

Welcome to Chako Zanzibar

Transforming Waste into Beauty, Empowering Communities

Who We Are

Chako Zanzibar is a pioneering social enterprise that brings creativity, sustainability, and community empowerment together. Based in the stunning islands of Zanzibar, we specialize in upcycling waste materials into beautifully handcrafted products that reflect the spirit and ingenuity of our community.

The name "**Chako**" means *yours* in Swahili, embodying our mission to inspire ownership and responsibility in managing waste. Our unique approach involves collecting waste generated by the tourism industry -mainly glass bottles and plastics - from resorts and restaurants. We transform this waste into beautiful products and sell them back to the same industry and its guests, creating a circular economy that benefits everyone. Beyond production, Chako offers tourism experiences and supports other small businesses (SMEs) in developing their own recycling and upcycling activities.

Our Story

Chako began with a simple yet powerful vision: to address the growing waste challenge in Zanzibar while uplifting local communities. Recognizing the island's reliance on tourism and its associated waste, we saw an opportunity to turn this problem into a solution.

We started by collaborating with local resorts and restaurants to collect discarded glass and plastic materials. With creativity and dedication, our artisans began crafting stunning upcycled products, blending traditional skills with modern design. As our impact grew, visitors and local entrepreneurs alike expressed interest in learning from our approach. This led to the creation of experience-based tourism activities and coaching programs for SMEs, enabling others to develop sustainable businesses of their own.

Today, Chako stands as a beacon of sustainability, demonstrating how waste can be reimaged into something meaningful and beautiful—through handcrafted products, responsible tourism, and empowerment of emerging social enterprises.

Our Mission

At Chako, we believe in a future where waste is a resource, not a burden. Our mission is to:

- **Reduce Waste:** Divert waste from landfills and the environment by upcycling it into high-quality products.
- **Empower Communities:** Provide fair employment, training, and skill development opportunities to local artisans, many of whom are women.
- **Educate and Inspire:** Promote awareness about waste management and sustainability within local communities *and among international visitors*.
- **Support Circular Economies:** Foster a sustainable cycle where waste from the tourism industry is transformed into products that tourists can cherish and take home.
- **Transform Tourism:** Offer meaningful, hands-on experiences that allow tourists to explore Zanzibar

through the lens of sustainability, craftsmanship, and community engagement.

- **Strengthen Local Businesses:** Coach and train small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in recycling and upcycling, helping them develop new skills, create sustainable business models, and increase their economic resilience.

What We Do

Chako's work is multi-faceted, combining craftsmanship, environmental stewardship, community engagement, responsible tourism, and enterprise development.

- **Upcycled Products:** Our product range includes drinking glasses, carafes, vases, tealight holders, and custom designs, all made from reclaimed materials.

- **Cleanup Programs:** We participate at cleanup initiatives across Zanzibar, tackling waste on beaches, in villages, and in urban areas.

- **Community Education:** We conduct workshops and training sessions on waste management and sustainability, empowering locals to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

- **Experience Tours:**

Chako offers immersive, behind-the-scenes tourism experiences where visitors can witness upcycling in action, join hands-on sessions, and meet our artisans and trainees.

- **Coaching & Incubation for SMEs:**

We support emerging entrepreneurs and small businesses through dedicated coaching and training programs that focus on Recycling and upcycling techniques and entrepreneurship

Why Choose Chako?

Every Chako product is a labor of love, handcrafted by skilled artisans who pour their creativity and passion into each piece. Nothing we create is machine-manufactured or mass-produced.

When you choose Chako, you're supporting:

- **A Circular Economy**
- **Artisanal Craftsmanship**
- **Community Empowerment**
- **Environmental Preservation**
- **Sustainable Tourism**
- **Local Enterprise Development through SME coaching and support**

Our Impact

Since its inception, Chako has achieved significant environmental, social, and economic impact:

- Diverted more than **100 tons of waste** from landfills and the ocean annually.
- Employed and trained over **150 local artisans**, offering stable incomes and professional growth.
- Reached over **7,000 community members** through workshops and cleanups.
- Partnered with more than **200 resorts, restaurants, and organizations** to promote sustainable practices.

- Welcomed thousands of **tourists** through our experience tours.
- Supported **multiple SMEs** in developing their own recycling and upcycling activities through coaching programs and skill-building activities.

Join Us on This Journey

At Chako, we invite everyone—tourists, locals, businesses, and changemakers—to join our mission for a sustainable Zanzibar. Whether it's purchasing our products, joining our experience tours, participating in a cleanup drive, or collaborating through SME coaching programs, your support fuels a future where waste becomes opportunity.

Let's work together to create beauty, inspire change, and protect our planet—one upcycled product, one artisan, one small business, and one meaningful visitor experience at a time.