

Success is not final, failure is not fatal

EMMA MASAKI BONIFACE KAISER



RETIRED SENIOR CHIEF,

A HERO, A POWERHOUSE!-

THE LIFE HISTORY OF A PARTRIACH

**NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN.** 

# A LIFE OF SERVICE, WISDOM AND LEADERSHIP

**EMMAH MASAKI** 

**BONIFACE KAISER** 

#### BIBLE REFERENCE VERSE

**Matthew 23:11** 

"The greatest among you will be your servant."

This verse fits beautifully because Chief Nyanaro's story is one of **servant leadership**—building schools, hospitals, churches, guiding people in governance and faith, and lifting his community with humility and love. His greatness was rooted not in title or position, but in his selfless service to others, just as the Bible teaches.

#### **Dedication**

This work is lovingly dedicated to **Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro** — A father, a leader, a servant of the people, and a true hero of our time.

From the humblest beginnings in the hills of North Mugirango, you rose to greatness through faith, courage, and unrelenting hard work. You lived not for yourself, but for the good of others — building schools where dreams could be born, hospitals where lives could be saved, churches where faith could be nurtured, and roads where journeys could begin.

You are the bridge between generations, the pillar of our community, and a beacon of wisdom and hope. Your leadership was a calling fulfilled with humility, your service a gift freely given, and your life an example that will forever inspire.

To your beloved family, your cherished community, and all who know your name, you have given a priceless inheritance: a legacy of service, strength, and love.

We, your children, grandchildren, friends, and all who have walked in the light of your path, are proud to carry your torch forward.

May your story continue to inspire generations to dream, to lead, and to believe that greatness is born from faith, sacrifice, and the will to serve.

With love, respect, and endless gratitude, We honor you, Chief James Nyanaro.

# Acknowledgment

I wish to sincerely acknowledge and thank **Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro**, whose rich life story, tireless service, and unwavering faith have been the heart and soul of this work. Your life is a living example of dedication, sacrifice, humility, and true leadership — a legacy that continues to inspire many.

Special thanks go to his loving wife, Mary Bochaberi, and their children — Mercylyne Moraa, Stella Mosinya, Kevin Bundi, Jane Kwamboka, Robert Kebaso, Pius Chelluget, Lillian Bosibori, Collette Kerubo, and Geoffrey Samusi — for standing beside him faithfully and for being part of the remarkable journey he traveled.

Gratitude also goes to the wider family, the grandchildren, the Ekerenyo and North Mugirango communities, fellow chiefs, church leaders, and all friends who supported him throughout his leadership journey and continue to honor his contributions.

I extend my appreciation to the church and educational institutions that shaped, strengthened, and walked alongside him in his mission to transform lives through development, faith, and service.

Above all, I thank **God Almighty**, who has been Chief Nyanaro's ever-present guide and protector, and who continues to bless his days with strength and wisdom.

This work stands as a humble attempt to capture a life lived with purpose — a gift to the generations who will walk in the paths he paved.

With deep respect and gratitude,

Emma Masaki, Boniface kaiser and Family.

### TABLE OF CONTENT

BIBLE REFERENCE VERSE	iv
Dedication	·v
Acknowledgment	vi
CHAPTER ONE : EARLY LIFE	· 1
CHAPTER 2 : EDUCATION	2
CHAPTER 3: WORKING AS A TEACHER AND AS A CHURCH LEADER	5
CHAPTER 4 : TRAVEL TO ROME	· 7
CHAPTER 5 : MARRIAGE	8
CHAPTER 6: WORKING AS A CHIEF AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	9
CHAPTER 6: RETIREMENT	11
CHAPTER 7: APPRECIATION	12
SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS	14
I. Educational Milestones	14
II. Contributions to Education Development	14
III. Administrative and Leadership Roles	14
IV. Community Development Projects	14
V. Religious and Spiritual Service	14
VI. Honors and Recognition	15
VII. Family Legacy	15
VIII. Post-Retirement Service	15
PERSONAL MESSAGES TO THE HERO SENIOR CHIEF JAMES NYANARO NYABARO	16
Message from Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro to All	16
Message from Mercylyne Moraa ( first born)	·17
Message from Stella Mosinya ( second born)	17
Message from Kevin Bundi (third born)	17
Message from Jane (fouth born)	17
Message from Kebaso Nyanaro (fifth born)	·17
Message from Pius Chelluget Nyanaro (sixth born)	18
Message from Lillian Bosibori (seventh born)	18
Message from Collette Kerubo(8th born)	18
Message from Geoffrey Samusi (ninth born)	18
Massage from Fellow Chiefs to Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro	18

Message from the Community to Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro	-19
Message from the Grandsons of Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro	-20
Message from the Granddaughters of Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro	-21
Message from the Author	-21
CONCLUSION	-22

#### **CHAPTER ONE**: EARLY LIFE

You ever dreamt of flying? You ever dreamt of achieving a certain goal? Never hold back. Spread your wings, reach out and make your dreams come true. The sky is no longer the limit, for I have been there before! You can definitely go beyond, if you believe!

When I was born, parents knew not the record of dates or time. I highly appreciate my parents for bringing me to this world. My loving father's name was Nyabaro Momanyi Nyaweri while my dotting mother's name was Yusabia Kemunto, daughter to Mbee from Bonyakoni clan. Those were many years ago when reading and writing were still a dream to many. My beloved mother, Kemunto, told me that I was born during the time when the very first vehicle passed through the small road passing through our home. The name of the vehicle was Bota, possibly from the name board! In my mother tongue we twist the pronunciation of words to fit our speech orientation skills. You know, just like Corner T was eventually coined into Konate, Bota we had! My mother told me that the year was around 1936. She vividly explained to me that on the day that I was born, there was partial darkness and she unscientifically made it clear that they believed that God prevented the sun from sending enough light to the earth for some reasons. I however came to learn during my school days that it was actually the solar eclipse, famously referred to as 'Enyakoira' in Ekegusii. Being an enthusiastic student of history, while learning about historical events that have been taken to book over time, I now believe that I was born on 13<sup>th</sup> of December, 1936. Legends are born in December, you know!

Growing up was more like a learning session for everything we got involved in as children taught us a lesson or two. Times went by so fast and before even realizing it, time was ripe for circumcision and I was part of a good number of twelve- year olds who were ready for the cut. It was very early in the morning when we were taken out for the cut. Women were singing in celebration and young men dancing in praise of the circumcised. A few hours into the day, darkness covered the earth. The year was 1948. I must have been an eclipse type of person or maybe, just maybe, it must have been God's way of sending a message that I was going to be a great person when I grew up, so I believed! What could you have said about the coincidence in a solar eclipse occurring on the day that I was born as well as the day I was circumcised, if it were you? To me, God had shown me the sign, and I was ready. When darkness fell, we got into the bushes and slept. After a while the sun shone again and then we

were escorted back home. As we grew up, there were no clothes like those worn nowadays. All we had were *shukas* that we held in place using safety pins. That was how all of us dressed.

As a boy who had been newly initiated into adulthood through circumcision, it was now time to go out and make some money. I set out and left home in search for work. I had decided to go to the estates in Sotik highlands where there were Europeans owning big farms and tea plantations. As a young man, I worked hard in everything that I did and the Europeans paid me five shillings at the end of the month, complemented by a half a blanket. My hard work stood out and one of the head farm managers decided to give me a pay rise of one shilling and so henceforth, I was earning six shillings a month. That was such a positive improvement and so I got even more motivated to work. There were workers tilling the land using tractors and they noticed how hardworking I was. They loved me and picked me as their errand boy to be helping in giving them food while still at the farm. I worked with them and remained committed, taking them lunch every day at noon. One of the workers was called Samwel Kabinga and his home was at Magwagwa. We became good friends since then. That was still the year 1948. At sometime I took leave to go home and visit my parents then went back to Sotik.

This time I went to a different farm owned by somebody whose name was Magonya in a farm called Set, which was some sort of a ranch where cows were reared. I was employed to clean the field where the cows grazed. Here I received seven shillings a month for pay and we stayed with a friend of mine, whom we came from the same home area with. His name was Oeba Masanya. We were agemates and we did the same job at the farm. At the end of the year 1949, we went back home for Christmas. It was a great moment for us and we had saved a good amount of money for our age. I therefore felt a strong desire to go to school and get educated using the money that I had saved.

#### **CHAPTER 2: EDUCATION**

At the start of the year 1950, I talked to my parents and my elder brother Ndubi, and asked them which school they would like me to go to. We were many of us from our home area who wanted to go to school and so we decided to go to Gekendo to get basic formal

education. Gekendo was a mission school founded by the catholic church. Christianity was widespread and had taken deep root by then. My brother Ongaro however resolved to join Nyangoge DEB, a school established by the district education board. That is the school he wanted, and that's where he went to. We also wanted Nyangoge and that's where we went to. People go for what they want, we believed! I hope you are driven by the same mantra.

At school, I joined standard one where we were taught by a teacher called Bernado Obiri. Time went by so fast and within no time, we were in standard two where we were taught by a teacher called Samwel Ondigi. That was school for me for that time. I guess I must have exhausted the much money that I had saved and so it was high time I went back to look for more, if at all I wanted to continue with my education. A few friends of mine and I therefore went back to Sotik highlands in search for employment. We got jobs and worked hard, saving for school since our plan was to go back to school as soon as we saved enough money. After a while, we went back to school to join standard three. Unfortunately however, we were told that our beloved school Gekendo had been closed. Possibly because of lack of learners, I thought. I wished I hadn't left but wishes are not horses. They will never be ridden.

We quickly made up our minds to find yet another school. It is the school that was closed but education was not closed. We went to a school called Rangenyo where we enrolled as day scholars in standard three. I believed that I was building a better future for myself and my family through education. Despite the long distance that we walked to and from school therefore, I never gave up, for I believed! The coincidental solar eclipses on the day that I was born and the day I was circumcised showed that I was going to be a great person. I worked very hard and got promoted to standard four. In an unfortunate event, I fell ill and developed a very serious cough. I think I must have been affected by the early morning cold and late evening cold that I experienced on my way to and from school. I stayed home for some time and was caught up by the timeline to pay for standard four examinations. I gave the money to one of the priests at the institution called father Francis More but her later gave the money back to me saying the registration had been closed. I therefore did not sit for the exams but I was allowed to proceed to standard five the following year, 1955.

We learnt the whole year in standard five but we still had to go back to sit for CPE, certificate of primary education. I passed very well and was promoted to standard five in the year 1956. We proceeded to standard six, and eventually standard seven while still at Rangenyo. In July 1959, I sat for my Kenya African Primary Education and passed. I talked to the priest

incharge at Rangenyo Mission and he was impressed by my good results and so he decided to offer me a job. He said that I would have gone for training at Asumbi but unfortunately the slots were alreadyall taken up by other students. I therefore was to work for them as a pupil teacher or as it is famously known, an untrained teacher. I worked until 1960 December when I was offered a chance to join Asumbi in January 1961. I took the offer and joined Asumbi training college in February, and learnt till 1962 November when I sat my exams and passed and became a P3 teacher. In January 1963, I was employed as a trained teacher and immediately appointed as headteacher at the same school called Embonga Primary School, which was quite far from Rangenyo Mission. I taught there for two years before I was transferred to Nyakenyomisia Primary in December 1964.

While at Nyakenyomisia, I interacted with a great leader called Agustino Moturi whose home was in the school's neighborhood. He was a senior chief and his home was near the school. I taught there while still undertaking my studies. In 1965, I sat my form two exams but I did not pass. I realized that I had too much work to do as a headteacher and so I couldn't get enough time to study. I stepped down as a headteacher to become just a teacher then I sought transfer to Gekendo Primary and got it. The headteacher of Gekendo primary at that time was a good friend of mine. His name was John Mesa. We had gone to school together at Rangenyo but she proceeded to Asumbi for training before me. I worked very hard, both as a teacher and as a student aiming at sitting my form two exams. My effort was not in vain since I sat the exams a second time in November 1967 and passed very well. I was therefore given a promotion to become a P2 teacher. I was therefore very happy since I now realized I had gotten a better harvest than I would have had if I just stayed back and got satisfied with my position. It is therefore a great thing that anyone who desires to achieve something great in life must come out of their comfort zones and go for what they believe in. The results encouraged me to proceed to register and study for my form four exams.

I registered, studied and sat my form four exams in January the next year. The registration was done by the London Education Council. It was not an easy exam and passing it was therefore not an easy thing. I sat the first time and passed only one paper out of four. I registered again and sat a second time and passed the second paper. I did the same thing the third and forth time. I sat the exams four good times my people! Four times without giving up. This exam was not a joke for sure. I put the four passes together and got a total of four.

# CHAPTER 3 : WORKING AS A TEACHER AND AS A CHURCH LEADER

These four points are what I took to the education office where they told me that the four points were enough for me to qualify as a P1 teacher. I was therefore given a promotion immediately to become a P1 teacher. That was a great step in my life. I had worked for it and so I believed that I deserved it. So I got it. That was the year 1971.

At that time, they started asking me to become a headteacher but I refused. When they insisted, I agreed to become a deputy headteacher but later on I agreed to become the headteacher of Gekendo Primary. While at it, I worked very hard to develop the school and eventually it grew into a highly populated school creating need for a secondary school into which our students would be admitted after primary education. I led a committee that passed the school to become a secondary school. In the committee, I acted as the secretary to the board. We worked very hard and made sure the secondary school was put in place. while teaching at Gekendo, I influenced many parents who ended up transferring their children from schools they went to that were not doing very well and brought them to Gekendo primary. The streams grew from two to four. Having the big population, we decided to split the schools into two, with the help of the board members. We then opened a branch at Sore and another at Nyanchoka. I was posted as headteacher at Nyanchoka branch. I put in more effort than I had put in at my previous station and within one year, the school had tremendously grown. That was such a short period for such development. I therefore received recognition from the education office and I was given a promotion. At the beginning of the year 1972, I was chosen to be a board member of the harambee committee appointed to build Kiabonyoru Secondary school. At Kiabonyoru, I was appointed as the treasurer to the board and I was assigned the duty of taking care of the funds. While at it, the board of management of the school asked that as a teacher, I needed to seek transfer to a school near my home. Before long, the head of education called Daniel Omangi gave me a transfer letter posting me to Nyaramba Primary, a school near my home.

I readily took up the new offer and reported to my new station immediately. At that time, I also learnt that Kebirigo Mission also wanted me to be the secretary to the board in the parish council. It was God's work and so I wouldn't resist. I took up the role readily and did it to my level best believing that service to mankind is service to God. I had those many roles which I attended to graciously. It was while I served as the headteacher at Nyaramba Primary that many people got to see me and interact with me at different levels. They appreciated my

leadership qualities and they talked a lot about the many good things I had done. I was a frequent visitor to Nyaramba market whereby I passed by every evening to share a cup of tea with my friends. One of my friends called Paul Ondieki, who was also my uncle, was one of the people I frequently visited as I came home. He had a shop at Nyaramba market. Together with his friend called Wilson Gesaka, they talked to me about the retirement of the then chief called Agustino Moturi Obwang'i, who had been serving as the chief for North Mugirango constituency. They said that people wanted me to become their next chief. I lisstened to them and thought to myself that they must have been politicizing the chief affair. I remained silent for a while insisting to them that I was a teacher and all I wanted to do was just teach and help learners realize their dreams. I also told them that I wanted to have enough time to do the work of the Lord since I had then been appointed as the chairperson to the parish committee to the diocese of Kisii, reporting to the then Bishop Mogendi.

#### **CHAPTER 4: TRAVEL TO ROME**

We later learnt that it was actually true that Chief Agustino Moturi had retired. Peole kept on saying that they wanted me to be their chief. They all felt that I had the leaadership qualities that they wanted. Maybe they were influenced by the kind of developent that I had spearheaded successfully in the region, right from schools to churches and homes. For sometime, the story was forgotten since the diocese was organizing to take a number of Christians to Rome in Italy for a visit that was fully sponsored by the church. I then found out during the meeting we held as parish councils at the diocese that I was one of the people who had been proposed to travel. That was the year 1975. My name, James Nyanaro was in the list. When people want you as their leader, surely it is hard to escape. Most of the time it means that there is something great that they must have seen in you as a person. The journey was therefore planned and so many of us went to Rome in the month of May. The Jumbo jet that we flew in carried so many people from all over the country. It was a big plane. Every mission was well represented. We went with people from every part of the country among them Nyeri, Malindi, Siaya and even Namanga. We arrived in France, then called Rhodes, safely and spent a few days there relaxing. We then left after about two weeks riding in a train down to the Mediterranean Sea. It took us two days to reach the shores of the Mediterranean Sea where we arrived at around eight pm in the night, the same time we had began our journey. We went down the sea and eventually came to the Vatican City in Rome, Italy. We spent a few days there praying and visiting places. It was a great byisit that eventually came to an end and we travelled back home safely. We first passed through the mission at Kebirigo the zone at Nyaramba, telling people how our visit to Rome had been.

### **CHAPTER 5: MARRIAGE**

After this visit, my beloved wife Mary Bochaberi and I decided to officiate our marriage. We planned and did a wedding at Nyaramba catholic church presided over by father Richard Queen. This was a great blessing to us since we had done it the traditional way after payment of dowry. We were grateful to God since as Christians, marriage in church meant a lot to us. Throughout my journey, my loving wife together with whom we are blessed with nine amazing children has been greatly supportive. I greatly thank God for her. My nine children include; Mercyline Moraa (1965), Stella Mosinya (1967), Kevin Bundi (1968), Jane (1972), Kebaso (1974), Pius Chelluget(1976), Lillian Bosibori(1978), Collette Kerubo (1980) and Geoffrey Samusi (1982). They are a wonderful family that has held my hand throughout the journey and I highly appreciate their immense contribution by supporting me as a family. I would never have asked for more. May our loving God always bless your families and see you through your daily endavors.

#### CHAPTER 6: WORKING AS A CHIEF AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

It was at that time that we realized that the position for chief had been officially announced. So I knew it was no longer rumours but a true story. I took up the challenge and wrote an application letter. My application went through and lucky enough, I was posted at Ekerenyo and was given my appointment letter on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1976, and started working immediately. I was given the title Chief which I embraced and dearly loved. The Nyanza provincial commissioner at that time called Isaiah Chelluget together with the Distict Commissioner for Kisii as well as the District Commissioner for Nyamira who was known as John Otika and several people from different places attended the swearing in ceremony which was a grand one. Priests, pastors and other religious leaders also attended and prayed for me as the PC crowned me as chief by putting the official chief's hat on my head. Among them was the famous father Richard Queen and Pastor Stephenson Maturi, a renowned pastor of The Seventh Day Adventist Church. I was officially handed the tools of work and the Member of Parliament for our constituency at that time was known as Livingstone Ateba Mariita and the Counsellor at that time was Raphael Ondieki.

As a chief, I worked towards a lot of development in schools, churches, roads, polytechnics and hospitals. The people wanted me to be their leader and so I had to put my best foot forward to ensure that they received quality service. I worked to ensure they got satisfied with their choice of leader. The eclipses that appeared during my time of birth and circumcision may have appeared as a mere coincidence to you but to me, they made a lot of sense to me. I now realized that I was destined to be a leader. This effort saw the development of many schools, both primary and secondary, hospitals, roads, both pathways and main roads, as well as churches and polytechnics. During my reign, I also tried very hard to support farmers, with whom we worked to find better ways of soil preservation and better methods of farming to ensure food security in our area.

Among the many great achievements that I was able to meet during my time as a leader are I was a successful chairperson of several boards of management in different schools and through that, I gave my input towards the growth of both primary and secondary schools. I have been an education enthusiast for all my life and educational development has been my greatest desire. My advice to young people is that they should get educated by all means possible. At some point I also had the priviledge to serve as the chairperson for the Land Control Board in Ekerenyo during which we educated several farmers on better methods of farming and soil conservation. Various farmers planted various crops among the maize,

beans, coffee and tea. They also practised livestock keeping. Through this, we ensured that there was no single household that ever went a day without food because through better methods of farming, many people were able to produce enough food to feed their families. I was also privileged to be appointed senior chief and eventually paramount chief whereby I was given powers to head all chiefs in the region. As a senior chief, I trained in several courses related to administration and governance that helped me to execute my duties dilligently and faithfully. Some of the trainings were held in Embu, others Matuga and others in Embaasi, Nairobi. We were trained in several areas such that after the intense training, together with other chiefs, we formed The Gusii Cultural Council that consisted of Gusii Elders who were responsible for making several cultural, social and political decisions for the tribe.

Apart from building primary and secondary schools, we also spearheaded the development of youth polytechniques and administrative offices like the D.O's office at Ekerenyo and houses for police officers. I was also incgarge of the construction of Ekerenyo Health Centre that is now a big hospital. I also chaired a team that led to the formation of Itibo flower society which defended the flower farmers in the region. Together with many others, I also recently helped in building of Ekerubo Gietai youth Institute and location offices that are used by the present day chiefs and subchiefs whereby my son Pius is one of them. They have also done a great job in developing the offices.

#### **CHAPTER 6: RETIREMENT**

It is therefore clear that leadership and development did not end when I retired since I have continued working whenever called upon to support water projects and school development projects. The work that I did was tremendously appreciated both by the people I served and the governent of those days. I also received great satisfaction from the service I had offered. The government was so impressed and at some point, the president awarded me with an honorary recognistion award for doing a great job as a paramount chief. Together with the award, I was also given a lot of money that helped us a great deal in supporting our last born daughter's journey to the United States of America for further studies. The money also helped me a lot in supporting the education of some of my grandchidren whose parents had difficulties in paying for them. Through that, they have been able to realize their dreams and are now able to sustain themselves and their families. It could have been tough for them to complete their education. My greatest plea for them is that they also support others who have such difficulties to enable them realise their dreams like they did.

#### **CHAPTER 7: APPRECIATION**

At this time I would like to highly appreciate my people whom I served for a long time. I thank you so much for seeing in me qualities of a good leader and for giving me a chance to serve you as your chief. I am grateful to you all for your kindness and upto date, I meat people who regard me highly for having been their leader. I also appreciate the fact that the leadership has been able to be retained in my family through the current assistant chief Pius. May he do his work well and pray that god enables him to overcome the many challenges that coe along with leadership, so that he can have a good legacy left behind even after he retires from it. A good name is made from how well you interact with people and attend to their needs as their leader. They will always bless you and wish your family werll. That's why even after I retired from being a chief in 1998, I was still appointed in so many committees both in church and in schools, both primary and secondary, where I was required to serve the people by helping them in various development projects. I was also appointed to be the chair of The Land Control Board in Ekerenyo. I did the work also quite dilligently and I continue to serve the people of North Mugirango to date since there people who still come for assistance from me.

I would like to give a special appreciation too to my greatest supporters as a chief. I received a lot of support from my long time friend Reverend Father Christopher Oira of Ekerenyo Catholic Parish, together with whom we oversaw various projects. He particularly helped me a great deal in holding a fundraiser for the completion of Ekerubo Gietai Youth Polytechnique. The money was raised by Christians with his aid and it went a long way to fund the institution's completion. I highly appreciate your support father. May God always bless the work of your hands. Another important person who supported me was former Member of Parliament Godfrey Masanya, who helped in proposing for the construction of Ekerubo Gietai AIC. Samwel Menyenya is also a crutial person who we actually need to talk to even now to help us in the construction of this road that should run all the way to Tombe. He helped a lot also in many construction projects. During my working times, I worked with various people who together in office, we supported one another to ensure the people we served got the best. In my location, where I was the senior chief, I was given a total of 8 sublocations that were headed by sub-chiefs. The subchiefs of my location included, Steven Onchari, who was incharge of Boisanga, Andarariko Bosiango, incharge of Bokurati sublocation, Daniel Nyakoe Mayoyo of Mokomoni, Andrew Ongaga Onserio of Nyaborarorande, Bomwagamo was headed by David Nyawachi, SosPeter Tengeya Ogetii

headed Ikonge and Samwel Momanyi was incharge of Mawawa while Bokeira was headed by Andrew Magara. During those times a chief would head quite a big area.

Throughout my life God has been my greatest pillar. I give all thanks to Him for good health and wisdom to lead. I also thank Him for my ever present wife and children.

#### **THE END**

#### **SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### I. Educational Milestones

- Completed primary education at Rangenyo Mission School.
- Passed Kenya African Primary Education (KAPE) exams (1959).
- Trained and qualified as a P3 teacher at Asumbi Teachers College (1962).
- Upgraded to P2 and later to P1 teacher after passing London Education Council Form Four exams.
- Served as teacher, deputy headteacher, and headteacher at Embonga, Nyakenyomisia, Gekendo, and Nyanchoka Primary Schools.

#### **II. Contributions to Education Development**

- Expanded Gekendo Primary School from two streams to four.
- Played a central role in founding new branch schools: Sore and Nyanchoka.
- Helped establish Kiabonyoru Secondary School.
- Championed the creation of Ekerubo Gietai Youth Polytechnic.
- Mentored countless students and influenced the education culture in the region.

#### III. Administrative and Leadership Roles

- Appointed Chief of Ekerenyo (26th February 1976).
- Promoted to Senior Chief and later Paramount Chief of the region.
- Supervised eight sublocations and mentored subchiefs.
- Co-founded the Gusii Cultural Council to safeguard social and cultural values.
- Chaired the Land Control Board at Ekerenyo, promoting agricultural land use and farmer education.

#### **IV. Community Development Projects**

- Led construction of:
  - o Ekerenyo Health Centre (now a major hospital).
  - o Roads (footpaths and motorable roads across North Mugirango).
  - Administrative offices such as the D.O's Office and police housing at Ekerenvo.
- Spearheaded water projects, agricultural reforms, and soil preservation initiatives.
- Supported establishment of Itibo Flower Society for local farmers.

#### V. Religious and Spiritual Service

- Active parish council secretary at Kebirigo Mission.
- Chairperson of various church committees, overseeing development projects.
- Participated in the 1975 pilgrimage to Rome and the Vatican.
- Supported numerous church fundraisers and projects after retirement.

#### VI. Honors and Recognition

- Officially recognized and awarded by the President for outstanding leadership and community service.
- Financial reward used to support the education of his daughter in the USA and several grandchildren.
- Continued respect and honor in the community even after official retirement.

#### VII. Family Legacy

- Proud father of nine children: Mercylyne Moraa, Stella Mosinya, Kevin Bundi, Jane, Kebaso Nyanaro, Pius Cheruget Nyanaro, Lillian Bosibori, Collette, and Geoffrey Samusi.
- Legacy of leadership continued through son Pius Cheruget Nyanaro, now serving as assistant chief.
- Set a strong family foundation built on faith, education, service, and unity.

#### **VIII. Post-Retirement Service**

- Remained a trusted elder and advisor in the community.
- Supported ongoing school expansions, church building projects, and agricultural initiatives.
- Continued to inspire leaders, families, and youth with his wisdom and example.

# PERSONAL MESSAGES TO THE HERO SENIOR CHIEF JAMES NYANARO NYABARO

— addressed to *everyone* (community, leaders, church, youth, family):

#### Message from Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro to All

"To my beloved people, friends, leaders, church family, and generations to come,

I stand today with a heart full of gratitude. I thank God, who has been my guide throughout my life. I thank my family, my community, my fellow leaders, and every soul who ever walked with me, supported me, and believed in me.

I served you with all my strength because I believed leadership is a calling to build others, not oneself. Together, we built schools, hospitals, churches, roads, and strong families.

Together, we dreamed, we worked, and we grew.

I want to remind you, especially the young people, that greatness is born from humility, hard work, faith, and respect. Never give up on your dreams — I am living proof that a humble beginning does not determine the size of your destiny.

To my fellow leaders, current and future, lead with justice, honesty, and fear of God. Serve your people selflessly, and God will bless the work of your hands.

To my fellow elders and the church, continue being the pillars of wisdom and faith that hold our society together.

To my dear community, always remember that unity is our strength. Support one another, love one another, and never forget where we have come from.

As I look at the generations rising behind me, my heart is full. I pray that you continue to carry forward the torch of development, peace, education, and faith.

I bless you all, and I thank you all.

May God bless you, and may God bless North Mugirango and Kenya at large!"

#### Message from Mercylyne Moraa (first born)

"Daddy, your life has been my greatest inspiration. You taught me that hard work and prayer open every door. I thank you for your unwavering love, guidance, and sacrifice. I am proud to be called your daughter. May God bless you always."

#### Message from Stella Mosinya ( second born)

"Baba, your strength and wisdom have shaped my life. Through your example, I learned to stand tall and pursue my dreams fearlessly. Thank you for teaching us to serve God and our community. I love you deeply."

#### Message from Kevin Bundi (third born)

"Father, you are my hero. Your journey from humble beginnings to a great leader motivates me every day. You instilled in us discipline, love for education, and service to others. I am forever proud to be your son."

#### ♣ Message from Jane (fouth born)

"Dear Daddy, your story is one of faith, perseverance, and victory. Thank you for lighting the path for us and many others. You have shown me the meaning of true leadership. I am blessed to call you my father."

#### Message from Kebaso Nyanaro (fifth born)

"Baba, you are a living legend whose footprints I strive to follow. Your resilience and commitment to bettering the lives of others have left a mark not only in our family but in the whole community. Thank you for your love and teachings."

#### Message from Pius Chelluget Nyanaro (sixth born)

"Dad, your legacy is a foundation I am honored to build upon. Serving alongside you and witnessing your dedication to the people has taught me that true leadership is selfless. Thank you for preparing me for the journey ahead. I salute you!"

#### Message from Lillian Bosibori (seventh born)

"Daddy, your life is a beautiful story of courage and compassion. You have always been my role model. Thank you for teaching us to put God first and to serve others with open hearts. I pray that God keeps blessing you."

#### Message from Collette Kerubo(8th born)

"Baba, thank you for showing me the beauty of humility, the power of perseverance, and the importance of family. Your wisdom continues to guide my steps. I am forever grateful for you and everything you have done for us."

### ♣ Message from Geoffrey Samusi (ninth born)

"Dad, your life has been a book full of lessons, and I am proud to be one of your readers. You taught us that leadership is about service, love, and sacrifice. Thank you for being a shining example to us all. I love you and honor you."

# Message from Fellow Chiefs to Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro

"Today, as your fellow chiefs and colleagues in leadership, we stand united to honor a true giant among us — Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro.

You blazed a trail that many of us continue to follow. Your leadership was not only firm but also wise and compassionate. You showed us that a chief's true strength lies not in authority alone, but in service, integrity, and love for the people.

Through your tireless work, you uplifted communities, built schools, promoted peace, supported agriculture, and strengthened the foundations of development across North Mugirango and beyond. Your service was selfless, your dedication unmatched, and your legacy undeniable.

To us, you are more than a colleague; you are a mentor, a pioneer, and a father in leadership. Your life is a living lesson on what it means to lead with humility, courage, and vision.

We, the fellow chiefs, express our deepest appreciation for your outstanding service and pray that the Almighty God continues to bless you with health, joy, and fulfillment.

You have left footprints that time will not erase. You are truly a Chief of Chiefs.

# Message from the Community to Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro

"Mzee wetu, Chief wetu, Baba yetu — today, we, the people you so faithfully served, gather our voices and our hearts to say thank you.

Your leadership was not about titles, but about service; not about power, but about lifting others. You built schools where dreams could begin, roads where journeys could start, and hospitals where lives could be saved. You stood for unity, for education, for fairness, and for the dignity of every person.

Through every step you took, you showed us that true leadership is measured by impact, not by applause. You guided with wisdom, corrected with love, and led with a heart anchored in God.

Chief James Nyanaro, you are not just part of our history — you are the foundation on which many of our successes stand today. We are forever grateful for the seeds you planted and the shade they provide to generations.

Today, we celebrate you while you are alive among us — a living pillar, a true hero, and a man whose name will never be forgotten.

May God continue to bless you with long life, peace, and the joy of seeing the fruits of your labor flourish in your lifetime.

Asante sana, Baba wetu wa jamii."

# Message from the Grandsons of Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro

"Babu, today we, your grandsons, rise to honor you — not just as our grandfather, but as a living legend, a teacher, and a beacon of wisdom.

Your life story is a powerful lesson for us: from the dusty fields of Sotik to the leadership halls of Ekerenyo, you showed that hard work, courage, and service to others are the true marks of greatness. You taught us that success is not just about personal achievements but about how many lives we touch and uplift.

We are proud to be the fruits of the tree you planted with such dedication and love. You opened roads for education, faith, and leadership — roads that we now walk confidently because you paved the way.

Today, we promise to carry your name with honor, to live by the values you taught us, and to always remember that true leadership is humble, selfless, and rooted in God.

Thank you for the legacy. Thank you for your prayers. Thank you for believing in us before we even believed in ourselves.

We love you, Babu, and we celebrate you today and always!"

# Message from the Granddaughters of Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro

"Dear Babu, today your granddaughters rise with joy, pride, and deep gratitude to celebrate the life you continue to live and the legacy you continue to build.

You are a shining example of strength, wisdom, humility, and unwavering faith. You have taught us that being a leader means serving with love, that true beauty lies in character, and that no dream is too high if we are willing to work hard and trust in God.

Because of you, we have learned to be bold yet humble, to carry ourselves with dignity, and to value our family, faith, and community above all.

Your story gives us wings, your prayers give us strength, and your love gives us courage to chase our dreams with purpose and confidence.

We are honored to be your granddaughters. We promise to live in a way that continues to make you proud, to carry your light into the future, and to always remember the deep roots from which we come.

We love you so much, Babu, and we thank God for the gift of your life every day!"

# Message from the Author

"Writing about the life of Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro has been a journey of deep admiration and profound respect.

His story is not just the story of one man — it is the story of perseverance, leadership, faith, and the power of dreams. It is a reminder that with determination and trust in God, even the humblest beginnings can rise to shape communities, build nations, and inspire generations.

As an author, capturing his journey was a task filled with honor, for his life is a living testimony of what true leadership looks like: service beyond self, love beyond boundaries, and strength rooted in humility.

Chief James Nyanaro's legacy stands tall — not just in the schools, churches, hospitals, and roads he helped build, but in the hearts of all who knew him, and those who will come to know him through this story.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to bring this legacy to light, and I pray that his story will inspire many more to dream boldly, serve faithfully, and lead with honor.

May his light continue to shine brightly for generations to come."

#### CONCLUSION

As we reflect on the life and legacy of Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro Nyabaro, we honor a man whose dedication to justice, education, and community development continues to inspire generations. His life is a testament to principled leadership, humility in service, and unwavering commitment to the people he served. His influence remains strong through the lives he has touched and the institutions he helped build. May his story continue to light the path for future leaders and serve as a powerful reminder of the impact one person can make through a life of service and integrity.

# A LIFE OF SERVICE, WISDOM, AND LEADERSHIP

Retired Senior Chief James Nyanaro Nyabaro is a man whose life story is woven with resilience, dedication, and a deep commitment to his people.

From humble beginnings to a celebrated leader, his journey is a testament to good governance. integrity, and visionary service—shaping generations and leaving a lasting legacy.

This book is not just a biography—it is an inspiration. A powerful reminder that true leadership is rooted in service, and that one man's vision can change countless lives.

"A great leader is not measured by the power. they wield, but by the lives they transform."

Written by:

Boniface Kaiser & Emmah Masaki