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Kanga Writings

Read some kanga writings on this page. These are some of the writings appearing on kanga - a very popular dress in eastern Africa. As you may notice, some of these writings are common Swahili proverbs. Majority of them, however, are just messages the wearer wishes to send across. It may be a message of love, caution, warning, reassurance, or just an act of self-expression.

Please also take a look at a [beautiful collection of kanga pictures](#) from a kind donation by Trui Goslinga-Lindeboom of [Kali Mata Ki Jai Foundation](#). Click on the pictures to enlarge them.

Most of the kanga writings on this page were sent to me by various readers of this page so that I could translate for them. I owe them a load of gratitude for their kind donation.

No.	Kanga Writing (Swahili)	Literal Translation	Most Common Meaning
1	Akiba haiozi	Savings never go bad	It's always good to save or invest for the future.
2	Akipenda chongo huita kengeza	A person in love with a one-eyed person calls her/him "cross-eyed"	When a person is in love, he/she hardly sees the bad attributes of his/her lover. She/he will always belittle or find excuses for any faults on her/his lover.
3	Akufukuzae hakwambii toka	A person who wants you out of her/his place will not tell you, 'Get out!'	The actual Swahili proverb doesn't stop there, it continues with: "... you will just learn that from her/his actions."

			<p>This proverb (which is used a lot in the Swahili world) is just a reminder that people's inner feelings are mostly communicated through actions, attitude and behaviour, and much less through words.</p> <p>Literally, the proverb tells people not to wait until they are verbally notified that they are no longer welcome at a particular place, instead, they should try to take note of the attitude, actions, and behaviour of their hosts, to know that they have stayed long enough and it was time to leave.</p>
4	Ala! Kumbe!	I see!! That is so!	A common expression used to show that one is surprised by some information that he or she has just come to know of.
5	Asante gari ya muhishimiwa	Thanks to the honourable's car	In the Swahili world leaders are always called with "Muhishimiwa" or "Mheshimiwa" title which is the translation for "Honourable" or "His/Her Excellency". In rural areas you hardly find any cars save those government-owned cars given to district and regional commissioners, local concillors, members of parliament, etc. These "honourable's cars" help rural people in many ways including giving them rides (lifts) especially in case of emergencies. That's why this kanga writing expresses gratitude to such a car.
6	Asiyekujua hakuthamini	He/she who doesn't know you, doesn't value you	Another Swahili proverb: Zimwi likujualo halikuli likakwisha - An ogre (zimwi) that knows you won't eat you completely. In the

			Swahili folklore, a "zimwi" is believed to be a monster that eats people.
7	Atakae hachoki	A person in need never gets tired	Of course she/he will feel tired only after getting what she/he wants.
8	Bahati ni upepo sasa upo kwangu	Being lucky is like (the blowing of) the wind, now (it's blowing) on my side	Indeed, don't expect to be lucky all the time.
9	Chanda chema huvikwa pete	A favourite finger gets a ring on	An award or privilege usually goes to the one who deserves it. Another Swahili proverb: Mcheza kwao hutunzwa - A person who plays at home gets awarded. A person who brings "the bacon" home, is the one that gets recognition.
10	Chokochoko mchokoe pweza, binadamu hutamweza	If you want to poke (provoke) someone, then poke an octopus; you will fail with a human being	The word "chokochoko" actually means "provocation" but it is derived from "chokoa" which means to poke or to fork. The way fisherman fish octopus in East Africa is by forking them in their holes with pointed wooden sticks.
11	Chokochoko si njema mchague la kusema	Provocation is not good, you should choose what to say	A warning against those who use their tongues to incite chaos and misunderstanding between people.
12	Dua la kuku halimpati mwewe	A chicken's prayer doesn't affect a hawk	This saying is normally used to refer to the helplessness of the powerless in the hands of their oppressors. Had the prayers of the victims be of any effect on to their victimizers, then certainly the oppression would end. But that doesn't seem to be the case.
13	Dunia duara	The Earth is round	Go wherever you go, but you'll return to the same old place. In some cases this saying is used to

			discourage overindulgence in other peoples' affairs. The Earth is round, everything revolves, and you'll never get to the bottom of everything! Some would add, "Dunia duara, ukiichungua utahara!!" (The Earth is round, you'll end up catching diarrhoea if you investigate it!). Try not to get bothered, worried and concerned with everything. Afterall, the Earth is round!
14	Embe mbivu yaliwa kwa uvumilivu	A ripe mango has to be eaten slowly	Of course the writing doesn't refer to an actual "ripe mango". It refers to a love partner who is willing and ready. She/he has to be handled gently and with care.
15	Ewe Mola tuepushe na mahasidi	O Lord, save us from the evil ones	A good prayer when surrounded by vultures that are ready to feast on your 'prey'.
16	Fadhila za punda ni mateke	The way a donkey expresses gratitude is by giving someone a bunch of kicks	This saying is used when one gets bad treatment in return to a favour he or she gave to someone. Another Swahili proverb: "Mtenda wema kijuki, mwishowe hutiwa moto", (A bee gets burnt/smoked in return for the favour of making honey).
17	Fimbo la mnyonge halina nguvu	A poor man's cane is not strong enough	Another similar Swahili proverb: Dau la mnyonge haliendi joshi - A poor man's canoe doesn't sail fast. For the canoe to sail fast, the wind has to be blowing in the direction the canoe is headed to. But even the wind doesn't blow in the poor man's favor! There is yet another similar proverb: Mbuzi wa masikini hazai - A poor man's goat doesn't bear kids. In short, nothing seems to work in the poor man's favor. That's an unfortunate reality.

18	Fitina yako faida yangu	Your bad words against me, actually benefit me. When you incite others against me, you actually benefit me.	When someone goes around spreading bad words against you, she may actually benefit you in a way. For example, the other people will realize that the other person is really bad for what she says about you. Or, the other people will come back to you and tell you what the person is saying against you and you will know that she is a person to avoid - hence a benefit to you.
19	Haba na haba, hujaza kibaba	Little and little, fills the measure	Small things, when combined together make up big things.
20	Halahala mti na macho	Beware, a stick and your eyes!	It is a caution given against an impending danger.
21	Halua ya lozi imemshinda mdokozi	Almond sweetmeat is a formidable challenge to a petty thief	Sweetmeat is a famous dessert in Zanzibar and along the coast of East Africa. It is made of starch, sugar, oil and sometimes nuts or sesame seeds are used. Depending on the way it is made, it can be as soft as jelly but sometimes it may be very hard to cut with fingers. The saying above is meant to laugh at someone who has attempted in vain to do something like to win over somebody else's lover.
22	Hasidi hana sababu	An envious person requires no reason to practice envy	He/she would practice envy for no reasons at all! There is something within him/herself that makes him/her practice envy. The inner urge is all by itself enough reason!
23	Hata tukibanana hapa atapata aliyejaliwa	Even if we get into a scramble here, the winner will be the one destined to win	More literally it translates as: "Even if we squash each other fighting for it, the one who will get it is the one destined to get it". The writing actually discourages people from using violence means to try to get

			things for themselves. In essence, it says, a particular thing goes not to the strong but to the one destined (ordained by God) to get it.
24	Hata ukinichukia la kweli nitakwambia	Hate me, but I won't stop telling you the truth.	The words of a person full of courage!
25	Hata ukinuna buzi tumelichuna	You may be angry, but we've skinned the big goat!	<p>The literal translation of the writing is very simple, but its meaning is rather hidden. You have to know some Swahili slang to be able to understand it.</p> <p>"Big goat" = buzi, goat = mbuzi</p> <p>"buzi" is Swahili slang for a well-to-do (temporary) male sex partner. "kuchuna buzi" = "to skin the big goat" is another slang for sleeping with such a man.</p> <p>As you can now realize, this is not a very polite saying. Someone is boasting that she has actually slept with some rich man even if the other lady is angry about that. That man might even be the other lady's lover - giving her the reason to be angry about it.</p>
26	Hodi hodi naikome mwaka ujao naolewa	Knock, knock, should stop, as I'm getting married next year	The lady doesn't want any more (male) visitors who drop by her house trying to win her as she has already been engaged and she is actually getting married very soon. Of course she's concerned that persistent 'knock, knock' on her door by the visitors would spoil her chance of getting married.
27	Huyo kibuzi	There (she is),	"Kibuzi mwarika" which I have

	mwarika mtizame anavyojitingisha	stupid goat, look at how she swings her body!	translated as "stupid goat" is just an insult. This statement is certainly made to offend someone. The person issuing that statement is certainly not pleased with someone that shows off her body by swinging it provocatively while she walks.
28	Japo kidogo chatosha kwa wapendanao	A little is enough for those in love	It doesn't really need much to sustain a relationship! A few words of endearment and assurance are more than enough!
29	Japo sipendezi kubembeleza siwezi	(I know) I'm not loved (by some people) but I cannot beg for (their) love.	She/he is very proud of herself/himself! She/he is not prepared to humiliate herself/himself.
30	Je! iko namna?	Is there a way?	This is slang which is usually used when there is something suspicious happening.
31	Jogoo wa shamba hawiki mjini	A country rooster would not crow while in town	Usually meant to despise country people but its wider meaning is that some things only fit in some environments.
32	Kama ni ubaya ulianza wewe	If you think I'm bad then you started it!	I'm just giving you the taste of your own bitter pill!
33	Kanga nenda na urembo, shani urembo na shani	Kanga, go with embellishment; wonder, elegance and wonder	As if talking to <i>kanga</i> the writing goes with the whole idea of giving <i>kanga</i> as gifts to loved ones. Here the gift giver "instructs" the <i>kanga</i> to go to his or her lover with the message to confirm the relationship.
34	Kasheshe unalijua unalisikia?	Do you know of "Kasheshe" or you just hear about it?	"kasheshe" is a rather new word in Swahili which refers to a serious crisis situation. Here is a warning against inviting or causing a crisis situation.
35	Kazi mwanamandanda,	Work is an obedient child,	When you work hard, it is certain that you will succeed. On

	kulala njaa kupenda	sleeping hungry is one's choice	the other hand, if you don't work hard, you are bound to have a miserable life.
36	Kidogo changu pokea na dua njema nakuombea	Please except this little from me along with my prayers	What a pleasant way to give!
37	Kikapu cha mama kimejaa ndago	My mother's basket is full of straw	Swahili people use straw (and I should say, many kinds of straw), for many purposes. They make straw baskets, hats, fans, mats, food covers, and a slew of other decorative stuff. Women (mothers) are the ones that make most of those things. Therefore, for a mother to have a basket full of straw, it may mean that she's well provided for, well served, contented. In that case then, a child here (in this kanga writing) sort of boasts of how he/she has provided all what his/her mother needs. Such a kanga, with such a writing, would be ideal to give to one's mother as a gift.
38	Kikulacho kinguoni mwako	What "eats" you is in your dress	The source of your problems is those close to you.
39	Kila jambo na wakati wake	There is an opportune time for everything	Do not mix up things! A time for work shouldn't be used for playing, and vice versa.
40	Kila mwenye kusubiri hakosi kitu	A patient person never misses (a thing)	With patience, you always stand to win.
41	Kila uonalo wasema na hili kaseme pia	You talk about everything you see, then talk about this one too!	It's an angry message from someone who's fed up with the behavior of another person. The other person gossips about everything she/he sees on others. She/he talks bad about others in their absence. So, realizing that she/he has witnessed a certain thing

			happening (probably something bad to her/him), she/he is given a challenge to go around and talk about it as well. In a way, it is an angry protest.
42	Kuelekeza si kufuma	To aim is not to hit	Good intentions alone serve nothing if not followed by tangible results.
43	Kuku mgeni hakosi kamba mguuni	A new hen would always have a string tied to its leg	You can always easily identify a new person in town through his/her appearance, actions and behaviour. There will always be something that he/she will have or do that is not common in the town. In other words, each stranger comes with an identity!
44	Kupata si werevu, na kukosa si ujinga	Getting something is not necessarily because of cleverness, and missing something is not necessarily because of ignorance	Another Swahili saying: Mpaji ni Mungu - God is the Sustainer.
45	Kwangu anakula keki afuate nini kwako we hafkeki	By having me he gets to eat a real cake, that's why he doesn't come to you as you are just a half-cake	This statement is said in jest. The speaker seems to have won a love battle. She is now throwing some insults to the person she has just defeated. She says, she has won him over because she is "the real thing" - perfect in every sense, while the other lady (the loser) doesn't really match up with her. She is just a "half-cake" - not perfect.
46	Lia na tabia yako usilaumu wenzako	Blame your character not your fellows	It's very easy to blame others whenever one faces a problem. This writing is a reminder that sometimes the blame should be on the "man in the mirror" - that is, yourself!

47	Lisemwalo lipo	If it's being talked about then it's already here	This is a very common Swahili saying. One would say that when he has heard about something he/she is not sure of especially something big or bad.
48	Machoni rafiki, moyoni mnaiki	Friendly in the eyes, a hypocrite in the heart	Typical hypocrites are very good at concealing their true characters.
49	Mama ni mama japokuwa rikwama	A mother is a mother even if a "coolie's cart"	Even a bad mother is still a mother worthy of respect, love and care.
50	Mama nipe radhi kuishi na watu kazi	Mother, give me your blessings; living with people is really tough	Swahili people believe that one has to earn his/her parent's blessings (radhi) to be successful in life. The blessings serve as a shield and guidance in the face of any hardship.
51	Mambo mazuri hayataki haraka	Good things should not be hastened	Another similar Swahili proverb: Haraka haraka haina baraka - Rush rush doesn't lead to bounty. You need to slow down sometimes since when you do everything in a rush you do not get enough time to enjoy what you do.
52	Mapenzi hayana macho ya kuona	Love is blind	Those in love do things that transcend normal senses.
53	Mapenzi hudumu ukila zabibu	Love lasts if you eat grapes	The literal translation doesn't make much sense but it actually means, love is sustained by sexual relation.
54	Mche Mungu upate rehema zake milele	Fear God so that you earn His everlasting blessings	Many kanga writings reflect deep religious feelings of the Swahili people. This is one of them.
55	Mcheza kwao hutunzwa	A person who plays at home gets awarded	He/She who brings "the bacon" home is the one who gets recognition and favour.
56	Mchezea wembe humkata mwenyewe	A person who plays with a razor, cuts	If you get involved in a dangerous exercise, you are bound to get harmed physically

		himself	or emotionally.
57	Mchimba kisima, huingia mwenyewe	A person who digs a well, gets himself inside (first)	A person who sets a trap often times finds himself caught in it. If you have bad intentions against others, chances are, you'll be the first to be affected by those intentions directly or indirectly.
58	Mdhaniaye ndiye kumbe siye	The one whom you think is the right one is the wrong one	You are barking up a wrong tree.
59	Mgaagaa na upwa hali wali mkavu	A person who walks and searches thoroughly around a beach never eats "dry" rice (rice with no fish stew)	If you work hard looking for something, you will never come out empty handed.
60	Mie langu jicho	To me, my eye!	He/She is prepared to do nothing but look at the way things go! It is the same as saying, "I don't care!".
61	Mimi na wewe pete na kidole	I and you are like a ring and a finger	We're so close.
62	Mke mwema pambo la nyumba	A good wife is a home's adornment	A wife full of love, lights up the home with her compassion.
63	Mke mwenza!! haa!! mezea!	Cowife! Ha! Just swallow it!	A wife tells her husband to never even think about having a second wife! The statement "mezea" (just swallow it) is Swahili slang which means, "let it pass" or as they say in US, "Forget it!"
64	Mkuki kwa nguruwe, kwa binaadamu mchungu	A spear only fits a warthog, it's bitter to a humanbeing	In other words, those people who like to cause harm and discomfort to others, often times are very quick at crying foul when something bad is done to

			them.
65	Moyo wa kupenda hauna subira	A heart deep in love has no patience	A person deep in love doesn't like to wait!
66	Moyo wangu Sultani, cha mtu sikitamani	My heart is like Sultan, I don't long for anybody else's property	I am satisfied.
67	Moyo wa subira haufanyi ghera	A patient heart is never in haste	A patient heart doesn't fumble around.
68	Mpaji ni Mungu	God is the Sustainer	Mostly used by the havenots to console themselves.
69	Mpenzi uwe radhi	Sorry, my dear!	It's about time that someone said, "I'm sorry!"
70	Msijifanye hamjui linalonikera	Don't pretend you don't know what annoys me	The person says: "You pretty well know what bothers me but you keep repeating the same as if you don't know that it annoys me."
71	Msilale wanawake	Women: do not fall asleep	It's a call to women not "to fall asleep" - meaning, not to be completely passive. They should "wake up" and do what is best for them.
72	Msilolijua litawasumbua	You will be troubled with what you have no knowledge of	Normally said to discourage those who are so nosy about the affairs of others.
73	Mso hili ana lile	A person missing this has that	There is no useless person. Likewise, there is no person that is absolutely perfect.
74	Mti hawendi ila kwa nyenzo	A log moves only with proper tools	You need to have proper tools to carry out any task.
75	Mtoto umleavyo ndivyo akuavyo	The way you raise a child is what he/she will grow to be	The upbringing of a child is what moulds his or her character. It is a lesson given to parents to raise their children well for them to have better future.
76	Mtumai cha	A person who	Encourages selfreliance.

	ndugu hufa masikini	relies on his/her relative's property, dies poor	
77	Mtupie Mungu kilio, sio binadamu mwenzio	Throw saddening stuff to God, not to your fellow human being	The logic is, God can handle any situation, not so with an ordinary human being.
78	Mungu atanilinda ubaya wenu hautanifika	God will protect me, your evil deeds will not reach me	God will protect me against your evil deeds. He is afterall, The Protector.
79	Mungu ndie muamuzi wa kila jambo	God is the Judge for everything	This is a very common attitude of many Swahili people. They will just leave matters to God to decide. It is the basis for their non-confrontational and peaceful attitude.
80	Mwanamke ni chachu ya maendeleo	A woman is an important part of development	A woman is an important part of any development effort.
81	Mwenye wivu ajinyonge	The envious should hang herself/himself	Mmmh! Quite rough words! This is a very harsh and impolite statement from someone who is really fed up with those who envy her/his relationship or success in life.
82	Mzaha mzaha hutumbuka usaha	Too many jokes burst out the pus	If you joke with someone too much, you may easily do or say something that will anger him or her.
83	Mzizi sio jadi kupendwa ni bahati	To be loved is not through a love potion but through your good luck	Of course many people would dispute that. Some people in the Swahili world do indeed believe in love potions.
84	Naishi niwezavyo siishi mtakavyo	I live as I can afford not as you wish	Another Swahili proverb: Mtu hujikuna ajipatapo - A person scratches herself/himself where her/his fingers reach. In this

			<p>writing the kanga wearer is confronting others who seem to talk behind her back regarding her life style. She is telling them she is not prepared to yield on their pressure. She'll just continue to live according to her means no matter what they say. This is a very strong statement.</p>
85	Na iwe leo furaha ya harusi	Let today be the happiest wedding moment	<p>A wedding day is considered to be a climax of life in many culture. Swahili culture is no exception. This kanga writing is a very popular chorus in many Swahili wedding songs.</p>
86	Naona ni shoga yangu, kumbe ni mke mwenzangu	I thought of you as my girlfriend, but alas! You are my cowife	<p>Someone is messing around with someone else's husband!</p>
87	Napenda kukuona mpenzi wangu ni furaha ya moyo wangu	I love to see you my dear, you are the joy of my heart!	<p>Mmmh! It's a kind of words you never get tired of hearing!</p>
88	Nazi mbovu harabu ya nzima	A bad coconut renders good ones bad	<p>A bad person or thing in the midst of good ones can easily spoil either the attributes or even the character of the good ones.</p>
89	Neema ya wazee furaha ya watoto	Economic success of parents is a joy to their children	<p>Parents who are economically successful have enough means to take good care of their children.</p>
90	Nikiwepo sipendezi na kunikosa huwezi	My presence doesn't please you and neither can you afford to be without me	<p>Mmmh! A kanga with such a writing is definitely intended to give someone a good "rub". The giver of such a kanga might even be hit back with it!</p>
91	Nilikudhani dhahabu kumbe adhabu	I thought of you as gold but you are such a pain	<p>I regarded you as the most precious thing I have ever had, but you have proved to be</p>

			nothing but torture and torment to me.
92	Nimekisaliti kidole na jiwe, liwalo na liwe	I have betrayed a toe against a stone, let it be!	I am prepared to bear the consequences of my own mistakes.
93	Njaa mwanamalegeza, shibe mwanamalevya	Hunger weakens, but food satisfaction intoxicates	When one is hungry, he becomes weak but when he is stomach- full of food he becomes too lazy to work.
94	Paka chume mtaani kwenu, halahala vitoweo vyenu	A stray cat is wandering around your neighbourhood, watch out with your "vitoweo" (fish or meat)	It is a caution given to lovers to watchout against wanderers lest they snatch their partners off.
95	Pekepeke za jirani, hazinitoi ndani	Unwarranted spying by a neighbour does not take me out of my house	The best treatment for nosy neighbours is to ignore them.
96	Pema usijapo pema ukipema si pema tena	A good place is one where you have not dwelt on, once you do that it ceases to be good	Often times you get fascinated with things you have little knowledge about. Once you have knowledge and experience with that thing it ceases to interest you. It's an unfortunate reality that bedevils many human relationships.
97	Penzi la mama tamu, haliishi hamu	Mother's love is so sweet that you never have enough of it	Couldn't have said it better!
98	Pilipili iko mtini yakuwashia nini?	A chilli pepper on its plant, how could it make you hot?	The issue is none of your concern, how could it bother you? In other words, "This is none of your business!"
99	Rafiki akupendae humuona penye haja	A friend who loves you, you'll always see him/her when	Compare with the English saying: A friend in need is a friend indeed.

		you're in need	
100	Samaki akioza usimtupe ataokotwa uje ujute	If a fish goes bad don't throw it away lest you regret when someone picks it up	Of course the meaning is far from the "fish" thing! It is a caution against making hasty decisions on things that affect us directly. And in this particular context it is with regard to relationships. The writing teaches us not to be too swift at dumping our friends and lovers only to regret when they find "better" suitors.
101	Shanuo baya pale linapokuchoma	A comb becomes bad when it hurts you	An otherwise useful thing or a good person becomes bad to you when it/he/she harms you in whatever way.
102	Shukurani zetu pokeeni na dua njema tunawaombea	Please accept our thanks and good prayers	An excellent way to express gratitude.
103	Sichagui sibagui atayenizika simjui	I do not choose nor do I segregate, for I don't know who will attend to my funeral	This is a nice saying and a very important reminder to all of us. We really don't know who will and will not be useful to us. You may be in trouble and get helped by someone you least expected. It always help to treat everyone equally and with respect.
104	Siku ya kufa nyani miti yote huteleza	The day a monkey is destined to die, all trees get slippery	There is no escaping one's fate.
105	Sithamini pochi yako bali utu wako	I value not your wallet but your morality	Another Swahili proverb: Bora utu kuliko kitu - Good moral character is more important than material wealth.
106	Situmai uzuri wangu, natumai bahati yangu	I don't rely on my beauty but my luck	Compare with: The beauty and the beast!
107	Tamu ya mua kifundo	A sugarcane is sweetest at the	What seems to be hard to achieve in real life is often times

		joint	the best. Fruits of hard labour are enjoyed the most.
108	Tulia tuishi wazuri haweshi	Calm down and live with me, pretty ones are never in short supply	Indeed the world is full of beautiful and handsome people. If one were to fall for each one of them it would be impossible to establish a lasting relationship with anyone.
109	Tulia tulia utakalo utalipata	Just be cool, you'll get what you want	A re-assuring statement!
110	Ubaya hauna kwao mola nisitiri na njama zao	There is no special place for wickedness; Oh Lord, save me from their evil plots	One can come across wicked things anywhere even where he/she least expected. Wicked things are not reserved to special places. There is no "home" for wickedness. Realizing that, the person here seeks refuge to God to protect him/her from any kind of evil plots against him/her. The saying itself is very poetic in Swahili and the meaning is far reaching.
111	Uchungu wa mwana aujuae mzazi	A parent has the ultimate feelings for her/his child	"Uchungu wa mwana" is generally used to mean the pain a mother feels from pregnancy to child birth. Ironically, it is this pain that creates a solid bond with her child and giving her the reason to protect the child from any harm. In essence, the writing says: "It is the mother that knows best how hard it was to give birth to the child and therefore she has the ultimate feelings for her child." In this case though, the writing is more general to include the feelings of both parents to their child. Hence the use of "mzazi" (parent), instead of "mama" (mother).

112	Ukali wa jicho washinda wembe	An eye is sharper than a razor	A look can be extremely effective in sending a desired message across. It can be a friendly and inviting look or a threatening one.
113	Ukila nanasi, tunda lingine basi	Once you taste a pineapple, you'll never go for any other fruit	It is very common in Swahili to use sweet fruits to signify things associated with love. There are songs and songs about such fruits as "nanasi" (pineapple), "zabibu" (grapes), "tofaa" (apple), etc., all having nothing to do with the fruits themselves but love. Hence such sayings as, "Ukila zabibu, utaleta majibu", (Once you taste grapes you'll definitely respond), obviously talks about things associated with love.
114	Ukimkirimu Mola wako hukosi fungu lako	If you are generous to your God, you won't miss your share (of compensation)	If you are generous to your God (and His creations), He will be generous to you. If you serve your God, He will serve you.
115	Ukiona vyaelea vimeundwa	When you see them (vessels) afloat, somebody made them	Nothing comes out of nothing! One has to work for whatever he or she wishes to achieve.
116	Ukipata shukuru ukikosa usikufuru	When you get (something) be thankful and when you miss (something) do not blaspheme	The one who gives is the same one as the one who deprives. It's the Almighty God. The best thing is to be thankful for both - getting and missing things. The Swahili people believe that it's in God's plans that people miss some things and get some things.
117	Ukistaajabu ya Musa utaona ya Firauni	If the acts of Moses make you wonder, wait until you	Get prepared for the worst! As the Americans would say: You ain't seen nothin' yet!!

		see the acts of Pharaoh	
118	Ukiujua huu, huu huujui	If you know this one, you don't know this (other) one	Sometimes interpreted as a gesture demonstrated by flies when they rub their legs forward and then they repeat rubbing their legs backward. i.e. if you know the forward one, you don't know the backward one. In other words you will always find that there is something you don't know.
119	Usiache mbachao kwa msala upitao	Don't abandon your old rug for a passing mat	Value more what is yours and more permanent rather than a temporary thing that is not yours even though it appears to be better looking than yours.
120	Usibadili nia kwa jambo la kusikia	Don't change your mind because of a hearsay	People do speak lots of things which are not always the truth. This is a piece of advice not to take hearsay seriously.
121	Usicheze na ulimwengu ukikuelemea utajuta	Don't play tricks with the world, you will regret when it falls on you	"Ulimwengu" in Swahili literally translates as "the world" or "the universe", but in the above saying it means one's life and whatever surrounds him/her including other people and things. The correct (non-literal) translation of the above saying would then be: Don't be unconcerned with your life, you will regret when it fails you.
122	Usikumbuke uovu ukasahau fadhila	Don't remember the evil things only while forgetting to be thankful for the good deeds	Make a judgement based on both, good and bad side of everything.
123	Usilaumu sisimizi sukari haimalizi	Don't blame an ant, it will never finish the sugar	Don't look for lame excuses.
124	Usinichukie kwa	Don't hate me	Hate me for something else but

	umasikini	for (my) poverty	not because of my poverty as I didn't ask God to make me poor.
125	Usinione nasinzia uyasemayo nayasikia	You see me dozing but I hear whatever you say	Don't think that I am not aware of what you do in my absence.
126	Usinipende kwa moja nipende kwa yote	Don't love me for just one thing, love me for everything	She/he demands to be loved as a person (as a whole) not just as someone that possesses one likable/adorable thing.
127	Usisafirie nyota ya mwenzio	Don't set sail using someone else's star	Everyone has his or her own destiny. If someone has become successful by doing something, it is not necessarily right to assume that you will also be successful by doing the same thing.
128	Usisahau hisani kwa dhiki ya mara moja	A single instant of hardship should not make you forget all the favours	The message here is that any long-term relationship is bound to encounter some displeasing incidents which should just as well be ignored in favour of so many good things rendered over the whole long period of relationship. That is exactly how relationships are sustained!
129	Usisherehekee vita ukalilia amani	Don't celebrate war and cry for peace	You cannot blow hot and cold at the same time. You're either for peace or for war - not both at the same time! If you are happy to go to war, it is hypocritical at the same time to cry (pray) for peace.
130	Usitake ushindani huniwezi aslani	Don't compete (with me), you can never beat me	War of words!
131	Utamaliza limau shaba haiwi dhahabu	You will run short of lemon juice (rubbing), but never will copper turn into gold	Don't wish for the impossible.

132	Uzuri wa mke ni tabia si sura	A wife's beauty is in her character, not her looks	Compare with: Don't judge a book by its cover!
133	Vidole vitano, kipi bora	Five fingers, which is the best?	It is an indirect way of saying that it is difficult to say which finger is better than another since fingers work together to accomplish a task. In other words, it is a call for unity. Compare with another Swahili proverb: Kidole kimoja hakivunji chawa - One finger is not capable of smashing a flea. You need two fingers (usually two thumbnails) for that purpose.
134	Vishindo vingi sio kutenda jambo	Fumbling around doesn't accomplish anything	Another Swahili proverb: "Simba mwenda kimya ndiye mla nyama" - A quiet lion is the one that catches the prey.
135	Wajenga kwa wengine kwako kwabomoka	You build somebody else's place while yours is falling down	A wake-up call for a person too negligent of his own life.
136	Wameadhirika mahasidi wasojijua	Humiliation has come down upon the evil ones who don't know themselves	Those who wrongly took themselves as saints rather than evil persons, have now revealed their true colors. They are very much humiliated! It seems to be the right time to laugh at them.
137	Wangu wa ubani nimemuweka ndani	I am securely holding my lover inside	"Ubani" (Frankincense gum) is a very common incense in East Africa and Arabia. It is commonly used in large gatherings especially in religious (Islamic) occasions where believers say prayers. It is very common to burn "ubani" in a small earthen container called "kiotezo" filled with hot charcoal. Burning "ubani" is

			<p>customarily taken to be an essential part of saying prayers. The custom is thought to have been brought to East Africa by the Persians (Iranians). Associating a lover with a word "ubani" is likely due to its nice fragrance or the fact that it requires a hard task of burning "ubani" in a prayer to have a lover. Statements like, "Humpati hata kwa ubani", (You will never win her even if you burn "ubani") are common in Swahili.</p>
138	<p>Wape wape vidonge vyao, wakimeza, wakitema shauri yao</p>	<p>Give them their (bitter) medicine tablets; It is upon them to swallow or to spit them off!</p>	<p>Usually said when one proceeds telling someone things that he or she would not like to hear. Maybe someone is complaining about what he or she did or just an attempt to intimidate him or her.</p>
139	<p>Wasemao nawaseme siwajali mambo yao</p>	<p>I don't care what they say!</p>	<p>I'll just ignore them!</p>
140	<p>Wastara nimestirika mlilolitaka halikunifika</p>	<p>Destined to be safe, I remain protected, and your evil wishes have not materialized</p>	<p>A triumphant and daring statement!</p>
141	<p>Wee! Utaumiza roho yako</p>	<p>You! You'll hurt your soul</p>	<p>Another impolite caution!</p>
142	<p>Zawadi ni tunda la moyo</p>	<p>A gift is a fruit from the heart</p>	<p>Another Swahili saying: Kutoa ni moyo usambe ni utajiri - Giving is from the heart not from the wealth.</p>
143	<p>Zawadi ni zawadi, usichoke kupokea</p>	<p>A gift is a gift, don't get tired of receiving</p>	<p>Compare with another Swahili proverb: "Kutoa ni moyo usambe ni utajiri", (Giving is from the heart not from the wealth).</p>

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