



The Rhythm of Life

On Ilha de Mozambique, last Saturday's news only arrives on Friday. Events occur, but rarely are they forced. People talk, they sit, they wait. Sometimes they just sit for hours. And wait. What they are waiting on is often unclear, both to an outsider and perhaps even to themselves. And, for long stretches of time, people play "the game." The game is "Eworoworo," a simple dice game introduced to Ilha roughly five years ago by Nkukuma, an elderly man from Pemba. Eworoworo, the Macua word used to describe the sound that is made when dice are shaken in a cup, is a game of chance. Some players insist they can manipulate the dice, but it largely remains a game of pure luck with little attendant skill or strategy. Yet, such a simple game occupies a great deal of collective time. And, where complexity is lacking, a rapid pace compensates; a rapid pace that stands in stark contrast to the island's otherwise deliberate speed. Indeed, the game hums along like a Metronome or well-oiled machine as players shake and roll (*slam down*, in truth) the dice and quickly move their individual tokens around the board. This is a steady and essential rhythm. But it is a rhythm of leisure time, not factory time. A rhythm governed by social power,

not labor power. A rhythm that animates both the limits and possibilities of life on the island. Ilha is a very poor place. An overwhelming number of the island's 14,000 people live below the poverty line, confronted by acute housing, water and sanitation issues. A walk through the island's main residential quarter, Macuti Town, finds people like Menina Isekiel, the owner of a neighborhood shop with rice, flour and other small goods on the shelf or Almeida Adamo who fled the mainland during the civil war and is trying to "move up in life" by selling tomatoes in the local market. Like most anywhere, people work hard to overcome limits and maximize opportunities. But whatever resourcefulness, creativity or drive people on the island might possess, a difficult economic climate often works against their best aspirations. Beyond artisanal fishing and a small tourism sector, there are few sources of economic development. One clear development alternative, however, is to harness the island's considerable historical, architectural and cultural riches to generate greater community wealth. Indeed, as tourist destinations go, there are not too many places left in the world like Ilha de Mozambique. Despite a deep and fascinating history

threaded together by over 500 years of African, Arab, Asian and European influence and a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation, Ilha is not an overly self-referential or calculated place. Rather, like Eworoworo, it is quite intentional. People understand themselves to be residents of Ilha. They do not try to be anything else, and it is in this space that Ilha's "authenticity" offers a potential comparative advantage for attracting tourism.

Yet, there are currently few avenues for visitors to engage with the local culture beyond 'point & shoot' tourism, diving, and perhaps a museum visit. The riddle to solve, therefore, becomes how to attract large numbers of culturally-oriented visitors to Ilha and provide incentives for them to spend money in ways that directly support the population through local businesses and projects like Technoserve's community trust and renovation program. Increasingly, ecotourism, adventure travel and cultural tours are driving an "off the beaten path" thrust to global tourism. To be sure, capturing the class of travelers who occupy this

niche market requires both creativity and sound business approaches. Home stay programs and historic preservation projects are two of the current thematic vehicles being promoted to respond to the demands of tourism and create incomes and opportunities for the local population. To be competitive, of course, these enterprises must be designed with quality, responsibility, and efficiency in mind. Moreover, they must be supported by improved infrastructure, transport systems, and the embrace of local government. In the end, however, not all solutions can necessarily be centered on business. If the spiritual and cultural essence of Ilha is marginalized by the logic of a business plan, then what makes the island special and provides it with a competitive edge will also be lost. But if the right balance - or rhythm- can be found and local customs and idioms are respected, then the people who live, work, pray, and play on the island will be the ones who shape and own the course of development.



A Talk with Hafiz Jamu

Hafiz Jamu



Mozambique Hafiz Jamu is a TechnoServe Business Advisor and community liaison for Ilha de Mozambique. Born and raised on Ilha, Hafiz, like his father before him, is the head of the island's largest Muslim Brotherhood. He has worked for TechnoServe since 2006 and has been instrumental in building the Community Foundation to preserve the island's unique heritage and return social and economic benefits to the residents. The TNS tourism team determined that the island had the potential to be a unique tourism destination and developed a plan to grow the number of tourists from 5,000 to 75,000 visitors per year. They then facilitated a unique partnership between the island community, the government of Mozambique, and a South African investor/donor who has agreed to finance the project. Hafiz likes to drink coffee, eat bread ("I can take a full month eating only bread!") and play basketball.

I was fortunate to be born on Ilha de Mozambique to a family with a comfortable social position. My father was a sheik (honorific title meaning, elder, leader and Islamic scholar). During my childhood I was never aware that he had such a major social and religious position on Ilha, but it would have a profound impact on my life. My mother came from the mainland. She is still alive and just yesterday I heard someone saying that she is a great woman! I am the youngest of four children, all boys.

According to the history, the original settlers of Ilha de Mocambique were Indian Ocean navigators and traders. The Macuas came here from the interior, and when they arrived they mixed with the Arabs. The original sailors that navigated the coast and conducted business would marry the people they met in their travels, as the Muslim religion allows men to marry when they journey outside their region. Normally for one to have a comfortable social position one would need to follow the path and education of their father, which in both mine and my father's case means Zanzibarian. That is, the identity and education of our fathers. The case of Macuas- my mother's background- is different because their system of upbringing and education turns toward the mother. A male child that was born to mixed parents would become assimilated, but girls were often marginalized, except those who showed leadership characteristics and were given the name Khalifa (female leader).

A Changing Ilha

Ilha has always been an open and curious society as a result of contacts with people from different places in the world who came to visit. But as I started to have a good understand about the world, I made up my mind to go and study somewhere out-

side Ilha. When I returned at the age of eighteen I saw this place in a different way. I was able to see the beauty that this place possesses in so many ways, especially in its rich history.

Many things have changed here. For instance, I quite remember a time in my family when we would not hire a household worker who had the same name as a neighbor. If there was a neighbor whose name was, say, Acacio, we could not in any way hire someone with this same name to be part of the staff. This attitude demonstrated respect, a familiarity and connection among people. Another example, when a child was born, many people would offer to buy the first soap or name the child after family members, friends or neighbors. There was a social cohesion and a strong spirit of togetherness. But I no longer see some of these traditions on Ilha. Maybe this is because people leave to seek an education? Maybe they have moved to other places in search of a better life? Once, big festive celebrations were common here, consisting of food sharing among families and neighbors. For instance, if my wife had cooked a nice meal, we would share it with the neighbors and this was an amazing practice that strengthened the community relationships we had. There were also stories, called Wahala, that used to be told in the houses with the purpose of educating children.

These stories were parables, life lessons; and they were common within the big families on the island. But, unfortunately, one can no longer find this tradition. Maybe this rupture is due to the fact that today we have access to a more formal education or because we derive much of our daily interactions with people coming from different parts of the world with different traditions and cultural backgrounds. It is normal. We tend to adapt ourselves to the lifestyle of those who seem to have more social prestige and position. But I think we also risk contributing to the marginalization of our own identity and an erosion of values. People grow

frustrated and rebel when they see they are not fully one thing and yet they are abandoning another.

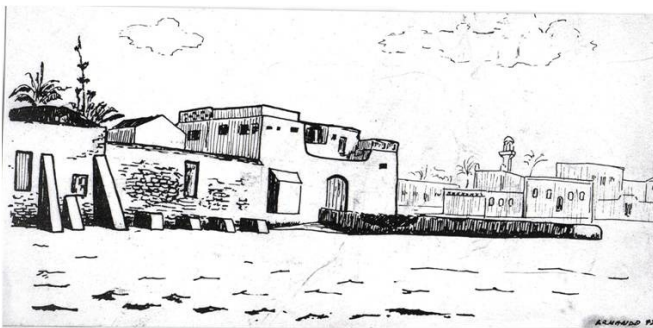
Becoming a Leader

For me, to be the son of a sheik constitutes a huge responsibility and challenge. As a youth, I had a great opportunity to study, but my father did not want me to go to school in Maputo. He wanted me to study in Nampula, so when I completed high school, he required me to return to the Ilha where I worked for him as his driver for three years. From the time I was eighteen years old I would participate in every religious meeting, but I was not allowed to speak. I attended some executive council meetings and my first intervention took place in a meeting where the main point of discussion was a salary increase for workers. As always, I was present at the meeting, but with no right to contribute. I was the only person with a grade eleven education in the old system, therefore I decided to ask to say a word, but my father immediately rejected my request.

However, there was a man who was the owner of a bakery and he persuaded my father to let me speak. And, in my first speech I said that I dealt with workers day-by-day, and five meticaís was fair salary for them. Everyone in the room applauded.

From that time forward, I would hear all the problems of the community, although still with no formal right to issue my personal opinion. Today, I realize that it was a moment of passage. When my father died, my family gathered together to decide who was going to replace his position. They wanted my eldest brother to assume the leadership. But on the following day there was another meeting with all the chiefs of the northern region and they appointed me as the person to take the position, reasoning that they used to see me with my father in the brotherhood and believed I was ready for this challenge. But this decision was also taken because my maternal uncle, who was Macua and not Arab, informed me that I was elected to replace my father and if I did not accept my father's name would disappear in the community.

When I took this position, I went through an intensive training that lasted three days. This was difficult. During the training I had to spend an entire night in the cemetery in order get in touch with the spirit of leadership. I also received a lot of advice. One piece of advice I have always violated, however, is that I should not talk a lot! This was stated because, as a leader, my voice is viewed as a law within this society and should be reserved and measured.



Responsibility and Challenges

My brotherhood has about eight hundred mosques in Nampula province. This means that I have that number of mosques under my control, and it means if I go to a village like Malema and say "I am Hafiz" people will understand that the owner of the mosque is around. Even if I go down to Maputo in the neighborhoods of Mafalala or Chamanculo people recognize and understand this.

Both personally and professionally, I have been forced to grow up because to be a Sheik demands exemplary behavior. For society I am a religious symbol of the brotherhood and in taking the path of my father I am honoring his great name. But is

"I am Hafiz" people will understand that the owner of the mosque is around."

has not always been easy. When I first assumed the role, I would walk the street and people would greet me with such respect, but I was never sure whether I could pay them back with the same amount of respect. At a certain point, my role became frustrating, I went to the mosque and I would speak to people with beautiful words, promising them that they would have a good life in the future as they get to paradise. But sometimes I would question myself whether this would ever happen or whether this would bring any benefits to these people.

When I took this position, I went through an intensive training that lasted three days. This was difficult. During the training I had to spend an entire night in the cemetery in order get in touch with the spirit of leadership. I also received a lot of advice. One piece of advice I have always violated, however, is that I should not talk a lot! This was stated because, as a leader, my voice is viewed as a law within this society and should be reserved and measured.



Responsibility and Challenges

My brotherhood has about eight hundred mosques in Nampula province. This means that I have that number of mosques under my control, and it means if I go to a village like Malema and say “I am Hafiz” people will understand that the owner of the mosque is around. Even if I go down to Maputo in the neighborhoods of Mafalala or Chamanculo people recognize and understand this.

Both personally and professionally, I have been forced to grow up because to be a Sheik demands exemplary behavior. For society I am a religious symbol of the brotherhood and in taking the path of my father I am honoring his great name. But it has not always been easy. When I first assumed the role, I would walk the street and people would greet me with such respect, but I was never sure whether I could pay them back with the same amount of respect. At a certain point, my role became frustrating, I went to the mosque and I would speak to people with beautiful words, promising them that they would have a good life in the future as they get to paradise. But sometimes I would question myself whether this would ever happen or whether this would bring any benefits to these people.

I had a vision that I should proceed with my studies because my religious position would not allow me to work for someone in Ilha de Mocambique without being expected to speak on their behalf. I also started having some struggles over my family, mainly with my brothers that were demanding the heritage that our father had left, even though everything had been written down in my name to guarantee the continuity of brotherhood. And because of these adversities I had to find another way of bringing benefits to Ilha de Mocambique.



Building a Foundation

I started to realize that Ilha was receiving international assistance from some NGOs, but this aid was not helping the right people. The aid in Ilha created a certain system that a small few benefitted from. Because of this my major challenge was to break the system. Some resisted. I was told to shut my mouth, told I was talking a lot of nonsense. Often I would go home sad, frustrated, I could not sleep. So I contacted UNESCO as they deal with many things on the island and I also presented the situation to the government. My idea was to create better conditions for the benefit of the people. And it was within that context that one day a British woman from TNS called Margarita Rose arrived. She was looking for someone who would be able to lead a project. We discussed my ideas, my needs, and frustrations about the people who come here and buy the buildings and soon afterwards re-sell them to other people while the local people continue living in poverty. And from here was born the initial ideas for what

“People no longer respect me as strictly a religious figure, but as someone who is very concerned about the social problems of the people of the island. ”

eventually became the community foundation.

The word foundation is important because what is a foundation?

Well, it is the

structure underneath a building to provide support so the house does not fall. And my challenge is to see that civil society is being supported by this foundation, so it can be an active, independent, and not fall into the absolute dependence of government or even private organizations. And with TechnoServe we have identified within the idea of a foundation a way to preserve our heritage and promote social and economic development. To achieve this, the foundation has a mechanism called an endowment, which means historic buildings cannot be sold and are instead used for the benefit of society.



People are learning what this means for the community at large. Recently, MCEl sought approval from the Municipal President to build a large antenna near the hospital, but the people of this foundation did not want it to be set there. Before the foundation these questions would not have been asked.

You see, the paper that we have in our exercise book is something of a great value in our lives, for we can use it to write at school. But there are things that are not paper, and what are those things?

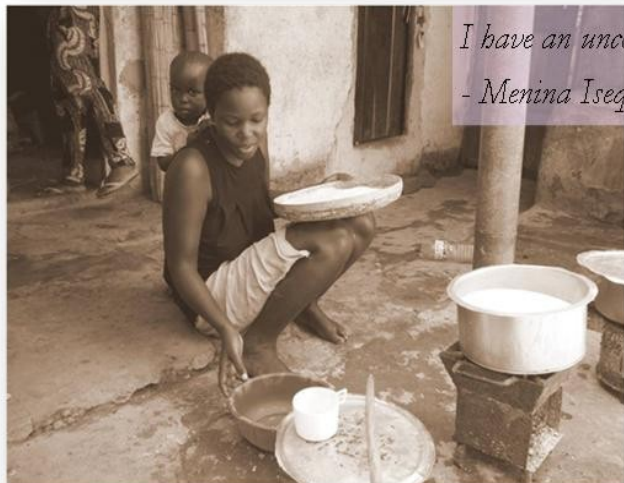
The point is, the paper is made of maize leaves or something else and water, and when those elements are mixed, we have paper as a final product. When we take care of nature from the point of view of keeping the trees, we are taking care of the paper. But trees are not paper. Therefore, there are things that are not business, but if we take care of them, we are effectively taking care of the business. My mission at TechnoServe is not business development as such; my mission is to help turn business into something that reaches deeper and is more meaningful.



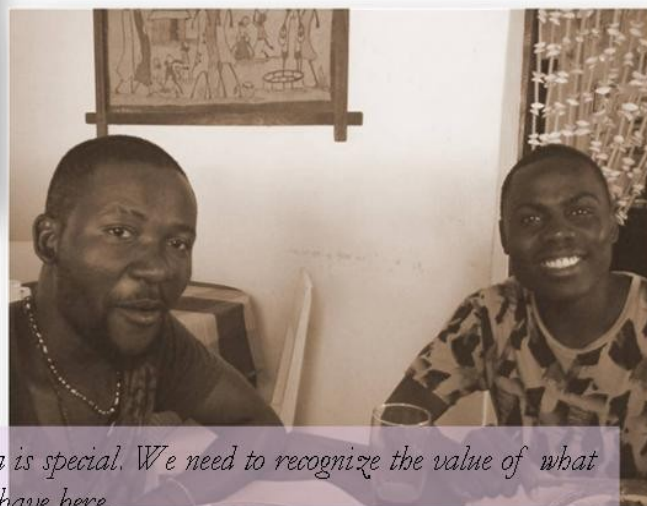
My father taught us to never misinterpret or use religious rules to accomplish our personal interests. I do not show up at the mosque quite as often as I used to. People no longer respect me as strictly a religious figure, but as someone who is very concerned about the social problems of the people of the island. And what makes Ilha Ilha is the people; the smiles that they carry, the dignified faces. Just walk around the island and you will see the happiness within their hearts. It is an amazing place, despite all the adversities of life.



Prismo | Prism

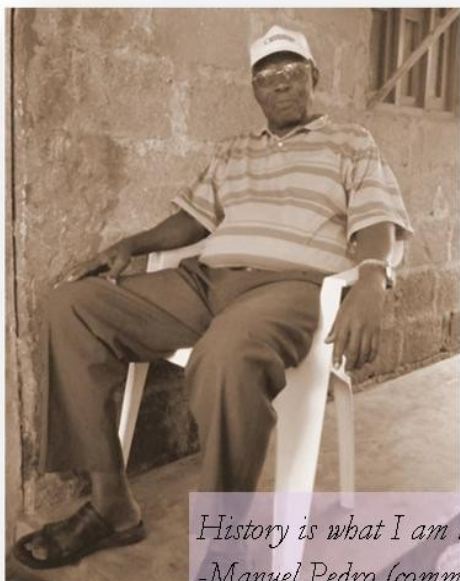


I have an unconditional love for Ilha.
- Menina Isequiél



Ilha is special. We need to recognize the value of what we have here.

-Jamal Jaime & Fahar Afai



History is what I am telling you now
-Manuel Pedro (community leader)



What is history? History is the things you do everyday that you tell your family about later.

Prismo | Prism

Country of Origin of Visitors to Mozambique Island, 2009

 USA- 254	 Ucrania - 27	 Tanzania - 4
 Tailandia - 2	 Suica- 62	 Suecia - 64
 Swazilandia - 3	 Serra leoa - 1	 Mauritania- 1
 Malawi - 5	 Kenya - 4	 Japao- 68
 Italia - 222	 Israel - 5	 Irlanda - 27
 India - 36	 Inglaterra- 377	 Irao - 2
 Mocambique - 1265	 Alemanha- 121	 Cuba - 4
 Namibia - 2	 Angola - 5	 Colombia - 10
 Nicaragua - 2	 Argelia - 2	 Dinamarca - 59
 Niderlandia - 2	 Argentina- 9	 Escocia - 1
 Noruega - 30	 Australia- 26	 Eslovenia - 1
 Nova zelandia - 6	 Barbados - 4	 Espanha - 307
 Panama - 1	 Belgica - 42	 Finlândia - 14
 Paquistao - 12	 Bolivia - 4	 Franca - 127
 Paraguai - 3	 Botswana- 2	 Gana - 5
 Pero - 1	 Brasil - 57	 Grecia - 3
 Polonia - 4	 Canada - 109	 Guine - 1
 Portugal - 326	 Chile - 2	 Holanda - 121
 RSA - 250	 China - 10	 Hungria - 61
 Zambia - 4	 Zimbabwe - 24	 Ilha das Comores - 20
		Ilhas Filipinas - 1

Prismo | Prism

