

**Insights from Proverbs of the Alur in the Democratic  
Republic of Congo**

**by**

**George Pirwoth Atido**

# **Insights from Proverbs of the Alur in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

**(Part One: “A” to “J”)**

**By**

**George Pirwoth Atido**



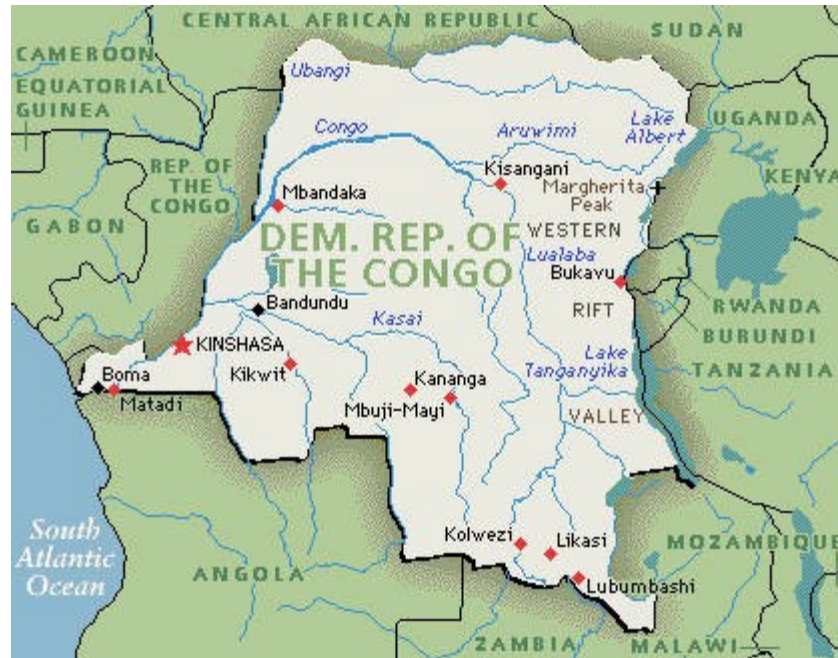
**In Collaboration with African Proverb Saying and Stories**

**[www.afriprov.org](http://www.afriprov.org)**

**Nairobi, Kenya**

**September 2011**

**Copyright @ 2011 George Pirwoth Atido**



## INTRODUCTION

The Alur people are a Nilotic group living in Uganda and Congo. They belong to the Niotes ethnic group which is the subgroup of the Nilotic that comprise the Nilote and Nilo-Hamites. The Nilotic group was formed at the beginning of the Second Millennium in Bahr el Ghazal particularly in the town of Rumbeck that is in the Province of Upper Nile in Sudan.<sup>1</sup>

Ethnologue estimates at 500,000 the number of the Alur in the Democratic Republic where they are found in Oriental Province, Ituri District and particularly in Mahagi Territory. According to the same source, they were 920,000 in Congo and Uganda together in 1991.<sup>2</sup> But the Report from the “*Table Ronde pour le Développement du Territoire de Mahagi*” held in Mahagi (DRC) from 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2009 by "CADEMA" (*Carrefour pour le Développement de Mahagi*) estimated at 1.905.040 the number of the Alur people in Congo alone. This constitutes 2.90% of the total population of the country which is 65.751.512 inhabitants. They occupy 5.216km<sup>2</sup> which represents 0.22% of the scope of the Congolese national territory (that is 2.345.000km<sup>2</sup>). The density of the Alur is an average of 365 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>3</sup> The Alurs are scattered in 8 different sectors that The Mahagi Territory (DRC) administrative report distributes as follow in 2007.<sup>4</sup>

N	Sector	Area	Population 2007
	Alur Juganda	840 Km2	69.841 hab.
	Anghal	952 Km2	421.337 hab.
	Jukoth	622 Km2	403.256 hab.
	Mukambo	470 Km2	281.657 hab.
	Pandoro	595 Km2	153.052 hab.
	Wagungu	90 Km2	51.602 hab.
	Walendu Watsi	842 Km2	36.067 hab.
	War palara	441 Km2	237.038hab.

---

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert U. Keno. *Introduction a l'Etude des Institutions Sociopolitiques du Peuple Alur*, (Bunia : Collection Kadipo, 2007), p. 21

<sup>2</sup> Barbara F. Grimes (Ed.) *Ethnologue Vol I Language of the World*, Dallas: SIL International, 2000, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> CADEMA. *Rapport final des travaux de la Table Ronde pour le Développement du Territoire de Mahagi*, ( Mahagi, Unpublished, 2009), p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Mahagi City Council. Archive. Mahagi Population Census, 2007.

	Mahagi City	8 Km2	65.878 hab.
	Total	5.216 Km2	1.320.818 hab.

The Alur are agriculturalists. Their main crops includes millet, sorghum, cassava, simsim, nuts, palm oil, potatoes and a variety of beans. Now, they also grow cotton and coffee. Besides, they keep cows, goats, chickens cattle and sheep. They are also very much interested in fishing (in Lake Albert) and hunting. The Alur are mostly Christian. Joshua Project presents the following statistical data about Christianity and other religions among the Alur in the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>5</sup>

## Religion

### [Christianity](#)

#### Protestant

[Buddhism](#) 0.00 %

[Christianity](#) 96.00 % (Evangelical: 22.00 %)

[Ethnic Religions](#) 2.00 %

[Hinduism](#) 0.00 %

[Islam](#) 1.00 %

[Non-Religious](#) 0.00 %

[Other / Small](#) 1.00 %

[Unknown](#) 0.00 %

Anglican 20.00 %

Independent 15.00 %

Protestant 30.00 %

Orthodox 0.00 %

Other Christian 5.00 %

Roman Catholic 30.00 %

<sup>5</sup> Joshua Project. "The Alur of the Democratic Republic of Congo" (2009) Retrieved from <http://www.joshuaproject.net> , Internet Accessed March 10, 2011.

(Evangelicals distributed across Christianity segments)

### Progress Indicators

3.2 \_ [Evangelicals >5%](#)

No

[Level 4](#) Greater than or equal to 2% Evangelical

We believe that a better understanding of the Alur proverbs is an asset that would help people interested to communicate with the Alur and most particularly the church to properly contextualize the Gospel to them as proverbs are part of their important way of communication. Besides, there is much need presently to inculturate the message of the Gospel to the Alur as a good number of them seem to return back to their traditional religion that they claim to be more responsive to their worldview and context.

The present work which is a compilation of 100 Alur proverbs from the letter “A” to “J” is just a pioneer exploration of the vast riches of wisdom found in the Alur proverb’s genre. For this fascicle, each proverb is first presented in Alur (in its literary structure), then come a literal translation in English, followed by it’s meaning in English, then it’s meaning in French and finally it’s corollary in the Bible if any. For biblical reference, we used New International Version of the Bible (NIV) which copy is also found at <http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/New-International-Version-NIV-Bible>. We hope that this work will be of some help to the English speakers as well as French speakers interested to the Alurs and for the Alurs themselves in the Democratic Republic of Congo particularly.

## **Alur Proverbs**

### ***Lembabola I Dhu Alur***

**1. *Atek a kenda.***

**English Literal Translation**

I am strong alone.

**English Meaning**

It is not wise to work alone.

**French Meaning**

*C'est un vice de compter sur soi seulement.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Psalm 133 :1

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!

**2. *Abamba kaku du raw.***

**English Literal Translation**

Greediness has tiered the mouth of the hippopotamus.

**English Meaning**

Greediness is dangerous.

**French Meaning**

*La gourmandise est un vice.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Luke 6: 38

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

**3. *Abecidho udaru cam kud i dero.***

**English Literal Translation**

I am going has finished food from the storehouse.

**English Meaning**

Be consistent when you are working with other people.

**French Meaning**

*Soyez consistant quand vous travaillez avec les autres.*

## **Biblical Parallel**

### **Matthew 5 :37**

All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

#### **4. *Abelu de jupagi nuti.***

##### **English Literal Translation**

Even the fool has relative.

##### **English Meaning**

Don’t despise people because they look weak; you may see their relative arising.

##### **French Meaning**

*Ne pas menacer les faibles, ses frères peuvent surgir.*

##### **Biblical Parallel**

None

#### **5. *Abelu poy i rimbe.***

##### **English Literal Translation**

The fool starts in his blood.

##### **English Meaning**

The person who has committed fault is never at peace.

##### **French Meaning**

*Celui qui a commis un forfait n’est jamais en paix.*

##### **Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 28:1

The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.

#### **6. *Abiba tek kum nyiti gweno.***

##### **English Literal Translation**

The hawk is strong at the chicks.

##### **English Meaning**

The malicious people feel strong while dealing with the weak.

##### **French Meaning**

*On se fait fort lorsqu’ on traite avec un adversaire les faibles.*

##### **Biblical Parallel**

None

#### **7. *Abiba ti i juke.***

##### **English Literal Translation**

The hawk looks old.

##### **English Meaning**

The appearance deceives.



**French Meaning**

*L'apparence trompe.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 7:21

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

8. *Abinga peyo abinga ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

Darkness can't lead darkness.

**English Meaning**

An ignorant can't teach another ignorant.

**French Meaning**

*Un ignorant ne peut instruire un autre ignorant.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Mathew 15:14

If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.

9. *Adeba tuco vul.*

**English Literal Translation**

The excess perforates the drum.

**English Meaning**

Excess is hurtful.

**French Meaning**

*L'excès nuit. Un acte répété ou une parole répétée de trop peut entraîner une conséquence fâcheuse.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 10 :19

Sin is not ended by multiplying words, but the prudent hold their tongues.

10. *Afoyo nego min nia piny biru ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

The hare killed her mother because he thought that the day will not come.

**English Meaning**

Impatience can lead to regrettable consequences.

**French Meaning**

*L'impatience conduit à des décisions maladroites. Il ne faut pas vider le dépôt car on ne sait pas ce que demain peut apporter.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Galatians 5: 22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and **self-control**. Against such things there is no law.

**11. Agada yil kum wadi.**

**English Literal Translation**

The reed itches while with others.

**English Meaning**

One finds himself strong while in the group.

**Meaning in French**

*L'individu est fort au sein de son groupe. L'union fait la force.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Ecclesiastes 4 : 9-12

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

**12. Agoro oyi i vuje.**

**English Literal Translation**

The termite attracts you in his hole.

**English Meaning**

People of same character collaborate.

**French Meaning**

*On se met toujours à côté des gens avec qui on s'est familiarisé. Qui se ressemble s'assemblent.*

**Biblical Parallel**

II Corinthians 6: 14

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

**13. Agulu diyo utac.**

**English Literal Translation**

The pot presses the crown

**English Meaning**

The authorities command the subordinate.

**French Meaning**

*Les autorités commandent les sujets.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Colossians 3 :22

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.

**14. Agulu m'ung'eny jubayu ngo.**

**English Literal Translation**

You don't throw broken pot.

**English Meaning**

Old things (friends) can be useful in the future.

**French Meaning**

*On peut recourir à un vieil objet (ami) pour se tirer d'affaire.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

**15. Agwata ma tek mac kaku re.**

**English Literal Translation**

Only the fire can break a strong calabash.

**English Meaning**

Great issues need great remedy.

**French Meaning**

*Aux grands maux des grands remèdes.*

## **Biblical Parallel**

Mark 9:29

He (Jesus) replied, this kind (of demon) can come out only by prayer and fasting.

### **16. Akelo lwong' nyameru.**

#### **English Literal Translation**

Akelo, call your sister.

#### **English Meaning**

Once one have a baby there is hope to have another.

#### **French Meaning**

*On peut fonder son espoir en se basant sur les expériences du passé.*

#### **Biblical Parallel**

None

### **17. Aling'a loyo akwera.**

#### **English Literal Translation**

Keeping quiet is better than refusing.

#### **English Meaning**

Refusing brutally may generate more problems than refusing by silence.

#### **French Meaning**

*Le refus par le silence est plus sage que l'expression verbale du refus.*

#### **Biblical Parallel**

James 3:17-19

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

### **18. Amur nyolo kite.**

#### **English Literal Translation**

The gazelle gives birth to its kind.

#### **English Meaning**

Like a father like a son.

#### **French Meaning**

*Tel père, tel fils ; telle mère, telle fille. L'enfant ne vaut que ce que vaut sa mère.*

#### **Biblical Parallel**

John 8 :42-45

Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. Why is my language not clear to

you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!

**19. *Ang'eyo dit uturo lak Gayo.***

**English Literal Translation**

I know much broke Gayo's tooth.

**English Meaning**

Too much pretention can lead to great damage.

**French Meaning**

*La prétention conduit aux graves dommages.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 3:5-8

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

**20. *Anguru pek ungo ni won.***

**English Literal Translation**

The hump is not a burden for its holder.

**English Meaning**

One can easily accept his own burden.

**French Meaning**

*On se charger de son fardeau sans peine.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

**21. *Anyer ma jarvwa nyol ka oro.***

**English Literal Translation**

The unfortunate animal gives birth during dry season.

**English Meaning**

The unfortunate people are most of the time victim of calamities.

**French Meaning**

*Le malchanceux est souvent victime des calamités.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

22. *Anyogi cek ni juma ma lak gi mbe.*

**English Literal Translation**

The maize grows for people who don't have teeth.

**English Meaning**

Good opportunities come to people who cannot take its advantage.

**French Meaning**

*La chance sourit souvent à celui qui ne peut en profiter.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

23. *Apora pora ng'olo yib ungwai.*

**English Literal Translation**

Imitating things led the frog to have his ears cut.

**English Meaning**

Blind imitation is dangerous.

**French Meaning**

*L'imitation aveugle est dangereuse.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

24. *Atum pa rwoth imedo ku peri.*

**English Literal Translation**

You add your own arm besides what the king has given you.

**English Meaning**

Don't rely completely on public things, have your own as well.

**French Meaning**

*A côté de bien publiques, il faut toujours disposer des effets personnels. A coté du service qu'on rend chez quelqu'un ou chez un employé, il faut aussi initier un travail personnel.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

25. *Awora wang'u nam.*

**English Literal Translation**

Excessive beggary has burned the lake.

**English Meaning**

It is shameful to beg all the time.

**French Meaning**

*La mendicité excessive est un vice.*

## **Biblical Parallel**

None

### **26. *Ayera yik.***

#### **English Literal Translation**

What is said spreads.

#### **English Meaning**

There is no secret guaranty once something has been said to one person.

#### **French Meaning**

*Qui veut conserver le secret se garde de partager le contenu de son secret a qui que ce soit.*

#### **Biblical Parallel**

Judge 16:18-19

When Delilah saw that he had told her everything, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, "Come back once more; he has told me everything." So the rulers of the Philistines returned with the silver in their hands. After putting him to sleep on her lap, she called for someone to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. And his strength left him.

### **27. *Ayii, yadhe mbe.***

#### **English Literal Translation**

Curse has no cure.

#### **English Meaning**

The only remedy to curse is reconciliation with the person who has cursed.

#### **French Meaning**

*La malédiction prononcée par un oncle paternelle n'a pas de remède, si ce n'est ses propres paroles d'imprécation par lesquelles il délie la malédiction.*

#### **Biblical Parallel**

None

### **28. *Bad afoyo camu bad lyec.***

#### **English Literal Translation**

Hare's ham eats elephant ham.

#### **English Meaning**

A small good deed can bring back big reward.

#### **French Meaning**

*Un petit acte de bienfaisance est souvent récompensé par un grand acte de bienfaisance.*

#### **Biblical Parallel**

Mark 9:41

Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.

29. *Bati p'ujwingjwing tie pa winyo ceke ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

Wagtail luck in not for every bird.

**English Meaning**

Chance does not apply for all in the same way.

**French Meaning**

*Ce n'est pas tout le monde qui a la même chance.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

30. *Bedo yo ketho jumondo i law koni.*

**English Literal Translation**

Docility make you wear cloth made from castrated animal.

**English Meaning**

Submissive people get precious things.

**French Meaning**

*La docilité paie bien.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 5 :5

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

31. *Bero ma nyangu reto ng'eyo ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

The evening does not recognize morning good deed.

**English Meaning**

People have short memory to keep benefited blessings in minds.

**French Meaning**

*Celui qui fait du bien est souvent vite ignoré.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

32. *Bero nego dolo.*

**English Literal Translation**

Goodness has killed the ape.

**English Meaning**

Positive things may attract negative reaction. People kill the ape because they need its skin.

**French Meaning**

*Souvent, un homme de bien est victime de mal pour rien. On tue le singe car on a besoin de sa peau.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Luke 4:24



Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.

33. *Bo nyolo ng’or.*

**English Literal Translation**

Herb produces beans.

**English Meaning**

Thing of less value can produce things of great values.

**French Meaning**

*Ce qui est vil peut produire ce qui est de grande valeur.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 19 :14

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

34. *Bor piny ujwigo lyec.*

**English Literal Translation**

The distance diminishes the elephant.

**English Meaning**

Even a strong man becomes powerless while needed far from where is at the time of need.

**French Meaning**

*De loin, on ne peut rien, même si on est fort.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

35. *Borpiny umwonyo lyec.*

**English Literal Translation**

The distance has swallowed the elephant.

**English Meaning**

A far solution is not useful.

**French Meaning**

*Le bien qui est éloigné ne profite pas.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

36. *Byey uwang’u wi aywer.*

**English Literal Translation**

The termite burned the partridge’s head.

**English Meaning**

Misfortune comes often on the innocent.

**French Meaning**

*Le Malheur s'abat souvent sur l'innocent.*

**Biblical Parallel**

II Timothy 3 :12-13

In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

**37. *Cak m'uoy jobere ngo.***

**English Literal Translation**

You can't collect poured milk.

**English Meaning**

Some spoiled issues are nor repairable.

**French Meaning**

*Certains dégâts sont irréparables.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 12:31

And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.

**38. *Camacama loyo kendakenda.***

**English Literal Translation**

Eating is better than clothing.

**English Meaning**

Health is more important than material things.

**French Meaning**

*Vaut mieux s'occuper de la santé que des autres aspects de la vie matérielle.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

**39. *Cana lembe mbe.***

**English Literal Translation**

There is no rock (mountain) of problems.

**English Meaning**

Any problem may find a solution.

**French Meaning**

*Tout problème nécessite discussion pour éventuelle solution.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 18:17-17

If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

**40. Can cibo acaye.**

**English Literal Translation**

Poverty provokes disparagement.

**English Meaning**

When you are miserable, you are exposed to disparagement.

**French Meaning**

*La misère expose aux dénigrements.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 27: 35-44

When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.' In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

**41. Can cibo jo.**

**English Literal Translation**

Poverty betrays people.

**English Meaning**

Poverty makes powerless.

**French Meaning**

*La misère trahit.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

42. *Can rwinyo landu.*

**English Literal Translation**

Poverty chases brownness.

**English Meaning**

The more poor, the more ugly.

**French Meaning**

*La misère ternit la beauté.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

43. *Can unego rwodhe.*

**English Literal Translation**

The misery has killed his king.

**English Meaning**

Everybody must carry his own cross.

**French Meaning**

*Chacun doit répondre de ses propres actes.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Galatians 6:5

For each one should carry their own load.

44. *Ceng' m'itho, ing'eyo ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

The day of you death, you can't know.

**English Meaning**

You can't prevent future misfortune.

**French Meaning**

*On ne peut prévenir le sort malheureux qui arrive demain.*

**Biblical Parallel**

James 4:13

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."

45. *Ceth udeyo min gweno.*

**English Literal Translation**

The excrement has choked the hen.

**English Meaning**

People generally find difficult to disclose their mistake.

**French Meaning**

*On a de la peine à expliquer aux autres le mal qu'on a commis.*

**Biblical Parallel**

James 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

46. *Cew camu ma dhu ode.*

**English Literal Translation**

The porcupine eats what is around its terrier.

**English Meaning**

Problems come from the surrounding.

**French Meaning**

*Souvent le malheur qui nous arrive a sa source dans notre environnement.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 26: 47-49

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him." Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him.

47. *Cew uryemo mok.*

**English Literal Translation**

The porcupine chases the pangolin.

**English Meaning**

The stronger deprives the weak.

**French Meaning**

*Le plus fort dépouille le faible.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

48. *Cing acel udaru nyuka i tabu.*

**English Literal Translation**

One hand finishes the porridge from the basin.

**English Meaning**

Many a mickle makes a muckle.

**French Meaning**

*Petit à petit, l'oiseau fait son nid.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

49. *Co, juneno kadok.*

**English Literal Translation**

You see men on the return.

**English Meaning**

It is the production that justifies the strength of a man.

**French Meaning**

*On reconnaît l'homme par ce qu'il produit.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Galatians 6:7

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

50. *Dhanu rombo, got re ma rombo ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

People meet, only mountains don't.

**English Meaning**

There is always possibility of people to meet again in life.

**French Meaning**

*Les circonstances font que les gens se rencontrent toujours plus tard dans la vie.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

51. *Dhur loyo tego.*

**English Literal Translation**

Uprightness is more powerful than physical strength.

**English Meaning**

Better use justice than physical strength.

**French Meaning**

*La justice finit toujours à gagner.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 29:4

By justice a king gives country stability, but those who are greedy for bribes tear it down.

52. *Dhyang' camu ka lake.*

**English Literal Translation**

The caw eats at the measure of its teeth.

**English Meaning**

Limit yourself to what you are able to do.

**French Meaning**

*On ne fait que ce dont on est capable.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

53. *Dhyang' ma godo akeca cage mbe.*

**English Literal Translation**

The cow that roams too much can't produce milk.

**English Meaning**

People who talk too much accomplish too less.

**French Meaning**

*Les bons diseurs ne sont pas des bons faiseurs.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Galatians 6:3

If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves.

54. *Dhyang' ma kwiny, jupeyo ku wadi.*

**English Literal Translation**

To pool a trong cow, you need another strong cow.

**English Meaning**

When someone is strong, you confront him with another strong person of his category.

**French Meaning**

*Il faut un autre fort pour faire face au fort.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Luke 11: 21-22

When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up his plunder.

55. *Diang' tero jo pa mon.*

**English Literal Translation**

Caw brings people to women.

**English Meaning**

When someone possesses wealth, he is tempted to look for expensive things.

**French Meaning**

*Lorsqu'on dispose des moyens, on est souvent tenté de tendre vers ce qui est éloigné, ce qui est coûteux.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

56. *Diewor umwonyo dhyang' ma tar.*

**English Literal Translation**

The darkness swallows the white cow.

**English Meaning**

In a bad community, it is difficult to discover good people.

**French Meaning**

*Dans une mauvaise communauté, il est souvent difficile de répertorier les gens de bon caractère. Le bien n'est pas facilement détectable là où le mal domine.*

**Biblical Parallel**

I Peter 2:12

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

57. *Dok ku ng'ec en e tho.*

**English Literal Translation**

To return behind is death.

**English Meaning**

There is great possibility to meet danger when you return to what you have left.

**French Meaning**

*Revenir à ce qu'on a laissé conduit généralement au danger.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Luke 11: 24-26

When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first.

58. *Dong' cen uciko dhugola.*

**English Literal Translation**

To remain behind is to be responsible of closing the door.

**English Meaning**

It is not fair to be the last.

**French Meaning**

*Il faut éviter d'être le dernier.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

59. *Dwong' uwang'u wi awendo.*

**English Literal Translation**



Glory has burned the guinea-fowl head.

**English Meaning**

Pride leads to disaster.

**French Meaning**

*L'orgueil conduit au désastre.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Mark 9:35

Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

**60. Galu wang’u Pabidi.**

**English Literal Translation**

Lateness has burned Pabidi.

**English Meaning**

Lateness can bring great disaster.

**French Meaning**

*Le retard ou la négligence peut laisser libre cours à des événements fâcheux.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 25: 1-13

At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup> The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’ ‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’ “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

**61. Gin m’uvoyo ley, kwer tong’o ngo.**

**English Literal Translation**

What was not possible for the hatchet can’t be possible for the hoe.

**English Meaning**

What a strong man has failed to realize can’t be done by a weak.

**French Meaning**

*Si le fort n’a pas pu réaliser une chose, le faible ne le pourra plus.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

62. *Gin m'wozo ith ku the kidi tye pi.*

**English Literal Translation**

What has removed the scorpion from the water, under the rock.

**English Meaning**

Difficulties remove people from their retreat.

**French Meaning**

*Les difficultés font sortir de l'asile.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

63. *Gin m'wozo raw kud i pi.*

**English Literal Translation**

What has removed the hippopotamus from the water.

**English Meaning**

Difficulties remove people from their retreat.

**French Meaning**

*Les difficultés font sortir de l'asile.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

64. *Gin ma nya rac rac ulonyo lak gwok.*

**English Literal Translation**

A useless thing cleanses the dog's teeth.

**English Meaning**

Each food is profitable, despite its quality.

**French Meaning**

*Tout repas est utile au corps, quelle que soit sa qualité méprisable.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

65. *Gweno ma welo camu ku ter arara.*

**English Literal Translation**

A visitor hen eats under the hedge.

**English Meaning**

When you are a visitor, you need some restraint.

**French Meaning**

*Il faut de retenue là où on est étranger.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

66. *Gweno tong'o m'emwonyo.*

**English Literal Translation**

The hen takes what it can swallow.

**English Meaning**

You need to engage what you can accomplish.

**French Meaning**

*Il faut engager des actions à la hauteur de ses moyens, de sa force. On ne peut accepter que ce dont on est capable de faire.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 12:29

Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house.

67. *Gwok camu nanu ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

The dog does not eat for nothing.

**English Meaning**

Everyone is useful in a way.

**French Meaning**

*Tout être vivant est utile à quelque chose.*

**Biblical Parallel**

James 2:11

For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

68. *Gwok muvito i vuru, juroko ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

Don't provoke a dog that is sleeping in the cinders.

**English Meaning**

Don't provoke a meek person.

**French Meaning**

*Il ne faut pas provoquer un homme apparemment docile.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 18:10

See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

69. *Gwok udagu jacwake.*

**English Literal Translation**

The dog dislikes his defender.

**English Meaning**

Counselors are despised.

**French Meaning**

*On devient souvent agressif à son conseiller.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

70. *Ic weco masagu dhok.*

**English Literal Translation**

The stomach speaks more than the mouth.

**English Meaning**

There is much in the heat than what the mouth articulates.

**French Meaning**

*Le cœur contient plus de propos que ce que la bouche articule. On réfléchit plus qu'on ne parle.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

71. *Icamu ku janegi.*

**English Literal Translation**

You eat with your enemy.

**English Meaning**

Redoubtable enemies are often among close friends.

**French Meaning**

*Souvent, l'ennemi redoutable se retrouve dans le cercle des plus proches. On est toujours trahi par son intime.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Luke 22:47-48

While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

72. *Ikabu lum i weng'i giri ngo.*

**English Literal Translation**

You don't remove herb from your own eye.

**English Meaning**

You need other people when you are in problem.

**French Meaning**

*On a toujours besoin d'un autre quand il y a un problème.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Galatians 6:2

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

**73. Ikayu ngey jabyedi ngo.****English Literal Translation**

You don't bite the back of the person carrying you.

**English Meaning**

It is unwise to create the problem with one's guardian.

**French Meaning**

*Il ne faut pas gâcher le climat entre soi et son responsable. Ne pas rendre rendu le mal pour le bien.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 10:1

A wise son brings joy to his father,  
but a foolish son brings grief to his mother.

**74. Ith uboko kan upodho, dok ungo kakare.****English Literal Translation**

When a leaf of a plant falls, it can't return again at its former location.

**English Meaning**

When things get worse, there is no remedy.

**French Meaning**

*Quand une situation s'est détériorée, il n'y a pas moyen de l'arranger.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

**75. Ith vono wic ungo.****English Literal Translation**

The ear cannot underestimate the head.

**English Meaning**

A subordinate has the duty to respect his master.

**French Meaning**

*Tout subalterne a le devoir de respecter supérieur.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 10:24

The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master.

76. *Jabozo camu i dekele.*

**English Literal Translation**

The artisan eats in residue.

**English Meaning**

A careful person works for others.

**French Meaning**

*Une personne responsable pense d'abord aux autres.*

**Biblical Parallel**

John 10:11

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

77. *Jacam tiye jatic ungo.*

**English Literal Translation**

The person who likes eating is not the one who works.

**English Meaning**

Too much eating is the characteristic of lazy people.

**French Meaning**

*Un vrai ouvrier mange peu.*

**Biblical Parallel**

II Thessalonians 3:10

For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."

78. *Jacan juyiko dhugola pare.*

**English Literal Translation**

You repair the door of the destitute.

**English Meaning**

Destitute people deserve help.

**French Meaning**

*Il faut aider les pauvres.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 22:9

The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

79. *Jadwar neno i upoko pi pare gire.*

**English Literal Translation**

The hunter sees himself in his calabash.

**English Meaning**

It is advisable to be self reliant.

**French Meaning**

*Il est sage de s'occuper de ses propres affaires. Quand on est étranger, il faut être endurant.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverb 22:6

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

**80. Jakasegu ng'ith ungo (i pany).**

**English Literal Translation**

The foolish can't soften in the mortar.

**English Meaning**

It is difficult to correct the foolish.

**French Meaning**

*L'insensé est incorrigible. Un défaut devenu habituel est difficile à corriger.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Jeremiah 5:3

O LORD, are not Thine eyes upon the truth? Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; Thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

**81. Jakeci negi.**

**English Literal Translation**

Your enemy kills you.

**English Meaning**

You need to take some distance with your enemy.

**French Meaning**

*L'ennemi reste dangereux.*

**Biblical Parallel**

I Peter 5 :8

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

**82. *Jaker nen gire kende.***

**English Literal Translation**

The King's successor is clearly seen.

**English Meaning**

It is simple to understand good things despite corruption.

**French Meaning**

*Le bien saute aux yeux.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 7 :20

Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

**83. *Jakisa tho i vuru.***

**English Literal Translation**

The merciful person dies in dust.

**English Meaning**

People generally don't remember the merciful person.

**French Meaning**

*Le généreux meurt est souvent oublié.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Acts 2 :22-24

Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

**84. *Jalworo penjo cege.***

**English Literal Translation**

The coward asks his wife.

**English Meaning**

A coward always needs people while facing problem.



**French Meaning**

*Un peureux ne tient jamais seul devant un problème.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

**85. *Jamusuma camu m'ukwiyo.***

**English Literal Translation**

A single man eats cold food.

**English Meaning**

When you are poor don't look for luxury.

**French Meaning**

*Quand on a pas ce qu'on veut, il faut se contenter de ce qu'on a.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

**86. *Jang'ayi camu ma juwer i wiye.***

**English Literal Translation**

A bad person eats what people have sung on.

**English Meaning**

A bad person is not socially respected.

**French Meaning**

*Les mauvaises personnes sont reléguées en dernière position dans la société.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

**87. *Janyap, lake pa ryedi.***

**English Literal Translation**

A lazy person has sharp teeth.

**English Meaning**

Lazy people like easy gain.

**French Meaning**

*Le paresseux est un beau mangeur.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 12:27

The lazy do not roast any game, but the diligent feed on the riches of the hunt.

88. *Japyem kyewo yamu.*

**English Literal Translation**

The stubborn person sculls in air.

**English Meaning**

A foolish person makes foolish action.

**French Meaning**

*L'insensé pose des actions insensées.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 14 :1

The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.

89. *Jarakwang' tho dhu wath (i galayi).*

**English Literal Translation**

The swimmer dies by the shore.

**English Meaning**

An expert is mostly confused by simple things.

**French Meaning**

*Le connaisseur est souvent confondu par de simples épreuves.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

90. *Jarukara camu tekere.*

**English Literal Translation**

The recidivist eats problems.

**English Meaning**

The recidivist exposes himself to complex problems.

**French Meaning**

*Rebellious people meet many complex problems.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 11 :5

The righteousness of the blameless makes their paths straight, but the wicked are brought down by their own wickedness.

**91. Jaruvwa jutwone kozi ngo.****English Literal Translation**

You don't deny seeds to destitute people.

**English Translation**

Needy need help in the society.

**French Meaning**

*Le malheureux est un indigent qu'il faut toujours assister.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Proverbs 19:17

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD,  
and he will reward them for what they have done.

**92. Jaryeko camu kwen ku dek ma the cingi.****English Literal Translation**

The intelligent person eats bread with the meat at your hand.

**English Meaning**

An intelligent person knows to exploit opportunities for his benefits.

**French Meaning**

*Le sage peut même jouir des atouts des autres personnes.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Ecclesiastes 8:5

Whoever obeys his command will come to no harm, and the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure.

**93. Jobi jucobo ku kum ugali.****English Literal Translation**

You pierce buffalo from a hiding place.

**English Meaning**

You don't confront directly a strong enemy.

**French Meaning**

*Utiliser l'approche indirecte pour confronter un adversaire fort.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

94. *Jucaku izo yen i tere.*

**English Literal Translation**

You climb a tree from the bottom.

**English Meaning**

Good solution comes from understanding the root cause of the problem.

**French Meaning**

*Il faut attaquer un problème à partir de ses racines.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

95. *Judongo bedo wi udhuru (wi cet).*

**English Literal Translation**

Elders stay in the dust-bin.

**English Meaning**

Elders solve shameful problem in peace.

**French Meaning**

*Les vieux sages gèrent des situations honteuses dans le calme. / Un haut responsable est appelé à couvrir une multitude d choses graves avec sagesse.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

96. *Jung'eyi ni peri.*

**English Literal Translation**

People know by what you have.

**English Meaning**

What you have determines who you are.

**French Meaning**

*L'on est ce que l'on a. / La valeur de quelqu'un dépend de ce qu'il a.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

97. *Junyutho cero ngo ni ng'atu movuto ataru.*

**English Literal Translation**

You don't show stars to someone who is sleeping on his back.

**English Meaning**

Evidence does not need demonstration.

**French Meaning**

*On ne perd pas de temps à démontrer ce qui est évident.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

98. ***Juponjo rec ku kwang ungo.***

English Literal Translation

You don't teach fish how to swim.

**English Meaning**

You can't teach an expert.

**French Meaning**

*On n'a rien à apprendre à un expert.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None

99. ***Juryemo awendo aryo ngo.***

**English Literal Translation**

You don't pursue two partridge at the same time.

**English Meaning**

Don't try to do two things at once.

**French Meaning**

*On ne suit pas deux lièvres à la fois.*

**Biblical Parallel**

Matthew 6 :24

No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

100. ***Juwayu naka kud agada.***

**English Literal Translation**

You attract termite with reed.

**English Meaning**

You need particular tactic in order to gain.

**French Meaning**

*Il faut une tactique pour réussir à convaincre le propriétaire de quelque chose.*

**Biblical Parallel**

None