. So you have to turn these economic activities that they're exposed to with their skills. And then together, it becomes a package. And this package, when you train them, it turns into a commodity that they can bring to the market and be able to generate an income to them. Because like you remember those women who are dancing, you know, dancing itself is cultural tourism, but how do you package it? So that for them, they can't realize the potential because it's not just dancing for people to entertain them, but they're dancing because they're able to, to, to generate an income out of it. And that is money that will help them to educate their kids, to be able to support them, to go to school, to be able to support them, to go into artwork, into art, into different types of activities that they will want them to get into. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:40:00 Yeah. That's wonderful. Um, and I know that, cause we, we were specifically when we were all there, um, reall --

-- y heavily interested in the communities that are surrounding the national parks because those communities, I mean, they deal with a lot. I mean, just having some big devastating animals around can really cause a lot of damage, should something happen. So in those particular communities, is there anything different that needs to be done? Like how, how are the women really brought into the conversation for those types of areas?

Speaker 2 00:40:35 Oh, okay. You mean that? How, how are they involved into conservations? Because they face it. You know, the farms that have been affected is their own farms and half of the time, because there were men have left to go to town, to look for, for jobs. They're the ones who are living at home to do family. And to be able to use whatever little farm have is they have to feed for the family. So you see when they have done their farming activity and then elephant comes in, destroys, then they're left with nothing. You know? So they're the ones who suffer the most. And because they're the ones who suffer the most, they need an alternative source of income that can help them to catch up for their, for what they are doing. Like when you have those behind fences are now that the elephant cannot cross the going to their farm.

Speaker 2 00:41:18 You see, at the same time, they will be waiting for them to grow and then harvest. But on the other side, they will have their beehives. I mean, the bees they're growing and then getting their honey packaging them and being able to sell. And then they can brand honey into the name. I mean, Brandon honey in a, in their community now and be able to promote their community in return, you know, and that community can be an attraction as a source of tourism attraction because people want to book, people want to see, like, these people are doing beef farming, how are they doing it? How special is it? And how is it helping them in return? You realize that you're just creating a chain of source of income without having to use too much energy and struggle.

Speaker 1 00:42:04 Yeah. That's wonderful. Um, you have to like with us to seeing, I mean, cause when we were there, I mean we saw the devastation, you know, just one area of elephant over-population could really devastate a local community. And then what incentive do they have to protect the wildlife when it's literally destroying their life? And that was very insightful. Just being there. It's like, Oh, how could you want to kill an elephant? It's like, well I've never had an elephant destroy my home. Like who am I to say what it's like to live with these animals and bringing in the women in the conversation, which you've done an amazing job of, I think really helps bring it to perspective and bring it to light for everybody to really put it in perspective what it's actually like living around these national parks that we love visiting so much as tourists.

Speaker 1 00:42:56 Like we actually got to see the communities that are around these national parks when you're usually just a tourist. You don't see those, you just go into the park and see the incredible wildlife, which is amazing that it's even there and just see what people have to struggle through, to live near them. I mean, it was quite, it was amazing. It was very eye-opening for sure. Um, yeah. So on that note for anyone who is a tourist, that's coming to Tanzania or visiting the area, is there anything that they should know before they come or they should keep in mind or, um, what advice or knowledge do you want to share with any tourists that are coming to the area

Speaker 2 00:43:43 You, you, uh, you know, a lot of times when they come to Tanzania, they want to go to national parks. But one thing I will decide is visit these villages. They should visit these communities, uh, visiting the communities will give them a lot of exposure, will give them a chance to understand how people live. You know, just understanding how people live will really help you to appreciate less. You know, you'll appreciate life, even in your own, your own environment when you get back home in your own country. And then another thing is it will help for them to be able to, to know the struggle. Like as much as these people, you know, for me, I always say animals don't plan to destroy, but you see that it's their nature. That for them, they believe everywhere they are it's their habitat, but they're just doing it because they'r --

-- e it's part and parcel of the area they have crossed.

Speaker 2 00:44:32 So therefore like this should also know that these people are struggling. You know, staying close to a national park has never been easy because you never know tomorrow you wake up and find an elephant outside your house. You never know tomorrow. You'll wake up your trees. You know, it's like every day you're doing something and you get back to square zero. So I would love to add Tanzania. You don't just go to the national park. You should also do what you should. Uh, you should also go to those communities that are near national parks. Talk to them. He had what they want to say. It's so interesting. They, some of them, they have, they know much better about the animals. Then we think that we have gotten all the information when you visit the national park. So when you talk to the community, because a lot of people have been there long before this national parks were created. Yeah. So that is where, um, getting people to go to the communities. They will learn a lot.

Speaker 1 00:45:37 How would you recommend that? Maybe if a tourist is a little nervous or apprehensive to go into community, they don't know. How do you think that they should go about that? Is there, should they partner with a tour company? Should they just go for it? Should they try to make connections? Like how does a tourist from the area, not from the area, come in and get to know a community,

Speaker 2 00:46:02 Whatever, to a company that they're planning with. They should request them to have an add-on to visit in a nearby community, to any national park that they plan to go. Because that is where they're going to learn quite a lot. Like when we went to w when we stayed with the villages, when we visited those villages, we learned a lot. We learned the history of the animal, where their history of their national park things that you should do, what you should not do. So you see, there was quite a lot that the village has said, and we realize they are there. The economic activities, like the plant rise, they plant sunflower. They can also teach you how to do all this, this farming activities. So they should plan with their operators wherever to accompany. So they're working with visit this coming. You know, for me, I can say this because I have had that exposure when I was in Malaysia, when I used to go to down to the communities, that's where I would learn a lot about people in culture. You know, what you read in books is not enough. Some of these things are not documented in the book. Some of these things, you have to live and experience them by yourself. And then that is the best you teach it. But when you experience it

Speaker 1 00:47:10 Completely agree, there's nothing better than just going and meeting and connecting with people. You don't know. It's, it's really some of the best experiences I know that I've ever had. Which I mean, like I got to meet you.

Speaker 2 00:47:24 I love telling you my friend now. So is

Speaker 3 00:47:30 There any, um, I guess, is there any last things that you really want to share? Is there any like advice that you want to give to anybody listening or, or any like final thoughts that you really just want to make sure that anyone listening really internalizes? Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:47:47 There's one thing I wanted to share with you. Like currently I'm a director of international relations. I mean, I, in the university where I work, I work with different universities around the world, but my greatest desire, I would love, especially students who are into conservation, who are into tourism to be able to have a semester abroad and I can facilitate for them to come. I can walk on the logistics and whatnot for them to come, because I would want them to have firsthand experience. Because when you come in as a tourist, the whole essence is you have your time plan. You know, like a planned, I'll be there for five days. I want to see this amount of animals. But when you come in as a student and you have a semester away abroad that whole semester, you have a lot to learn. You can go into the villages, you can get to hear what people say because the world has become a global village.

Speaker 2 00:48:36 And people are working in different networks. You know, one time we went to meet someone from a different country and this person behaves in a particular way. And you're like, who behaves like t --

-- his? But that is not, you can't question that person. That's the way that they have been brought up. But you see if you had a lot of levels of exposure. That's what I told you. When I went to Malaysia and I went into all these communities today, when I meet an Indian praying, I would not even question wise because I know that that is their culture. Even admit Chinese, eating with chopsticks. I would not look weird. Like I know that is how they do it. You know? So for me, I want young girls and boys. Yeah. Especially people who are in developed countries in Europe, in America to come down. There's a lot to learn.

Speaker 2 00:49:19 That is not in those books that we think will read books. And we get, you know, even if you say I would sit on YouTube and looking at people's documentaries, remember people have given you what they want, but not what you want. Yeah. Because that is what they were looking for. But what you want, you need to get into the ground. Yeah. When you get into the ground, you learn a lot about people. People are so welcoming here. You, you guys had your own experiences. So where we went to people are always on all over with us. So people are welcoming. You get to learn a lot. You get to experience a lot. You get to also learn. I always say culture shock culture. Shock is something that you can not avoid. But through culture shock, there are things that will always be embedded in your memory and you'll forever remember them. So I would like to encourage young boys and girls not to sit there and wait until you have graduated and then you are working and then you want to come for holiday. And then it's not, you know, when you're on holiday, you cannot learn a lot. But when you're on your study trip, you will have a lot to learn. And it will empower you that one day when you start your own organization, or when you go to work, you will be a totally different person.

Speaker 3 00:50:26 Absolutely. Um, so

Speaker 2 00:50:28 What is the best way? So like, let's say someone is interested in doing a semester abroad, or maybe I'm a professor or someone else who might be listening to this. They are completely aligned with you and would like to get in touch with you. What is the best way for somebody to get in touch with you? They can drop me an email, uh, on my email address, and then I can facilitate it doesn't mean I won't connect them with, because through the investees middle much easier. We'll give them a donation later because we are doing a cultural exchange where we have a exchange program where we give them motivation. When they come down to Tanzania, if let's say they, uh, they want to touch to the university that I'm walking, because we have tourism department, we have different different departments. So we'll attach them to a particular department, but we will give, they would go to a semester program where they will be, they'll go into communities.

Speaker 2 00:51:19 They would also get to do different, different, practical activities. So that by the time they get back home, they have that exposure depending on the duration they want to stay. So it doesn't mean that you have to be at three months, four months, like right now, I'm going to be receiving students from Finland. This will be three girls. They're coming down to do their semester abroad with us, but they, while they're studying their samples, that they're going to undertake here in Tanzania. They want to see to understand them from the African context of perspective. But at the same time, they get to use that opportunity to travel, to learn and to be massed into community, helped to facilitate. I mean, I don't mind calling, even if it doesn't have to be my investee, I'll always connect them to that place. Even if they're medical students, I've met a medical student from Poland.

Speaker 2 00:52:11 I think she came because Holland, they don't have malaria. So she came down to study malaria. But while studying Melinda, she went down to another community where they stayed there. That's wonderful. That's wonderful. Great. Yeah. So if anybody reaches out, then I'll just make sure they get in touch with you on how to, how to get ahold of you. That'd be great. All right, Judith. Well, this was great. I mean, that's really all the questions I had and if there's, if there's nothing else that you want to share, then I'm fine wrapping this episode up. Thanks. Thanks. Thanks. Thank you for thinking about me and --

-- thank you for allowing me to my young fellow girls and women around the world. Wonderful. Thanks Judith. You're amazing.

Speaker 1 00:52:59 Again, for listening to this episode of <inaudible>, if you'd like that you heard hit that subscribe button, so you never miss a future episode. Do you have an environmental organization travel story or research that you'd like to share? Let me know <inaudible> dot com until next time friends together, we will. Rewild the planet.

--