

**A COLLECTION OF 100 GANDA/KOOKI (UGANDA) PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS**



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

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to:

My friend family

*Thank you for your immeasurable support.*

# A COLLECTION OF 100 KOOKI (UGANDA) PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS

## INTRODUCTION

### The Location

The Rakai district is a multi-ethnic region which was separated from the Masaka district of Uganda in the mid-1970s. The prominent ethnic group in this region is the Baganda, with smaller groups including Bakoki, Banyarwanda, Barundi, Banyankole and Bahaya. Different sub-dialects of the Ganda language are spoken. These include the Kooki (*Olukooki*), Sese (*Olusese*), Vuma (*Luvuma*) and Diopa (*Ludiopa*). The Kooki (*Olukooki*) dialect is endangered and may be almost extinct and very few members of this community speak it. The Kingdom of Kooki occupied the Rakai district



Kitaro Kingdom, was called KitasimbwaChaja Nemukoka, which meant “*it was not planted it came with floods.*” He decided to marry the girl as a cover-up and for this he was rewarded. The Kabaka gave him the Bakoki Kingdom where he settled and had a large family.

### **Culture and Social Structure**

As a general rule, however, Baganda kings acquired wives through a system that worked on the assumption that everyone and everything in the kingdom, sometimes even beyond, belonged to the Kabaka. When a king desired a woman who was already married to one of his chiefs, he would just go ahead and get her. The aggrieved husband would turn a blind eye on the whole affair and would get compensated with some estate, or in case of a chief, a promotion. The Bakoki did not involve themselves in regular education but farmed and herded livestock. They were brave fighters and great hunters. Polygamy was accepted in the community, especially if a man had property to sustain many wives and children. Male and female circumcision was not a cultural practice. They lived in thatched huts, with several huts in one compound.

Girls learned their gender roles by working with their mothers. They learnt to prepare different meals, weave baskets (*ekibbo*) and mats. At the age of ten years girls the aunt (*senga*) taught them responsibilities and duties expected in a marriage. The boys worked with their fathers and learned how to farm, herd livestock, and gender roles. Uncles trained them on marriage responsibilities. Marriages were arranged by family members, who first established the suitability of a spouse for their son or daughter, to ensure these families were not associated with witchcraft and other vices.

The Bakoki people use proverbs and wise sayings, riddles, folktales, songs and dance to pass on knowledge and cultural norms to their community members. Proverbs and wise sayings are used in ordinary daily conversation especially by the elderly. The main meal *Omuwumbo*, was bananas which were cooked while covered with green banana leaves and was served with groundnut stew (*ebinyeebwa*) or vegetables. Yams (*endaggu*), sweet potatoes, boiled or roasted maize cobs were usually eaten with tea. Beans, groundnuts and green vegetables were included in most meals. Roasted coffee beans were used as a snack.

Tree bark clothes were made from specific species of trees, “Mutuba” and “Enselele”. The regular attire worn by men was a long tunic which was worn from the armpit to the ankles, with a belt while the women wore a long sleeveless dress (*embugo – olubugo*). The ordinary people walked barefooted, but the financially able wore wooden sandals (*Emikalabanda*) made from the “Musambya” tree. Tobacco smoking pipes were made from the “Ekisekeseke” tree, clay and metallic rings and were used by both women and men to smoke tobacco. Special royal drums made of wood from the “Mubajjagoma” tree and cow hides were sounded to give different communication.

Before the arrival of the Christian missionaries, traditional religion dominated the Bakoki spiritual life. They had shrines, *lubaale*, where rituals were carried out. These were big thatched huts where elders brought traditional banana brew and coffee beans. There was a fireplace with three cooking stones where a fire was lit with firewood or charcoal from the “Kasaana” tree. Once the fire was lit it would burn without going off for days. Others created shrines at the base

of old indigenous trees such as the “Omuwule” and “Kabaka Anjagala”. Different groups of people had different totems. Besides they considered a form of entertainment and relaxation, a pipe is also regarded as sacred and is used for burning incense to invoke spirits and smoking traditional herbs to appease the gods, or to cause bad luck to someone.

**Economy**

Lake Kijanebalora translated “*it came while they were seeing*” is the only lake in Kooki. It covers the five sub-counties of Lwanda, Byakabanda, Kibanda, Buyamba and Lwamaggwa. The lake has several types of fish including *obuyamba* (hypochromines) and *emmamba* (Lungfish), which is sold to markets by the fishermen.

Kigera Cave is located in Byakanda sub-country, Kigera has a 3km tunnel which connects the cave in Byakabanda to a cave in Kitente village in Kifamba sub-county through Nabbunga hills. The cave and other features in its vicinity are used as places for healing and seeking blessings by individuals with political ambitions, and is a tourist attraction site. Farmers sell their excess bananas, yams and sweet potatoes, sorghum and groundnuts to support other financial needs of the families. The women sell straw mats and baskets.

**Politics**

Kooki is a part of the Buganda kingdom and is listed by modern records as a Chiefdom. It covers Rakai district, bordering River Kagera, Masaka and Ankole. Initially a separate kingdom ruled by a Kamuswaga, Kooki was incorporated into Buganda in 1996 with the Kamuswaga’s role defined as a cultural leader. The office of traditional ruler of Kooki was abolished by President Milton Obote in 1966 and restored in 2004. The local parliament is located in the middle of traditional Palace, and is neatly constructed under a grass thatched shed and decorated with fine marble stones. The responsibilities of various leaders and ministers are assigned here as well. Problems affecting various categories of the Bakooki people are identified and resolved here.

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## A COLLECTION OF 100 KOOKI (UGANDA) PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS

### 1. Abakadde bali mu gandaalo mu kisikiziz kyomuti.

**Swahili:** Wazee huketi kwenye kivuli kwa sababu walipanda mti miaka mingi iliyopita.

**French:** Les vieux restent à l'ombre des arbres puisqu'ils les ont plantés plusieurs années passées.

**English:** Old men sit in the shade because they planted a tree many years before.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches about planning for the future. What we establish now creates the stability for our future. We should save resources which will provide for our needs in the future.

Bible parallel: Proverbs 16:3

*Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.*

**Psalm 20:4**

*May he grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your plans!*

### 2. Ababi okulya, abalungi emilimo.

**Swahili:** Umati ni mbaya kwa kula, lakini mzuri kwa kazi.

**French:** Une foule est mauvaise au moment de manger mais bon au moment du travail.

**English:** A crowd is bad for eating, but good for work.

**Teaching:** Many people working or living together requires support of each other to accomplish our goals. Sometimes selfishness arises when there are benefits expected at the end of an endeavor. Sometimes people want to acquire everything for themselves without consideration for others. This shows us that sharing is a value we should develop for all situations and for the benefit of all people.

**Bible parallel:** Philippians 2:3-4

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

### 3. Abakazi abangi bafuula musajja waabwe okwogera nnimi bbili.

**Swahili:** Wake wengi humfanya bwana kuwa mtu wa ndimi mbili.

**French:** La polygamie fait le mari, un homme à deux-mots.

**English:** Polygamy makes a husband a double-tongued man.

**Teaching:** Serving two masters is having divided loyalty. A man cannot pay full attention to two households but will favor one. It can lead to dishonesty because he will have to please both his partners especially if one is displeased. It warns us to pursue one objective and we will succeed, instead of two or more, your concentration and input will not be equal in both. One is therefore, bound to fail.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Kings 18:21

*"Then Elijah approached all the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him. But if Baal is God, follow him." But the people did not answer a word."*

#### 4. Aboluganda bita.

**Swahili:** Watu wanaoishi pamoja hawakosi kubishana.

**French:** Les gens qui vivent ensemble, se querellent toujours.

**English:** People who live together cannot fail to have quarrels.

**Teaching:** As it is said: *‘we were not born of the same mother’* – relationships are not always without disagreements. This proverb teaches us the need to accommodate one another in a relationship, in the working team, in the general community or family. Appreciating each other’s uniqueness, weaknesses and strengths leads to harmony and cohesion.

**Bible parallel:** Colossians 3:13

*“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”*

#### 5. Aboluganda nga bayombye, kwata enkumbi olime.

**Swahili:** Haufai kutoa maoni yako wakati jamaa wawili wanapo gombana.

**French:** Ne donne pas d’opinions, lorsque deux frères se querellent.

**English:** You should not give an opinion when two relatives are quarrelling.

**Teaching:** *‘Blood is thicker than water’* - Relatives protect each other in the bad and good times. We should not criticize or take sides with one person when closely related persons are in disagreement. We should remain neutral and give them counsel to help them reconcile.

**Bible parallel:** Romans 2:1-4

*“Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?”*

#### 6. Abuliira omugezi tatawaana.

**Swahili:** Anaye mueleza mambo mtu mwerevu hana haja ya kujichosha.

**French:** Celui qui explique les choses a une personne intelligente, n’a pas besoin de se fatiguer à parler.

**English:** One who explains things to an intelligent person need not tire herself out talking.

**Teaching:** When we are warned or being taught something, we should pay attention so that it can benefit us. Sometimes others act in a different way towards us, and that is a sign of disapproval. We should understand this and change our unacceptable behavior.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 1:17

*“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.”*

**7. Addukana yanoonya akuyu.**

**Swahili:** Mtu anaye hara ahitaji yeyote amwelekeze kwenye mlango.

**French:** Une personne qui souffert de la diarrhée, n'a pas besoin d'une aide de direction de la porte.

**English:** A man with diarrhea will not require any one to give them the direction to the door.

**Teaching:** It is used to make us understand that the person in need is the one who understands his/her problem, and should be the one to seek for the best solution. Another person may not understand the need. We should make effort to attempt solving our issues before seeking other solutions.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 10:13

*"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."*

**8. Akaami akatono okagayira mitala wa mugga.**

**Swahili:** Mwanamme mwembamba, unamdarau akiwa ng'ambo ya mto.

**French:** On néglige un homme mince, quand il est encore de l'autre cote de la rivière.

**English:** A thin man, you show him contempt when he is across the river.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us that we should not judge others until we have enough knowledge of their character and abilities. We can misjudge a person because of their appearance, only to realize otherwise. Appreciate all people as they are.

**Bible parallel:** Romans 14:10

*"Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;"*

**9. Akako akatono kakila mbegelaako.**

**Swahili:** Heri chako kidogo kuliko kuomba.

**French:** Il est bon le peu que tu as, par rapport à l'emprunt.

**English:** It is better yours which is little than borrowing.

**Teaching:** It reminds us that what is not yours can be taken away from you. We should be self-reliant because gives us confidence, and we are able to support ourselves and others.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Corinthians 3:5

*"Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God"*

**10. Akanyonyi kagoza byo oya birara okuzimba ekisu kyaako.**

**Swahili:** Ndege hujenga kiota kwa kutumia manyoya ya ndege wengine.

**French:** Quand un oiseau construit son nid, il utilise les plumes des autres oiseaux.

**English:** When a bird builds its nest it uses the feathers of other birds.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us the benefits of unity and teamwork. A person cannot sustain themselves fully. Support from other people helps us to succeed in your endeavors. The family, friends and community build us to live full lives.

**Bible parallel:** Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

*“Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up.”*

### 11. Akatono kazila mu liiso.

**Swahili:** Kidogo kwenye jicho, lakini kwa mwenzako ni kikubwa.

**French:** Peu à l’œil mais beaucoup à ton ami.

**English:** Little to the eye, but to your friend it is much.

**Teaching:** It reminds us not to take things for granted and appreciate whatever we have in our possession; whether resources or skills and abilities. What we believe is inadequate is plenty for another person.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

*“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”*

### 12. Akozesa emikono gyombi, talemwa kulya.

**Swahili:** Anaye itumia mikono miwili hakosi kula.

**French:** Celui qui utilise toutes les deux mains, ne peut manquer pas à manger.

**English:** One who uses both hands cannot fail to eat.

**Teaching:** This is an expression of hard work. When you have physical strength you can work and get benefits which support you and those you have responsibility for. When one is not working, then there is nothing they achieve, which creates dependence on others.

**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.”*

### 13. Akussuka lyali nalyo, taba mutti.

**Swahili:** Kama amekutupia mkuki aliokuwa nao, inamaanisha hakuogopi.

**French:** S’il a jeté la seule lance qu’il avait, cela signifie qu’il n’a pas peur de toi.

**English:** If he has thrown the only spear he had at you, it means that he does not fear you.

**Teaching:** When someone threatens you with a weapon, he has negative intentions and is ready for consequences. Anger can make a person do unacceptable and dangerous things. We should not retaliate in such situations but seek ways of resolving the problem.

**Bible parallel:** Romans 12:19

*“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,” says the Lord.”*

### 14. Alaba ekilungi, akinyumya.

**Swahili:** Yule ambaye hukiona kitu kizuri lazima asimulie.

**French:** Celui qui a vécu une bonne chose, doit nécessairement la narrer.

**English:** One who sees something good must narrate it.

**Teaching:** It encourages us to appreciate good deeds by others. A person’s good deeds are told to others and it motivates them.

**Bible parallel:** Philippians 4:8

*“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”*

**15. Amaka omutali muchaara galinga ekisibo omutali nte.**

**Swahili:** Nyumba isiyo kuwa na mwanamke ni sawa na zizi lisilo na ng’ombe.

**French:** Une maison sans une femme, est comme un fenil sans de bétails.

**English:** A home without a woman is like a barn without cattle.

**Teaching:** Women are mentors and builders in a home. They sire children and build the future bloodlines for the community. They guide the members of the family and support the head of the family. They carry out the daily chores which make the daily activities of the family and community. She is a mother to all.

**Bible parallel:** Titus 2:4-5

*“Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.”*

**16. Akwaagala, Akwaagula no bujama bwo.**

**Swahili:** Anayekupenda, hukupenda na uchafu wako.

**French:** Celui qui aime, t’aime avec tes salissures.

**English:** He who loves, loves you with your dirt.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches about genuine love and acceptance of all characteristics of a person. We should not accept people because of what they have but because of whom they are. Whatever weaknesses and inabilities we should love them unconditionally.

**Bible parallel:** Ruth 1:16-17

*“But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.”*

**17. Akwata empoya atuuka wala, Nawolovu yatuuka mu kibuga.**

**Swahili:** Mwenda pole hufika mbali.

**French:** Celui qui marche lentement, va loin.

**English:** The one who walks slowly reaches far.

**Teaching:** Slow but sure!! We should not be in a hurry to do things. Taking our time and working keenly and carefully ensures we achieve our goals.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 5:15-17

*“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”*

**18. Amaka amalungi gakola ekibanja ekiningi.**

**Swahili:** Nyumba nzuri hutengeneza shamba nzuri.

**French:** Un bon foyer, fait un bon champ.

**English:** A good home makes a good farm.

**Teaching:** This proverb stresses the benefits of being sustainable socially and economically. People living in harmony as a team, they achieve much more. They can provide for themselves and others.

**Bible parallel:** Isaiah 14:1

*“When the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and again choose Israel, and settle them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob.”*

#### 19. Amatu agatawulira kubulirirwa gagendera wamu nomutwe.

**Swahili:** Masikio yasiyo sikia wasia, huandamana na kichwa kinapo katwa.

**French:** Les oreilles qui n’entendent pas de conseils, accompagnent la tête quand elle est coupée.

**English:** Ears that do not listen to advice, accompany the head when it is chopped off.

**Teaching:** This proverb warns us that there are consequences when we do not take advice from those who have wisdom and experience. Those associated with us also suffer the consequences. We should therefore, appreciate advice and correction.

**Bible parallel:** Jeremiah 6:10

*“To whom shall I speak and give warning That they may hear? Behold, their ears are closed And they cannot listen Behold, the word of the LORD has become a reproach to them; They have no delight in it.”*

#### 20. Amambuka si maserengeta.

**Swahili:** Ukiupanda mti, lazima uushuke ule mti.

**French:** Lorsque tu montes sur un arbre, tu dois descendre le même arbre.

**English:** If you climb up a tree, you must climb down the same tree.

**Teaching:** There are good times and bad times. One does not remain in comfort and stability always. Sometimes situations are difficult and we persevere. One may be wealthy or be in a senior position, but later they may lose wealth or job. But life goes on.

**Bible parallel:** Daniel 2:21

*“He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.”*

#### 21. Amazzi amasabe tegamala nyonta.

**Swahili:** Maji ya kuomba hayamalizi kiu.

**French:** L’eau qu’on a mendie, ne termine pas la soif.

**English:** Water that has been begged for does not quench the thirst.

**Teaching:** Relying on other people’s properties to support ourselves is not acceptable and is discouraged. Borrowed items do not provide for all the needs of a person. Self-reliance is the best principle and helps a person to support themselves and others in the family or community, without fear of losing stability.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 4:28

*“Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.”*

#### 22. Atalimba takula.

**Swahili:** Asiye ongea uongo hatakua.

**French:** Celui qui ne ment pas, ne grandit pas.

**English:** He who tells no lies will not grow up.

**Teaching:** Telling lies is a vice which brings many problems between people. This usually has unpleasant consequences which make people to learn lessons to guide them in the future. We should learn from mistakes we make so that we do not repeat them.

**Bible parallel:** James 3:2

*“For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.”*

### 23. Atambula ekilo.

**Swahili:** Anaye safari mahali anapo pafahamu huwa hana wasiwasi atafika usiku.

**French:** Celui qui voyage à une place qu’il connait bien, ne craint pas d’arriver quand il fait sombre.

**English:** One who travels to a familiar place does not worry about arriving in the dark.

**Teaching:** When a person is sure of what they are doing, they do not have to worry about inconveniences or fear failure. We are confident of success if we undertake to do things we are experienced in or have abilities for. We remain patient and finally achieve our goal.

**Bible parallel:** Hebrews 11:6

*“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”*

### 24. Atanatambula yatenda nyina okufumba.

**Swahili:** Asiye safari hufikiria kwamba mamake tu ndiye mpishi bora zaidi duniani.

**French:** Celui qui n’a jamais voyagé pense que sa mère est la meilleure cuisinière du monde.

**English:** He who has not travelled thinks that his mother is the best cook in the world.

**Teaching:** Different experiences help us to grow. Associating with other people of different cultures, social classes, political and religious beliefs, makes us have broader minds. Remaining in one environment without exposure limits our ideas. More experience makes better our development, socially and economically.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 18:15

*“The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out.”*

### 25. Atya enjuba taliba wa gombolola.

**Swahili:** Anaye liogopa jua hawezi kuwa mkuu.

**French:** Celui qui craint le soleil, ne peut pas grandir.

**English:** He who fears the sun will not become chief.

**Teaching:** A person who fears challenges cannot be a leader. A leader should be able to handle all matters whether they are difficult or easy, because they are expected to provide solutions to counter challenges, be firm and be responsible for the members of the family or community.

**Bible parallel:** Exodus 18:21

*“Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.”*

## 26. Bassa kimu nga nkuyege.

**Swahili:** Tahadhari sio hofu, hata mchwa hutembea na silaha.

**French:** Une caution n'est pas lâcheté.

**English:** Caution is not cowardice, even the ant's march armed.

**Teaching:** It is better to be careful than to be sorry. When we are aware of a problem that may arise ahead, we should take precaution to prevent it from affecting us or other people. *'fore warned is forearmed'.*

**Bible parallel:** Psalm 56:3-4

*"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?"*

## 27. Bazaala mubiri tebazaala mpisa.

**Swahili:** Wazazi huzaa mwili wa watoto wao, lakini sio kila wakati tabia zao.

**French:** Les parents donnent naissance au corps de leurs enfants, mais pas à leurs caractères.

**English:** Parents give birth to the body of their children, but not always to their characters.

**Teaching:** We may bring up children and try to shape their character, and yet they may not turn out to be as we expected. Sometimes they adapt behavior which we cannot change; and which may differ from our expectations. We should always try to mould them positively so that their future character is acceptable by community.

**Bible parallel:** Titus 2:12

*"Training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age."*

## 28. Bugubugu, ssimuliro.

**Swahili:** Moto mwingi si moto

**French:** Beaucoup de feux, n'est pas du feu.

**English:** A lot of fire is not fire.

**Teaching:** It is used as a warning about having or doing anything in excess. *Too much of anything is poisonous.* Excesses cause trouble and may affect one's behavior or character negatively. Amassing wealth creates arrogance, corruption and greed which is not acceptable in the community.

**Bible parallel:** Luke 12:15

*"And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."*

## 29. Bwoba tosobota kutunula mumaaso, olibeera mabega.

**Swahili:** Kama hauwezi kutazama mbele, utaendelea kubaki nyuma.

**French:** Si tu ne peux pas regarder en avant, tu resteras toujours derrière.

**English:** If you cannot look ahead, you will always remain behind.

**Teaching:** Hope and determination is important for a person to be able to develop economically and intellectually. We all must focus on moving ahead with our endeavors, regardless of any challenges we might encounter.

**Bible parallel:** Hebrew 6:11

*"We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized."*

### 30. Bwoba oli mulungi, nelwolifa entaanayo elyagalwa.

**Swahili:** Kama wewe ni mtu mzuri hata baada ya kifo kaburi lako litapendwa.

**French:** Si tu es une bonne personne, votre tombeau sera aimé même après la mort.

**English:** If you're a good person even after death your grave is loved.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us to be of good character and do good deeds so that people will remember them even after they are dead. A person is remembered for the good things they do in life. We should therefore do well.

**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.”*

### 31. Bwoba onywanje no mukulu, oba otuliidde muguwa.

**Swahili:** Ukiwa rafiki wa mkuu kumbuka huwa amekalia kamba.

**French:** Quand tu fais amitié avec un chef, rappelles toi que tu t'assois sur une corde.

**English:** When you befriend a chief remember that he sits on a rope.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us to tolerate one another at all times. We can have a friendship, or blood ties with people who are in authority, are powerful politically or economically. Sometimes they may not be there for us and the bond may break. We should understand them and their status, accommodate them as they are. They may fail us but we should accept that their position can prevent their freedom and time for us.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 27:10

*“Do not forsake your friend and your father's friend, and do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity. Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother who is far away.”*

### 32. Bwoyo kya enju, oyinza okusazamu omukka?

**Swahili:** Ukiichoma nyumba, unaweza kuuficha moshi?

**French:** Si tu brules une maison, peux-tu cacher la fumée?

**English:** If you burn a house, can you conceal the smoke?

**Teaching:** Nothing remains a secret for long. It will always be exposed, whether it is a good thing or not. Early signs of the repercussions are always present but we ignore them. We should beware of actions which may cause trouble later.

**Bible parallel:** Hebrews 4:13

*“And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”*

### 33. Bwosalawo okulya embwa, lya ensava.

**Swahili:** Kama umeamua kumla mbwa, mle aliye mnono.

**French:** Si tu décides de manger un chien, manges celui qui est gras.

**English:** If you have decided to eat a dog, eat a fat one.

**Teaching:** It teaches us that when we decide to undertake anything we should be focused and put as much effort as possible in order to succeed. We should always do our best, think big and act big. Do your best always without fear.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 12:11

*“Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.”*

#### 34. Bwosekerera ekibya osekerera mubumbii.

**Swahili:** Ukiichekelea bakuli, unamchekelea mtunzi.

**French:** Lorsque tu ris au bol, tu ris au potier.

**English:** If you laugh at the bowl, you laugh at the potter.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us to respect and honor those who facilitated our wellbeing regardless of their age and status. Appreciate those who supported us in our daily walk with life.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 23:22

*“Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.”*

#### 35. Ebbeere lya nyabo telefuna Bigenge.

**Swahili:** Titi la mama halipatwi na ukoma.

**French:** Les seins d’une mère, ne peuvent être lépreux.

**English:** The mother’s breast cannot get leprosy.

**Teaching:** This proverb reminds that the value of a mother cannot be reduced by anything in this world. The support and provisions given by a mother are continuous even when children mature into adults. Even if other people give negative opinions about one’s mother, we should always value her, regardless of her character, age, social and economic status.

**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.”*

#### 36. Ecika ekikolimire, mwemuva abakazi abalwaana na mafumu.

**Swahili:** Ukoo ulio laaniwa ni ule wanawake hupigana na mikuki.

**French:** Le clan maudit, est celui que les femmes combattent avec de lances.

**English:** A cursed clan is that whose women fight with spears.

**Teaching:** It is unusual for a woman to be a warrior in any community. It is the duty of the men to be protectors. Unusual behavior may not be acceptable even in modern society and it is considered to be a taboo. We should hold the responsibilities expected by the norms of the community.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Timothy 2:12

*“But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.”*

1 Corinthians 11:3

*“But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.”*

#### 37. Ekilabo ekitono koowa munno.

**Swahili:** Zawadi ndogo huweka nguvu kwa urafiki.

**French:** Un petit cadeau, redresse l’ami.

**English:** A small gift strengthens a friendship.

**Teaching:** This proverb reminds us that the small deeds we do for one another help to strengthen bonds. They are a sign of appreciation, which builds the esteem of the other person. Let us learn to give than to receive.

**Bible parallel:** Matthew 5:16

*“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*

**38. Ekiri muttu kimanywa nyini kyo.**

**Swahili:** Kilicho ndani ya mfuko hujulikana tu na mwenyewe.

**French:** Ce qui est dans le sac, est connu par le propriétaire.

**English:** What is inside a package is known only to its owner?

**Teaching:** Our secrets and plans are only known to ourselves and can only be known by someone else unless we disclose. We should not assume we know about other people, their plans and intentions. Only God knows our inner thoughts and plans.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Samuel 16:7

*“But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”*

**39. Ekyengela amangu, kivunda mangu.**

**Swahili:** Kinacho iva haraka, huoza haraka.

**French:** Ce qui est cueilli avant, pourrit vite.

**English:** What ripens quickly, rots quickly?

**Teaching:** This is used as a warning about gaining property or wealth quickly. Easily acquired wealth gets depleted quickly. *Come easy go easy.* We should learn to gradually acquire what we wish and also ensure sustainability them for the future.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 23:4-5

*“Do not toil to acquire wealth; be discerning enough to desist. When your eyes light on it, it is gone, for suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven.”*

Proverbs 13:11

*“Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.”*

**40. Embwa elina eggumba mu kamwa teluma.**

**Swahili:** Mbwa aliye na mfupa mdomoni hawezi kukuuma.

**French:** Un chien avec un os dans sa gueule, ne peut pas te mordre.

**English:** A dog with a bone in his mouth cannot bite you.

**Teaching:** We cannot serve two masters at the same time. We need to focus on a specific endeavor in order to succeed. When our attention is divided, we are bound to fail.

**Bible parallel:** Matthew 6:24

*“No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”*

**41. Empungu telya bire.**

**Swahili:** Hata tai mkubwa zaidi hushuka juu ya mti kupumzika.

**French:** Même l’aigle puissant, descend assis pour se reposer.

**English:** Even the mightiest eagle comes down to the tree tops to rest.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to remind people that however important or wealthy we are, we sometimes experience difficulties which lowers our ego. We cannot remain static.

Life has its ups and downs. One time we are comfortable and contented but the next maybe otherwise.

**Bible parallel:** Genesis 8:22

*“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”*

#### **42. Endiga tekabiira mwaana gwa mbuzi effudde.**

**Swahili:** Kondoo halii kwa kifo cha mwana mbuzi.

**French:** Un mouton ne se lamente pas de la mort d’un chevreau.

**English:** A sheep does not lament the death of a goat’s kid.

**Teaching:** That which does not concern you directly usually becomes of no interest. Many people act disinterested and de-touched. It encourages us to support others even when they are not our associates or relatives, and without discrimination.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Thessalonians 5:11

*“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”*

#### **43. Enjovu ebbiri wezilwanira, essubi lisesetera.**

**Swahili:** Wakati ndovu wawili wanapo pigana nyasi ndio hupondwa.

**French:** Quand deux éléphants se bagarrent, ce sont les herbes qui souffert.

**English:** When two elephants fight the grass gets trampled.

**Teaching:** When the authority disagree or wrangle about issues, the subjects are the ones who suffer. Sometimes it is the side effect of failed authority which affects the stability of the lower level staff in an organization. Family members and children may suffer because the parents are in disagreement. Those in authority should have good relationships.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Timothy 3:2

*“Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, and able to teach.”*

#### **44. Enjovu telemelerwa sanga lyaayo.**

**Swahili:** Ndovu hawezi kushindwa kuzibeba pembe zake.

**French:** L’éléphant ne se fatigue pas avec sa trompe.

**English:** An elephant can never fail to carry its tusks.

**Teaching:** This proverb is common among all African ethnic groups. It teaches us to be resilient and understand that we have the ability to handle our challenges. We are also able to appreciate and accept our situations, and focus on making a better tomorrow for ourselves and other people.

**Bible parallel:** James 1:2-4

*“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”*

#### **45. Enkima bwelemerelwa okutuukirira elyenvu, nti ago tegengedde.**

**Swahili:** Nyani akishindwa ni kufikia ndizi zilizoiva kwa mikono yake, husema hayajaiva.

**French:** Lorsque le singe ne peut pas arriver à toucher des bananes mûres par ses mains, il dit qu’elles ne sont pas mûres.

**English:** When a monkey can't reach the ripe bananas with his hands, he says they are not ripe.

**Teaching:** People give excuses and reasons for failing to do something when it is not easy to do. We should learn to be persistent and focused on what we want to achieve. Continue your efforts and in the end there will be success.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 16:13

*“Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”*

#### **46. Enkuba tetonyera omu.**

**Swahili:** Mvua hainyeshi juu ya paa moja tu.

**French:** La pluie ne tombe pas sur un seul toit.

**English:** Rain does not fall on one roof alone.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us that whatever we experience is similar to what other people do too. All human beings have same challenges or comforts. When we have problems, we can get assistance from others who have experienced them and are wiser from it. We are encouraged to keep seeking solutions by consultation.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

*“Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ...”*

#### **47. Engalo ensa zigwanira nyini zo.**

**Swahili:** Mikono mitupu hufurahisha mwenyewe pekee.

**French:** Les mains vident, plaisent seulement ses propriétaires.

**English:** Empty hands only please their owner.

**Teaching:** In the African tradition, a person with nothing is not valued by others; and is viewed as a burden, even when they do not realize it. Every person is expected to work and achieve something which can help themselves and others, so they are viewed as responsible and reliable. They may have property, skills or wisdom to offer others. Without these, how do we give any input to support the community? We all need to have a way of helping to build others.

**Bible parallel:** Acts 20:35

*“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”*

1 Timothy 5:8

*“But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”*

#### 48. Enyana tesekerera nkunku.

**Swahili:** Ndama hamchekelei ng'ombe asiye kuwa na pembe.

**French:** **Un veau ne se moque pas à une vache sans cornes.**

**English:** A calf doesn't laugh at a hornless cow.

**Teaching:** It is used as a warning that we are quick to see other people's weaknesses and forget that we may also have the same or worse, now or in future. In the future, what has befallen others may befall us too. We should appreciate one another regardless of our challenges and inabilities.

**Bible parallel:** Matthew 7:1-5

*"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."*

#### 49. Entalwooza yamala amazzi mulwendo.

**Swahili:** Yule mtu hafikirii ni kama chungu inayokataa kukaa vizuri maji yakamwagika yote.

**French:** Celui qui ne pense pas, est comme une gourde mal placée et dont toute eau est versée.

**English:** The one who does not think is like a gourd which fails to sit well and all the water pours.

**Teaching:** A person who takes things for granted, or takes things lightly retains no knowledge of things in his mind. It is important to value what is told to us so that it carries meaning which can help us in our personal development. Otherwise, we remain without wisdom and knowledge to guide our lives.

**Bible parallel:** James 1:5

*"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."*

#### 50. Ensuwa entono nazo, zirina amatu.

**Swahili:** Vyungu vidogo vina masikio.

**French:** Les petits pots ont des oreilles.

**English:** Little pots have ears.

**Teaching:** The proverb is used as a warning against talking about other people negatively or gossiping. Other people may hear, even children and expose the details. Especially whatever negative information children hear about a person, they perceive it as the truth so we should avoid engaging in negative conversation.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 26:22

*"The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body."*

James 4:11

*"Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge."*

**51. Essubi elyokya enyumba embii, iyelyokya ne nungi.**

**Swahili:** Tochi ya nyasi inayoichoma nyumba mbaya huchoma pia ile nzuri.

**French:** La torche d'herbes qui brule une mauvaise maison, brule une bonne aussi.

**English:** The grass torch that burns a bad house also burns a good one.

**Teaching:** An action may be good or bad depending on circumstances. Some things we do may affect some people positively, but others negatively. We should be careful because our actions have consequences.

**Bible parallel:** Romans 6:23

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

**52. Eyali alumidwa omusota, bwalaba omunya agudduka.**

**Swahili:** Anaye umwa na nyoka huogopa mjuji.

**French:** Celui qui est mordu par un serpent, fuit même un lézard.

**English:** He who is bitten by a snake fears a lizard.

**Teaching:** As the saying goes, “*once bitten, twice shy*” When we get into a problem once, we should be more careful not to get into it again. We should be careful even of small mistakes and not underestimate the extent of damage they can cause because even a small mistake can cause a lot of damage.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 24:16

*“For the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity.”*

**53. Eyettikka obuvunanyizibwa, era afuna okunenye zebwa.**

**Swahili:** Mtu anaye beba majukumu pia hupata lawama.

**French:** On blâme même lapersonne qui exécute sa responsabilité.

**English:** A person who carries responsibility also receives blame.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us that every leader will give an account to God for those who followed them in their lifetime. A leader must be sure that they've said and done everything as directed by the Lord and expected by the community, so that people will stay on the right track. People judge leaders when things go wrong. They blame the leaders who did their work and their best.

**Bible parallel:** Hebrews 13:17

*“Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you”*

**54. Ezenkanankana ne bisiki tezaaka.**

**Swahili:** Vijiti vidogo vya kuni vinavyo jifanya kuwa sawa na zile kubwa haziwaki.

**French:** Une petite pièce de bois de chauffage qui cherche à se comparer au plus grand, n'éclaire pas.

**English:** Small pieces of firewood that seek to equate themselves to the big ones do not light.

**Teaching:** The proverb is used as a warning that we should accept who we are and what we have instead of pretending to be different. We should not elevate our status or become

know-it-all, but should be ourselves. It does not benefit us at all to pretend to be what we are not. People appreciate us as we are and despise us when we pretend.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Samuel 16:7

*“But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”*

#### **55. Kamu kamu gwe muganda.**

**Swahili:** Kijiti kimoja kwa kimoja hutengeneza kifungu.

**French:** Un bâton à un autre fait un fagot.

**English:** One stick at a time makes a bundle.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to encourage people to undertake their endeavors step by step until they finally achieve their intended goal. Even the most difficult job can be successfully done if it is approached with a specific and precise procedure. Relationships too can be built slowly until they become strong and steady.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 9:24

*“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.”*

#### **56. Kakulu ta kulilwa.**

**Swahili:** Huwezi kuwa juu ya mkubwa.

**French:** Tu ne peux pas être au-dessus d’un leader.

**English:** You cannot be above the leader.

**Teaching:** There is always an authority to lead and give instructions to others. We should respect them and be subjective to their leadership. We cannot all be leaders.

**Bible parallel:** Romans 13:1

*“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.”*

#### **57. Kyenkola banange sagala bakinkole.**

**Swahili:** Anaye dhulumu akidhulumiwa husema amekandamizwa.

**French:** Celui déplaie les autres, quand il est offensé, il dit qu’il est opprimé.

**English:** The one who offends others, when offended says he/she is being oppressed.

**Teaching:** It warns that we should show consideration for others so that we also receive the same consideration from others. Treat others with respect and they will also respect us.

**Bible parallel:** Matthew 7:12

*“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”*

#### **58. Lubaale mbeera nga ne mbiro kwotadde.**

**Swahili:** Omba usaidizi kutoka kwa mizimu baada ya kuitumia nguvu zako zote.

**French:** Demande l’aide à l’esprit après avoir utilisée toute ton effort.

**English:** Ask help from the spirits after having used all your strength.

**Teaching:** This proverb encourages us to do our best to ensure we meet our objectives successfully. We should not feel discouraged when we don’t achieve our intended goals quickly. We should keep making more efforts and only seek other options when we fail.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Chronicles 20:17

*“You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.”*

**59. “Mama yasinga okuweeka”**

**Swahili:** “mama yangu kwa hakika ndiye anaye jua kumbeba motto zaidi ya wote” mtoto husema.

**French:** “Ma mère est évidemment la meilleure berceuse,” dit le bébé.

**English:** “my mother is indeed the best baby carrier,' says the baby.”

**Teaching:** Everyone believes that their familiar ground is the best. We should learn to expose ourselves to other experiences which help us to grow intellectually, socially and economically. We learn by sharing with other people of different culture, race, political and religious affiliations, among others.

**Bible parallel:** Philippians 4:9

*“The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”*

**60. Mpola mpola yatuuka emugga.**

**Swahili:** Pole pole na kwa haki, mdudu alifika kwa kisima.

**French:** Lentement, mais sûrement, le ver arrive bien.

**English:** Slowly but surely, the worm reached the well.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches that we should take time when doing everything. Being meticulous helps us to be successful and work without errors.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Timothy 1:7

*“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”*

**61. Mulungi emabega, mumaaso mubi.**

**Swahili:** Kizuri kutoka nyuma, kibaya mbele.

**French:** Belle au derrière, mais laid en avant.

**English:** Beautiful from behind, ugly in front.

**Teaching:** We can judge people or situations incorrectly. Whatever may seem appealing may turn out to be the opposite. We should take time to have some experience before deciding on anything.

**Bible parallel:** James 4:11-12

*“Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?”*

**62. Omukazi omugumba, ufuna nyo abagenyi.**

**Swahili:** Mwanamke tasa hupata wageni wengi.

**French:** Une femme stérile, reçoit beaucoup de visiteurs.

**English:** An infertile woman gets a lot of visitors.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us to be resilient. When our matters don't go as expected, we get many people giving their advice and opinions. We should bear our challenge and

overcome it use appropriate methods and not trying too many solutions because it damages instead of mending.

**Bible parallel:** Philippians 4:13

*“I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me.”*

Proverbs 13:10

*“Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.”*

**63. Ne ssanja lyaaliko olulagala.**

**Swahili:** Tawi la ndizi lililo zeeka, hapo awali lilikuwa change na la rangi ya kijani kibichi.

**French:** Une Vieille feuille de bananier, fut jeune et verte.

**English:** An old banana leaf was once young and green.

**Teaching:** Everyone was once young and matures along the years. Young people should learn that one changes status, age and gains wisdom as years pass by. They will also grow old one day. We should prepare for changes in our lives.

**Bible parallel:** Titus 2:2-3

*Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved too much wine, teaching what is good,*

**64. Nonuzinyi ennyo alekulira ekidaala.**

**Swahili:** Hata anayejua kucheza densi zaidi ya wote, siku moja atajiuzulu.

**French:** Même le meilleur danseur, doit prendre pension un jour.

**English:** Even the best dancer one day must retire.

**Teaching:** Everything we do is for a time. Nothing lasts forever in this life. Businesses can thrive but also fail later. One should be prepared because changes come in life.

**Bible parallel:** Ecclesiastes 7:14

*“In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.”*

**65. Obulamu bulinga kisikiriize ria na mukka, buyita mangu ate tebudda.**

**Swahili:** Maisha ni kama kivuli na ukungu. Hupita haraka na haipo tena.

**French:** La vie, c’est comme une bouillard ou l’ombre, elle passe rapidement et n’est plus.

**English:** Life is like a shadow and a mist. It passes quickly by and is no more.

**Teaching:** Nothing lasts forever and therefore, we should value it why we have it. We should learn to appreciate what we have in terms of resources, wellbeing, abilities and wisdom. Things can change and we no longer have them. Make best use of time and resources.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Thessalonians 3:9

*“For what thanks can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account,”*

**66. Obulamu bulinga masanda bwoseleera, ogenda mumaaso.**

**Swahili:** Maisha imejaa magandaya ndizi. Ukiteleza unaendelea.

**French:** Lavie est pleine du corps de banane, tu barbotes et continues.

**English:** Life is full of banana skins. You slip, you carry on.

**Teaching:** We have difficult times and easy times during our everyday lives. Times are different. We should learn to be encouraged and not give up. When we fail we should pick ourselves up and try again and again.

**Bible parallel:** Joshua 1:9

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

**67. Okugezaako oba okugwa si bunafu.**

**Swahili:** Kujaribu na kushindwa sio uzembe.

**French:** Essayer et échouer ne sont pas la paraisse.

**English:** To try and to fail is not laziness.

**Teaching:** When we make an effort to succeed and fail, we should not be judged as being lazy or unwilling. We should give one hope that they can succeed and therefore, keep trying. However long it takes one will succeed.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 10:4

*“A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent enriches.”*

**68. Omwana omubi takaddiwa ewaka.**

**Swahili:** Msichana asiye mrembo hazeekei kwao.

**French:** La fille ne devenait pas vieille à la maison.

**English:** An ugly girl does not become old at home.

**Teaching:** All women are expected to get married in the African tradition. They have a duty to ensure the continuation of a generation. Above physical beauty is the ability to sire children, nurture a family and serve the community. There is always a positive outcome whoever difficult matters might be - No problem lasts forever, it will always end.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Peter 5:10

*“The suffering won't last forever. It won't be long before this generous God who has great plans for us in Christ - eternal and glorious plans they are! - will have you put together and on your feet for good.”*

**69. Wange omubi ansingira omulungii owa mulilwana.**

**Swahili:** Mtoto wako mwenye sura mbaya ni wa dhamana kwako zaidi ya yule mwenye sura nzuri na ni wa jirani yako.

**French:** Un enfant laid de toi, est plus que celui qui de ton voisin.

**English:** An ugly child of your own is more to you than a beautiful one belonging to your neighbor.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us that we should rely on what is ours and no other people's property because we can lose it. We should value what we have and be satisfied with it.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Corinthians 3:5

*“Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God,”*

## 70. Ofundako okuwasa omukadde okusinga obuwuulu.

**Swahili:** Afadhali kumuoa mwanamke mzee kuliko kubaki bila mke.

**French:** Il est bon de se marier à une vieille mademoiselle que de rester célibataire.

**English:** It is better to be married to an old lady than to remain unmarried.

**Teaching:** This proverb encourages marriage and continuation of bloodlines. A person is respected when they have a family and not being single. Being married indicates that he has a sense of responsibility as a man in the community.

**Bible parallel:** Genesis 2:24

*“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”*

## 71. Okwelinda ssi buti, ensanafu etambula egaludde.

**Swahili:** Tahadhari sio uoga; hata wadudu hutembea na silaha.

**French:** La caution n’est pas une lâcheté, car même la fourmi se déplacer en main armée.

**English:** Caution is not cowardice; even the ants’ march armed.

**Teaching:** Being careful or staying away from confrontations is not a sign of one being fearful, but being precautionary. We should maintain control over our reactions to issues and use dialogue to resolve matters.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 5:15-17

*“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”*

## 72. Okudizza guba mwoyo.

**Swahili:** Kurudisha shukrani ni moyo.

**French:** Remercier, c’est le Cœur.

**English:** Being thankful is the heart.

**Teaching:** We should learn to appreciate what others give us or do for us. Often we do not remember to express our gratitude. If we did not accept this deeds, then we may not even say ‘thank you’. Being thankful is a choice made by a genuine person’s heart.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 5:20

*“Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,”*

## 73. Okufa nkovu etalisimuuka.

**Swahili:** Kifo ni kovu lisilo pona.

**French:** La mort est une cicatrice qui ne guérit jamais.

**English:** Death is a scar that never heals.

**Teaching:** Death must come to all human beings. A loved one cannot be forgotten because they were part of the family. The sight of their children and family members trigger memories of the person. This pain of loss never leaves.

**Bible parallel:** Psalm 34:18

*“The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”*

**74. Olinye jegava nonywa amatabangufu.**

**Swahili:** Mtu hafuati nyayo ndani ya maji.

**French:** On ne poursuit pas les empreintes de pied dans l'eau.

**English:** One does not follow the footprints in the water.

**Teaching:** This proverb reminds us that deeds are more important than empty talk. What we can see is more influential than what is just spoken. Behavior, for example, is adapted because it is visibly expressed and hence results in influence of other people. If we influence people it is because there is evidence of their deeds.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Peter 2:12

*“Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.”*

**75. Olubuto lwo bwoluwa emmere embi lujja kukubira engoma ozine.**

**Swahili:** Ukipatia tumbo chakula kibaya, itakupigia ngoma ucheze.

**French:** Lorsque tu donnes une mauvaise nourriture à ton estomac, ça tambourinera pour que tu dances.

**English:** If you give bad food to your stomach, it will drum for you to dance.

**Teaching:** The proverb is used as a warning. If you get yourself into trouble, then get ready to accept the consequences. We should avoid getting into trouble.

**Bible parallel:** Colossians 3:25

*“For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.”*

**76. Oluliimi lwa mukabalo lukaawa.**

**Swahili:** Ulimi wa wake wenza ni mchungu.

**French:** La langue de coépouse est la meilleure.

**English:** The tongue of co-wife is bitter.

**Teaching:** This proverb warns about jealousy and lack of appreciation of others. It encourages people to live in harmony without suspicion of each other. We should cohabit within a community and respect each other.

**Bible parallel:** Colossians 3:13

*“Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”*

**77. Olunaku olumu, teluvunza nyama.**

**Swahili:** Siku moja haiwezi kufanya nyama ioze.

**French:** Un jour de plus fera la viande pourrir.

**English:** One day more won't make the meat rot.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches us that a problem can be solved as soon as it is realized. Delaying the solution makes it worse and it may not be solved. Sickness and behavior, for instance, can be changed early.

**Bible parallel:** James 3:2

*“For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.”*

**78. Omukulu watali, ebikere bibunduka.**

**Swahili:** Mkubwa akiwa hayuko, chura huruka ndani.

**French:** Quand le chief est absent, les grenouilles dansent.

**English:** When the master is away, the frogs hop in.

**Teaching:** Irresponsibility is not acceptable by any community. It teaches that we should not take advantage of the absence of authority. Self-motivation leads us to work without supervision because we are aware of our responsibilities.

**Bible parallel:** Matthew 24:45-47

*“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.”*

**79. Omwaana owegonjebwa, aweesa nyina ekitiibwa.**

**Swahili:** Mtoto wa tabia nzuri hufanya mamake aheshimiwe.

**French:** L’enfant qui a un bon caractère, fait que sa mère soit respectée.

**English:** The child with good behaviors makes the mother to be respected.

**Teaching:** All people appreciate persons of good behavior and positive attitude. Those who associate with them benefit from the association and are respected too. It encourages people to be of good character; change for the benefit of all in the community and family.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 22:1

*“A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.”*

**80. Omutamiivu tawaba.**

**Swahili:** Mlevi hakosei njia.

**French:** Un ivrogne ne se trompe pas le chemin.

**English:** A drunkard does not lose the way.

**Teaching:** It teaches us that whatever we say about others or do to them is usually pre-planned. In our conscience are our thoughts and plans. We should take seriously what people say about us and reflect on it. It may change our lives for the better.

**Bible parallel:** James 5:19-20

*“My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.”*

**81. Omuze gwo muntu gumalwa ntaana.**

**Swahili:** Tabia mbaya ya mtu humalizwa na kaburi.

**French:** Les mauvaises habitudes d’une personne sont stoppées par la tombe.

**English:** The bad behaviors of a person are stopped by the grave.

**Teaching:** The message is that behavior is within a person, and once learned it may not be unlearn permanently. Sometimes there could be relapse. The negative reputation of a person only ends when the person dies. We should ensure we create good reputation so that our legacy continues after we die.

**Bible parallel:** Revelation 14:13

*“And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!”*

**82. Omukwaano ogwokumpi, ye mulabe wo.**

**Swahili:** Rafiki wa karibu anaweza kuwa adui wa karibu.

**French:** Un ami intime peut devenir ton proche ennemi.

**English:** A close friend can become a close enemy.

**Teaching:** Those we trust most, we tend to tell them our innermost secrets and thoughts. We should be careful about doing this because if they are not genuine friends, they will use these details against you. The person who knows you best, is the one who destroys you. Don't be too close and too trusting to other people.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 18:24

*“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*

**83. Omumpi wakoma wakwaata.**

**Swahili:** Mtu mfupi huweka mfuko wake pale mkono wake utafikia.

**French:** Une personne à petite taille, met toujours sa poche là où sa main peut arriver.

**English:** A short person hangs his bag where his hand can reach.

**Teaching:** It teaches us to only desire to undertake what endeavors we can manage. We should not try to achieve what we cannot manage. Trying to do too many things at a time leads to failure. Let us take responsibilities which we can manage successfully.

**Bible parallel:** Ecclesiastes 5:10

*“He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.”*

**84. Omuntu bwabeera obwoomu, yefuula kabaka.**

**Swahili:** Mtu akiwa peke yake hujifanya kama mfalme.

**French:** Lorsqu'une personne est seule, elle se porte comme un roi.

**English:** If one is on his own, he behaves like a king.

**Teaching:** One who is alone controls himself and does what he wants. It is important to take responsibility for oneself and other people. Self-importance leads to trouble. Embrace other people and you will have good association with the community, have a sense of belonging and be accepted by others.

**Bible parallel:** James 4:6

*“But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”*

**85. Omutima gulinga mbuzi, gwetaaga kusiba.**

**Swahili:** Moyo ni kama mbuzi inayohitaji kufungwa.

**French:** Le Cœur est comme une chèvre qui doit être attachée.

**English:** The heart is like a goat that has to be tied up.

**Teaching:** It teaches that we should control our emotions whatever the circumstance. We may desire to have relationships or properties which are prohibited by social norms. We should be reasonable and make acceptable decisions, respecting the human universal values.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Corinthians 10:13

*“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”*

**86. Omusajja nga alina ebizibu, Aleesa.**

**Swahili:** Mwanamme akiwa na wasiwasi huvuta sigara.

**French:** Lorsqu'un homme a de suspects, il fume la cigarette.

**English:** When a man is troubled he smokes.

**Teaching:** When a person is not at ease, he gets himself distractions instead of talking about his troubles. We should learn to accommodate the challenges we encounter and seek solutions. Our endeavors should not be stalled by challenges; instead they should help us grow.

**Bible parallel:** Romans 12:12

*“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.”*

**87. Omuwala omubi takula mu maka.**

**Swahili:** Msichana asiye mrembo hazeekei kwao.

**French:** Une fille laide ne devient pas vieille dans sa maison.

**English:** An ugly girl does not become old at home.

**Teaching:** Culture requires that every woman be married and leave her parent's homestead. Therefore, every girl, regardless of whether she is ugly or beautiful, has to get married to make her own home. A community's roots are built on the continuation of family lineage.

**Bible parallel:** Genesis 2:24

*“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”*

**88. Omuyizzi awondera enjovu, tatekera kukasukira bunyonyi mayinja.**

**Swahili:** Mwindaji anaye mfuata ndovu hasimama kurushia ndege mawe.

**French:** Le chasseur qui suit un éléphant, ne cesse pas à jeter des pierres aux oiseaux.

**English:** The hunter who is following an elephant does not stop to throw stones at birds.

**Teaching:** When we are determined to achieve a certain goal, we must put our efforts and focus on doing so. Destructions from other people and circumstances should not derail our efforts, or discourage us.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Timothy 2:4

*“No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.”*

**89. Omwezi gutambula mpota, naye gubuuka ekibuga.**

**Swahili:** Mwezi huenda pole pole, lakini huuvuka mji.

**French:** La lune va lentement, mais elle traverse de villes.

**English:** The moon moves slowly, but it crosses the town.

**Teaching:** We should be methodical about how we do our things. Being in a hurry may not give us the results we wish to achieve. Being precise and sure of what we are undertaking leads us to success. As the saying goes “hurry hurry has no blessings”.

**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.”*

#### **90. Sente esala okusinga ejjambiya.**

**Swahili:** Pesa ina makali kuliko upanga.

**French:** L’argent est puissant qu’une machette.

**English:** Money is sharper than a sword.

**Teaching:** Money has power to make a person do anything, whether good or evil. Some successes result because a lot of resources were invested. Sometimes people are corrupted to enable certain activities to be done. It enables what is impossible in most cases and we should be careful how we use it. It should be for good not for evil.

**Bible parallel:** Mark 4:19

*“But the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.”*

#### **91. Sotta abudongo nga bukyaali bubisi.**

**Swahili:** Ufinyange udongo ungali na maji.

**French:** Piétines la terre lorsqu’elle est encore mouillée.

**English:** Work the clay when it is still wet.

**Teaching:** We should correct those who make mistakes, at the earliest opportunity so that the problem does not persist or be repeated. Correction of unacceptable behavior changes a person for the better, making them more responsible persons. Waiting to make the correction can lead to irreversible consequences. Children for instance should be corrected and made to understand their mistakes, so that they become responsible persons.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 22:6

*“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.”*

#### **92. Taata ye ngabo ya maka.**

**Swahili:** Baba ni ngao ya jamii.

**French:** Le père est un bouclier de la famille.

**English:** The father is a shield for the family.

**Teaching:** In the African context, a father is the leader of the family and has the responsibility of protecting his family in every way. Their security means sustaining them and meeting their daily needs, and barring physical danger. He protects the name of the family and ensures they hold respect in the community.

**Bible parallel:** 1 Timothy 3:4

*“He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive,”*

### 93. Teli azaalwa na bumanyirivu.

**Swahili:** Hakuna naye zaliwa na ujuzi.

**French:** Personne n'est sage.

**English:** Nobody is born wise.

**Teaching:** *Experience is the best teacher*-so the saying goes. We cannot know everything until we are taught or learn by various means. We should learn to undertake endeavors without fear so that we get to perform, fail and do better in future. Actions lead us to better abilities, skills and knowledge.

**Bible parallel:** Ephesians 2:10

*"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."*

### 94. Tewesiganga omuntu.

**Swahili:** Usiamini kila mtu.

**French:** Ne crois pas à tout le monde.

**English:** Do not trust everyone.

**Teaching:** This proverb warns us to be careful about those to trust and tell our secrets or plans. Some of the people we consider as trusted friends may have ill intentions and do not appreciate our achievement. They want to make us fail. We should associate only with genuine friends.

**Bible parallel:** Proverbs 27:5-6

*"Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy."*

**1 John 4:1**

*"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world."*

### 95. Tokungula kyotasimba.

**Swahili:** Usikidunishe kile ambacho haukukilima.

**French:** Ne néglige pas ce que tu n'as pas cultivé.

**English:** Do not belittle what you did not cultivate.

**Teaching:** We should respect other people's efforts and achievements. Instead we should emulate them and focus on succeeding too. We may not even be able to achieve what they have, so we should appreciate their outcomes.

**Bible parallel:** 2 Corinthians 9:10-11

*"He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God."*

### 96. Towakananga na musiru.

**Swahili:** Usipuuze nguvu za watu wajinga wakiwa wengi.

**French:** Ne néglige pas la force des gens ignorants lorsqu'ils sont nombreux.

**English:** Never underestimate the power of stupid people in large numbers.

**Teaching:** This proverb reminds us the power of many people having a common mind and when people work as a team, it doesn't matter what their inabilities and weaknesses are, they succeed. We all have something to offer the community.

**Bible parallel:** 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.”*

### 97. Toyonoona muzinga olwokwokebwa ne njuki emu.

**Swahili:** Hakuna haja ya mtu kuuharibu mzinga kwa sababu ya kuumwa na nyuki mmoja.

**French:** Il n'y a pas de nécessités pour qu'une personne puisse casser la calebasse à cause d'être mordu par l'abeille.

**English:** There is no need for a man to destroy all beehives just because of a sting from a bee.

**Teaching:** It is used as a warning. When one person wrongs us, we should not hold responsible those associated to them. An individual's misconduct or unacceptable behavior should be handled with the person. The reputation of one person can affect other people close to them, so we should learn to forgive.

**Bible parallel:** Matthew 6:14-15

*“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”*

### 98. Tukozeza njuba emu naye si naka gonna.

**Swahili:** Tunatumia jua moja lakini sio boma zetu.

**French:** Nous utilisons le soleil, mais il n'est pas notre maison d'élevage.

**English:** We share the same sun but not our homes.

**Teaching:** This proverb teaches to remember that our loyalty is stronger to our family than other people. We can be friends and associates but family bonds are forever. Our family ties are unique and an outsider may not fit in well. The inner issues of the family may not be shared with anyone other than family.

**Bible parallel:** Genesis

18:19

*“For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.”*

### 99. Wakili okusooka ne bibi nomala nebirungi.

**Swahili:** Afadhali majaribu yakukujie mwanzoni na upate amani baadaye, kuliko yakupate mwishowe.

**French:** Il est bon que les tentations viennent pour que tu puisses être en paix à la fin.

**English:** It is better that trials come to you in the beginning and you find peace

afterwards, than coming to you at the end.

**Teaching:** It is said that ‘*troubles have no roots*’ – they come and go. When we face challenges we should appreciate them and focus on resolving them, then moving on. Solutions should be sort and not wait until when it is too late.

**Bible parallel:** Revelation 5:5

*“And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”*

**100. Zimba Nnene, takutelaako muti.**

**Swahili:** Jenga kubwa, hakuwekei mti.

**French:** Là où il y a les maçons, il n’y a pas d’arbre.

**English:** Build a big one (house), he/she does not add for you any timber.

**Teaching:** It encourages us to ignore negative opinions from other people because they do not help us to achieve our goals. They do not give any input to establish your endeavors. Stay focused and you will achieve your intended goals.

**Bible parallel: 1 Corinthians 7:35**

*“I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.”*

## **APPENDIX**

### **A RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR THE COLLECTION OF 100 KOOKI (UGANDA) PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS**

**By Atemu Ishiabwe**  
(Kenya)

## **INTRODUCTION**

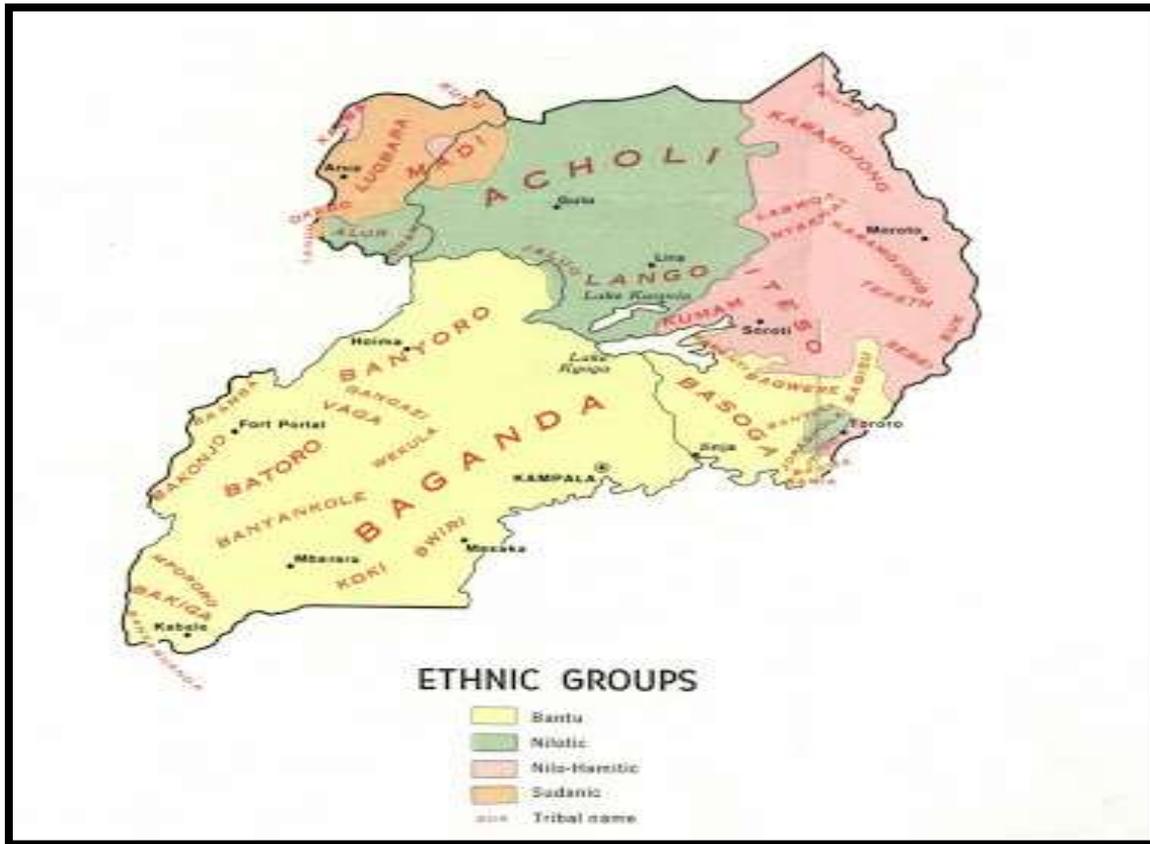
### **The Location**

The Rakai district is a multi-ethnic region which was separated from the Masaka district of Uganda in the mid-1970s. The prominent ethnic group in this region is the Baganda, with smaller groups including Bakoki, Banyarwanda, Barundi, Banyankole and Bahaya. Different sub-dialects of the Ganda language are spoken. These include the Kooki (*Olukooki*), Sese (*Olusese*), Vuma (*Luvuma*) and Diopa (*Ludiopa*). The Kooki dialect is endangered and may be almost extinct and very few members of this community speak it. The Kingdom of Kooki occupied the Rakai district.

The Ethnographic Maps Showing the Ethnic Groups of Uganda



## The Ethnographic Map Showing the Location of the Bakooki in Uganda



### History

Buganda was one of several small principalities founded by Bantu-speaking people in what is now Uganda. It was founded in the late 14th century, when the *kabaka*, or ruler, of the Ganda people came to exercise strong centralized control over his domains, called Buganda. By the 19th century Buganda had become the largest and most powerful kingdom in the region. The local chiefs of conquered areas ruled as personal appointees of the *kabaka*. The Bakooki are Ganda, but speak the *Kooki* dialect which is almost extinct.

### Myth of Origin

The Bakooki myth of origin is interesting. They say that the Kabaka Mutesa I made a girl servant pregnant and the identity of the one who fathered the child had to be kept a secret to uphold the respect and dignity of the royalty. One of his senior servants whose origin was the Bunyoro Kitaro Kingdom, was called Kitayimbwa Chaja Nemukoka, which meant “*it was not planted it came with floods.*” He decided to marry the girl as a cover-up and for this he was rewarded. The Kabaka gave him the Bakooki Kingdom where he settled and had a large family.

Other records indicate that Kooki was a small state under the rule of the Babiito Dynasty, who originated from the Bunyoro kingdom. This Babiito Dynasty was led by Bwowe Isingoma, who was the first Mubiito ruler of Kooki. He had a twin brother Kitayimbwa Kato. Their father

Isansa Gabigogo was king of the Bunyoro kingdom at the time and had promised them a share of the kingdom. Unfortunately he died and the elder son Duhaga I succeeded him. The twins were denied any share of the kingdom. They decided to have a kingdom of their own, which Bwowe called Kooki because he had got most of the spear holding warriors from a village called Kooki in Bunyoro.

Bwowe decided to bond with his elder brother Duhaga I and sent his brother Kitayimbwa to present gifts, but he did not accept them due to negative influence and misadvice by his sycophants. He arrested Kitayimbwa who later managed to escape. Bwowe decided to go and rescue his brother, but Duhaga I killed him. His escaped brother returned to Kooki to succeed him. Before his death he had advised his community to transfer their alliance from Bunyoro to Buganda. Through the years, successions continued in the kingdom until Edward Kezekia Ndawula Kamuswaga II became the first king of Kooki to adopt the title of *Kamusaaga*. In Bunyoro, this meant the 11<sup>th</sup> child of the ruling king. Later the title changed to Kamuswaga and it eventually became the title of a ruling king of Kooki. Ndwalu finally signed the famous agreement of friendship with Buganda in November 1896.

The Kooki kingdom had great wealth in herds of cattle, iron deposits and ivory, which made other neighbors go into war with them to get their wealth. Their survival depended on alliance with the more powerful kingdoms. They sought help from the Buganda king to throw out Banyoro from Buddu because they had military skills, and succeeded. However, in 1875 Buganda realized Kooki was becoming stronger and attacked them to ensure that no other kingdom would be stronger than theirs. They stole large herds of cattle and kidnapped many women and children. Later their relationship improved and the kings worked peacefully with each other. Kooki became a member of the courts and councils of the royal Buganda kingdom and assumed a greater status as a state.

### **Culture and Social Structure**

The Bakoki are members of the Buganda community. There have been instances when in the history of the Buganda, when the king had to get out of his way to woo a girl. As a general rule, however, Buganda kings acquired wives through a system that worked on the assumption that everyone and everything in the kingdom, sometimes even beyond, belonged to the Kabaka. After the death of a reigning king, some of the attractive young widows would be selected and put aside as future wives of the new monarch. When a king desired a woman who was already married to one of his chiefs, he would just go ahead and get her. It was considered good manners for the aggrieved husband to turn a blind eye on the whole affair. He then would stand a good chance of getting compensated with some estate, or in case of a chief, a promotion.

The Bakoki did not involve themselves in regular education but farmed and herded livestock. They were brave fighters and great hunters. Polygamy was accepted in the community, especially if a man had property to sustain many wives and children. Male and female circumcision was not a cultural practice of the Bakoki. They lived in thatched huts, with several huts in one compound.

Girls were learned their gender roles by working with their mothers. They were trained how to prepare different meals, weave baskets (*ekibbo*) and mats. At the age of ten years girls were taken to the aunt (*senga*) to be taught about responsibilities and duties expected in a marriage. The boys worked with their fathers and learned how to farm, herd livestock, and gender roles. Uncles would train them on marriage and manhood responsibilities and duties.

Customarily, the aunt assisted in assessing and suggesting a suitable spouse for their son or daughter. Character and family background would be checked to ensure they did not have relationship with families associated with witchcraft and other vices. Once an acceptable choice was made, the elders would then visit the girl's family to begin plans for the marriage. If a girl eloped she was considered an outcast and a cleansing ceremony would be performed to enable her to be allowed back into the family circle.

The Bakoki were farmers with extensive farms, with trees planted on them and large banana plantations since this was their staple food. Yams (*endaggu*), sweet potatoes, boiled or roasted maize cobs were usually eaten with tea. Beans, groundnuts and green vegetables were included in most meals. The main meal *Omuwumbo*, was bananas which were cooked while covered with green banana leaves to create a wonderful flavor. This was served with groundnut stew (*ebinyeebwa*) or a variety of vegetables such as *Entula ennene*, *katunkuma*, *dodo*, *ensugga* and many other types. Coffee grew in plantations and would be used as a special snack - roasted coffee beans, which both adults and children would nibble on. They kept livestock such as cattle, goats and sheep.

Tree bark clothes were made from specific species of trees, "Mutuba" and "Enselele". The regular attire worn by men was a long tree bark tunic which was worn from the armpit to the ankles, with a belt. When going for weddings and prayers, they wore a cloth tunic. While at home they wore a short tunic. The ordinary people walked barefooted, but the financially able wore wooden sandals (*Emikalabanda*) made from the "Musambya" tree. These sandals/clogs are still used by family heirs as a sign of social status.



The women also wore a tree bark sleeveless dress (*embugo – olubugo*) which was worn from under the armpits to the ankles.

## Entertainment and Relaxation

Tobacco smoking pipes were made from the “Ekisekeseke” tree, clay and metallic rings and were used by both women and men to smoke tobacco, to pass time and to relax.

Special royal drums made of wood from the “Mubajjangoma” tree and cow hides are sounded to give different communication. The drums are sounded when the king leaves his palace on an official visit, and when he returns. They are also used to sermon his subjects to the palace for an event or a task.

*Omuhesho* is a traditional game of the Bakoki. It is usually played by two people at a time and requires a board of 32 pits, arranged with eight pits lengthwise towards the players, and four pits deep. Each player’s territory is the 16 pits on their side of the board. The players use 64 undifferentiated seeds which they sequentially drop into the pits. *Omuhesho* is still played today for companionship, recreational purposes, to exercise the mind and for developing arithmetic skills.

The Bakoki people use proverbs and wise sayings, riddles, folktales, songs and dance to pass on knowledge and cultural norms to their community members. Proverbs and wise sayings are used in ordinary daily conversation.

## Examples of the Kooki proverbs and wise sayings

### 1. *Ekyengela amangu, kivunda mangu.*

**Swahili:** Kinachoiva kwa haraka, huoza kwa haraka.

**French:** Ce qui mûrit très vite, pourrit très vite.

**English:** What ripens quickly, rots quickly.

**Teaching:** This proverb is used to teach people that what is achieved with ease, can be misused easily if we do not take care of it. Wealth can be depleted easily unless it is invested wisely. The proverb is used to caution people to plan for the future.

### 2. *Embwa elina eggumba mu kamwa teluma.*

**Swahili:** Mbwa aliye na mfupa mdomoni hawezi kukuuma.

**French:** Le chien ayant un os dans sa gueule, ne peut pas te mordre.

**English:** A dog with a bone in his mouth cannot bite you.

**Teaching:** The proverb cautions people to make a choice and undertake to do one thing at a time. *Do not serve two masters. Do not cook two pots.* Priority must be made in order to improve focus which enables us to achieve a goal. Divided attention leads a person to make mistakes.

## Religion

Before the arrival of the Christian missionaries, traditional religion dominated the Bakoki spiritual life. They had shrines, *lubaale*, where rituals were carried out. These were big thatched huts where elders brought traditional banana brew and coffee beans. There was a fireplace with

three cooking stones where a fire was lit with firewood or charcoal from the “Kasaana” tree. Once the fire was lit it would burn without going off for days.

Others created shrines at the base of old indigenous trees such as the “Omuwule” and “Kabaka Anjagala”. Different groups of people had different totems, such as, *Mukasa* which were oars used by fishermen to row their boats, *Ndungu* for the hunters, Kalondozi for the missing persons lost from home, and many others.

Besides they considered a form of entertainment and relaxation, a pipe is also regarded as sacred and is used for burning incense to invoke spirits and smoking traditional herbs to appease the gods, or to cause bad luck to someone.

### **Economy**

Lake Kijanebalora translated “*it came while they were seeing*” is the only lake in Kooki. It covers the five sub-counties of Lwanda, Byakabanda, Kibanda, Buyamba and Lwamaggwa. The former rulers used to sail on this lake while touring their land or visiting subjects. The lake has several types of fish including *obuyamba* (hypochromines) and *emmamba* (Lungfish), which is sold to markets by the fishermen.

Kigera Cave is located in Byakanda sub-country, Kigera has a 3km tunnel which connects the cave in Byakabanda to a cave in Kitente village in Kifamba sub-county through Nabbunga hills. The cave and other features in its vicinity are used as places for healing and seeking blessings by individuals with political ambitions, and is a tourist attraction site.

Farmers sell their excess bananas, yams and sweet potatoes, sorghum and groundnuts to support other financial needs of the families. The women sell straw mats and baskets.

### **Politics**

Kooki is a part of the Buganda kingdom and is listed by modern records as a Chiefdom. It covers Rakai district, bordering River Kagera, Masaka and Ankole. Initially a separate kingdom ruled by a Kamuswaga, Kooki was incorporated into Buganda in 1996 with the Kamuswaga’s role defined as a cultural leader. The office of traditional ruler of Kooki was abolished by President Milton Obote in 1966 and restored in 2004. The local parliament is located in the middle of traditional Palace, and is neatly constructed under a grass thatched shed and decorated with fine marble stones. The responsibilities of various leaders and ministers are assigned here as well. Problems affecting various categories of the Bakooki people are identified and resolved here.

Through the years, successions continued in the kingdom until Edward Kezekia Ndawula Kamuswaga II became the first king of Kooki to adopt the title of *Kamusaaga*. In Runyoro, this meant the 11<sup>th</sup> child of the ruling king. Later the title changed to Kamuswaga and it eventually became the title of a ruling king of Kooki. Ndwalu finally signed the famous agreement of friendship with Buganda in November 1896.

## **WRITING OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this research are:

1. To collect one hundred proverbs and wise sayings from the Bakoki, from the elders and their general community.
2. To translate these Kooki proverbs and wise sayings into English, Kiswahili and French, for reference by a wider group of readers.
3. To find Biblical parallels to complement the Christian point of view.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

This will help people to enrich their communication skills by using these proverbs and wise sayings.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The writer will research and collect Kooki proverbs and wise sayings from this community. The teachings and a bible parallels will be added to each. One hundred of these proverbs and wise sayings will be recorded for translation into Kiswahili, English, and French and be published in a booklet.

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5. Some members of the Bakoki community.
6. **Collaborator** Caroline Nassibwa +254 718 059 799