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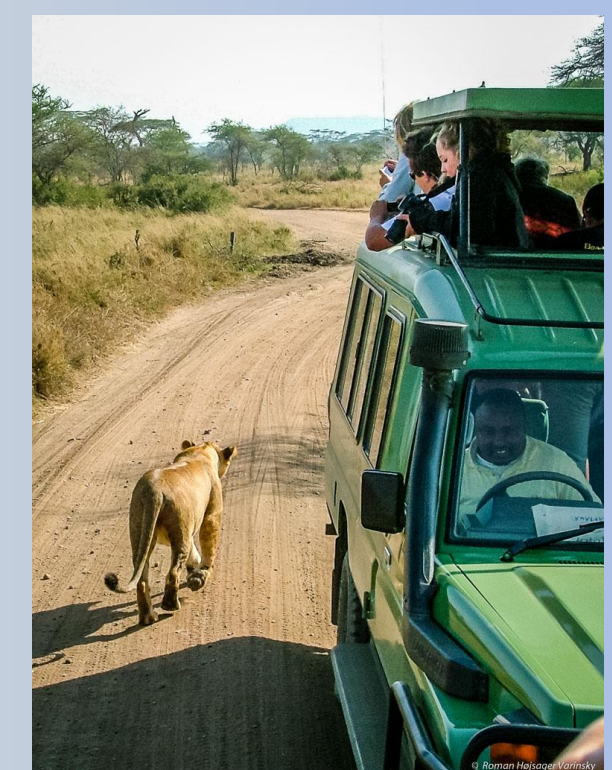
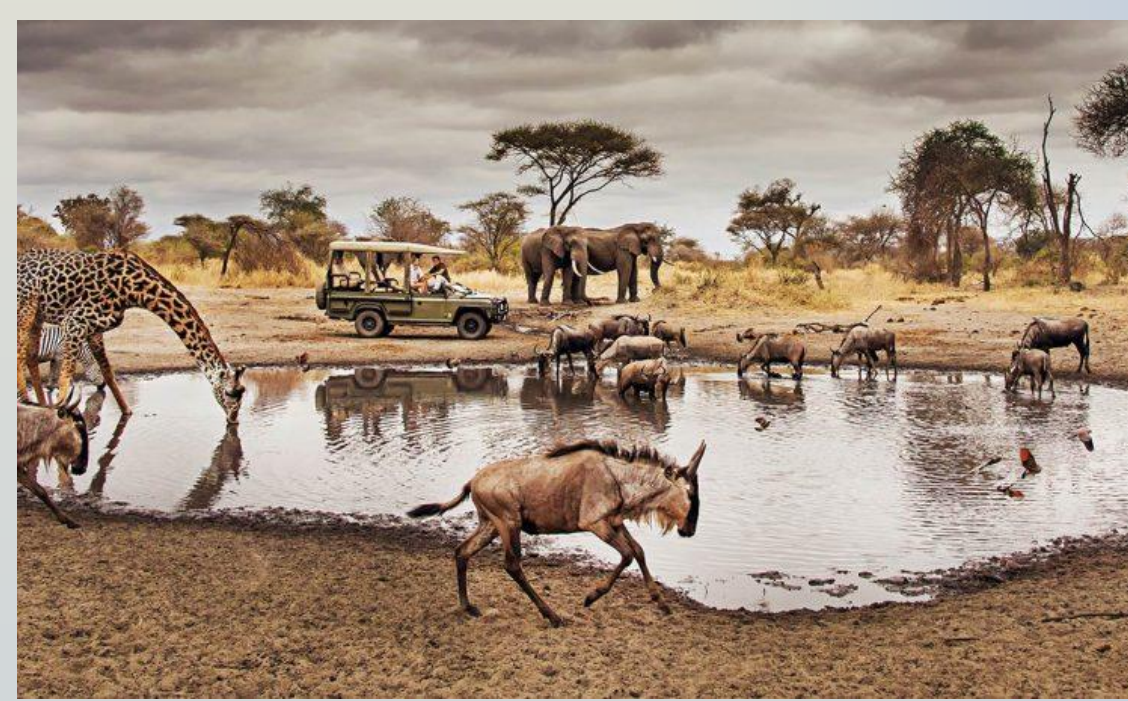
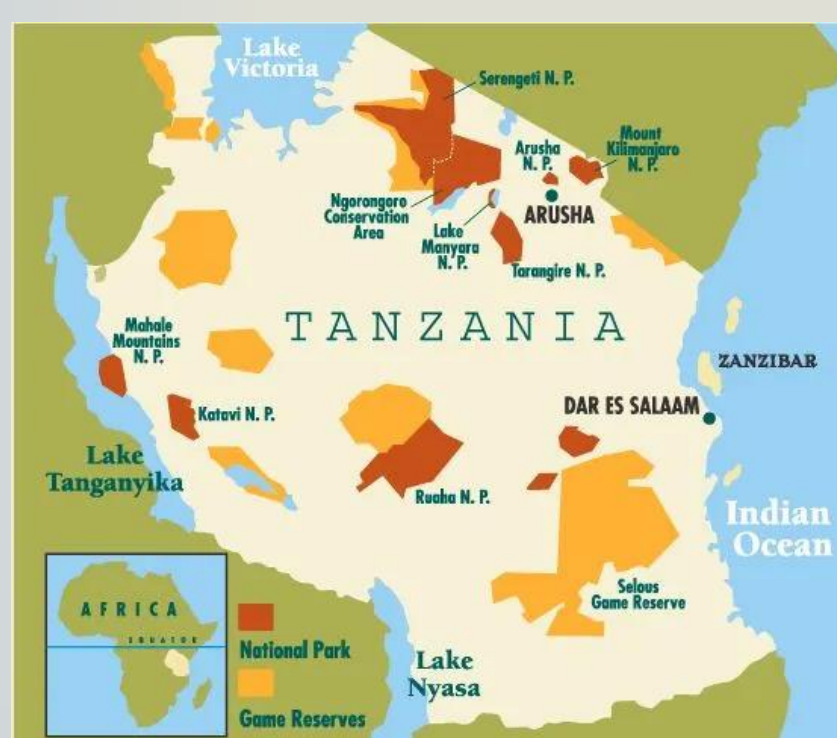
ISSUE

The core issue identified in the study is the critical mismatch between the growing demand from motivated tourists with access needs and the lack of readiness of the destination. Most tourism products in Serengeti National Park are not designed to be accessible, leading to the exclusion of this group from a meaningful experience and the failure to tap into their economic potential.

AIM

To assess the accessibility of tourism products for tourists with access needs in Serengeti National Park and to examine the potential for inclusive tourism in the area.

STUDY AREA



METHODOLOGY

The study employed an exploratory qualitative research design conducted between April and July 2024 in Serengeti National Park (SENAPA). Data were gathered from a purposive sample of 66 participants using a triangulated approach, including interviews, non-participant field observations at key sites, and mini-focus group discussions. Following formal approval from TAWIRI and COSTECH, the collected data underwent thematic analysis using iterative coding and categorization based on the established six-phase procedure by Braun and Clarke (2006) and focus group methodologies by Krueger and Morgan.

RESULTS



tourist profile:

- Social Support:** 58% travel with companions (a critical factor for participation).
- Spending:** \$800 – \$2,000 per stay (2 – 4 nights).
- Economic Impact:** Higher overall contribution due to group/companion travel.
- Main Interests:** Iconic experiences like the Great Wildebeest Migration.



key barriers:

- Transportation:** Poor road conditions causing fatigue and a lack of accessible vehicles.
- Infrastructure:** Inaccessible pathways for wheelchair users and damaged safety handrails.
- Communication:** Complete absence of sign language interpretation.



key recommendations:

- Standardization:** Establish and enforce accessibility standards across the park.
- Innovation:** Develop digital applications for better on-site navigation.
- Inclusive Design:** Invest in accessible mobility solutions and staff training.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study in Serengeti National Park confirms that while the destination features elements of universal design (e.g., the Media Center, dining ramps, and accessible rooms), social support from companions remains a key success factor, with 58% of tourists seeking their assistance. Despite positive examples of accessible accommodation that boost visitor loyalty, critical barriers such as outdated transportation and inadequate infrastructure persist. Addressing these gaps is not only a matter of inclusion but also a strategic competitive advantage that enhances overall satisfaction and economic returns from the growing market segment of tourists with access needs.

