

Threads of Grace

THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF
RETIRED SENIOR CHIEF
JAMES NYANARO NYABARO

*The story of a hero, a chief—a
narration of a life dressed in purpose.*

**RETIRED SENIOR CHIEF,
A HERO, A POWERHOUSE!-
THE LIFE HISTORY OF A PARTRIACH
NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN.**

A LIFE OF SERVICE, WISDOM AND LEADERSHIP

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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 Mora, 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.

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CHAPTER ONE: EARLY LIFE

Message Send-Off – Chapter One: Early Life

“From the humblest paths trodden barefoot, to the firm ground of destiny, the journey begins not with greatness, but with the quiet courage to believe in something more. Chief Nyanaro’s early life reminds us that even in the simplest beginnings, greatness can be conceived — shaped by struggle, lifted by dreams, and carved through perseverance.”

Bible Verse

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.”

Have you ever dreamt of flying? Have you ever imagined yourself achieving a certain goal? Don’t hold back. Spread your wings, reach out, and make those dreams come true. The sky is no longer the limit — I’ve been there before. And if I could, you can too. All it takes is belief.

When I was born, my parents didn’t record the exact date or time. Still, I deeply appreciate them for bringing me into this world. My loving father’s name was Nyabaro Momanyi Nyaweri, and my devoted mother was Yusabia Kemunto, daughter of Mbee from the Bonyakoni clan. That was many years ago, a time when reading and writing were still dreams for most in our community.

My beloved mother told me that I was born around the time the very first vehicle passed through the small road by our home. The vehicle, she said, was called *Bota* — perhaps from the nameboard. In our mother tongue, words are often twisted to match our unique speech patterns. Just like *Corner T* became *Konate*, we had *Bota*.

My mother estimated the year of my birth to be around 1936. She vividly remembered that on the day I was born, there was a moment of partial darkness — a sign she believed meant that God had briefly withheld the sunlight for a reason. Much later, during my school years, I learned that this was likely a solar eclipse, known in our Ekegusii language as *Enyakoira*. Through my love of history, I researched eclipse records and came to believe I was born on *13th December 1936*.

However, official records such as my national ID list my date of birth as *1st January 1941* — a common placeholder date assigned to many from my generation, especially those born before formal registration was widespread. So while the government may say one thing, my

heart still holds to the stories passed down through my mother's memory and the signs of the sky on that day.

Growing up felt like one long learning session. Every childhood experience carried its own lesson. Time passed quickly, and before I knew it, I had come of age. I joined a group of twelve-year-olds for circumcision, marking our transition to adulthood. It was early morning when the rituals began — women sang, young men danced. Then, in what felt like divine timing, darkness once again fell over the earth. It was 1948, and yes — *another solar eclipse*.

Was it coincidence? Or a sign from God that I was destined for something great? That's what I believed. If it were you, what would you make of an eclipse occurring on both the day of your birth and your initiation into adulthood?

When the sun returned, we were escorted back home. We didn't have the kind of clothes children wear today. We dressed in *shukas*, held together by safety pins — simple but sufficient.

As a newly initiated young man, it was time to go out and earn a living. I set off in search of work, heading to the Sotik Highlands, where European settlers ran vast farms and tea plantations. I worked hard and earned *five shillings* a month, along with half a blanket. My dedication paid off — one of the farm managers increased my pay to *six shillings*.

My work ethic caught the attention of the tractor operators, who picked me as their errand boy. Every day at noon, I'd bring them food in the fields. One of those workers, Samwel Kabinga from Magwagwa, became a close friend. That was still in 1948.

After a short break to visit my parents, I returned to Sotik — this time to a different farm owned by Magonya, known as *Set Ranch*, where cows were reared. I was hired to clean the grazing fields and earned *seven shillings* a month. I stayed with a friend from my home area, Oeba Masanya, my agemate and workmate.

By the end of 1949, we returned home for Christmas. It was a joyous time. We had saved a decent amount for boys our age, and that gave me a strong desire — *a burning motivation* — to go to school and get an education using the money I had worked so hard to earn.

CHAPTER TWO: THE JOURNEY OF EDUCATION

Message Send-Off – Chapter Two: Education

“Education is the ladder that lifts one from obscurity to purpose. For Chief Nyanaro, each lesson learned was a step toward transformation — not just for himself, but for a community yet to dream. His journey teaches us that education is never just about books; it’s about boldness, persistence, and the belief that knowledge can build nations.”

Bible Verse

Proverbs 4:7 (NKJV)

“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.”

At the start of the year *1950*, I spoke with my parents and my elder brother *Ndubi*, asking which school they thought I should attend. There were many of us from our home area eager to pursue education, so we chose to go to *Gekendo*, a mission school founded by the Catholic Church. By then, *Christianity* had taken deep root in our community.

My brother *Ongaro*, however, chose to attend *Nyangoge DEB*, a school established by the *District Education Board*. That’s where he wanted to go — and he did. We also ended up at *Nyangoge*, for in our hearts we believed: people go for what they truly want. I hope you live by the same mantra.

At school, I joined *Standard One*, taught by a teacher named *Bernado Obiri*. Time passed quickly, and soon I was in *Standard Two*, under the guidance of *Samwel Ondigi*. But by then, I had exhausted the money I had saved while working in *Sotik*. It was time to return and earn again, if I wanted to continue with school.

So, a few friends and I journeyed back to the *Sotik Highlands*, found work, and saved with the single goal of returning to school. When we felt ready, we went back and rejoined in *Standard Three*. But to our dismay, we found that *Gekendo* had been closed — perhaps due to a low number of learners. I regretted having left in the first place, but wishes are not horses, and we cannot ride them.

We quickly shifted our focus — the school may have closed, but education was not closed. We enrolled at *Rangenyo School* as day scholars, again in *Standard Three*. I believed firmly that *education* was my path to a better future — for myself and for my family. The long walks to and from school never discouraged me. I remembered the *solar eclipses* that marked both my birth and circumcision, and I took them as divine signs that I was destined for something greater.

I worked hard and progressed to *Standard Four*, but an unfortunate illness hit me. I developed a persistent cough, likely caused by the early morning and late evening cold. I stayed home to recover and missed the registration window for the *Standard Four exams*. I had even paid the exam fee to *Father Francis More*, one of the priests, but he later returned the money, saying the registration was closed. Though I didn't sit the exams, I was allowed to proceed to *Standard Five* in 1955.

We completed *Standard Five*, but still had to sit for the *Certificate of Primary Education (CPE)*. I passed well and was promoted to *Standard Six* in 1956. I then progressed to *Standard Seven*, and in July 1959, I sat for my *Kenya African Primary Education* and passed.

I shared my results with the priest at *Rangenyo Mission*, who was impressed and offered me a position as a *pupil teacher* — also known as an *untrained teacher*. He had intended to send me to *Asumbi* for training, but all the slots were already filled. So, I stayed on as a teacher until December 1960, when I was finally offered a chance to join *Asumbi Training College* in January 1961.

I reported in February 1961, studied diligently, and sat my final exams in November 1962. I passed and officially became a *P3 teacher*. By January 1963, I was employed as a trained teacher and was immediately appointed *headteacher* at *Embonga Primary School* — far from *Rangenyo*.

I taught at *Embonga* for two years until I was transferred in December 1964 to *Nyakenyomisia Primary School*. There, I met a remarkable leader, *Agustino Moturi*, a senior chief whose home was near the school. I continued teaching while also pursuing further studies.

In 1965, I sat for my *Form Two exams*, but I didn't pass — the workload of being a *headteacher* left me little time to study. Realizing this, I stepped down from my leadership position to focus on being a teacher. I requested a transfer to *Gekendo Primary School*, which I received.

The headteacher at *Gekendo* at the time was *John Mesa*, a friend and former schoolmate from *Rangenyo*. He had joined *Asumbi* before I did. I worked hard, balancing both teaching and studying, determined to re-sit the *Form Two exams*.

In November 1967, I sat the exam again and passed with excellent results. I was promoted to a *P2 teacher*, and I was overjoyed. This promotion was proof that stepping out of my comfort zone had paid off. Anyone who wants to achieve something great in life must take a risk and pursue what they believe in.

Motivated by this success, I registered to sit for the *Form Four exams*, which were administered by the *London Education Council*. It was a tough exam, and passing all four papers at once was extremely difficult.

In my first attempt, I passed *one paper*. I didn't give up. I registered again and passed the *second paper*, then again for the *third*, and once more for the *fourth*. Yes, I sat the exam *four times*. It was no small task. But I was determined, and eventually, I passed *all four papers*.

CHAPTER THREE: A CALL TO LEAD

Message Send-Off – Chapter Three: Working as a Teacher and Church Leader

"To teach is to touch lives forever. To lead in faith is to plant seeds of eternal hope. In classrooms and congregations, Chief Nyanaro sowed wisdom and watered purpose. His legacy reminds us that the greatest leaders are those who serve not just with their hands, but with their hearts."

Bible Verse

Matthew 5:14 (NIV)

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden."

The four points I had earned in the *London Education Council exam* were the same four I took to the *education office*, where I was told that they were sufficient for promotion. Those four points made me eligible to become a *P1 teacher*. I received the promotion immediately — a moment of great pride in my life. I had worked for it, believed in it, and so, I received it. That was the year 1971.

Soon after, the *education authorities* began urging me to take up *leadership positions*. At first, I refused the *headteacher role*, preferring to focus on *classroom teaching*. But as the calls became more persistent, I agreed to serve as a *deputy headteacher* — and eventually, I became the *headteacher of Gekendo Primary School*.

While at *Gekendo*, I worked with *passion and dedication* to develop the school. It began to thrive, growing in *student numbers* and *academic reputation*. The growth created a pressing need for a *secondary school*, so our students could continue their education close to home. I led a *committee to establish the secondary section*, acting as the *secretary to the board*. We worked tirelessly, and our efforts bore fruit: *Gekendo Secondary School* was born.

Parents began noticing the *quality of education* we offered. Many transferred their children from *struggling schools* to *Gekendo Primary*. As enrollment increased, the school expanded from *two streams to four*. Given the swelling numbers, we decided to *split the school* — with support from the board — creating two branches: one at *Sore*, and another at *Nyanchoka*. I was posted as the *headteacher at Nyanchoka*.

At *Nyanchoka*, I poured in even more effort than before. Within just one year, the school grew tremendously — a testament to what *dedicated leadership* could accomplish. My work was recognized by the *education office*, and I was again given a *promotion*.

At the start of 1972, I was selected as a *board member of the Harambee committee* tasked with building *Kiabonyoru Secondary School*. At *Kiabonyoru*, I was appointed *Treasurer to the Board*, responsible for *managing and safeguarding* the school's funds.

While serving in this role, the *Board of Management* recommended that I seek a *transfer to a school nearer my home*, to make my service more sustainable. Before long, the *Head of*

Education, Daniel Omangi, issued me a *transfer letter*. I was posted to *Nyaramba Primary School*, conveniently located near my home.

I accepted the new role gladly and reported to my new station immediately.

At the same time, I was approached by *Kebirigo Mission*, who wanted me to serve as the *Secretary to the Parish Council Board*. I saw this as *God's work*, and I accepted the responsibility without hesitation. I did it *wholeheartedly*, believing that *service to mankind is service to God*.

During my tenure at *Nyaramba Primary*, I became *well known in the community*. Many people saw my work, interacted with me closely, and began to *recognize and speak about my leadership qualities*. I frequently stopped by *Nyaramba Market* in the evenings to share a cup of tea with friends. One of them was my uncle, *Paul Ondieki*, who ran a shop there. I also spent time with his friend *Wilson Gesaka*.

One evening, they brought up a conversation that would *change the course of my life*. They spoke about the retirement of *Chief Agustino Moturi Obwang'i*, who had served as *Chief of North Mugirango Constituency*. They told me that *people wanted me to be the next chief*.

At first, I didn't take them seriously. I thought they were *politicizing the chief's retirement*. I stayed quiet and reminded them that I was a *teacher*, and that my only goal was to *help learners achieve their dreams*. I also told them that I wanted to focus on *serving the Lord*, as I had recently been appointed *Chairperson of the Parish Committee to the Diocese of Kisii*, reporting directly to *Bishop Mogendi*.

CHAPTER FOUR: ROME — A STEP OF FAITH



Message Send-Off – Chapter Four: Travel to Rome

“Some journeys are more than just miles—they are spiritual awakenings. Chief Nyanaro’s pilgrimage to Rome was not only a journey across continents, but a deepening of faith, humility, and purpose. It showed that leadership guided by God is strengthened through sacred encounters and the courage to see beyond borders.”



Bible Verse

Psalm 121:8 (NIV)

“The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.”

In time, we learned the *rumors were true*: Chief Agustino Moturi Obwang’i had officially retired. The *whispers grew louder*. People in the community kept saying they wanted me to become their *next chief*. They believed I had the *leadership qualities* they were looking for — maybe it was because of the work I had already done in the region. I had helped develop *schools, churches, and communities* — perhaps these efforts had planted seeds of *trust* in people’s hearts.

For a while, that talk quieted down. The *Diocese* had shifted focus, organizing a *historic pilgrimage* — a journey that would take selected Christians to *Rome, Italy*, with *all expenses fully sponsored by the Church*.

At a *parish council meeting*, held at the *Diocese of Kisii*, I was surprised to learn that I had been *nominated* to be among those who would travel. My name — *James Nyanaro* — was on the list. That was the year *1975*.

It’s hard to escape when people truly want you to lead. Often, it means they have seen something in you — something you may not even fully see in yourself.

The journey was planned with *care and reverence*. In the month of *May 1975*, we boarded a *Jumbo Jet*, a massive plane carrying Christians from across the country — from *Nyeri, Malindi, Siaya, Namanga*, and beyond. Every mission was represented. It was a *national spiritual mission*.

We first landed in *France*, then known locally as *Rhodes*. We stayed there for a few days, *resting and reflecting*. After about two weeks, we boarded a train, which carried us toward the *Mediterranean Sea*. It was a *long, two-day journey*. We arrived at the shores of the Mediterranean at *8 p.m.*, exactly the same time we had begun our journey — a beautiful coincidence that felt almost *symbolic*.

From there, we continued our journey *across the sea* and finally arrived in the *Vatican City, Rome* — the *spiritual heart of Catholicism*. We spent several days there — *praying, visiting sacred sites, and reflecting deeply on our faith and purpose*.

It was more than a trip — it was a *pilgrimage of meaning*, and one that left a *lasting mark on my spirit*.

When we returned to *Kenya*, we first visited the *mission at Kebirigo*, then continued through the *Nyaramba zone*, where we shared stories of our experience in *Rome*. We told the people

how it had been — the *sacred places* we had seen, the *powerful prayers* we had offered, and the *feeling of being part of something larger than ourselves*.

⌚ CHAPTER FIVE: A COVENANT OF LOVE AND FAMILY

Message Send-Off – Chapter Five: Marriage

“A strong marriage is the heart of every lasting legacy. In choosing love, commitment, and faith, Chief Nyanaro and his beloved Mary built a family rooted in unity and service. Their bond was not just a personal blessing, but a foundation for generations — proving that love anchored in God endures all seasons.”

Bible Verse

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NIV)

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.”

Certainly. What follows is a *richly expanded and emotionally grounded* version of your next chapter, honoring your *marriage, family life*, and the *quiet strength that home has provided* throughout your leadership and service. The chapter blends your sense of *faith, gratitude, and love* into a memorable and deeply human chapter title.

After returning from the *unforgettable pilgrimage to Rome*, my heart felt full — not just with *memories of sacred places and prayers whispered in foreign lands*, but with a *renewed sense of clarity and commitment* to what truly matters. It was then that my *beloved wife, Mary Bochaberi*, and I made a decision that had long been in our hearts: to *officiate our marriage in the Church*.

We had already followed the *traditional path* — the *dowry had been paid*, our families had *blessed our union*, and we had lived together in harmony. But as *Christians*, we knew that *marriage in the eyes of God*, witnessed in *His house*, held a *deeper spiritual significance* for us. So, we planned our *church wedding*, and it was held at *Nyaramba Catholic Church*, presided over by *Father Richard Queen*.

It was not just a ceremony — it was a *sacred affirmation*. A declaration that our *love and life together* were rooted in *faith, mutual respect, and divine blessing*. That day remains one of the *greatest blessings* of our life together.

Throughout my journey — in *schools, in leadership, in community service* — Mary has been my *unwavering support*. Her *quiet strength, gentle wisdom, and deep patience* have sustained me through every season. Without her, I could never have stood so firm. I *thank God for her daily*.

Together, we have been *blessed with nine beautiful children*, each one a *light in our lives*:

- *Mercyline Moraai*,

- *Stella Mosinya,*
- *Kevin Bundi,*
- *Jane Kwamboka,*
- *Robert Kebaso,*
- *Pius Chelluget,*
- *Lillian Bosibori,*
- *Collette Kerubo,*
- *Geoffrey Samusi,*

Each child brought their own *unique energy, laughter, and lessons*. Together, they formed the *heartbeat of our home*. They grew up watching their parents live out values of *hard work, service, faith, and community*. And in turn, they offered us *love, joy, and a reason to keep pressing on through every challenge*.

Raising nine children was no small feat — there were *early mornings, long days, and plenty of sacrifices*. But we embraced it all with *love and prayer*. Our house may not have been filled with *riches*, but it overflowed with *warmth, togetherness, and the kind of wealth only a strong family can bring*.

Even as I held *public responsibilities* and served in *leadership roles*, my *family remained my anchor*. Their *support* gave me the *courage to lead*. Their *belief in me* reminded me never to give up. We have *walked together, grown together, and held each other* through every chapter.

Today, I look at our children — *grown now, some with families of their own* — and I am filled with *deep pride and endless gratitude*. Each of them has made their own *contribution to the world*, and more importantly, to our family's *legacy of faith and perseverance*.

If there's one thing I have come to believe with certainty, it is this: *a strong family is the foundation of a meaningful life*. You may *lead a school, or even a nation*, but if you cannot *lead with love at home*, all else feels empty.

So, to my wife *Mary*, and to our *nine wonderful children* — I say this: *thank you*. Thank you for *walking with me, for believing in me, for loving me through it all*. I could never have asked for more.

May our *loving God* continue to bless each of your families and see you through your daily endeavors. Wherever life takes you, never forget *where you come from* — and never stop believing in the *power of love, family, and faith*.

CHAPTER SIX: THE CROWN OF SERVICE

Message Send-Off – Chapter Six: Working as a Chief and Other Achievements

“Leadership is not given — it is earned through trust, vision, and selfless action. Chief Nyanaro rose not for titles, but for transformation. His service as chief was marked by compassion, wisdom, and a fierce dedication to his people. True greatness, as he showed, lies in building others, one decision, one school, one road, one soul at a time.”

Bible Verse

Proverbs 11:14 (NKJV)

“Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”

It was during this time that we learned the *position of chief had been officially declared vacant*. What had once been *rumors and speculation* was now a *public call* — and I knew in my heart, it was time to act. I took up the challenge and wrote *an application letter*. My *application was successful*, and I was *posted to serve at Ekerenyo*.

I received my *official appointment letter on 26th February 1976* and began my work immediately. I was formally given the title “Chief”, a name and responsibility I embraced with *pride, reverence, and great love*. It was more than a role — it was a *calling*.

The *swearing-in ceremony was grand and deeply memorable*. In attendance were *key government officials* including the *Nyanza Provincial Commissioner, Isaiah Chelluget*, the *District Commissioner for Kisii Murama*, and *John Otuko*, the *District Office for Nyamira*. Many others came from near and far to witness *this moment*.

Religious leaders were present in full support — *Father Richard Queen*, who had presided over my wedding, *Pastor Samuel Mogeni* and *Pastor Stephenson Maturi*, a respected leader in the *Seventh-day Adventist Church*, led prayers for me. The moment the PC placed the *official Chief’s hat on my head*, I felt the *full weight and honor* of the responsibility I was taking on.

I was *officially handed the tools of office*, and alongside me stood the *Member of Parliament, Livingstone Atebe Mariita*, and our *local Councillor, Raphael Ondieki*. It was a *proud day* for my *family, my church, and my people*.

As *Chief*, I knew that my work had only just begun.

I committed myself fully to development and service. In schools, churches, roads, polytechnics, and health centers — I gave my best to ensure my people saw the fruits of their faith in me. They had chosen me, and I would not let them down.

Some may see the *eclipses* that marked my *birth and circumcision* as coincidence — but to

me, they were *signs*. I had long believed that I was *destined for leadership*, and now, in *service to my people*, that belief came full circle.

Through *determined effort*, we accomplished much:

- *We established new schools*, both primary and secondary, to ensure no child was left behind.
- *We improved and expanded roads* — from small village paths to larger routes connecting our communities.
- *We built health facilities*, most notably the *Ekerenyo Health Centre*, now a *major hospital in the region*.
- *We supported farmers* with training in *soil preservation, crop diversification, and modern techniques*. No household under my watch ever had to go without food — we made sure of that.

I also served as:

- *Chairperson of multiple School Boards of Management*, contributing to *educational growth* in our region.
- *Chair of the Land Control Board in Ekerenyo*, helping farmers *manage land wisely and productively*.
- A *dedicated advocate for youth empowerment*, through the creation of *Polytechnics, technical institutes, and vocational programs*.

Over time, I was *promoted to Senior Chief*, and later *honored with the title of Paramount Chief* — entrusted to lead all chiefs in the region. With that role came *opportunities for advanced training in governance and administration*, in places like *Embu, Matuga, and Embakasi, Nairobi*.

Those trainings gave birth to something even greater — the *formation of the Gusii Cultural Council*, a body of respected elders who guided the social, cultural, and political direction of the *Abagusii people*. It was a *council of wisdom, vision, and unity*.

Together with others, I led the development of:

- *Administrative offices such as the D.O.'s office at Ekerenyo*
- *Housing for police officers, improving law enforcement support*
- *The founding of the Itibo and Nyaramba pyrethrum Society*, protecting the interests of *flower farmers*
- And most recently, the *building of Ekerubo Gietai Youth Institute* and the *current location offices for chiefs and sub-chiefs*

Among those now serving is my own son, *Pius*, who has taken up the *mantle of leadership in his own right*. The *legacy continues* — not only through the *buildings we raised*, but in the *people we've mentored, empowered, and inspired*.

CHAPTER SEVEN: A Legacy That Lives On

Message Send-Off – Chapter Six: Retirement

"Retirement is not the end of service — it is the beginning of reflection, mentorship, and legacy. Chief Nyanaro did not step away from duty; he stepped deeper into purpose, guiding others with wisdom hard-earned and freely shared. In rest, he still built. In quiet, he still led. True leaders never truly retire — they continue to inspire."

Bible Verse

2 Timothy 4:7 (NIV)

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

Some people believe that *leadership ends at retirement* — that once the *office is vacated* and the *uniform is folded*, the *influence fades*. But for me, *leadership was never just a position* — it was, and still is, a *calling*. Even after I *stepped down from formal duties*, my *journey of service did not end*.

In fact, I have *continued to contribute whenever I am called upon* — especially in *community development projects*, such as the *construction of water points, expansion of school infrastructure*, and the *support of local youth initiatives*. My name, it seems, remained *etched in the minds and hearts* of those I once served, and they still see me as someone who can *bring people together for a good cause*.

It brings me *great joy* to see *classrooms built, water tanks installed, and students enrolled* in schools that didn't exist before — and to know that in some *small way*, I am still part of the *growth of my people*.

The work I did during my *active years of service* was *deeply appreciated* — not just by the *citizens I served*, but also by the *Government of Kenya* at the time. I was *humbled and honored* when, in recognition of my *outstanding service*, I was *awarded a national honorary award* by none other than the *President himself, Mwai Kibaki*. It was one of the *proudest moments of my life*.

That *recognition wasn't just symbolic*. Along with the award came a *substantial monetary gift*, which could not have come at a more *meaningful time*. It helped our family in an *important way* — we used it to *support our last-born daughter's journey to the United States of America*, where she *pursued her higher education*. It was a *dream we had carried as a family*, and it *came true*.

The same *funds* also enabled me to *step in and support the education of several of my grandchildren*, whose parents were *struggling financially*. *Education had always been close to my heart* — and I was not about to let anyone in my family be *denied that opportunity because of hardship*. With that *support*, these grandchildren were able to *complete their*

education, find jobs, and begin building lives of dignity and independence.

I often reflect on how *different their futures might have been without that help*. They might not have gone to school. They might have stayed home, *stuck in a cycle of struggle*. But today, they are *standing strong, raising families, and giving back to their communities*. And that brings me to a *message I carry deeply in my heart* — not just for them, but for *anyone who has ever been lifted up by others*:

“When you rise, remember to lift others with you.”

That is my *heartfelt plea* to my *children, my grandchildren, and to the young people of this nation*. If you have the *ability to help someone else* — do it. Be the *bridge that someone else can walk on*. Just as I was able to *support you*, I pray that you will *extend the same hand to someone else in need*. That is how we grow — not just as *families*, but as *a people*.

To this day, I *continue to serve in informal ways* — as a *mentor, an elder, a voice of guidance*. My *phone still rings*. People still stop by. They still ask, “*Mzee, what do you think we should do?*” And I always answer, not because I must — but because *I still care*.

The title *Paramount Chief* may no longer be written beside my name, but the *spirit of service that came with it lives on* — in the *schools we built, in the farms we revived, in the leaders we raised*, and in the *children whose futures were made possible because someone believed in them*.

I have lived a *full life* — not without *challenges*, but *rich with meaning*. And I am *still living it*, one *act of kindness at a time*.



CHAPTER EIGHT: A HEART FULL OF GRATITUDE



Message Send-Off – Chapter Seven: Appreciation

"Gratitude is the soul's echo to a life well-lived. Chief Nyanaro's appreciation for those who walked beside him reflects the heart of a true servant leader — one who knew that every accomplishment was a shared victory. In recognizing others, he revealed the humility and grace that made his leadership unforgettable."



Bible Verse

Philippians 1:3 (NIV)

"I thank my God every time I remember you."

As I reflect on my journey — from the *humble beginnings of my childhood*, to the *fields of Sotik*, to the *classrooms of Rangenyo*, to the *office of the Paramount Chief* — my heart is full. At this time, I wish to express my *deepest gratitude* to the *people of North Mugirango*, whom I had the *honor of serving* for so many years. *Thank you for trusting me, for seeing in me the qualities of a leader*, and for giving me the chance to serve you as your chief. That trust was *never taken for granted*.

To this day, I still meet people — *young and old* — who speak of my time in leadership with *kindness and respect*. These *moments warm my heart*. They remind me that a *good name* is not built through *power or position*, but through how we *treat people*, how we *listen*, how we *respond to their needs*, and how we *walk with humility*.

I am especially *grateful that leadership has continued in my family*, through my son *Pius*, who now serves as *Assistant Chief*. I pray that *God strengthens him, grants him wisdom, and walks with him* through the many *challenges of public service*. May he *build a legacy of integrity*, and when his time of service comes to an end, may *people speak well of him* — just as they *spoke well of me*.

Even after my *official retirement in 1998*, the *work did not stop*. I was *honored to be appointed* to numerous *church and school committees*, where I continued to *support development projects* in both *primary and secondary institutions*. I was also appointed as *Chairman of the Land Control Board in Ekerenyo*, where I served *diligently, resolving disputes, guiding families, and supporting our farming community*.

Even today, long after I *left public office*, people still *come to me — seeking advice, assistance, or simply a listening ear*. And as long as *God gives me life and strength*, I will *continue to serve*.

I would like to offer *special appreciation* to those who *walked closely with me* in leadership and *supported my work in tangible and meaningful ways*.

First and foremost, I thank *Reverend Father Christopher Oira* of *Kebirigo Catholic Parish* — my *long-time friend and spiritual brother*. Together, we *oversaw numerous community projects*. One of the most memorable was the *fundraiser for the completion of Ekerubo Gietai*

Youth Polytechnic. With Father Oira's help, and the generosity of Christians, enough funds were raised to complete the institution. Thank you, Father Oira. May God continue to bless the work of your hands.

I also thank former Member of Parliament, Godfrey Masanya, whose support was instrumental in proposing and championing the construction of St Stephen Youth Catholic Church. His leadership and partnership meant a great deal to the community and to me personally.

Another key figure is Samwel Menyanya, who supported many construction and infrastructure projects during my years in office. Even today, we look to him — particularly for the proposed road construction that should run all the way to Tombe. His continued influence remains valuable, and we hope to see more development through his input.

Throughout my tenure, I was blessed to work with a dedicated team of leaders. In my role as Senior Chief, I was responsible for eight sub-locations, each headed by a capable sub-chief. These included:

- Steven Onchari – Boisanga
- Andaraniko Osiango OsumoS – Bokurati
- Daniel Nyakoe Mayoyo – Mokomoni
- Andrew Ongaga Onserio – Nyaborarorande
- James Nyawachi – Bomwagamo
- Sospeter Tengeya Ogetii – Ikonge
- Samwel Momanyi – Magwagwa
- Samwel MogambiS – Bokeira

Each of these men played an essential role in local governance, conflict resolution, and community development. Together, we served a wide area and a large population, with unity and commitment.

Finally, and most importantly, I thank God Almighty, who has been my rock and foundation through every season of life. Without His guidance, wisdom, and provision, none of this would have been possible. He gave me health, courage, and the grace to lead.

I thank God also for my ever-faithful wife, Mary Bochaberi, who stood by me in every stage of this journey — and for our nine wonderful children, who gave me reason to persevere, and who now carry the values of faith, humility, and service into their own lives.

As I close this chapter, I do so with no regret — only gratitude. I have served, I have loved, and I have walked the path I was meant to walk.

May those who come after us carry this torch forward — with dignity, with faith, and with love for the people.

May God bless you all. May God bless North Mugirango. And may God bless Kenya.

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 **P1 teacher** after passing **London Education Council Form Four exams**
-  Served as **teacher, deputy headteacher, and headteacher** at:
 - **Embonga Primary School**
 - **Nyakenyomisia Primary School**
 - **Gekendo Primary School**
 - **Nyanchoka Primary School**



II. Contributions to Education Development

- Expanded **Gekendo Primary** from **2 streams** to **4**
- Helped found branch schools: **Sore** and **Nyanchoka**
- Played a key role in establishing **Kiabonyoru Secondary School**
- Championed the creation of **Ekerubo Gietai Youth Polytechnic**
- Mentored hundreds of students and influenced the **education culture** of the region



III. Administrative and Leadership Roles

- Appointed **Chief of Ekerenyo** – **26th February 1976**
- Promoted to **Senior Chief** and later **Paramount Chief**
- Supervised **8 sublocations** and mentored multiple **subchiefs**
- Co-founded the **Gusii Cultural Council** to uphold **cultural, social, and political values**
- Chaired the **Land Control Board** at Ekerenyo — promoting responsible land use and modern farming education



IV. Community Development Projects

- Led construction of:
 - **Ekerenyo Health Centre** (now a major hospital)
 - **Administrative offices** including the D.O's Office and police housing
- Oversaw development of roads — **footpaths and motorable roads** across **North Mugirango**
- Spearheaded **clean water projects, agricultural reforms, and soil conservation**
- Supported the establishment of the **Itibo Flower Society** to empower local farmers



V. Religious and Spiritual Service

- Served as **parish council secretary** at **Kebirigo Mission**
- Chaired numerous **church committees**, leading **construction and fundraising projects**
- Participated in the **1975 pilgrimage to Rome and the Vatican**
- Continued supporting **faith-based development efforts** well into retirement

VI. Honors and Recognition

- 🏅 Received **honorary recognition** by the **President of Kenya** for outstanding public service
 - 💰 Awarded a **financial prize**, used to:
 - Fund his **daughter's education in the USA**
 - Support the **education of multiple grandchildren**
 - 🙌 Continued to receive **respect and admiration** from the community even after retirement
-

VII. Family Legacy

- 👪 Proud father of **nine children**:
 - *Mercylyne Mora, Stella Mosinya, Kevin Bundi, Jane, Kebaso Nyanaro, Pius Chelluget Nyanaro, Lillian Bosibori, Collette Kerubo, Geoffrey Samusi*
 - ⚡ Legacy of leadership continued through son **Pius Cheruget Nyanaro**, now serving as **Assistant Chief**
 - 🎯 Built a family legacy grounded in **faith, education, service, and unity**
-

VIII. Post-Retirement Service

- 🤝 Remained a **trusted elder, mediator, and advisor** to the community
- 🚒 Continued to support **school expansions, church projects, and youth initiatives**
- 💫 Inspired a new generation of **leaders, teachers, and farmers** with his enduring **wisdom and humility**

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!"

A Message of Gratitude from Your Children

Dear Daddy, Baba, Father —

Your life has been our greatest inspiration.

From the very beginning, you taught us that **hard work and prayer** open every door, and through your unwavering love, guidance, and sacrifice, you laid the foundation on which we now stand.

You showed us how to be **strong and fearless**, how to dream boldly, and how to serve both **God and community** with humility and joy.

Your journey from **humble beginnings** to becoming a respected **leader of people** has lit the path for all of us.

Because of you, we walk with **confidence**, rooted in **faith**, and driven by a desire to make the world better.

You have been our **hero**, our teacher, and our quiet guide.

From you, we learned **discipline**, the **value of education**, and the dignity of **selfless service**. Your story is not only a family legacy — it's a **lesson in courage**, a **testament to perseverance**, and a **reflection of God's grace**.

Through your example, we've come to understand that **true leadership is not about power, but about purpose**.

You gave so much of yourself to us, and to your community — and in doing so, you planted seeds that continue to grow.

Baba, you are a **living legend** whose footprints we strive to follow.

Your resilience has left a mark not only on us as your children, but on the hearts of many whose lives you touched.

We are proud to carry your name, your teachings, and your light forward.

Some of us have served beside you.

All of us have learned from you.

And each of us thanks you — deeply, sincerely, and forever.

May God continue to bless you with health, peace, and joy.
May your legacy live on in every act of kindness, in every heart you've shaped, and in every prayer we lift for you.

We love you, we honor you, and we thank 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



Message Send-Off – Conclusion

"The life of Chief James Nyanaro is not just a story — it is a blueprint of servant leadership, resilience, and faith. His footsteps mark a trail of impact that will guide generations. As his journey closes in pages but lives on in hearts, may we carry forward his torch — to lead with love, to serve with honor, and to live with purpose."



Bible Verse

Matthew 25:21 (NIV)

"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

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