

# Documentation & Revitalization of Ekegusii Language and Culture

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# My Background

- Bachelor's degree in Linguistics (2008)
  - College of William & Mary (Virginia)
- 1 year living in Kenya doing research on language endangerment
  - How youth are shifting from local mother tongues to Swahili and English

# My Background

## Native American Languages

- 5 years helping with language documentation and revitalization
- Made dictionary for Chitimacha language of Louisiana
  - Now working on grammar of Chitimacha
- Made computer software for learning Eskimo and Navajo

# My Background

## Research

- Language endangerment and the history of language endangerment
- The use of technology in language revitalization
- Language documentation and description

# My Background

**Graduate student: University of California, Santa Barbara**

- Advisor: Carol Genetti, organizer of InField / CoLang
- Department has long history of language documentation and revitalization
- Home of the first InField / CoLang



# Current Project

- **Collaborators:** Ekegusii Encyclopedia Project, Kennedy Bosire, Gladys Machogu, Carol Genetti (advisor), Carlos Nash (outside advisor)
- **Goal:** Make audio and video recordings of traditional Ekegusii language and cultural activities

# Things We'll Record

- Process of harvesting, preparing, cooking, and eating millet
- Carving
- Traditional folktales (e.g. *Okang'ombe*, *Ogansona n'Okanda*)
- Proverbs and riddles
- Conversations: how to greet people, ask about them and their family, etc.
- Explanations of traditional activities (to go with the video)
- Songs and dancing
- Poetry
- Anything else the community wants to record that's important to the culture

# Tasks

- Make recordings
- Transcribe and translate recordings
  - This is just as important as making the recordings!
  - The recordings don't help if nobody understands them!
  - Will pay Ekegusii speakers to sit down and help me transcribe and translate the recordings
- Prepare the recordings for watching and add audio



# Outcomes

- Teaching materials for Abagusii youth
- Data for a grammar of Ekegusii (Carlos Nash)
  - This in turn will be used to create workbooks for the youth
- Data for a dissertation on Ekegusii discourse
  - Not just single words
  - Find out how phrases, sentences, conversations, and stories work
- Examples:
  - Statements vs. Questions
  - Contraction / Elision
- Future trips each summer



eriso enkenge > eris'enkenge