



# PRAY FOR THE RUFJI OF TANZANIA



Have you ever heard of a mangrove? Want to take a guess? Go ahead, try it! I'll wait. Did you guess a kind of fruit? An insect? An animal? A kind of tree? If you guessed tree, you were right! A mangrove is a kind of shrub or tree that live along shores, rivers, and estuaries in the tropics and subtropics all over the world. It is known for its amazing tangle of roots that wriggle out of the mud. They are remarkably tough and can tolerate salty water in a way that most other plants can't. When I was little, I overheard my dad say that slugs were eating his plants in the garden. Thinking I could surprise him with my depth of slug destroying knowledge, I went outside and sprinkled or sometimes dumped piles of salt all over the plants. It might have taken care of the slugs, and I must admit I enjoyed watching them liquify, but I bet you can guess what happened to all the plants. Needless to say, I learned that day that plants DO NOT like salt.

Living along the Rufiji River in the east African country of Tanzania, is an unreached, unengaged people group of around 285,000, called the Rufiji-Ndengereko. They are considered unreached because their primary religion is Islam and there are VERY few evangelical believers among them. They are considered unengaged because there is currently no known gospel witness going out specifically to this region. They are subsistence farmers who grow mainly cassava, maize, rice, millet, sesame, coconuts, and cashew nuts.



The Rufiji River has the largest concentration of mangroves in east Africa. Like these tough trees that God has designed to thrive in harsh conditions, the Rufiji people have also learned to live life in a hard area. Although they might be able to survive physically in this way, spiritually they have grown roots in the shallow, sandy soil of a false gospel. Their trust and only hope is in a religion that cannot guarantee freedom from sin and salvation by faith alone. Pray that the Rufiji hear the true gospel, THE only way to be truly saved, and the gospel takes root in fertile soil that God Himself has prepared. May the seed of the gospel be planted firmly in the hearts of the Rufiji.



Don't forget to pray for the Rufiji children too! Imagine the next time they are playing by the river among the mangroves, trying to catch fish with their hands or hopping from root to root of the mangrove tree, that they wonder at the creation of such an amazing ecosystem and hope that the God who created all these things, is far bigger and better that they could even imagine. And not only did this God create this world of wonders, but He also created a way for His creation to be redeemed and renewed through Christ alone.