

They call me Yame

WHEN GREETING SOMEONE OLDER THAN YOU in Swahili, you say “*shikamoo*” to show respect. Only 2.5 percent of Tanzania’s population is over 65. In our village, that includes about 140 people. Our elders form a village council. They meet to share memories and discuss village affairs. We consider their knowledge sacred.



Elders in our village never live alone. Generations sleep under the same roof and eat from the same pot. We give each other strength.

The oldest person in Kambi ya Simba is 103 years old.

My name is Emanuel. They call me Yame. I was born in 1902, in the village of Mbulu. School ended for me after one year. The head teacher asked my parents if I would care for his cattle. My parents said yes.

I fought in World War II. Carrying a gun to shoot people, that made me unhappy. It went against my nature. I have yet to be paid for my service in World War II. I still ask the government, Where is my money? They never answer. After the war, I was appointed Minister of Peace and Safety for the Mbulu-Karatu district. It was a job that made me proud.



I have outlived my wives. My first wife, she died after our second child was born. That was before I went to fight in the war. My second wife, she died last year. I have eight children. My great-grandchildren, they keep me company, here in the sun.

When I first came to the village, we had to chase away the lions. That is why it is called *Kambi ya Simba* (Lion's Camp). We killed elephants when they threatened us, and ate their meat.

For many years, I staged traditional plays and dances for the village. I was the village healer, too. Medicinal roots, I know what they cure and how to apply them.

Some days I worry for our village. The rains are fewer. The soil is poorer. But we are a strong people. We care for each other. When I sit here, outside on my blanket, everyone who passes says "*shikamoo.*"

I want to be a leader

FEW STUDENTS WHO GRADUATE FROM OUR SCHOOL continue their studies. The reason is simple: we cannot afford university tuition. In our daily lives, we make do with so little. It breaks our hearts that we must do without further education, too. Still, we dream of our future—dreams that would take us away from the village we know so well:



I want to be a scientist in order to reach the sky as American scientists have. — FAUSTINE

I want to be a journalist or a reporter and travel to Europe. — REBEKA

I want to be the headmistress at a secondary school. — GOODNESS

I want to be president of Tanzania. — LUCY

I want to be a pilot. — SHANGWE

I want to have only four children, if God wishes, by use of family planning. — MATLE

I want to be a doctor in a modern hospital. — PASCALINA

I want to be a teacher at the university. — EMELIANA

I want to be a pastor in my church. – RUBEN

I dream to continue my studies in another country. God bless me for my opinion. – CLAUDIA

I want to be a tour guide in a national park. – HEAVENLIGHT

I want to be an artist. I also want to work in a radio station. – HALIMA

I would like to be an agricultural officer. – VICTORY

I imagine being a secretary in an office. – ROZINA

I would like to open my own school and I will name it Tenga Academic School. – FUMENCE

I want to be a doctor and a musician. I want to run my life softly. – GLORY

I want to be a teacher of Kiswahili. – PILI

I want to be a lawyer. – FISSOO

I want to be a driver of big cars. – MODEST

I want to be a master of literature. – REGINALD

I would like to be a peaceful person. – LUCIAN

I want to be a leader in my country. – THOBIAS



More about Tanzania

TANZANIA LIES IN EAST AFRICA, just south of the equator. It is home to many of the postcard images of Africa: Mount Kilimanjaro (the tallest mountain in Africa, at 19,340 feet), the Serengeti Plains (where wild animals roam one of the oldest ecosystems on earth), Ngorongoro (a 10,000 foot volcano whose collapsed caldera is 10 miles in diameter and which boasts the world's densest population of predators), the red-clad Maasai herdsmen, the Great Rift Valley (a 6,000 mile crack in the earth's crust), the island of Zanzibar (known for its spices), and Lake Victoria (the largest lake in Africa and the source of the Nile).

Within Tanzania's borders one finds the Olduvai Gorge (the "Cradle of Life" where the Leakeys unearthed the oldest hominid fossils), Gombe Stream (where Jane Goodall does her chimpanzee research), and the town of Ujiji (where the explorer Henry M. Stanley said the famous words, "Doctor Livingstone, I presume?"). There is Lake Tanganyika (the second deepest lake in the world), the Selous Game Reserve (the largest protected reserve in Africa, covering an area greater than that of Switzerland) and Oldonyo Lengai (the world's only active carbonate volcano, whose lavas can be approached at close range and look like melted chocolate).

Tanzania also has miles of white sand beaches, savannahs, tropical rainforests, petrified deserts, verdant hills, and some of the world's finest coral reefs. It has the second

richest bird catalogue and the largest animal migration—over one million Serengeti wildebeests—in the world.

Culturally, the population is hugely diverse, with over 120 indigenous cultures. Tanzania is the only country in Africa whose people speak four of the continent's five linguistic families: Bantu (the most common family in Africa), Cushitic (with roots in Mesopotamia, hence the name of its speakers, the Iraqw), Nilotic (coming from Nubian populations in the Nile Valley), and Khoisan (with click-sounds, the language of "Bushmen"). Unlike most of Tanzania's neighbors, where such diversity has been the catalyst for civil war, Tanzania has a peaceful history. A single language, Swahili, unites its many groups.

In terms of religion, Tanzania splits in thirds. Christian, Muslim, and traditional faiths claim a roughly equal number of followers. People on the coast and the island of Zanzibar are mostly Muslim. Inland, they are more often Christians. The animists are found usually in remote, rural areas.

Tanganyika was a German colony until the end of World War I, when it came under British rule. It gained independence in 1961, and then merged with Zanzibar to form Tanzania in 1964. Julius Nyerere became president and, soon after, turned the country towards socialism. Nyerere was a charismatic leader, and though his socialist policies were catastrophic for the country's economy, his reign was peaceful and he is still regarded as the "father of Tanzania."

In 1986, after Nyerere's resignation opened the way to democratic elections, the country embarked on reforms designed to strengthen the economy and encourage foreign

investment. Since then, Tanzania has made positive strides, both socially and economically. The international community has offered encouragement, with Europe, the United States, and the international lending institutions agreeing to help reduce the country's roughly seven billion dollars of debt.

Still, Tanzania remains one of the least developed countries in the world. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) equaled \$520 (USD) in 2004, making it the second poorest country in the world (with a measurable GDP), next to Sierra Leone. Agriculture makes up half of the country's GDP. Tourism and mining are the country's fastest growing sectors, but they are controlled largely by non-blacks. Most Tanzanians are subsistence farmers in rural districts, served by bad roads and living without electricity, running water, or basic sanitation. Minimum wage is set at \$50 per month in urban areas and \$35 per month in rural areas, though informal employers often pay a fraction of this. Nearly half the country lives below the national poverty line of \$180 per year.

Life expectancy in Tanzania has dropped from 49.5 years in 1975 to 46.0 years in 2005. While AIDS/HIV rates in Tanzania are relatively low by African standards—recent estimates suggest an infection rate of 8 percent—they have still taken a toll. The childhood mortality rate stands at 16.5 percent, with malaria and water-borne illnesses the leading killers. Almost half of Tanzania's children are undernourished, and the average woman gives birth to five children.

Enrollment in primary schools has increased steadily in recent years, the result of the Tanzanian government's decision to make primary education universal and free. However, facilities are threadbare, and most teachers are insufficiently trained. The student teacher

ratio can range from as high as 222:1 in some rural schools to 66:1 in urban areas. Secondary school enrollments have also increased. Secondary education is not free, though, and tuition fees, paired with rigorous admission exams, put it beyond the reach of most. Only one in ten primary students advances to secondary school. Post-secondary education remains a brass ring that few catch. In 2000, the total university enrollment for Tanzania was 20,000 students.

Breathtakingly beautiful, diverse, and poor, Tanzania tests resilience and hope every day.

(From "A Tanzanian Backgrounder," by Carl Cervone, June 2005)



Other facts

LOCATION: East Africa, bordering the Indian Ocean, between Kenya and Mozambique

AREA: 945,087 square kilometers

ARABLE LAND: 4.52% (2003)

IRRIGATED LAND: 0.16% (1998)

CLIMATE: Varies from tropical along the coast to temperate in highlands

TOTAL POPULATION: 36.7 million (2005)

AGE: 0–14 years, 44%; 15–64 years, 53.4%; 65 years and over, 2.6 % (2005)

URBAN POPULATION (% of total): 35.4% (2003)

POPULATION GROWTH RATE: 1.83% (2005)

LITERACY: 78.2%: male, 85.9% and female, 70.7% (2003)

GOVERNMENT TYPE: Republic

CAPITAL: Dodoma

INDEPENDENCE: Tanganyika became independent on December 9, 1961 (from a United Kingdom-administered United Nations trusteeship). Zanzibar became independent on December 9, 1963 (from the United Kingdom). Tanganyika united with Zanzibar on April 26, 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar; it was renamed the United Republic of Tanzania on October 29, 1964.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS: Coffee, sisal (used to make rope), tea, cotton, pyrethrum (insecticide made from chrysanthemums), cashew nuts, tobacco, cloves, corn, wheat, cassava (manioc), bananas, fruits, vegetables, cattle, sheep, goats

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS: Agricultural processing (sugar, beer, cigarettes, sisal twine), gemstones, gold and iron mining, soda ash, oil refining, shoes, cement, apparel, wood products, fertilizer, salt

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION (% of GDP): 2.9% (2002)

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON HEALTH (% of GDP): 2.7% (2002)

POPULATION WITH SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION: 46% (2002)

INTERNET USERS (per 1,000 people): 7 (2002)

(Statistics from *Human Development Report 2005*, United Nations Development Program)

Swahili glossary

(Assembled by students and teachers at Awet Secondary School)

Greetings

hello/how are you? *habari*

I'm fine (reply back) *nzuri*

greetings (to an elder) *shikamoo*

reply (to an elder) *marahaba*

greetings (youth-to-youth) *mambo* or *vipi*

reply (youth-to-youth) *poa* or *safi*

may I come in? *hodi*

welcome/come in *karibu*

good morning *habari ya asubuhi*

goodbye *kwa heri*

good luck *bahati*

Other civilities

please *tafadhali*

thank you *asante*

thank you very much *asante sana*

you're welcome *karibu*

you're very welcome *karibu sana*

forgive me *samahani*

sorry *pole*

I beg of you *naomba*

Inquiries (*habari + noun*)

how is your work? *habari za kazi?*

how is everything at home? *habari za nyumbani*

how are your studies? *habari za masomo?*

how are you this morning *habari ya asubuhi*

how are you this evening? *habari za jioni*

possible reply: "fine" *salama*

Forms of address

Bibi is a term of respect used to address women.

Mama is a term of great respect and is usually

used to address older women. *Bwana* is a term

of respect for men, meaning "sir" or "mister."

Mzee means "elder" or "old person." *Rafiki*

means "friend."

Some basics

yes *ndiyo*

no *hapana*

maybe *labda*

easy *rahisi*

hard *ngumu*

okay *sawalhaya*

and *na*

or *au*

but *lakini*
big *kubwa*
little *ndogo* or *kidogo*
good *nzuri*
bad *mbaya*
today *leo*
tomorrow *kesho*
yesterday *jana*

Numbers

one *moja*
two *mbili*
three *tatu*

four *nne*
five *tano*
six *sita*
seven *saba*
eight *nane*
nine *tisa*
ten *kumi*
twenty *ishirini*
fifty *hamsini*
hundred *mia*
thousand *elfu*
million *milioni*

Colors

black *nyeusi*
white *nyeupe*
red *nyekundu*
blue *blu*
green *kijani*
yellow *njano*
khaki *kaki*
brown *rangi ya udongo*
orange *rangi ya machungwa*

SOME WORDS IN THIS BOOK

AIDS *ukimwi*
assistance *msaada*
audio cassette *kanda*
banana *ndizi*
beans *maharagwe*
bicycle *baisikeli*
bird/airplane *ndege*
book *kitabu*
boy *mvulana*
bucket *ndoo*
cat *paka*
cattle *ng'ombe*
chalkboard *ubao*

chicken *kuku*
children *watoto*
choir *kwaya*
church *kanisa*
clothes *nguo*
communication *mawasiliano*
cooking fire *moto wa kupikia*
cooking pot *chungu* or *sufuria*
day *siku*
daytime *mchana*
desk *dawati*

doctor *daktari* or *mganga*
dog *mbwa*
donkey *punda*
dream *ndoto*
dress *gauni*
drought *ukame*
drugstore *duka la dawa*
dust *uwumbi*
education *elimu*
electricity *umeme*
elephant *tembo* or *ndovu*
family *familia*
farmer *mkulima*

father *baba*
field *shamba*
flour *unga*
fried bread *chapati*
fruits *matunda*
game *mchezo*
girl *msichana*
goat *mbuzi*
hair *nywele*
health *afya*
hill *kilima*
homestead *makazi* or *nyumbani*
journey *safari*
kerosene *mafuta ya taa*
land *ardhi*
lantern *taa*
lion *simba*
livestock *mifugo*
maize *mahindi*
maize porridge *ugali*
meat *nyama*
medicine *dawa*
milk *maziwa*
mobile phone *simu*
money *fedha* or *pesa* or *hela*
month/moon *mwezi*

mother *mama*
mountain *mlima*
music *muziki*
nest *kiota*
news *habari*
nighttime *usiku*
office *ofisi*
oil *mafuta*
paint *rangi*
pants *suruali*
parents *wazazi*
path *njia*
photograph *picha*
pigeon peas *mbazi*
plate *sahani*
public bus (large) *basi la abiria*
public bus (small) *dala dala*
rain *mvua*
rice *mchele*
river *mtu*
road *barabara*
rope *kamba*
salt *chumvi*
school uniforms *sari za shule*
school *shule*
season *majira*
sheep *kondoo*

shoes *viatu*
sickness *ugonjwa*
soil *udongo*
song *wimbo*
store *duka*
stream *kijito*
student *mwanafunzi*
studies *masomo*
sugar *sukari*
tea *chai*
teacher *mwalimu*
tractor *trekta*
transport *usafiri*
tree *mti*
unity *umoja*
used clothing *mitumba*
valley *bonde*
vegetables *mboga*
village *kijiji*
water *maji*
weather *hali ya hewa*
weed *magugu*
wheat *ngano*
year *mwaka*

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