

**A COLLECTION OF 100 SAMBURU (KENYA) PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS**



**BY**

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**Nairobi, Kenya**

**FEBRUARY 2016**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I thank the Almighty God for enabling me to complete this project. I also wish to thank Father Joseph Healey of the Maryknoll Society for the financial support, Cephas Agbemenu for the illustrations and technical support, and the African Proverbs Working Group Committee, for their guidance and moral support.

I also thank my dear friend Gabriel Odhiambo, who devoted himself to helping me to link with the collaborators, and with compiling of this collection of proverbs and wise sayings from the Samburu ethnic community.

Special thanks to my husband Peter Murithi and daughter Patricia Muthoni, for their moral support and interest in my work.

Thank you all for encouraging and enabling me to complete this project.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my collaborators:

JAMES OLEIPERE

And

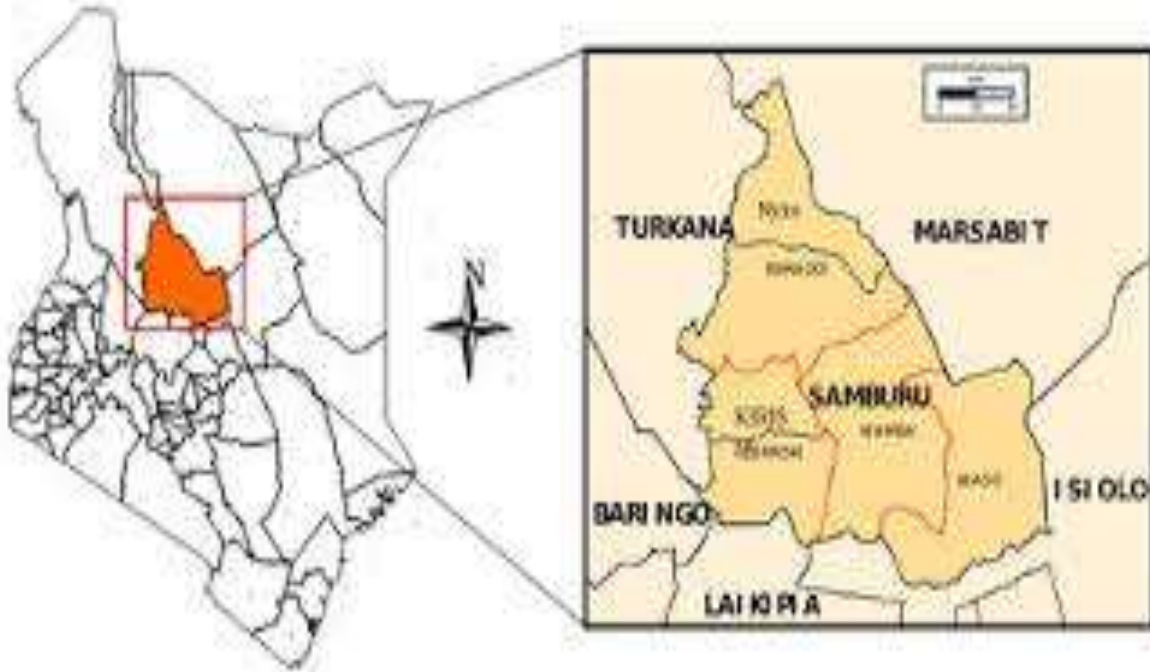
JOHNSTONE LEKUYE

Two members of this wonderful Samburu community.

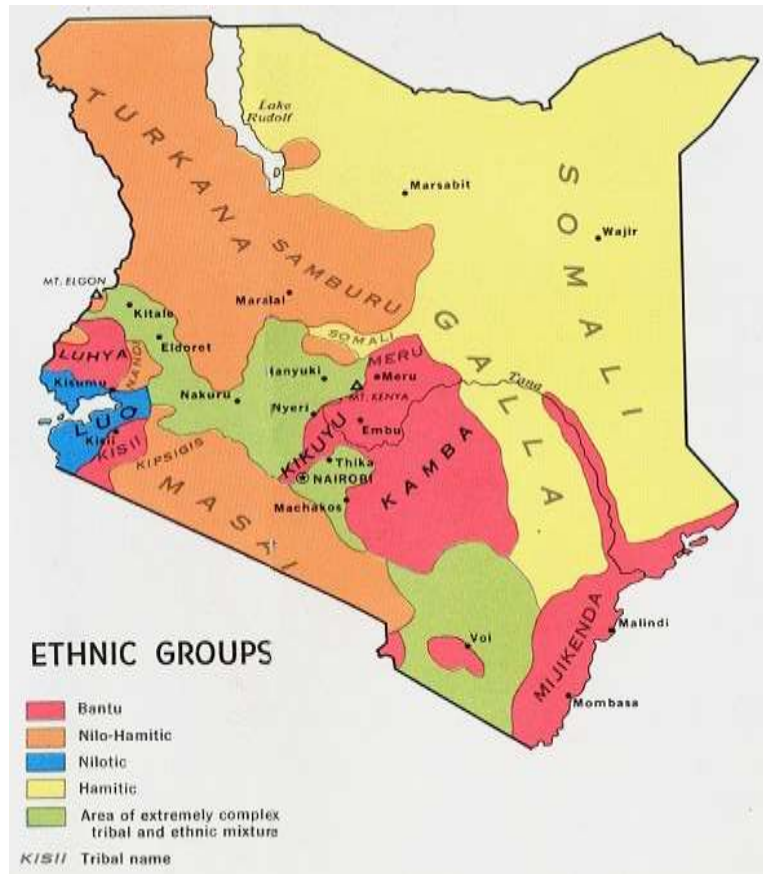
Thank you for your inspiration.

## INTRODUCTION

The Samburu are a Nilotic people of north-central Kenya and live north of the equator . They are a Maa-speaking group and very similar to the Maasai ethnic group. They speak Samburu, which is a Nilo-Saharan language. The neighbors of the Samburu people include the pastoral Turkana, Rendille and Borana ethnic groups.



*The ethnographical location of the Samburu people of Kenya*



***The ethnographical location of the ethnic groups of Kenya, and the Samburu***

Samburu history is intertwined with that of Kenya's other Nilotic ethnic groups. They are known to have originated from Sudan, settling north of Mount Kenya and south of Lake Turkana in Kenya's Rift Valley area. Upon their arrival in Kenya in the 15th century, they parted ways with their Maasai cousins, who moved further south while the Samburu moved north. The name Samburu was given to them by other ethnic groups, and directly translates as 'Butterflies.' Previously they knew themselves as the Loikop. The name 'Samburu' is also of Maasai origin, 'Samburr' meaning a traditional leather bag specific to them, which is used for carrying meat and honey on their backs.

Traditionally the Samburu economy was purely pastoral. They are semi-nomadic pastoralists who herd mainly cattle, but also keep cows, sheep, goats and camels. Their cattle are their life; their wealth; their livelihood and the symbol of status and success within the community. Like the true Maasai, the Samburu believe that all cattle belong to them, raiding of other ethnic groups has always been a major pre-occupation of the warriors.



*Samburu women wearing traditional jewelry*

Both Samburu men and women dress in brightly colored traditional *shukas*, which they wrap loosely around their bodies. Samburu men also dye their hair with red ochre, while the women adorn themselves in beautiful, multi-beaded necklaces and other traditional jewelry. Samburu warriors, or morans, keep their long hair in braids and dress in more colorful attire than other members of the ethnic group.



*Samburu warriors/morans adorned in traditional regalia.*

Samburu practice polygamy and a man may have multiple wives as long as he can pay dowry. A Samburu settlement is known as a *nkang*, consisting of one family, composed of a man and his wife or wives. Each wife has her own house, which she builds with the help of other women out of local materials, such as sticks, mud and cow dung. The houses are surrounded by an acacia thorn bush fence and the center of the village has the animal pens away from predators.

They have a strong oral tradition, passing down their history and customs, through the use of proverbs, wise sayings, riddles, folktales, songs and dance. These fascinating tales are given to the children of the tribe around crackling fires inside the Manyattas, or under moonlit skies in the arid plains around the villages. Emphasis on the use of proverbs and wise sayings helps them to remember and use them in ordinary daily conversation.

Dancing is very important in the Samburu culture. Men dance in a circle, jumping very high from a standing position. The Samburu have traditionally not used any instruments to accompany their singing and dancing. Men and women do not dance in the same circles, but they do coordinate their dances.



*The Samburu dancers performing their jumping butterfly dance.*

Circumcision for both boys and girls has always been one of the most important rituals among the Samburu. For girls, it signifies becoming a woman. Once circumcised, a girl/woman can be given away in an arranged marriage to start her own family. Sadly, this practice has seen girls as young as 12 years old get married to men old enough to be their grandfathers. Circumcision for boys marks the initiation into *moran* (warrior) life.

The *moran* have the duty to defend the community and the livestock. This promotes values such as self-respect, perseverance, courage, fellowship and also a strong sense of responsibility.

The *moran*-hood remains the basis of Samburu pride, building a bridge between the present and their heroic past.

The Samburu believe that God (*Nkai*) is the source of all protection from the hazards of their existence. The Samburu have ritual diviners who divine the causes of individual illnesses and misfortune, and guide warriors. The Samburu calendar is important to determine the seasons, times of drought, rituals and rains. Elders of the tribe have a mystical knowledge of these seasons and, without calendars, can determine the correct time for every activity..

In recent decades missionaries have succeeded in converting more Samburu to predominantly Catholic, and Protestant forms of Christianity. Nevertheless, the majority of Samburu continue to observe most traditional ritual practices.

The Samburu live in a very beautiful, sparsely populated part of Kenya with abundant wildlife. Much of the land is now protected and community development initiatives have extended to eco-friendly lodges jointly run by the Samburu. The combination of a significant growth in population over the past 60 years and a decline in their cattle holdings has forced them to seek other supplemental forms of livelihood. Some have attempted to grow crops, while many young men have migrated for at least short periods to cities to seek wage work.

Today Samburu National Reserve, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust are natural habitats for elephants, which generate income through tourism.



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## A COLLECTION OF 100 SAMBURU PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS

### 1. *Ebunga amu meeny heye.*

**English:** Never lose hope about advising people against their wrong doing.

**Kiswahili:** Usikufe roho unapowashauri watu kuhusu maovu walioyafanya.

**French:** Ne perds pas l'espoir de conseiller les gens sur leurs malfaisances.

**Teaching:** It teaches that we should never tire of doing good to others. We should consistently correct those who have errant behaviors which may affect the community negatively. Hope for positive change as a result of your advice.

**Bible parallel:** Luke 15:7 *"Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."*

### 2. *Edugo enkuo gejuk negua emusana.*

**English:** A young person may die but an old man lives.

**Kiswahili:** Kijana anaweza kufa lakini mzee ataishi.

**French:** Un jeune garçon peut mourir mais le vieux vit.

**Teaching:** It teaches that the choices we make in life determine whether we live meaningful lives or not. This is regardless of age, gender or other factors. Wise decisions help us to succeed in our daily endeavours.

**Bible parallel:** James 1:5 *"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."*

*Proverbs 13:20 "Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm".*

### 3. *Enkongu Naipuyo geny.*

**English:** Someone who is roaming around is the bravest.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu anaye tembea huku na huku ni shujaa.

**French:** Celui qui se deplace librement d'un cote a l'autre est fort.

**Teaching:** Experiencing different situations in life makes a person strong and wiser. Venturing into various endeavors makes one better at undertakings and decision making. We should be daring to try anything.

**Bible parallel:** Isaiah 40:29 *"He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength."*

*1 Peter 5:7 "... casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."*

### 4. *Entolimuu pee kitum alshamishama.*

**English:** Give your idea and see if it will be useful.

**Kiswahili:** Toa wazo lako unone kama litakua la faida.

**French:** Donnes ton idee et voir si sera-t-elle utile.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to encourage people not to fear expressing their ideas or opinions. Each person has independent ideas that can be useful to other people. Ideas are only useful when brought out for the benefit of the community.

**Bible parallel:** Daniel 1:17 *"As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams."*

### 5. *Hoi olganaylol lamabaiki.*

**English:** You may desire something, but you may be unable to access it.

**Kiswahili:** Unaweza kukitamani kitu, lakini huna uwezo wa kukipata.

**French:** Tu peux desirer quelque chose mais incapable de la trouver.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a person should be satisfied with what they have, or are able to acquire in life. A person's desire may not always be met, but we should use the resources available to us to live a fulfilled life. Desiring what you can't achieve leads a person to using wrong methods of acquiring it.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Timothy 6:6-8 *"Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content."*

6. ***Iyiolo niyo niniyo nikijokini***

**English:** You know how to speak, but you don't know how you can be told

**Kiswahili:** Unajua kuongea, lakini hujui vile unaweza kuambiwa.

**French:** Tu sais comment parler mais tu ne sais pas comment on peut te dire.

**Teaching:** It advises that a person should listen to other people, allow others to present their views and opinions. Views from one person may not be helpful to all. Listen to the wisdom of others too.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 18:2 *"Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions."*

7. ***Keder enkerai omenye.***

**English:** A young person can have an idea that can help even the elderly.

**Kiswahili:** Kijana anaweza kuwa na wazo ambalo linaweza kusaidia mzee.

**French:** Un jeune peut avoir une idee qui peut aider un vieux.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a young person can have wisdom, abilities and ideas which can benefit the elderly. It is not only our elders who can guide and lead. In the society, even young people should be given an opportunity to implement their ideas to help community.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Kings 11:21 *"Jehoash was seven years old when he began to reign."*

1 Timothy 4:12 *"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."*

8. ***Kedorop a kenya.***

**English:** Our days are very short so we should make good use of them.

**Kiswahili:** Siku zetu ni fupi kwa hivyo tunafaa tuzitumia vyema.

**French:** Nos jours sont tellement courts, il nous faut bien les utiliser.

**Teaching:** It teaches that human life is not permanent, and we should use the time we have appropriately to benefit the community. People should live a meaningful life and ensure we have a positive impact on those around us.

**Bible parallel:** James 4:14-15 *"Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.'"*

9. ***Keer enkiok ndoot.***

**English:** Your behaviour will eventually be revealed.

**Kiswahili:** Tabia zako mwishowe hujitokeza.



**French:** Ton comportement seras eventuellement se reveler.

**Teaching:** It teaches us that a person is judged by his behaviours and character. A person may pretend to be what they he/she is not, but over time their true self is revealed. Your actions tell about you. Be yourself.

**Bible parallel:** Colossians 3:17 *“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*

**10. Keeta oldie enkolong enye.**

**English:** Even a poor person has his day.

**Kiswahili:** Hata masikini ana siku yake.

**French:** Meme une personne pauvre a son jour a se rejouir.

**Teaching:** It teaches that there are always opportunities that bring good benefits to people, especially when they least expect it. Chances come to people in different times and varied ways. We should appreciate when this happens to us.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Samuel 2:7 *“The Lord sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts”*

**11. Keeta entim nkiyiaa.**

**English:** You should not reveal your secrets to everyone.

**Kiswahili:** Hufai kueleza siri zako kwa kila mtu.

**French:** Ne dévoiles pas tes secrets a tout le monde.

**Teaching:** A person should not expose their issues too much to those they view as friends, because some are not genuine friends. They can use this knowledge against them.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 11:13 *“A talebearer reveals secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit conceals the matter.”*

**12. Kekwenie olchata ochuma olopejo**

**English:** Don't laugh at somebody who is suffering. You should help him.

**Kiswahili:** Usichekelee mtu anaye tseka. Unafaa umsaidie.

**French:** Ne dedaigne pas quelqu'un qui manque, seulement il faut lui aider.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us the importance of being our brother's keeper. In a community or family, it is essential that we be concerned with each other's problems and needs. Help others when they need help, according to your ability. You will require help sometime also.

**Bible parallel:** Philippians 2:3-11 *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”*

**13. Kekur lala olgejep.**

**English:** Members of the same family are open to each other and can discuss anything.

**Kiswahili:** Watu wa jamii moja hawafichani mambo na hujadiliana juu ya lolote.

**French:** Les membres de meme famille sont ouvert,l'un a l'autre et peuvent discuter n'importe quoi.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches the importance of bonding and trust in a family. Family members should communicate with each other so that they can help each other. They should not hide issues from each other. They should be a team.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 1:10 *“I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.”*

**14. Kemodooni olemeyilo enkorop.**

**English:** A visitor who does not know where to pass is blind.

**Kiswahili:** Mgeni asiyejua kwa kupitia ni kipofu.

**French:** Le visiteur qui ne sait ou passer est aveugle.

**Teaching:** This proverb encourages consultation with those who have knowledge or skill about certain matters or work. When a person is doing something they are not familiar with, they may do it wrongly or totally fail.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 15:22 *“Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they succeed.”*

**15. Kepir dukieya along siade**

**English:** The first person will get first things.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu wa kwanza hupata vitu vya kwanza.

**French:** C'est le premier d'arriver qui boit l'eau la plus pure.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a person who begins doing things before others succeeds earlier. One's idea should be implemented before other people steal it. This makes you achieve your intentions with greater success.

**Bible parallel: Isaiah 65:23** *“They will not work in vain... For they are people blessed by the LORD, and their children, too, will be blessed.”*

**16. Kerek enkwe olee odonyo.**

**English:** A man's idea is so powerful that it can move a mountain.

**Kiswahili:** Wazo la mtu lina nguvu inayoweza kuusongesha mlima.

**French:** La pense d'une personne a une force qui peut déplacer une montagne.

**Teaching:** This proverb encourages us not to doubt ourselves, or what we think we can do. Having faith helps a person to achieve the impossible. One may not have resources or skills to do great things, but knowledge and faith can lead one to success.

**Bible parallel: Matthew 21:21** *“And Jesus answered them, “Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ it will happen.”*

**17. Kerek namuruae tome.**

**English:** Strong person can be defeated by a weak person.

**Kiswahili:** Mwenye nguvu anaweza kushindwa na mtu mdhaifu.

**French:** Un homme fort peut être battu par inapte. (faible)

**Teaching:** It teaches that a physically strong person may be weak in wisdom. A person may be undermined by others because he does not seem able especially economically. However, this person may have the strength of the mind, much wisdom and good decision making abilities, which are more valuable than physical strength.

**Bible parallel:** Deuteronomy 31:6 *“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”*

**18. Keripo emaal edaa.**

**English:** You should be watchful all the time.

**Kiswahili:** Unafaa ujihadhari kila wakati.

**French:** Il faut être guard chaque fois.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that we should be careful about what we do or say because it can lead to many problems. Disagreements between family, friends and associates can arise. We should always try not to fall into such situations.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Peter 5:8 *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”*

**19. Kore ememeshula enkikwei meshula enkigwana.**

**English:** When you don't live in unity even your ideas will be different.

**Kiswahili:** Msipoishi kwa umoja, hata mawazo yenu hutofautiana.

**French:** Si tu ne vis pas en unite meme tes idees seront differentes.

**Teaching:** It encourages cohesion within a family or community. When people differ in opinions and ideas, they are bound to have problems with each other. Unity among members of a family or community helps them to have related ideas which benefit them all.

**Bible parallel:** John 4:36-38 *“Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. <sup>37</sup> Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. <sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”*

**20. Kore enkiok mingani meeny heye**

**English:** A disobedient person may die.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu asiyetii anaweza kufa.

**French:** Une personne desobeissante peut mourir.

**Teaching:** The proverb teaches that we should be obedient. Disobedience always has consequences that are negative and retrogressive. It encourages a person to conform to requirements of the community in order to be accepted, and to fit in.

**Bible parallel:** Deuteronomy 28:15 *“But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you”*

**21. Kore mali engare naok ntare.**

**English:** Richness will one day vanish .

**Kiswahili:** Utajiri utaisha siku moja.

**French:** La richesse finira un jour.

**Teaching:** The proverb teaches that when prosperity comes, do not use all of it. Being rich is not permanent and one can change to being poor. A person should be cautious of how they spend their wealth, in case they end up being poor.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 23:5 “*Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.*”

**22. *Kore nemeshula nkikul memeshula nkiguana.***

**English:** People who don't stay together have different ideas.

**Kiswahili:** Watu wasioishi pamoja huwa na maoni yanayo tofautiana.

**French:** Ceux qui ne vivent pas ensemble ont différentes idées.

**Teaching:** People tend to think and reason alike when sharing same circumstances. Those without any bonds usually will disagree on the simplest matters. The proverb encourages that people should try to collaborate with each other and develop cohesion in the family and community.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 12:25-27 “*That there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.*”

**23. *Kore nkiok natua meny enigisho***

**English:** A deaf ear is followed by death, and an ear that listens is followed by blessings.

**Kiswahili:** Sikio kiziwi hufuatwa na kifo, na sikio lisikialo hufuatwa na baraka.

**French:** Un sourd entend qu'il est poursuivi par la mort et l'oreille qui entendais, est poursuivi par la benediction.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to warn people to be obedient, take advice or face the consequences, which are usually negative. A person who heeds to good advice and instructions grows in wisdom and is acceptable in society. Many positive benefits are enjoyed by such a person.

**Bible parallel:** Deuteronomy 28:1 “*If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth.*”

**24. *Kore pee egolu tama enemakon***

**English:** When you get yourself into trouble you have to rescue yourself.

**Kiswahili:** Unapo jiingisha kwa shida inabidi ujiokoe mwenyewe.

**French:** Lorsque tu e trouves dans un problem, il te faut se defender toi-meme.

**Teaching:** It teaches that however bad or poorly a situation may be a person can still make the best out of it. Bad circumstances can change to good, by a person making effort to change them. One can be poor, but gain wealth by working hard and investing.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Corinthians 4:17 “*For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!*”

**25. *Layielai nchooki nkiyok.***

**English:** Listen to me and also listen when advised by someone.

**Kiswahili:** Nisikize na usikize unapo pewa usia na mtu mwingine.

**French:** Ecoute-moi et entend aussi quand on conseil.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to advise that it is important to seek advice from the right people in order to make wise decisions. In order for a person to grow in wisdom, second opinions are crucial in decision making.

**Bible:** Proverbs 11:14 *“Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory.”*

**26. Lburro osiapa liangitie.**

**English:** You should keep secrets of your family and also yours.

**Kiswahili:** Unafaa kuweka siri za jamii na zako.

**French:** Il te faut cacher le secret de ta famille.

**Teaching:** It teaches that family issues should not be told to outsiders. Keep private issues between those concerned with them, because it can destroy good relationships within the family.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 11:13 *“Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a thing covered.”*

**27. Marajo ketwa olee etunukaa.**

**English:** Never count on what you don't have.

**Kiswahili:** Usitarajie kitu ambacho haujakipata.

**French:** Ne comptez pas sur ce que tu n'as pas jusqu'à ce que tu le trouveras.

**Teaching:** A person should not anticipate things to happen the way they expect. Things can change and you get bad results and not the good you expected.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 16:9 *“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.”*

**28. Meaku nkang nacham larrabel**

**English:** War is not good for anyone.

**Kiswahili:** Vita si vyema kwa yeyote.

**French:** La guerre n'est bonne à personne.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to emphasize the importance of peaceful co-existence and brotherhood. In case of disagreement, calm and favourable solutions should be sought in order not to aggravate a situation.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 12:18 *“There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, But the tongue of the wise brings healing.”*

**29. Mebungai enepik enkutok.**

**English:** Something that you have doubted you will continue doing.

**Kiswahili:** Jambo ambalo hauna uhakika nalo utaendelea kulifanya.

**French:** Si tu doutes sur quelque chose aujourd'hui, ceci continuera.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us to be persistent in what we do in order to succeed in an endeavor. Practice makes perfect. Even when one is unsure of their ability to make correct decisions or perform good work, they may find themselves excelling as a result of making extra effort.

**Bible parallel:** Colossians 3:23-24 *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”*

**30. Medol enkongu enedol enkae.**

**English:** When you are making decisions think of how you will benefit from your ideas.

**Kiswahili:** Unapoamua jambo fikiria vile utafaidika na maono yako.

**French:** Quand tu decides pense comment elle tes idées bénéficieront.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that when we make decisions we should consider what effects they will have upon us and other people also.

**Bible parallel: Proverbs 16:25** *“There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”*

**Proverbs 11:30** *“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls.”*

**31. Meek oltome lala lenyena.**

**English:** A husband as the head of the family should provide for his family.

**Kiswahili:** Bwana akiwa mkuu wa jamii anahitaji kuitunza jamii yake.

**French:** Le mari a tant que le chef de famille, doit garantir sa famille.

**Teaching:** It emphasizes the role of a husband in a family. He guides them and is expected to provide for all their needs, especially economically. An African husband is respected when he undertakes to fulfill these roles.

**Bible parallel: 1 Timothy 5:8** *“But if any man does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”*

**32. Meek osikiria olola lenye.**

**English:** You cannot get tired of solving your own problems.

**Kiswahili:** Huwezi kuchoka kutatua shida zako.

**French:** Tu ne dois pas te fatiguer de régler tes problèmes.

**Teaching:** Life cannot be without troubles. This proverb encourages people to solve problems for themselves when they arise. We should not give up even when solutions are slow. We should also not wait for other people to solve them.

**Bible parallel: Philippians 4:6** *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”*

**33. Meeta damata nalal kewon**

**English:** No one can prove himself wrong.

**Kiswahili:** Hakuna mtu ambaye anaweza kujikosoa.

**French:** Personne peut dire ses propres malfaissance.

**Teaching:** No one is ever perfect. We need others to help us grow and gain knowledge. A person cannot know their real weaknesses until another person points them out. We should accept to be corrected by others.

**Bible parallel: Romans 3:10** *“As it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;”*

**34. Meeta naimutie kiret.**

**English:** All that comes late cannot help when emergency occurs.

**Kiswahili:** Yote yanayokuja baadaye hayawezi kusaidia wakati wa dharura.

**French:** Tous ceux qui viennent en retard ne peuvent pas aider au cas d’urgence.

**Teaching:** This proverb advises that an issue should be solved using measures available at the moment. We should not wait for solutions which can only be obtained later. It may be too late.

**Bible parallel:** Ezra 10:4 *"Arise! For this matter is your responsibility, but we will be with you; be courageous and act."*

**35. Meeta enkiruratet epat**

**English:** A man who loves sleep has nothing to benefit from.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu anayeupenda usingizi hana cha kumfaidi.

**French:** Un homme qui aime dormir n'a rien comme benefice.

**Teaching:** It warns that idleness and laziness does not build one's progress. A person has to work hard in order to fend for himself and others, and also to gain favour with other people. A lazy or idle person has no associates and cannot prosper.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 6:10 *"A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a vagabond, and want like an armed man."*

**36. Meeta okucho olau**

**English:** A disobedient person may learn his lessons after being disciplined.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu mtukutu husoma baada ya kuadhibiwa.

**French:** Une personne desobeissante save apres etre punie.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that there are consequences of wrong doing. There must be punishment which helps wrong doer to change positively and realize their mistakes. Not taking action against a wrong doer encourages continuity of these bad actions.

**Bible parallel:** Isaiah 59:2 *"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid [His] face from you, that he will not hear."*

**37. Meeta nasieku mitum.**

**English:** You can get easily what comes fast.

**Kiswahili:** Utakipata kwa urahisi kinacho kuja kwa haraka.

**French:** Tu peux trouver ce qui vienne a la premiere place.

**Teaching:** It teaches that nothing of value is given on a silver platter. A person should pursue useful ventures despite any barriers and difficulties that may be encountered, and always focus on achieving their objective. When you rely on the wealth of others you won't see the need to work hard and therefore, poverty will become poor.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 *"For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living."*

**38. Meeta enilo openy.**

**English:** A person cannot abandon his family and walk alone, he must return.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu hawezi kuacha jamii yake na kutembea peke yake; lazima arudi.

**French:** N'abandone pas ta famille et va seule, tu dois retourner.

**Teaching:** It teaches that family is of great value to society. A person always needs to be part of a family circle. Even if you segregate yourself, a time comes when one needs

them. Family will support someone, whether they are good or bad. *Blood is thicker than water.* Family bonds are very important to everyone.

**Bible parallel:** Ruth 1:16 *“But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.”*”

**39. . Meetai keret namutie.**

**English:** If things come late, you cannot help anybody.

**Kiswahili:** Mambo yakikuja yamechelewa, hauwezi kusaidia.

**French:** Lorsque l'affaire vient en retard tu ne peux pas intervenir.

**Teaching:** This proverb helps us to learn the importance of planning earlier so that one does not have to deal with a crisis. When issues are handled too late, they may be difficult to resolve. *‘A stitch in time saves nine.’*

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 21:5 *“The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.”*

**40. Meetai tonyoraki maibai.**

**English:** When someone does good to you, you should do the same to them.

**Swahili:** Mtu akikutendea memo, unafaa umtendee hivyo pia.

**French:** Ne rends pas le mal pour mal.

**Teaching:** It teaches the need to treat people well, if we expect to be treated the same by others. Never despise anyone because of their status, race, age or any other reason. We may need them later in life and they may not be ready to treat you well.

**Bible parallel:** **Luke 6:31** *“And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.”*  
1 Timothy 4:12 *“Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.”*

**41. Medua ayiagak**

**English.** Those who work together can't see each other.

**Kiswahili:** Wanaofanya kazi pamoja hawaonani.

**French:** Ceux qui travaillent ensemble ne se voient pas.

**Teaching:** It teaches that people in a team should not wait for the other member to do something, but each one should play their part without being forced. For instance, a person should not wait to be told to help out a family member, but should do it by choice and as an obligation. We should not wait for another member to help out.

**Bible parallel:** Hebrews 10:24-25 *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

**42. Meguanai olelipong**

**English:** A man is the head of the family and should not let the wife take his roles.

**Kiswahili:** Mwanamme ni kiongozi wa jamii na hafai kuwacha mkewe kuchukua majukumu yake.

**French:** L'homme est le chef de famille et il ne faut pas laisser la femme de jouer ton role.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a man is the head of the family and should take a lead role in guiding, providing leadership and economic stability. A wife should be under his



guidance and authority and should let him play these roles. It also reminds us that we should recognize and respect authority in society.

**Bible parallel:** 1Timothy 2:11-13 *“Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve “*

**43. Meidim olenkaina enkigara.**

**English:** You cannot decide something alone while leading majority, but it has to be decided and agreed upon by the majority.

**Kiswahili:** Huwezi kukubali jambo peke yako ukiwa unaongoza wengine, kwani lazima wengi kati yao wakubaliane.

**French:** Tu ne peux pas décider une affaire seul autant que vous êtes nombreux, seulement il faut que ça soit décidé en consentant de tout le monde.

**Teaching:** It teaches us the importance of consultation in decision making. It is important to seek opinions from other people so that you make appropriate decisions which benefits everyone.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 20:18 *“Plans are established by seeking advice; so if you wage war, obtain guidance.”*

**44. Meisiapaa laouru ngiro lkujita.**

**English:** A bad person cannot be hidden by his/her bad behaviours.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu mbaya hawezi kufichwa na tabia zake.

**French:** Un mauvais homme ne peut pas cacher son comportement.

**Teaching:** The proverb warns that a person's bad behaviour makes the members of a community not want to associate him/her. This is because they fear being influenced by the person, or judged by the community as having the same behavior. We should therefore, choose suitable associates who build us and not destroy us.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 22:24-25 *“Make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man, lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare.”*

**45. Meitakinoui nkagitie.**

**English:** Nobody makes others to be rich.

**Kiswahili:** Hakuna yeyote ambaye hufanya wengine kuwa tajiri.

**French:** Personne peut enrichir quelqu'un d'autre.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to encourage people to work hard because nothing comes for free. Personal effort makes a person become independent and able to support themselves economically.

**Bible parallel:** Colossians 3:23-24 *“whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.*

**46. Mejing esayiet engupes nemeng`ama.**

**English:** When you are being accused of doing something that you haven't done, the truth will eventually reveal itself.

**-Kiswahili:** Unapo laumiwa juu ya tendo ambalo ukulitenda, ukweli utajitokeza.

**French:** Quand on t'accuse sur une affaire que tu n'as pas fait, c'est vrai que la verite se revelera un jour.

**Teaching:** It is used to encourage people to always tell the truth. The truth always prevails. It cannot be hidden and will finally stand out from lies and untruths.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Kings 12:15 *"And they did not ask an accounting from the men into whose hand they delivered the money to pay out to the workmen, for they dealt honestly."*

**47. Mejool emurt enkwe.**

**English:** Respect your elder brother, he is a symbol of unity.

**Kiswahili:** Mheshimu ndugu aliye mkubwa wako, yeye ni ishara ya ushirikiano.

**French:** Respectes ton grand-frere, car il est le symbole de l'unite.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us the importance of respecting our elders, whether they are blood relatives or not. Respect ensures that we get respected by others and be accepted in the community.

**Bible parallel:** Exodus 20:12 *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."*

**48. Mejool murt nkue.**

**English:** There is no shortcut in life.

**Kiswahili:** Hakuna njia ya mkato maishani.

**French:** Pas de raccourci dans la vie.

**Teaching:** It teaches that one has to work very hard and tirelessly to earn a living by whatever means. Prosperity comes with hard work

**Bible parallel:** Colossians 3:23-24 *"Whatever your task, work heartily as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward, you are serving the Lord Christ."*

**49. Menigisho nkiri nememe.**

**English:** When you cannot follow the advice of parents you will be punished for it.

**Kiswahili:** Usipo fuata usia wa wazazi utaadhibiwa.

**French:** Si tu ne suis pas les conseils de tes parents, tu seras punis.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that parents or elders are a symbol of wisdom in a community. When their guidance is not heeded, then a society loses its morals and stability. Other negative effects will also be realized, which affect the future generations negatively.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 15:31-33 *"He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise. He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding. The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility. "*

Proverbs 13:10 *"Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel."*

**50. Menyaanyuk enkerai nattiepua menye oneitu.**

**English:** A child that has his father is better than an orphan because he get advices from his father

**Kiswahili:** Mtoto aliye na baba ni afadhali kuliko yatima kwa sababu hupana wasia kutoka kwa babake.

**French:** L'enfant qui a un pere mieux vaut qu'un orphelin, puisque celui-ci donne des conseils de son pere.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us the importance of appreciating what we have, because when you lose, it that is when you realize it is valuable in your life. Support from other members of the community or family is essential. At some time, everyone requires someone/people to lean on in life.

**Bible parallel:** Galatians 6:2 *"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."*

Hebrews 10:24-25 *"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

### 51. *Memir empuus narok*

**English:** When you are searching for something and you don't get it, forget about it.

**Kiswahili:** Unapo kitafuta kitu na ukikose, kisahau.

**French:** Lorsque tu cherches une chose et tu ne la trouves pas, oublie-la.

**Teaching:** This proverb encourages people not to remain stagnant in one venture or opinion, even when it is not working out. When a person is fixated, his/her does not envision other opportunities for success. A person should be flexible in order to be more successful.

**Bible parallel:** Mark 1:16-18 *"Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him."*

### 52. *Memira eichoro ochua.*

**English:** Gambling is bad and no truth can come from it.

**Kiswahili:** Bahati nasibu ni mbaya na hakuna ukweli unaweza kupatikana kwake.

**French:** L'aventure est tres mal, la verite ne peut jamais y apparaitre.

**Teaching:** It teaches that living life by chance without establishing a focus makes a person to live a meaningless life. It can lead a person to making wrong choices and hence fail to achieve meaningful goals. A person should understand their purpose in life, in order for each one to positively contribute to society.

**Bible parallel:** John 15:16 *"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you."*

Ephesians 2:10 *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."*

### 53. *Memra echoro nkwechi.*

**English:** In a competition there must always be a winner.

**Swahili:** Katika mashindano lazima kuwe na mshindani.

**French:** Dans une competition il faut qu'il y ait un gagnant.

**Teaching:** The proverb teaches that when in competition, a person should be prepared to either win or lose. A person should accept the outcome. People should learn not to be selfish and want everything for themselves. They should allow others to have a chance to stand out and feel heroic.

**Bible parallel:** Philippians 2:3 *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.”*

**Isaiah 41:10** *“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”*

#### 54. *Memanyai meleeno.*

**English:** Don't just move from one place to another without seeing.

**Kiswahili:** Usishinde kuhama bila kuona unakoenda.

**French:** Ne te déplaces pas d'une place à l'autre sans savoir quoi y faire.

**Teaching:** The nomadic lifestyle of the Samburu community requires that before they move to new fields to herd their livestock, they ensure it is safe. The proverb teaches that we should plan, be alert and ready to face consequences. A person should always focus ahead, be prepared and decisive in order to succeed in achieving an intended goal.

**Bible parallel: 1 Peter 5:8** *“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”*

#### 55. *Memurata oloyioni ota menye*

**English:** Your father is your boss and you need to respect him.

**Kiswahili:** Baba yako ni bossi/mtawala wako kwa hivyo unafaa umuheshimu.

**French:** Ton père est ton patron, il faut lui respecter.

**Teaching:** It teaches that elders and parents must be respected in order for one to have a fruitful life without problems of being accepted in society. Their wisdom should be heeded.

**Bible parallel:** Leviticus 19:32 *“You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.”*

#### 56. *Menigisho nkiri nememe.*

**English:** When a person continuously does wrong he/she cannot realize until they are told.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu anaye fanya makosa kila wakati hawezi kutambua huyafanya mpaka aambiwe.

**French:** Il est difficile pour un malfaiteur de savoir ce qu'il fait jusqu'à ce que il sera informé.

**Teaching:** A person does not know when making constant mistakes in their daily lives. Members of the community see those mistakes and tell the person. This provides opportunity for change of behaviours. We should accept correction from others who mean well, and not assume we are always correct.

**Bible parallel:** Hebrews 12:11 *“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”*

**57. Meningisho amu meeta enkigwana oloomenye.**

**English:** When you don't listen to elders you will destroy your life.

**Kiswahili:** Usipowasikiza wazee utayaharibu maisho yako.

**French:** Si tu n'écoutes les vieux-ages, tu risques ta vie.

**Teaching:** It warns about disobedience to authority and elders. When a person defies society norms, then other people disassociate with him/her. One loses respect, trust and is not accepted in the community or family. Life becomes difficult because nobody is willing to assist them when in need.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Peter 2:13-15 *"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people."*

**58. Menya endama lomon.**

**English:** When you are discussing something important, it needs time.

**Kiswahili:** Unapo jadia jambo la muhimu, inahitaji muda.

**French:** Quand tu discutes une chose importante, il faut temps.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us that for anything to be achieved it takes sacrifices in terms of time and patience to make it succeed.

**Bible parallel:** James 5:7 *"Be patient therefore, brothers, to the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."*

**59. Menyaanyukoro nkochua olayiok.**

**English:** Everyone has his own vision towards life.

**Kiswahili:** Kila mtu ana maono yake kuhusu maisha.

**French:** Tout et chacun a sa vision pour la vie.

**Teaching:** It's used to help people understand that, everyone should have a purpose in life, so that they focus on it to be able to positively shape their lives. Aimless living without a goal one wishes to achieve in life, leads to poverty and unhappiness.

**Bible parallel:** Philippians 3:13-14 *"Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."*

**60. Menyaanyakoro mperot enkai.**

**English:** If you are poor now, it doesn't mean that you will remain poor forever.

**Kiswahili:** Ukiwa maskini sasa sio kumaanisha utabaki maskini milele.

**French:** Si tu es pauvre aujourd'hui, ne signifie pas que tu le seras éternellement.

**Teaching:** The circumstances of today do not reflect on those of your future. The situation may be completely different. We should therefore, have hope for better days to come and work towards making these positive changes.

**Bible parallel:** Isaiah 43:18-19 *"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert"*

**61. *Menyaanyuk duat olewa.***

**English:** People reason differently.

**Kiswahili:** Watu huelewa mambo kwa njia zinazotofautiana.

**French:** Les gens pensent toujours differement.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us that every person is unique and has different abilities as created by God. For instance, in a community people have different views, opinion, knowledge which can be used positively to benefit others.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 *“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.”*

**62. *Merakamunyak enkeju mapik oloicho***

**English:** Knowledge is like owning property.

**Kiswahili:** Kuwa na ujuzi ni sawa na kuwa na mali.

**French:** La connaissance est comme avoir des biens materiels.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a person’s knowledge is of great value; as much value as any wealth one may have. If one puts knowledge to good use, it can help to gain economical, social and financial stability in life.

**Bible parallel:** Colossians 3:23-24 *“Whatever your task, work heartily as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward, you are serving the Lord Christ.”*

**63. *Meretoi olaur eitashe.***

**English:** People cannot have a meeting while standing, but when they are seated.

**Kiswahili:** Watu hawawezi kuendeleza mkutano wakiwa wamesimama, lakini wawe wameketi.

**French:** Les gens ne peuvent pas avoir une reunion en etant debout, il faut qu'ils soient assis.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that important matters should be handled carefully and without a hurry. People should consult carefully and in depth without getting impatient, until a proper decision is made about the issue.

**Bible parallel:** Ecclesiastes 7:8 *“The end of a matter is better than its beginning; Patience of spirit is better than haughtiness of spirit.”*

**64. *Metal oldonyo kewon.***

**English:** No one will see his own behaviours.

**Kiswahili:** Hakuna yeyote anayeona tabia zake.

**French:** Aucne personne peut voir son comportement.

**Teaching:** It teaches that nobody is able to realize their weaknesses and mistakes. Everyone thinks they are perfect. Other people see our weaknesses and correct us so that we can change for the better. We should accept correction always.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 3:11-12 *“My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.”*

**65. *Metoip olkarasha obo aare.***

**English:** Two men who have a family cannot live together in the same house.

**Kiswahili:** Wanaume wawili walio na jamii hawawezi kuishi katika nyumba moja.

**French:** Deux hommes qui ont des familles ne peuvent pas vivre dans une meme maison.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that people with different characters, visions and opinions may not usually agree with each other. They may differ in opinion but both may be of benefit to each other. We should therefore, accommodate each other in society/family and respect each other's opinions.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 4:2-3 *“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”*

**66. *Mijo kidogiek egundi neme enino***

**English:** Don't accept mistakes that you have not done.

**Kiswahili:** Usikubali makosa ambayo hujayafanya.

**French:** Nacceptes pas les fautes que tu n'as pas fait.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a person must take responsibility for their deeds, but should not accept responsibility for wrong deeds they did not do. We should always stand by the truth that we know.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 6:13 *“Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”*

**67. *Mikidikie olkikwei lelikae.***

**English:** The suffering of another person cannot affect you, but your own suffering affects you..

**Kiswahili:** Mateso ya mtu mwingine hayawezi kukuadhiri, lakini yako mwenyewe yatakuadhiri.

**French:** La souffrance du quelqu'un ne peut pas t'affecter, seulement la tienne.

**Teaching:** The proverb teaches that a person does not understand the magnitude of another's difficult situation, until they experience similar tribulations. For instance, we may not be able to be emphatic towards others unless we try to 'fit in their shoes'.

**Bible parallel:** Psalm 31:7 *“I will rejoice and be glad in Your lovingkindness, Because You have seen my affliction; You have known the troubles of my soul,”*

**68. *Mikimanya ochoke.***

**English:** Lack of remembering is a problem.

**Kiswahili:** Kukosa kukumbuka ni shida.

**French:** Ne pas se rappeler, c'est un probleme.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that a person should not forget past experiences, so that someone will not repeat the same mistakes. History is the best teacher. We should recall the past and make better decisions today and in future.

**Bible parallel:** James 1:22-25 *“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.”*

**69. Mikintosh enkorotit.**

**English:** Don't beat somebody to death. Punish them for the wrong they have done.

**Kiswahili:** Usichape mtu mpaka umuue. Muadhibu kwa makosa aliyoyafanya.

**French:** Ne bat pas quelqu'un pour lui tuer, mais punisse-lui pour les fautes qu'il commit.

**Teaching:** An offender must be ready to face the consequences. The person should be made to learn from their mistakes. Killing an offender does not help others to learn from his/her mistakes. Punishment helps others to learn so that they also correct their ways.

**Bible parallel:** Isaiah 13:11 *“Thus I will punish the world for its evil And the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless.”*

**70. Mikiar eitu kimpari**

**English:** Don't judge somebody without understanding him/her.

**Kiswahili:** Usihukumu mtu bila kumuelewa.

**French:** Ne juge pas une personne avant que tu ne l'entends pas.

**Teaching:** It is used as a warning to those who judge others by their physical appearance or first encounter impressions. Each person has greater value and abilities than what we externally see. Every person has inner values which are more important than our physical looks.

**Bible parallel:** Isaiah 11:3 *“And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear,”*

**71. Mikindikie olkikwoi lolikai.**

**English:** You may not know the extent of another's suffering until you have the same experience.

**Kiswahili:** Huwezi kuelewa na mateso ya mtu mwingine mpaka uyapitie mwenyewe

**French:** C'est difficile de savoir le fond de quelqu'un qui souffre, jusqu'à ce que tu seras dans la meme situation.

**Teaching:** It teaches that someone cannot understand the real bad situation or difficulties that someone is going through unless you are in that state yourself. We may try to encourage a person with tribulations, but we may not fully solve the problems.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 14:10 *“The heart knows its own bitterness, And a stranger does not share its joy.”*

**72. Mikintosh endapana enker ino**

**English:** You cannot be satisfied by your own things but you have to keep on searching.



**Kiswahili:** Huwezi kutosheka na vitu vyako pekee, lakini utaendelea kutafuta.

**French:** Tu ne peux pas être satisfait par tes biens mais il faut continuer à chercher.

**Teaching:** It teaches us that people are never satisfied with what they have acquired. They continue generating more wealth. This can lead to greed and problematic encounters and loss of morals. People should have comforts but not in excess.

**Bible parallel:** Psalm 73:12 *“This is what the wicked are like-- always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.”*

**73. Mikiwa enino.**

**English:** When you are rich you have to assist the poor.

**Kiswahili:** Ukiwa tajiri ni vyema kusaidia maskini.

**French:** Quand tu es riche, il faut assister les pauvres.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to encourage people to share the wealth and opportunities that they have to assist the less fortunate in the society. Be generous and share your wealth so that when you are in need, others will support you too.

**Bible parallel:** Hebrews 13:16 *“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”*

**74. Mikiwa nino.**

**English:** Don't be selfish.

**Kiswahili:** Wacha ubinafsi.

**French:** Ne sois pas egoïste.

**Teaching:** In the Samburu community, sharing meals and responsibilities are a normal way of life. This proverb is used to teach everyone to collaborate and share with others. Team work is most beneficial and builds strong bonds among members of a community or family.

**Bible parallel:** Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 *“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”*

**75. Mimpār oltungani enetopokie.**

**English:** When somebody gets rich, you should not ask where he obtained his wealth.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu anapo tajirika, usimuulize aliipata wapi au vipi mali yake.

**French:** Lorsqu'une personne devient riche, il ne faut pas demander d'où lui vient cette richesse.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a prosperous person acquires his wealth through his own efforts and hard work. It encourages people to work hard to achieve their comforts and good opportunities, in their own ways, instead of interfering with other people's ventures.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 15:10 *“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.”*

**76. Mirajo ketwa olee etunukaa.**

**English:** Never count on what you don't have until you have it.

**Kiswahili:** Usitarajie kitu ambacho haujakipata, mpaka ukipate.

**French:** Ne comptez pas sur ce que tu n'as pas jusqu'à ce que tu le trouveras.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a person should not anticipate things to happen the way he/she wishes. The outcome may not be as had been planned. One should plan keeping in mind what resources they have at hand.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 16:9 *"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps."*

**77. Mirio nerio likae.**

**English:** It is not a must you do wrong because you have seen someone do it.

**Kiswahili:** Sio lazima ufanye maovu kwa vile umeona mwingine akiyatenda.

**French:** Ce n'est obligatoire de faire du mal puisque tu as vu quelqu'un d'autre le fait.

**Teaching:** The proverb teaches that it is important to understand that only beneficial behaviours are worth adopting. People get negatively influenced in behavior and character by the bad people they associate with in their daily life. One has to be careful.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Corinthians 6:14-15 *"Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Be'lial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?"*

**78. Mirotokei emoti netamayiee ndaa.**

**English:** Don't bite the hand that feeds you.

**Kiswahili:** Usiuume mkono unaokulisha.

**French:** Ne piques pas la main qui te sert a manger.

**Teaching:** It teaches the importance of appreciating any good deeds done to us by others. We should respect, honour and protect those who support us in our lives because when they are not able we shall surely suffer

**Bible parallel:** Exodus 20:12 *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you."*

**79. Mirua erang almanong.**

**English:** Don't do something that you have no idea about.

**Kiswahili:** Usilifanye jambo ambalo haulielewi.

**French:** Ne fais pas une que tu n'as pas idee.

**Teaching:** Being ignorant is unwise. A person should not deal with matters which they have no knowledge about because they will make mistakes which may harm others or themselves. Don't be a know-it-all. It is safest to leave issues to be handled by those who know how to.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 3:18 *"Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become "fools" so that you may become wise."*

**80. Misar lkesen engor**

**English:** Don't count your chicks before they hatch.

**Kiswahili:** Usihesabu vifaranga wako kama mayai hayajatamia.

**French:** Ne compte pas tes poussins avant qu'ils trament.

**Teaching:** Place your expectations on what you have with you, and not on what you hope to get in the future. This is because it may not materialize.

**Bible parallel:** Philippians 4:6 *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”*

**81. Monkon altadoyo enkolong.**

**English:** Always speak the truth because it will set you free.

**Kiswahili:** Ongea ukweli kila wakati kwani itakuweka huru.

**French:** Parles toujours la verite, car elle te liberera.

**Teaching:** It is used to encourage people to always tell the truth so that a person does not carry a psychological burden. The truth always prevails. It cannot be hidden and will finally stand out from lies and untruths.

**Bible parallel:** Zechariah 8:16 *“These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace;”*

**82. Murua ranga kimanya.**

**English:** Use your time well while you are young.

**Kiswahili:** Utumie wakati wako vyema ukiwa kijana.

**French:** Utilises ton temps bien lorsque que tu es encore jeune.

**Teaching:** It teaches that young people have a great chance to make their lives stable and prosperous. They have the energy, zeal and opportunity to develop economically, socially and physically.

**Bible parallel:** James 1:4 *“Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”*

**83. Nchoo egurumi pee nimu.**

**English:** Never do something without understand it fully.

**Kiswahili:** Usifanye kitendo chochote bila kukielewa vikamilifu.

**French:** Ne fais pas une chose sans savoir ses contenus.

**Teaching:** It teaches us the need to understand an issue in depth before discussing it or acting on it. Consequences can be harmful to other people or to oneself.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 4:7 *“The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight.”*

**84. Nkamai tagolo.**

**English:** If anything goes wrong you should take care of yourself.

**Kiswahili:** Chochote kikienda mrama unafaa ujilinde.

**French:** Si la chose ne va pas bien, il faut etre guard de soi.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that everyone should take personal responsibility and not blame others for their short falls. As much as possible, a person should learn to depend on themselves and not be dependent on other people. Face life’s issues with confidence and you will live with fewer uncertainties.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 28:13-14 *“Whoever hides his transgressions will not succeed, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will find mercy. Blessed is the man who always fears the Lord, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into disaster.”*

Ezra 10:4 *“Arise, for it is your task, and we are with you; be strong and do it.”*

**85. Nkejuai tagolo.**

**English:** If you are caught up in a problem, you will eventually get out of it.

**Kiswahili:** Ukijipata kwa tatizo, mwishowe utaweza kujitoa.

**French:** Lorsque tu es attrape dans un probleme, tu t'ensortiras d'eux.

**Teaching:** Troubles pass! There is no problem that is permanent. Bad situations can be changed by one's efforts and determination. It encourages people to focus on creating better situations in future, and not remain in a problem.

**Bible parallel: Psalm 50:15** *"And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."*

**86. Nkiiyia nemetumo amu ketuma ltung`ana.**

**English:** People who know each other will always meet, even if they had not met for a long time.

**Kiswahili:** Watu wanao juana lazima wakutane, hata kama hawajakutana kwa muda mrefu.

**French:** Il est vrai que les gens qui se connaissent, un jour, il vont se croiser.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a person cannot be alone through life. Association with other people is inevitable. One may undertake endeavours alone, but will need the support of other people in the community which one belongs.

**Bible parallel: Corinthians 12:17-20** *"If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body"*.

**87. Olaigwanani oichoni.**

**English:** Before you act or do something, you have to think deeply about it.

**Kiswahili:** Kabla hujatenda jambo, unafaa ufikirie kwa undani.

**French:** Il faut penser avant d'agir.

**Teaching:** The proverb teaches that when you are undertaking any activity it is important that you give it a second thought, or consult widely to get different views before making a final decision.

**Bible parallel: Deuteronomy 4:29** *"But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul"*

**88. Olaiguana olchoni**

**English:** When you go to bed at night have tomorrow's plan with you.

**Kiswahili:** Unapoenda kulala usiku kuwa na mpango wa kesho.

**French:** Quand tu vas au lit la nuit, ait le plan de demain.

**Teaching:** This proverb helps us to learn the importance of planning early to avoid last minute arrangements. A person ensures there are no omissions and errors which can cause inconveniences.

**Bible parallel: Proverbs 21:5** *"The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty."*

**89. Olchore lai kichoriki enapik.**

**English:** Your best friend can turn out to be your worst enemy

**Swahili:** Rafiki wa dhati anaweza kugeuka kuwa adui mbaya.

**French:** Ton vrai ami peut changer et être ton ennemi juré.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that a person should be careful with the choice of friends they make because not all friends are genuine. Some work towards ensuring you fail in your endeavors, instead of supporting you to succeed. Do not be over-trusting.

**Bible parallel:** Micah 7:5-6 *“Put no trust in a neighbor; have no confidence in a friend; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your arms; for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.”*

**90. Oloiturok olosiada.**

**English:** To come first or to come late, all are the same.

**Kiswahili:** Kuja mwanzo au kuchelewa, zote ni sawa.

**French:** Être en temps ou en retard, c'est la même chose.

**Teaching:** It teaches that although a person may start off to pursue an endeavour earlier than another, he/she may not achieve the goal first. What is most important in life is to focus on what we wish to achieve, do it at our own pace and not compete with others.

**Bible parallel:** *Psalms 27:13-14 “I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!”*

**91. Reto oo reto.**

**English:** Assist others for you to be assisted

**Kiswahili:** Saidia wengine ili na wewe usaidiwe.

**French:** Il faut assister les autres que tu sois assisté.

**Teaching:** The proverb emphasizes the importance of being responsible for one another. A person should be ready to help others who are in need, just as he/she would expect to be assisted if in need.

**Bible parallel:** James 2:8 *“If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right.”*

**92. Sarisara te nkeju nimisarsar te nkutuk.**

**English:** Don't mess with your tongue.

**Kiswahili:** Usiharibu kwa ulimi.

**French:** Ne salis pas par la langue.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to warn people not to damage themselves by what they speak – or cause other people anguish and misery. A person should think twice before expressing their thoughts.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 10:19 *“When words are too many, transgression is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is prudent.”*

**93. Taa oltugani oningi**

**English:** A wise man is a man with an idea.

**Kiswahili:** Mtu mwenye busara ni mtu mwenye wazo.

**French:** Un homme sage est celui qui a d’idée.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a person can only provide guidance, or counsel if they have ideas/knowledge about a wide range of issues. A person with ideas can confidently give wise counsel. People should therefore strive to acquire as much knowledge as possible, in order to guide or advise others.

**Bible parallel** Proverbs 2:6 *“For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;”*

Proverbs 1:7 *“The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of knowledge: [but] fools despise wisdom and instruction.”*

**94. Tara oloboru gatonye.**

**English:** When you have been overpowered in battle, look for a way to escape.

**Kiswahili:** Unaposhindwa katika vita, tafuta njia ya kutoroka.

**French:** Lorsqu’on est tellement battu, il faut chercher un chemin pour se protéger.

**Teaching:** It teaches that a person should accept defeat and look for options to handle the matter. When one way fails, then we should seek for a chance to try again. When we don’t accept defeat, we do not give ourselves the opportunity to grow. There is always a winner and a loser.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Samuel 13:22-23 *“So on the day of the battle there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and Jonathan his son had them. And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.”*

**95. Tasaai olgiso lenchachur.**

**English:** When you are doing wrong you are suppose to change and do what is right.

**Kiswahili:** Unapotenda maovu unafaa ubadilike na utende mema.

**French:** Quand tu fais du mal, il faut changer et faire ce qui est bon.

**Teaching:** It teaches the importance of good morals and discipline. In a society, good behavior is passed from one generation to the other. Younger persons adapt behavior from elder ones. This proverb teaches that there is always an opportunity for people to change negative behavior and become productive members of the society.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 4:22-24 *“To put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”*

**96. Tasaaniki entirma enkare**

**English:** Think before you act.

**Kiswahili:** Fikiria kabla ya kutenda.

**French:** Penses avant d’agir.

**Teaching:** It teaches us the importance of internalizing issues before taking an action. When you take action hurriedly it may result in negative consequences. Second opinions also play an important part in decision making. One must think of the positive and negative effects a decision may have on themselves and other people.

**Bible parallel:** Romans 14:19 *“So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up-building.”*

Jeremiah 6:16 *“Thus says the Lord: “Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’”*

**97. Tashichore mali ewuen eyata.**

**English:** Make use of every opportunity because you don't know what tomorrow holds.

**Kiswahili:** Itumie nafasi yako vyema kwani hujui kesho kutakuwa aje.

**French:** Prends en consideration chaque opportunité, puisque tu ne sais ce qu'arrivera demain.

**Teaching:** This proverb encourages people to use their opportunities wisely. We should be fully committed to whatever we do. A person does not know whether he/she will be energetic, or have resources in the future. Do not delay before undertaking an endeavour.

**Bible parallel:** Ecclesiastes 11:6 *“Sow your seed in the morning and do not be idle in the evening, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will be good.”*

**98. Tarichore nelikae.**

**English:** When you get something good use it wisely.

**Kiswahili:** Ukipata kitu kizuri, kitumie kwa busara.

**French:** Lorsque tu trouves une chose bonne, il faut utiliser ça avec maîtrise.

**Teaching:** The proverb encourages people to value and seize the opportunity which one gets because it may never present itself again. We should make the best use of whatever resources we have available, to establish ourselves. What someone does not have cannot be useful to them.

**Bible:** Colossians 4:5 *“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.”*

**99. Tijiga ake onyuni mijing onyisho.**

**English:** Don't be those who wait but be those who are to be awaited.

**Kiswahili:** Usiwe wale husubiri, lakini uwe wale wanao subiriwa.

**French:** Ne sois pas ceux qui attendent mais sois parmi ceux qu'on attendait.

**Teaching:** A person should aim at doing things that make the community members to admire or want to emulate him/her. A person's contribution to society should be visible to all. Someone should not wait for others to act when he/she can actually be able to assist.

**Bible parallel:** Titus 2:7-8 *“Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.”*

**100. Toduai amu edorop.**

**English:** When a poor person comes for help, give it.

**Kiswahili:** Masikini anapokuja kuomba msaada, mpe.

**French:** Quand une personne vient pour l'aider, tu donnes.

**Teaching:** It teaches that we should be generous to other people and provide for their needs when we are able. Whatever little there is should be shared with those who have none; either food, shelter, clothing or other needs.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 19:17 *“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.”*



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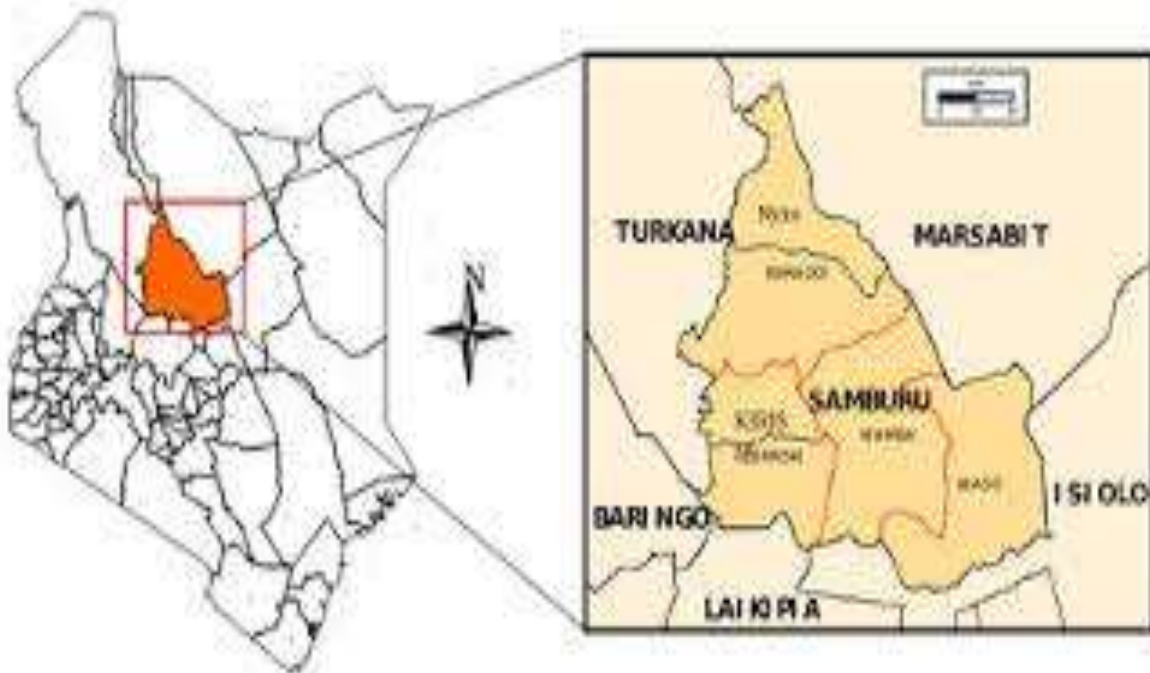
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## APPENDIXES

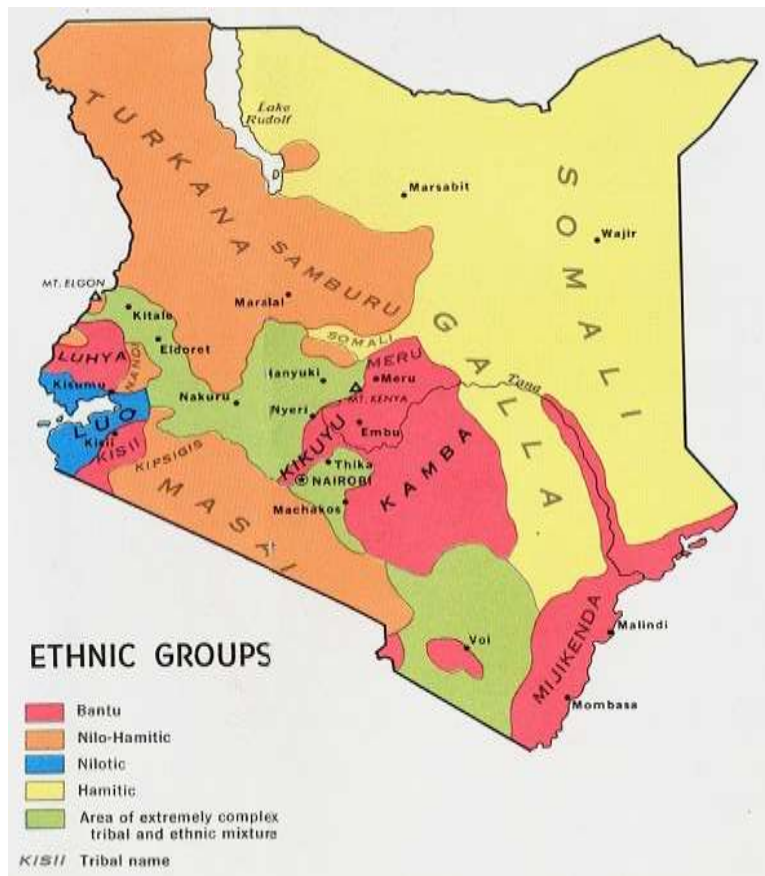
### RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR COLLECTION OF SAMBURU PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS

By Margaret Wambere (Kenya)

**Location:** The Samburu are a Nilotic people of north-central Kenya. They live north of the equator. They are a Maa-speaking group, and are very similar to the Maasai ethnic group. They speak Samburu, which is a Nilo-Saharan language. The neighbors of the Samburu tribe include the pastoral Turkana, Rendille and Borana ethnic groups.



*The ethnographical location of the Samburu people of Kenya*



### ***The Ethnic Groups of Kenya and their Ethnographical Location***

**Myth Of Origin** Samburu history is intertwined with that of Kenya's other Nilotic ethnic groups. They are known to have originated from Sudan, settling north of Mount Kenya and south of Lake Turkana in Kenya's Rift Valley area. Upon their arrival in Kenya in the 15th century, they parted ways with their Maasai cousins, who moved further south while the Samburu moved north. The name Samburu was given to them by other ethnic groups, and directly translates as 'Butterflies.' Previously they knew themselves as the Loikop. The name 'Samburu' is also of Maasai origin, 'Samburr' meaning a traditional leather bag specific to them, which is used for carrying meat and honey on their backs. In the 19th century European travellers often referred to Samburu as "Burkineji" (people of the white goats).

**Culture and Social Structure:** Traditionally the Samburu economy was purely pastoral. They are semi-nomadic pastoralists who herd mainly cattle, but also keep cows, sheep, goats and camels. Their cattle are their life; their wealth; their livelihood and the symbol of status and success within the community. Like the true Maasai, the Samburu believe that all cattle belong to them, raiding of other ethnic groups has always been a major preoccupation of the warriors.

Samburu practice polygamous marriages, and a man may have multiple wives as long as he can pay dowry. A Samburu settlement is known as a *nkang*, consisting of one family, composed of a man and his wife or wives. Each woman has her own house, which she builds with the help of other women out of local materials, such as sticks, mud and cow dung. Large ritual settlements,

known as *Lorora* may consist of 20 or more families. However, settlements tend towards housing two or three families, with perhaps 5-6 houses built in a rough circle with an open space in the centre. The circle of houses is surrounded by an acacia thorn bush fence and the center of the village has the animal pens away from predators. It is in the communal compound between the huts that a fire was lit. Family members sit around it so that elder members can disseminate information about culture.

Proverbs and wise sayings, riddles, folktales, songs and dance are used to do this. Emphasis on the use of proverbs and wise sayings helps them to remember and use them in ordinary daily conversation. Each evening provides great opportunity for this communication. This custom has been unchanged since the age of their forefathers.

Circumcision for both boys and girls has always been one of the most important rituals among the Samburu. For boys, circumcision marks the initiation into *moran* (warrior) life. For girls, it signifies becoming a woman. Once circumcised, a girl/woman can be given away in an arranged marriage to start her own family. Sadly, this practice has seen girls as young as 12 years old get married to men old enough to be their grandfathers. The *moran* have the duty to defend the community and the livestock. This promotes values such as self-respect, perseverance, courage, fellowship and also a strong sense of responsibility. The *moran*-hood remains the basis of **Samburu** pride, building a bridge between the present and their heroic past.

Religion: The Samburu believe that God (*Nkai*) is the source of all protection from the hazards of their existence. Samburu religion traditionally focuses on their multi-faceted divinity (*Nkai*). Samburu have ritual diviners who divine the causes of individual illnesses and misfortune, and guide warriors. In recent decades missionaries have had success in converting more Samburu to predominantly Catholic, and Protestant forms of Christianity. Nevertheless, the majority of Samburu continue to observe most traditional ritual practices.

Economy: The Samburu live in a very beautiful, sparsely populated part of Kenya with abundant wildlife. Much of the land is now protected and community development initiatives have extended to eco-friendly lodges jointly run by the Samburu. The combination of a significant growth in population over the past 60 years and a decline in their cattle holdings has forced them to seek other supplemental forms of livelihood. Some have attempted to grow crops, while many young men have migrated for at least short periods to cities to seek wage work. Many work in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, as watchmen, while it is also popular to go to Kenya's coastal resorts where some work; others sell spears and beaded ornaments.

Today Samburu National Reserve, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust are natural habitats for elephants, which generate income through tourism. Zebras and rhinoceroses live protected from poachers and hunters at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy. Orphaned elephants are taken care of at the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust.

Prominent persons: Francis Xavier Ole Kaparo served the Kenyan government and the people of Kenya in different capacities and was the second longest serving Speaker of the National Assembly of Kenya. The Samburu County Governor Moses K. Lenolkulal and Senator Sammy Leshore also come from the Samburu community.

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5. Samburu collaborators: James Oleipere & Johnstone Lekuye of Nairobi, Kenya (Contacts: +254 0774 219 294)

## WRITING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are:

1. To collect a hundred proverbs and wise sayings from the Samburu ethnic group.
2. To translate these proverbs and wise sayings into Swahili, English and French for the youth and other literate people to be wise.
3. To help people to enrich their communication skills by using these proverbs and wise sayings from the Samburu people.
4. To facilitate religious teachings using them, and show the relationship to the locally understood sayings and proverbs.

## METHODOLOGY

The writer will interview Samburu elders and other people with good understanding of the proverbs and wise sayings. She will record them for translation into Kiswahili, English and French, and publish a booklet.

## BUDGET

Expenses	\$
Typing and printing	\$100
Binding	\$ 600
Transport	\$200
Miscellaneous	\$120
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 500</b>