

Swahilii proverbs

Literature



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Methali za kiswahili ---- Swahili proverbs 1. Adhabu ya kaburi aijua maiti, The touture of the grave is only known by the corpse 2. Akiba haiozi, A reserve will not decay 3. Asifuye mvuwa imemnyea. He who praises rain has been rained on. 4. Akili nyingi huondowa maarifa. Great wit drives away wisdom 5. Asiye kubali kushindwa si mshindani. He who does not admit defeat is not a sportsman 6. Atangaye na jua hujawa. He wanders around by day a lot, learns a lot 7. Asiye kuwapo na lake halipo. If you are absent you lose your share 8. Avumaye baharini papa kumbe wengi wapo.

Shark is the famous one in sea the but they many others 9. Baada ya dhiki faraja. After hardship comes relief. 10. Baniani mbaya kiatu chake dawa. An evil Indian but his bussiness is good. 11. Bendera hufuata upepo. A flag follows the direction of the wind. 12. Bilisi wa mtu ni mtu. The evil spirit of a man is a man. 13. Chamlevi huliwa na mgema. The drunkard's money is being consumed by palm-wine trapper. 14. Chanda chema huvikwa pete. A handsome finger gets the ring. 15. Chombo cha kuzama hakina usukani. A sinking vessel needs no navigation. 16. Chovya - chovya yamaliza buyu la asali. Constant dipping will empty goud of honey 17.

Dalili ya mvua mawingu. Clouds are the sign of rain 18. Damu nzito kuliko maji. Blood is thicker than water 19. Dawa ya moto ni moto. the remedy of fire is fire 20. Dua la kuku halimpatu mwewe. the curse of the fowl does not bother the kite. 21. Fadhila ya punda ni mateke. Gratitude of a donkey is a kick. 22. Fimbo ya mbali hayiuwi nyoka. A wepon which you don't have in hand wont kill a snake. 23. Fuata nyuki ule asali. Follow bees and you will get honey 24. Fumbo mfumbe mjinga mwerevu huligangua. Put a riddle to a fool a clever person will solve it 25. Ganda la mua la jana chungu kaona kivuno.

The skin of yesterday's sugarcane is a harvest to an ant. 26. Haba na haba hujaza kibaba. Little by little fills up the measure. 27. Hapana marefu yasio na mwisho. There is no distance that has no end. 28. Hakuna siri ya watu wawili. There is no secret between two people. 29. Haraka haraka haina baraka. Hurry hurry has no blessings. 30. Hasira, hasara. Anger brings loss (Damage). 31. Heri kufa macho kuliko kufa moyo. It is better to lose your eyes than to lose your heart. 32. Heri kujikwa kidole kuliko ulimi. Better to stumble with toe than tongue. 33. Hiari ya shinda utumwa. Voluntary is better than force. 34.

Hucheka kovu asiye kuwa na jeraha. He laughs at scar who has received no wound. 35. Ihsani (hisani) haiozi. Kindness does not go rotten. 36. Ikiwa hujui kufa, tazama kaburi. If you don't know death look at the grave. 37. Jina jema hungara gizani. A good name shines in the dark. 38. Jino la pembe si dawa ya pengo. An ivory tooth is not cure for the lost tooth. 39. Jitihadi haiondoi kudura. Effort will not counter faith. 40. Jogoo la shamba haliwiki mjini. The village cock does not crow in town. 41. Kafiri akufaye si Isilamu asiyekufa. An infidel who does you good turn is not like a Muslim who does not. 42. Kamba hukatika pabovu.

A rope parts where it is thinnest. 43. Kanga hazai ugenini. A guinea-fowl not lay eggs on strange places. 44. Kawaida ni kama sheria. Usage is like law. 45. Kawia ufike. Better delay and get there. 46. Kazi mbaya siyo mchezo mwema. A bad job is not as worthless as a good game. 47. Kelele za mlango haziniwasi usingizi. The creaking of the door deprives me of no sleep. 48. Kenda karibu na kumi. Nine is near ten. 49. Kiburi si maungwana. Arrogance is not gentlemanly. 50. Kichango kuchangizana. Everyone should contribute

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when collection is made. 51. Kidole kimoja hakivunji chawa. One finger cannot kill a louse. 52.

Kingiacho mjini si haramu. That is fashionable in town is never prohibited. 53. Kikulacho ki nguoni mwako. That which eats you up is in your clothing. 54. Kila chombo kwa wimblile. Every vessel has its own waves 55. Kila mlango na ufunguwo wake. Every door with its own key 56. Kila mtoto na koja lake. To every child his own neck ornament 57. Kila mwamba ngoma , ngozi huivuta kwake. Every who stretches a skin on a drum, pulls the skin own his own side. 58. Kila ndege huruka na mbawa zake. Every bird flies with its own wings. 59. Kilio huanza mfiwa ndipo wa mbali wakaingia. The beareved begins the wailing latter others join. 0. Kimya kingi kina mshindo mkubwa. Along silence followed by mighty noise. 61. Kinga na kinga ndipo moto uwakapo. One fire brand after another keeps fire burning. 62. Kinyozi hajinyoi. A barber does not shave himself. 63. Kinywa ni jumba la maneno. Mouth is the home of words. 64. Kipendacho moyo ni dawa. What the heart desires is medicine to it. 65. Kipyaa kinyemi ingawa kidonda. A new thing is a souce of joy even if is sore. 66. Kisebusebu na roho kipapo. Refusing and wanting at the same time. 67. Kisokula mlimwengu, sera nale. what is not eaten by a man, let the devil eat it. 68. Kitanda usicho kilala hujui kunguni wake.

You cannot know the bugs of a bed that you have not lain on. 69. Kivuli cha fimbo hakimfichi mtu jua. Shadow of a stick cannot protect one from the sun. 70. Kiwi cha yule ni chema cha; hata ulimwengu uwishe. The blindness of that one is his good fortune 71. Kizuri chajiuza kibaya chajitembeza. A good thing sells it self a bad one advertises it self 72. Konzo ya maji haifumbatiki. A

handfull of water can not be grasped. 73. Kosa moja haliachi mke. One fault does not warrant divorce of a wife 74. Kozi mwandada , kulala na njaa kupenda. A goshawk is an egg child, if sleeps hungry its his own fault. 75. Kuagiza kufyekeza. e One eye of a master sees more than four of a servant. 76. Kuambizana kuko kusikilizana hapana. Giving advice but no one listens. 77. Kucha M'ngu si kilemba cheupe. The fear of God is not wearing a white turban. 78. Kuchamba kwingi, kuondoka na mavi. Leave well alone! You wont improve matters by going on tinkering 79. Kufa kufaana. Death has its advantages too ie it benifits those who inherit. 80. Kufa kwa jamaa, harusi. The death of not a relative is a wedding. Compared to a death of a relative 81. Kufa kwa mdomo, mate hutawanyika. When the head of thefamilydies, that family breaks up. 82. Kuishi kwingi ni kuona mengi.

To live long is to see much. 83. Kujikwa si kuanguka, bali ni kwenda mbele. To stumble is not falling down but it is to go forward. 84. Kukopa harusi kulipa matanga. Borrowing is like a wedding , repaying is like mourning. 85. Kuku havunji yai lake. A hen does not break her own eggs. 86. Kuku mgeni hakosi kamba mguuni. A new fowl always has string around its legs. 87. Kula kutamu , kulima mavune. Eating is sweet , digging is weariness. 88. Kulea mimba si kazi kazi kulea mwana. It is not hard to nurse a pregnancy, but it is hard to bring up a child. 89. Kunako matanga kume kufa mtu. Where they is mourning someone has died. 90. Kunguru mwoga hukimbiza mbawa zake. The timid crow withdraws his wings from harm. 91. Kupanda mchongoma , kushuka ngoma. You may climb a thorn tree, and be unable to come down. 92. Kupoteya njia ndiyo kujua njia. To get lost is to learn the way. 93. Kutoa ni moyo usambe ni utajiri. Charity is the matter of the heart not of the

pocket. 94. Kutu kuu ni la mgeni. Old rust is for the stranger. 95. Kuzima koleo si mwisho wa uhunzi. Cooling the tongs is not end of forging. 96. Kwa mwoga huenda kicheko na kwa shujaa huenda kilio. i. e. timidity often ends in a laugh, bravado in a lament. 97. Kwenda mbio siyo kufika.

To run is not necessarily to arrive. 98. Kwenye miti hakuna wajenzi. Where there trees, there are no builders. 99. La kuvunda(kuvunja) halina rubani. A vessel running agroud has no captain. 100. La kuvunda (kuvunja)halina ubani. They is no incence for something rotting. 101. Lake mtu halimtapishi bali humchefusha. One's foul smelling does not sicken one self but merely disguts one. 102. Leo ni leo asemayo kesho ni mwongo. Today is today who says tommorrow is a liar 103. Liandikwalo ndiyo liwalo. That which is written by God is what is. 104. Lila na fila hazitangamani. Good and evil will never mix. 105. Lipitalo , hupishwa .

Things dont just happen by accidents 106. Lisemwalo lipo, ikiwa halipo laja. What is benig talked about is here, and if its not it's comming around behind. 107. Lisilokuwapo moyoni, halipo machoni. Out of sight out of mind. 108. Maafuu hapatilizwi. You dont take viengeance on silliness. 109. Macho hayana pazia. Eyes have no screens, they see all that is within view. 110. Mafahali wawili hawakai zizi moja. Two bulls do not live in the same shade. 111. Maiti haulizwi sanda. A dead person is not asked for a shroud. 112. Maji hufuata mkondo. water follows current. i. e. swim with current. 113. Maji huteremka bondeni, hayapandi mlima.

Water flows down the valley does not climb the hill. 114. Maji ukiyavuliya nguo huna budi kuyaogelea. If you take of your clothes for water you must

bathe. 115. Maji usiyoyafika hujui wingi wake. You can not know the extent of water in a pond that you have never been to. 116. Maji ya kifufu ni bahari ya chungu. Water in a coconut shell is like an ocean to an ant. 117. Maji yakija hupwa. When tide is high, it ebbs. 118. Mpanda ngazi hushuka. He who climbs a ladder comes down again. i. e. What goes up must come down. 119. Maji yakimwagika hayazoleki. If water is split, it can not be gathered up. 120. Majumba makubwa husitiri mambo.

Big houses conceal a lot. 121. Majuto ni mjukuu. Regrets are like a child, They come some considerable time after event. 122. Manahodha wengi chombo huenda mrama. With many captains, the ship does not sail properly. i. e. Too many cooks spoil the broth. 123. Maneno makali hayavunji mfupa. Words alone wont break bones. 124. Maneno mema hutowa nyoka pangoni. Pleasant words will draw the snake from its hole. 125. Masikini akipata matako hulia mbwata. When a poor man gets something he boasts of his new wealth. 126. Masikini haokoti, akiokota huambiwa kaiba. A poor man does not pick up things if does they say he stole them. 127.

Masikini na mwanawe tajiri na mali yake. A poor man with his child a rich man with his wealth. 128. Mavi usioyala, wayawingiani kuku? Why drive away fowls from the dung you do not eat yourself? 129. Mavi ya kale hayanuki. Old droppings do not stink. 130. Mbinu hufuata mwendo. A double jointed arm follows the leg action. i. e Like father like son. 131. Mbio za sakafuni huishia ukingoni. Running on the roof finishes at the edge. 132. Mbiu za mgambo ikilia kuna jambo. When an oxhorn of a news man is sounded, something is wrong. 133. Mchagua jembe si mkulima. One who selects his hoe is not real farmer. 134. Mchagua nazi hupata koroma.

He who selects coconut with great care ends up getting a bad coconut 135. Mchakacho ujao, halulengwi na jiwe. You dont throw stones at an approaching craclin noise in the bush wait and see what is it first 136. Mchama ago hanyeli, huenda akauya papo. A traveller does not make a mess where he had made a camp as he might one day come back. 137. Mchelea mwana kulia hulia yeye.. He who fears the crying of a child, will cry himself. 138. Mchele moja mapishi mengi. Rice is all one but they are many ways of cooking it. 139. Mcheka kilema hafi bila kumpata. He who laughs at a cripple will not die without becoming himself 140.

Mcheza hawi kiwete, ngoma yataka matao. A dancer will not become crippled for dancing calls for grace. 141. Mcheza kwao hutuzwa. He who dances at home will be rewarded. 142. Mcheza na tope humrukia. He who plays with mud will get splashed. 143. Mchezea zuri , baya humfika. He who ridicules the good will be overtaken by evil. 144. Mchimba kisima hungia mwenyewe. He who digs a pit will fall into it himself. 145. Mchonga mwiko hukimbiza mkono wake. The maker of wooden spoons saves his hand from fire. 146. Mchovya asali hachovi mara moja. He who dips his finger into honey does not dip it once. 147. Mchuma janga hula na wakwao.

He who earns calamity, eats it with his family. 148. Mchumia juani, hula kivulini. He who earns his living in the sun, eats in the shade. 149. Mdharau biu, hubiuka yeye. He who ridicules a deformed person becomes deformed himself. 150. Meno ya mbwa hayaumani. The teeth of a dog do not lock together. i. e brothers do not harm one another when they fight. 151. Mfa maji hukamata maji. A drowning man catches at the water. 152. Mficha uchi hazai. One who hides private parts wont get a child. 153. Mfinyazi hulia

gaeni. A potter eats from a potsherd. 154. Mfuata nyuki hakosi asali. One follows bees will never fail to get honey. 155.

Mfukuzwa kwao hana pakwenda. He who is expelled from home has no where to go 156. Mgaagaa na upwa hali wali mkavu. A lazy person with a nephwe does not eat dry rice. 157. Mganga hajigangui. A witchdoctor does not cure himself. 158. Mgema akisifiwa tembo hilitia maji. If the palmwine tapper is praised, he dilutes the palm-wine with water. 159. Mgeni ni kuku mweupe. A stranger is like a white fowl (noticeable) 160. Mgeni njoo mwenyeji apone. Let the guest come so that the host may benefit. 161. Mgonjwa haulizwi uji. A sick person is not asked for porridge. 162. Miye nyumba ya udongo , sihimili vishindo I am a mud hut, I can not stand shocks. 63. Mjinga akierevuka mwerevu yupo mashakani. When a fool becomes enlightened, the wise man is in trouble. 164. Mjumbe hauawi. A messenger is not killed 165. Mkamatwa na ngozi ndiye mwizi. The one who is caught with the skin is the thief. 166. Mkamia maji hayanywi. He who fixes his mind much on water ends up not drinking it 167. Mkata (masikini) hana kinyongo. A poor man has no contempt. 168. Mke ni nguo , mgomba kupalilia. A wife is like clothes and banana plant needs weeding. 169. Mkono moja hauchinji ngombe. A single hand can not slaughter a cow. 170. Mkono moja haulei mwana. A single hand can not nurse a child. 71. Mkono mtupu haulambwi. An empty hand is not licked. 172. Mkono usioweza kuukata, ubusu. Kiss the hand you can not cut. 173. Mkosa kitoweo humangiria. One who has little relish must eat sparingly. 174. Mkuki kwa nguruwe mtamu, kwa mwanadamu uchungu. Its nice throw a spear to a pig, but painful when thrown to you. 175. Mkulima ni mmoja walaji ni wengi. The farmer is one but those who eat fruits of his labour are many.

176. Mla cha mwenziwe na chake huliwa. He who eats another mansfoodwill have his own food eaten by others. 177. Mla cha uchungu na tamu hakosi. He who eats bitter things gets sweet things too. 178.

Mla kuku wa mwenziwe miguu humwelekeya. He who devours his neighbour's fowl, its foot prints will give him away. 179. Mla mbuzi hulipa ngombe. The eater of a goat pays back a cow. 180. Mla mla leo mla jana kala nini? The real eater is todays eater not yesterdays. 181. Mla nawe hafi nawe ila mzaliwa nawe. He who eats with you will not die with you except he who was born with you. 182. Mlenga jiwe kundini hajui limpataye. He who who flings a stone amid a crowd, does not know the it hits. 183. Mlimbua nchi ni mwananchi. He who enjoys the first fruit of a country is son of that country. 184. Mnyamaa kadumbu. One who keeps silent, endures. 85. mnywa maji kwa mkono moja, Kiu yake i pale pale. He who drinks water with one hand finds out his thirst is still there. 186. Moja shika, si kumi nenda urudi. Take one, not that you may return with ten. 187. Moto hauzai moto. Fire does not beget fire in the end it begets ashes. 188. Mpanda farasi wawili hupasuka msamba. One who rides two horses at once will split asunder. 189. Mpanda ovyo hula ovyo. He who sows disorderly fashion will eat likewise. 190. Mpemba akipata gogo hanyii chini. If a native of pemba can get a log he does not relive himself on the ground. ie nothing but the best 191. Mpemba hakimbii mvua ndogo.

A native of Pemba does not run away fro a small shower. 192. Mpiga ngumi ukuta huumiza mkonowe. He who fights with a wall will only hurt his hand. 193. Mpofuka ukongweni, hapotewi na njia. He who becomes blind in his old age does not lose his way. 194. Msafiri masikini ajapokuwa sultani. A

traveller is poor, even though he being a ruler. 195. Msasi haogopi mwiba. A hunter is not afraid of thorns. 196. Msema pweke hakosi. One who talks to himself can not be wrong. Ie no one to correct him. 197. Mshale kwenda msituni haukupotea. If an arrow goes into a forest it is not lost. 198. Mshoni hachagui nguo. A tailor does not select his cloth. 99. Msitukane wagemama na ulevi ungalipo. Do not abuse palm-wine tappers while drunkenness persists. 200. Msitukane wakunga na uzazi ungalipo. Do not abuse midwives while child-bearing continues. 201. Mstahimilivu hula mbivu. A patient man will eat ripe fruits. 202. Mtaka cha mvunguni sharti aina. He who requires what is under the bed must bend for it. 203. Mtaka nyingi nasaba hupata mwingi msiba. He who boasts of his ancestry unduly will bring plenty of trouble upon himself. 204. Mtaka unda haneni. He who desires to make something does not announce his intentions , just turns them into actions. 205. Mtaka yote hukosa yote.

He who desires all, misses all 206. Mtegemea nundu haachi kunona. He who likes to eat cows hump will not fail to grow fat. 207. Mtembezi hula miguu yake. An aimless wanderer wears away his legs. 208. mteuzi hashi tamaa. A connoisseur never comes to the end of desire. 209. Mti hauwendu ila kwa nyenzo. A log can not move save by the help of rollers. 210. Mtondoo haufi maji. An old man always keeps something in reserve. 211. Mtoto akililia wembe mpe. When a child cries for a razor give it him. i. e. Let him learn by experience. 212. Mtoto umleyavyo ndivyo akuavyo. As you bring up a child , so he will be. 213. Mtoto wa nyoka ni nyoka.

The child of a snake is a snake. 214. Mtu hakatai mwito, hukata aitwalo. A person does not objects to being called, he objects to what he is called for.

215. Mtu hujikuna ajipatiapo. A person scratches himself where his hand can reach. 216. Mtu huulizwa amevaani , haulizwi amekulani. A person is asked about his dress not what he has eaten. 217. Mtumai cha ndugu hufa masikini. One who always depends on his brother will die poor. 218. Mtumi wa kunga haambiwi maana. The carrier of a secret message is not told its meaning. 219. Mtumikie kafiri upate mradi wako. Serve even an unbeliever to attain your own ends. 220.

Mtupa jongoo hutupa na mti wake. If you throw a millipede you should throw away the stick you picked it up with 221. Mume wa mama ni baba. A husband of a mother is a father 222. Mungu hamfichi mnafikiki. God does not condescend a(hypocrite) liar. 223. Mvumbika changa hula mbovu. One who stores half grown fruit eats it rotten. 224. Mvungu mkeka. The space under the bed is like a mat. 225. Mvunja nchi ni mwananchi. The destroyer of a country is a citizen of that country. 226. Mvuvi ajuwa pweza alipo. A fisherman knows where to look for an octopus. 227. Mwacha asili ni mtumwa. He who renounces his ancestrey is like a slave. 228.

Mwamba na wako hukutuma umwambiye. He who speaks ill of someone close to you in your presence sends you to tell him so. 229. Mwamini Mungu si mtovu. He who trusts in God lacks nothing. 230. Mwana mkaidi hafaidi mpaka siku ya idi. An obstinate child does not suffer save on the day of festival. 231. Mwana maji wa kwale kufa maji mazowea. To a seamen of Kwale, death by water is common experience. 232. Mwana mkuwa nawe ni mwenzio kama wewe. The child who grows up with you is your fellow. 233. Mwana wa kuku hafunzwi kuchakura. A chick is not taught how to scratch up the ground. 234. Mwana simba ni simba. The child of lion is a lion. 35.

Mwanga mpe mtoto kulea. Give a wizard a child to bring up. 236. Mwangaza mbili moja humponyoka. He who is after two things at the same time, one will surely escape him 237. Mwanzo kokochi mwisho nazi. The beginning is bud the end is coconut. 238. Mwanzo wa chanzo ni chane mbili. The beginning of a mat-making is two slips of raffia leaf. 239. Mwanzo wa ngoma ni lele. The beginning of a dance is "lele" i. e. just one man singing hu lalaaaa. 240. Mwapiza la nje hupata la ndani. One who curses someone in public, brings it on himself in private. 241. Mwekaji kisasi haambiwi mwerevu. He who nurses vengeance is not called wise. 42. Mwenda bure si mkaa bure, huenda akaokota. One who walks with no reason is not like one who sits without reason, the one who walks might pick up something. 243. Mwenda mbio hujikwa kidole. A person who is in too much of a hurry stubs his toe. 244. Mwenda tezi na omo marejeo ngamani. He who goes to the quarterdeck and forecastle will return to the hold eventually. 245. Mwenye kelele hana neno. A noisy person is harmless. 246. Mwenye kovu usidhani kapowa. One with a scar, do not think him healed. 247. Mwenye kubebwa hujikaza. He who is carried on the back must cling on. 248. Mwenye kuchinja hachelei kuchuna. He who slaughters a beast does not hesitate about skinning it 249. Mwenye kuumwa na nyoka akiona jani hushtuka. One who has been bitten by a snake, when he sees grass he he gets afraid. i. e. Once bitten twice shy. 250. Mwenye macho haambiwi tazama. One who has eyes is not told to look (he does it himself) 251. Mwenye nguvu mpishe. Let a strong man pass 252. Mwenye njaa hana miiko. A hungry man observes no taboos. 253. Mwenye pupa hadiriki kula tamu. A hasty person misses the sweet things (because he cannot wait for the fruit to ripen). 254. Mwenye shibe hamjui mwenye njaa. A

satisfied person does not know the hungry man. f. He that is warm thinks that all are so. 255. Mwenye shoka hakosi kuni. He who has an axe does not lack firewood. 256. Mwenye tumbo ni tumbole, angafunga mkaja. She who is pregnant, is pregnant-even though she wrap herself in an 'mkaja' (i. e. you don't achieve something by merely pretending you have achieved it.) (Mkaja is the cloth a woman wears round her stomach after giving birth). 257. Mwenzako akinyolewa wewe tia maji. When your Companion is being shaved, put water (on your head). ('Be prepared-eg. when you see a neighbouring country being invaded prepare to face the same situation yourself) cf.

When your neighbour's house is on fire, take care of your own. 258. Mwibaji na watwana, mlifi ni mwungwana. A thief is a rogue but the one who repays is a gentleman 259. Mwili wa mwenzio ni kando ya mwilio. Your companion's body is beside (i. e. not a part of) your body. 260. Mwizi hushikwa na mwizi mwenziwe. A thief is caught by his fellow thief. cf. Set a thief to catch a thief. 261. Mwomba chumvi huombea chunguche. He who asks for salt does so for his own cooking pot 262. Mwosha hadhuru maiti. The washer of corpses does no harm to the dead. 263. Mwosha huoshwa. The corpse-washer is washed (in his turn). Cf. Tit for tat. 64. Mwosha husitiri maiti. The washer conceals the corpse (i. e. gives nothing away). 265. Mzaha, mzaha, hutumbuka usaha. Joke, joke, discharges pus (i. e. do not dismiss even a small scratch as if it were only a joke-it may go bad) cf. A stitch in time saves nine. 266. Mzazi haachi ujusi. One who gives birth cannot avoid (ritual) defilement 267. Mzigo wa mwenzio ni kanda la usufi. Your companion's burden is (no more than) a load of kapok (to you). cf. The burden is light on the shoulder of another.

268. Mzika pembe ndiye mzua pembe. The one who buries ivory is the one to dig it up

269. Mzowea kutwaa, kutoa ni vita. For him) who is accustomed to taking giving away is a battle.

270. Mzowea kunyonga, kuchinja hawezi. He who is used to strangle, cannot slaughter.

271. Mzungu Wa kula hafundishwi mwana. The process of eating is not taught to a child.

272. Nahodha wengi, chombo huenda mrama. Too many captains (and) the ship rolls. cf. Too many cooks spoil the broth.

273. Natuone ndipo twambe, kusikia Si kuona. Let us see then tell; hearing is not seeing cf. Seeing is believing.

274. Nazi mbovu harabu ya nzima. A rotten coconut in a heap spoils the wholesome ones. cf. A rotten apple spoils its neighbours. cf. A sickly sheep infects the whole flock.

75. Ndege mjanja hunaswa na tundu bovu, An artful bird can be trapped in a rotten cage.

276. Ndege mwigo hana mazowea. A bird that imitates others does not get used to a place.

277. Ndugu chungu, jirani mkungu. (Alt. Ndugu kitu.... .) A brother is (as useful as) a cooking pot, and a neighbour is (as useful as) a cooking pot lid.

278. Ndugu mwui afadhali kuwa naye. A bad brother is far better than no brother. cf. Blood is thicker than water.

279. Ndugu wakigombana, chukua jembe ukalime, wakipatana chukua kikapu ukavune. When brothers quarrel, take a hoe and go and dig; and when they make it up, take a basket and patten the crop (i. e. ever interfere with a dispute between brothers except to fly and settle it amicably).

280. Ngoja! ngoja? huumiza matumbo. Wait a minute! wait a minute! harms the stomach

281. Ngoma ivumayo haidumu. A noisy drumming does not last long.

282. Ngoma ivumayo haikawii kupasuka. A drum that is sounded loudly will soon split cf. A pitcher that often goes to the well, is broken at last.

283. Ngozi ivute ili maji. Stretch hide while it is still green. cf. Strike while the iron is hot.

284. Nia njema ni tabibu, nia mbaya

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huharibu. A good purpose is like a doctor (it heals or keeps you well) and evil purpose corrupts. 285. Nifae na mvua nikufae na jua.

Do me a favour during a rainy season and I shall do the same to you during the dry season. 286. Nimekula asali udogoni, utamu ungali gegoni. I ate honey in my childhood, and its sweetness is still in my tooth. 287.

Nimekupaka wanja, wewe wanipaka pilipili. I have anointed you with kohl, do you, in return, anoint me with pepper? 288. Njia ya mwongo fupi. The way of a liar is short (i. e. he soon comes to grief). 289. Njia ya siku zote haina alama. A regular path has no signpost. cf. A used key is always bright. 290.

Ng'ombe avunjikapo guu hurejea zizini. When a bull gets his leg broken, he is sure to go back to his yard. 91. Ng'ombe haelemewi na nunduye. A cow is

not oppressed by its own hump. 292. Nta Si asali; nalikuwa nazo Si uchunga.

Wax is not honey; 'I had them' (i. e. cattle) is not herding. 293. Nyani haoni

kundule, huliona la mwenziwe. The ape does not see his own backside, he

sees his companion's. 294. Nyimbo ya kufunzwa haikeshi ngoma. Songs

learnt from outside sources (foreign importations) are not used at a dance so

long. 295. Nyumba usiyolala ndani hujui ila yake. You cannot know the

defects of a house you have not slept in. Cf. It is the wearer who knows

where the shoe pinches. 296. Nyumba ya udongo haihimili vishindo.

A mud hut cannot withstand great shocks. 297. Nzi kufa juu ya kidonda Si

haramu. For a fly to die on an ulcer is not bad (after all, he got what he

wanted). 298. Pabaya pako Si pema pa mwenzako. Your own bad place is far

better (so far as you are concerned) than your companion's place (which will

do you no good). 299. Padogo pako Si pakubwa pa mwenzako. Your own

small place is not like a big place of your companion. cf. A poor thing but

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mine own. 300. Painamapo ndipo painukapo. Where it slopes down is where it slopes up. 301. Paka akiondoka, panya hutawala. when the cat goes away, mice reign. cf.

When the cat's away, the mice do play. 302. Paka hakubali kulala chali. A cat can never be made to lie on its back. 303. Paka wa nyumba haingwa. A cat belonging to the house is not chased away. 304. Panapo wengi hapaharibiki neno. Where there are many, nothing goes wrong. (A council of many people ensures that things are kept on the right tines.) cf. Many hands make light work. 305. Papo kwa papo kamba hukata jiwe. Constant rubbing of a rope will cut a stone. cf. Constant dripping wears away a stone. 306. Pele hupewa msi kucha. Scabics are given to him who has no fingernails (i. e. who cannot scratch himself). 307.

Pema usijapo pema; ukipema Si pema tena. A good place you don't go to is a good place: if you go too often, it isn't a good place any longer. cf. Familiarity brings contempt; or, Outstay one's welcome. 308. Penye kuku wengi hapamwagwi mtama. Where there are many fowls, millet is not scattered (i. e. it is not advisable to disclose a secret in the presence of a number of people). 309. Penye mafundi, hapakosi wanafunzi. Where there are experts there will be no lack of learners. 310. Penye mbaya wako, hapakosi mwema wako/na mwema wako hakosi. Where you have an enemy, you will also surely find a friend. 311. Penye miti hakuna wajenzi.

Where there are plenty of trees there are no builders. 312. Penye nia ipo njia. Where there's a will there's a way. 313. Penye urembo ndipo penye urimbo. Where there is finery, there lies the snare (Lit: birdlime). 314. Penye

wazee haliharibiki neno. Where there are old people, nothing goes wrong.

315. Penye wengi pana mengi. Where there are many (present) there is

much (said). 316. Penye wengi pana Mungu. Where there are many people,

there God is 317. Pilipili usozila zakuwashiani? How can you be burnt by

chilies which you have not eaten? 318. Pofu hasahau mkongoja wake. A blind

person does not forget his walking stick. 19. Pwagu hupata pwaguzi. A thief

finds another one (who is a bigger and better thief than he is). Cf. When

Greek meets Greek. 320. Radhi ni bora kuliko mali Blessings are better than

wealth, 321. Sahani iliyofunikwa, kilichomo kimesitirika. When a plate is

covered, its contents are hidden. 322. Samaki mmoja akioza, huoza wote. If

one fish rots, they all rot. cf. A rotten apple spoils its neighbours. A sickly

sheep infects the whole flock. 323. Shika! Shika! na mwenyewe nyuma. Hold

him! Hold him! and you yourself after him (i. e. you shouldn't expect others

to do all the work). 324. Shimo la ulimi mkono haufutiki.

A pit of (dug by) the tongue cannot be covered up by the hand (words are

more dangerous). Cf. The pen is mightier than the sword. 325. Shoka lisilo

mpini halichanji kuni. An axe with rio handle does not split firewood. 326. Si

kila mwenye makucha huwa simba. Not all that have claws are lions. cf All

that glitters is not gold. 327. Sikio halilali na njaa. An ear dots not go to bed

hungry (there's always plenty of gossip). 328. Sikio halipwani kichwa. Alt:

Sikio halipiti kichwa. The ear does not surpass the head. 329. Sikio la kufa

halisikii dawa. A dying ear does not feel the medicine. 330. Siku njema

huonekana asubuhi.

A good day becomes evident in the morning. 331. Siku utakayokwenda uchi,

ndiyo siku utakayokutana na mkweo. The day you go naked, is the day you

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will meet your father/mother. in-law. 332. Simba mwenda kimya(pole) ndiye mla nyama. The lion which moves silently is the one that eats meat. 333. Simbiko haisimbuki ila kwa msukosuko. A thing that is firmly fixed cannot be dislodged except with much trouble. 334. Sitafuga ndwele na waganga tele. I shall not suffer illness while doctors abound. 335. Subira ni ufunguo Wa faraja. Patience is the key to tranquility. 336. Subira yavuta heri, huleta kilicho mbali.

Patience attractshappiness; it brings near that which is far. 337. Sumu ya neno ni neno. The poison for a word is a word. cf. Tit for tat. 338. Tamaa mbele, mauti nyuma. Desire first, death afterwards, (i. e. 'No one ever thinks of the possiblility of death when concentrating on achieving a particular end). 339. Taratibu ndiyo mwendo. Slowly is indeed the way to walk. Cf. He that goes slowly goes surely, or, Hasten slowly. or, Slow but sure. 340. Teke la kuku halimwumizi mwanawe A hen's kick does not hurt her chick. 341. Tonga si tuwi The juice of an Immature coconut Is not like the real coconut juice. 342.

Ucheshi wa mtoto ni anga la nyumba. The laughter of a child lights up the house. 343. Uchungu wa mwana, aujua mzazi. The labour of childbirth is known to the mother. 344. Udongo uwahi ungali maji Work the clay while it is still wet Cf. Strike while the iron is hot 345. Udugu wa nazi hukutania chunguni The brotherhood of coconuts is a meeting in the cook- in pot (said of people who do not cooperate until it is too late). 346. Ukenda kwa wenye chongo, vunja lako jicho. When you go among one-eyed people, put out your own eye. Cf. Where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise, or, When in Rome, do as the Romans do (?). 347.

Ukiona kwako kunaungua kwa mwenzako kunateketea. If you find your own house is on fire, you may be sure that your neighbour's house is burning much more fiercely. 348. Ukiona neno, usiposema neno, hutapatikana na neno. If you see something and say nothing, you will have nothing to suffer for. Cf. Mind your own business, or, Hear all, see all, say nothing. 349. Ukiona vinaelea, vimeundwa. If you see vessels afloat, remember that they have had to be built. 350. Ukiona zinduna, ambari iko nyuma. If you see amber, ambergis is (not far) behind, (i. e. Where there is a jealous husband, there will be jealous wife). (Sauce for the goose . . . ?) 351. Ukipewa shibiri usichukue pima. If you are offered a p, do not take a couple of yards. Cf. Give him an inch and he will take an ell. 352. Ukupigao ndio ukufunzao. What beats you is what teaches you. Cf. Spare the rod and spoil the child. 353. Ukistaajabu ya Mussa utaona ya Firauni. If you are astonished at Moses' deeds, you will be more astonished at Pharaoh's. Not-Moses declared himself to be a prophet, but Pharaoh declared himself to be God. 354. Ukitaja nyoka, shika fimbo mkononi. When you mention a snake, have a stick ready in your hand. Talk of the devil, and you'll hear the rustle of his wings. 55. . Ukitaka kula nguruwe, chagua aliyeno, na. If you want to eat pig, choose one which is fat. Cf. As well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb. (Muslims are forbidden pork). 356. Ukitaka uzuri sharti udhurike. If you want beauty, you must (first) be injured 357. Ukuukuu wa kamba Si upya wa ukambaa. A well-worn coir-rope is better than a new rope made from raffia. 358. Ulimi hauna mfupa. A tongue has no bone (i. e. it can get round anything, both literally and metaphorically). 359. Ulimi unauma kuliko meno. The tongue hurts more than the teeth. 360. Ulipendalo hupati, hupata ujaliwalo.

You will not necessarily get what you desire, you will get what is appointed you (by God). Cf. Man proposes, God disposes. 361. Ulivyoligema utalinywa. As you tapped it (palm-wine) you will (have to) drink. Cf. As you sow, so shall you reap, or, You have made your bed and now you must lie on it. 362. Umejigeuza pweza, unajipalia makaa? Have you changed into a cuttle-fish, (that) you heap live embers on yourself? 363. Umekuwa bata akili kwa watoto? Are you a duck (that) your mind is with your children? 364. Umekuwa jeta hubanduki? Are you a Jeta, (that) you do not move? 365. Umekuwa nguva, huhimili kishindo?

Are you a dugong, (that) you cannot bear a wound? 366. Unamlaumu mwewe, kipanga yuwesha kuku. You are blaming the hawk, (while) the falcon is killing the chickens. 367. Ungalijua alacho nyuki, usingalionja asali. Had you known what bees eat, you would not have tasted the honey. 368. Ushikwapo shikamana. When you are seized, hold on yourself. 369. Usiache kunanua kwa kutega. Do not neglect the undoing (of a trap that has caught) for the setting (of others). cf. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. 370. Usiache mbachao kwa msala upitao. Never give up your own old mat for a better prayer mat which you see passing. 71. Usicheze na simba, ukamtia mkono kinywani. When you play with a lion, do not put your hand in its mouth (that would be going too far!). 372. Usigombe na mkwezi, nazi imeliwa na mwezi. Don't quarrel with the coconut-palm climber: the coconut has been eaten by the moon. 373. Usijifanye kuku mweupe. Do not pretend to be a white fowl (you're only an ordinary chap). 374. Usikaange mbuyu ukawaachia wenye meno watafune. Do not roast baobab kernels and leave

those who have teeth chewing (them). Don't start quarrels among other people (bv telling tales). 375. Usile na kipofu ukamgusa rnkono.

When you are eating with a blind man, do not touch his hand. (to do so will lead him to suspect that either the food is finished or you are trying to play a trick on him. In other words, with a simple person you must be very careful lest you might do something to make him suspicious of you) 376.

Usimwamshe aliyelala utalala wewe. Do not wake one who is sleeping; you will fall asleep yourself. 377. Usinivishe kilemba cha ukoka. Do not put a grass turban on my head, (i. e. do not flatter me). 378. Usipoziba ufa utajenga ukuta. If you do not fill up a crack, you will have to build a wall. cf. A stitch in time saves nine 379.

Usisafiriye na nyota ya mwenzio. Don't travel under another's lucky star (i. e. do not rely on someone else's good fortune). 380. Usisahau ubaharia kwa sababu ya unahodha. Do not forget what it is to be a sailor because of being a captain yourself. 381. Usishindane na Kari; Kari ni mja wa Mungu. Do not compete with Kari, Kari comes from God. 382. Usitukane wagama na ulevi ungalipo. Speak no ill of palm-wine tappers as long as drinking persists 383. Usitukane wakunga na uzazi 'ungalipo. Speak no ill of midwives while childbirth still continues. 384. Usiyavuke maji usiyoweza kuyaoga. Do not cross water that is too deep for wading.