



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION

REGIONAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR HUMANITARIAN AND SOCIAL ISSUES

**SUB-PROGRAMME 2: RESUMPTION OF BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES, PROVISION OF
HEALTH CARE AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT TO GROUPS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

PROJECT NO. 4.2.3

**PROMOTION OF THE USE OF KISWAHILI AS A WORKING LANGUAGE
IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION**

August 2006

1. Introduction

This project is in response to the *Dar es Salaam Declaration* (henceforth the Declaration) which, in Article 74, emphasizes the necessity to promote the use of Kiswahili as a working language in the Great Lakes Region (henceforth GLR). It was felt that such a language, among other working languages, would be a necessary prerequisite to effective regional cooperation and an efficient tool for social, cultural, political and economic development. This stance is indicative of not only the political will among member states but also it emanates from the general spirit of the Declaration.

The implementation of this project will call for close cooperation between member states whose stalwart political will and commitment will be necessary. Cooperation among member states supported by the Declaration and other OAU/AU charters and declarations will not only legitimize the suggestions given herein, but they also will grant the enabling milieu for the project.

2. Contextual Framework and Analysis

Kiswahili is, unquestionably, a major world language for it ranks among the top 6 main languages in the world. It is estimated that more than 100 million people speak and use Kiswahili the world over. As a backdrop to our project on the use of Kiswahili as one of the working languages in the GLR, therefore, a bird's eye view of the language in the world in general, and in Africa in particular, zeroing in to the situation in the GLR is necessary.

Kiswahili and the World

Currently there is, generally, a very conducive cultural, economic, political and scientific atmosphere for the growth and, thus, acceptance of Kiswahili the world over. The testimony for this kind of atmosphere is aptly indicated in, for example, the number of radio stations that broadcast in Kiswahili from as far as China, Japan, India, Russia, Germany, USA, and UK, just to mention a few. Furthermore, more and more universities and colleges the world over are taking Kiswahili on board as one of their subject offerings. In the USA alone, for example, there are 47 colleges and universities that teach Kiswahili.

Indeed Kiswahili is one of the languages that are taught at Diploma level in the International Baccalaureate Organization system throughout the world. Moreover, presently there are internet and computer localization and creation programs that in just a very few years to come will make the internet and computer programs readily available to Kiswahili speakers and readers in the world.

Kiswahili and Africa

The OAU Charter (1963) states the following, among other issues:

“The working languages of the Organization and all its institutions shall be, if possible, African languages, English and French, Arabic and Portuguese”

The fact that as early as 1963, such a call had been made indicates the language commitment that the African continent has had since immediately after independence. A number of subsequent Charters, Action Plans and Declarations that followed the 1963

Charter emphasized the need for using African languages in the OAU. These include the Cultural Charter (1976), Lagos Plan of Action (1980); Language Plan of Action (1986), Harare Declaration (1997); Lome, Durban and Maputo (2000, 2002, 2003). The most recent declaration, the Dar es Salaam Declaration for the GLR that focused on the use of Kiswahili as a working language for the region is yet one more document supporting the viewpoint. All these do, indeed provide a legal basis for the use of Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR.

The above were given impetus when, as recently as July 2004 during the AU Meeting in Addis Ababa, the Heads of State and delegates from Tanzania, Mozambique, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, the Comoros, Rwanda and Uganda gave their speeches and presentations in Kiswahili. This was a move that further proved that Kiswahili can function well as a working language in presentations and deliberations in such forums like that of the AU summit and, now, in GLR forums.

Kiswahili in the Great Lakes Region

The GLR comprises the following 11 countries: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia. Although generally multilingual, most of these countries have a widespread use of Kiswahili in formal and informal settings. Research and studies such as that by H.J.M. Mwansoko (2002) estimate that the number of speakers of Kiswahili in some of these countries are as follows:

- Burundi (2 million)
- DRC (20 million)
- Kenya (17 million)
- Rwanda (3 million),
- United Republic of Tanzania (31 million),
- Uganda (10 million)

It is envisaged that this project will not only benefit the six GLR states enumerated above, but also it will spill over to other countries in which some Kiswahili is spoken. These are the northern parts of Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, and the southern parts of Somalia, among others. The project may even expand as time goes on and as the Region's boundaries are redefined since, for example, there are also many native speakers of the language on the Indian Ocean islands of the Comoros and the northwestern parts of Madagascar.

As seen from above, there is, generally, a wide use of Kiswahili in most of the GLR states. Kiswahili language and its rich and varied literary tradition are increasingly attracting attention and recognition at home and abroad. It is, therefore, very important that this position is appreciated, maintained and strengthened. It is very heartening to see how Kiswahili has been developed in a number of GLR states to cater for intellectual discourse, with many universities offering the language and its literature from Bachelors to Ph.D. degrees. These have formed a solid ground for the growth of the language as a tool for intellectual discourse and the institutions remain as important parts of larger and broader efforts of a continuous process of building regional unity and identity.

Strong and independent departments in universities and other institutions charged with the teaching of the language at higher levels of education are an indispensable aspect of the process.

In the GLR local expertise is available in terms of teaching the language and developing the necessary terminologies. It is gratifying, therefore, to see that basically, the institutional mechanism for promoting Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR is, in effect, already in place and intact. The institutional mechanism has been solidified by works of several leading scholars and enthusiasts that have advocated for the use of Kiswahili as an East and Central African regional language, and as a pan-African language in general because of its linguistic and cultural peculiarities. These include Kihore (1983), Msanjila (1997, 2001), Ryanga (2001) and Mwansoko (2002). These scholars have, mostly, emphasized the use of the language in formal settings such as in education, courts of laws, in diplomatic activities, business and trade, and in literary works.

The above efforts have included the formation of *Chama cha Kiswahili cha Afrika* (CHAKA) - a Pan-African Kiswahili Association, and *Chama cha Kiswahili cha Afrika Mashariki* (CHAKAMA) – a regional organization that brings together all university lecturers and professors of Kiswahili from East and Central Africa. In the same vein, moves are underway to form what will be known as *Baraza la Kiswahili la Afrika Mashariki* – an authoritative body that will unite all East African National Kiswahili Councils into one, and an organization that will concern itself mainly with the standardization of the language to suit the needs of the East and Central African people.

From this account therefore, it is clear that Kiswahili and its literature have become a cultural fact for many East and Central Africans. The major reason for this is in language efficiency as this Bantu language has grown among East and Central Africans from a means of mere broad communication to that of broad and very elaborate expression that befits its use as one of the working languages in the GLR.

3. Objectives

Overall Objective

The overall objective of this project as per Article 74 of the Declaration is to promote the use of Kiswahili as a working language in the Great Lakes Region.

Specific Objectives

- To put into place, a Regional Policy and a Regional Kiswahili Coordination Committee that will oversee the, development and promotion of Kiswahili as one of the working languages in the GLR;
- To promote effective communication and participation of the people of the GLR in their different fora through the use of Kiswahili as a working language;
- To develop Kiswahili terminologies and word lists relevant to the different forums and summits of the GLR;
- To identify and fund principal research areas that will enhance the use of Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR.

4. Strategies

- The overall strategy of this project is to first of all start using Kiswahili as soon as possible as one of the working languages in the GLR forums by using available expertise in translation and interpretation. This is the strategy that was used by the AU Heads of State and Heads of Delegations in July 2004. Gradually this will indicate the major weak points that need to be worked on so as to improve on the use of this language in such fora.
- Where possible and necessary, to help our local populations and communities access Kiswahili language through different means that each member state may deem appropriate. This may entail establishing a regional Kiswahili web site so as to enhance the access.
- The third main strategy is to build the local capacity for effecting the promotion of Kiswahili as a working language through funding the proposed activities. Such an approach will take into account the activities for each objective as shown hereunder.

5. Activities

At Regional Level

- The possibility of using Kiswahili as a working language in the forthcoming GLR Summit should be explored
- Establish a Regional Coordination Committee of Language Experts that will oversee the running of all aspects related to the use of Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR.
- Develop Kiswahili terminologies relevant to the different forums and summits of the GLR.
- Identify Kiswahili interpreters and translators within the GLR and translate into Kiswahili all documents and publications - including all Protocols, Declarations, and Projects that have been used and continue to be used in different GLR fora.
- Distinguish and fund / solicit for scholarships for the training of trainers who will train GLR interpreters.
- Identify research areas, including those on ICT and Kiswahili development and usage, which will enhance the use of Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR and thereafter develop appropriate research proposals.
- Do any other advocacy work and capacity development that will enhance the promotion of Kiswahili as one of the working languages in the GLR.

At National Level

Within the spirit of regional cooperation, and social, cultural, political and economic development of the people of the GLR as per the Declaration, individually or collaboratively, GLR member states may:

- Establish a National Sub-Committee of experts to examine and make a follow-up of all aspects related to the use of Kiswahili as one of the working languages in the GLR,

- Identify Kiswahili interpreters and translators where available within a country and liaise with the Regional Coordination Committee in giving them further training;
- Identify suitable candidates to be trained as interpreters and translators within a country and liaise with the Regional Coordination Committee in training them from undergraduate to post graduate levels;
- Where possible, develop at national level, Kiswahili terminologies relevant to the different forums and summits of the GLR and collaborate with the Regional Coordination Committee in compiling and standardizing the terminologies
- Undertake a fundraising campaign aimed at the private sector and other sources so as to create scholarships for the training of interpreters and translators for the GLR fora.
- Do any other advocacy work and capacity development that will enhance the promotion of Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR.

6. Risks

- Inadequate human and financial resources.
- Lack of adequate and correct information on Kiswahili language.

7. Opportunities

- Readiness to use Kiswahili as one of the working languages in not only the GLR as emphasized in the Dar es Salaam Declaration, but also in Africa in general as demonstrated at the July 2004 AU Summit.
- The large, existing number of speakers and users of Kiswahili in the majority of the GLR states and beyond.
- The existing infrastructure of the defunct EACROTANAL in Zanzibar, the Institute of Kiswahili Research at the University of Dar es Salaam, and other institutions across the region that can render services related to the development and use of Kiswahili as a one of the working languages among the GLR member states and peoples;
- Available expertise in translation and interpretation at least for initial use in the GLR forums while others are being trained.
- The already existing efforts to localize the Internet and create computer programs from which the work of developing Kiswahili alongside technological and scientific developments in the world can proceed.
- The existing Kiswahili promoting bodies such as the *Chama cha Kiswahili cha Afrika* (Kiswahili Association for Africa), *Chama cha Kiswahili cha Afrika Mashariki* (East African Kiswahili Association), various National Kiswahili Councils, Universities and tertiary institutions across the region, from which manpower, expertise and experience can be tapped for the promotion of Kiswahili as one of the working languages in the GLR.
- Positive political developments in the region with regards to refugees who were previously living in camps in Tanzania, and who speak and spread Kiswahili language upon return to their countries of origin.

8. Beneficiaries

- Participants in different GLR fora.
- Readers of publications and documents accruing from such fora.
- All the different social, economic and political actors in the GLR, including the civil society, women, men, youth and children.

9. Financing

The financing of this project's activities will come from contributions from Member States of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region with support from the bilateral and multilateral partners, including the Private Sector and the Friends of the GLR.

10. Institutional Arrangements

The Coordination Committee on Humanitarian and Social Affairs will oversee the operationalization of all regional-level activities related to the promotion of Kiswahili as one of the working languages in the GLR. This Committee will be assisted by National Sub-Committees of Experts which, under its direction, and where possible, will operationalize the above-mentioned national-level activities with the assistance of, and in conjunction with, existing education institutions and relevant ministries such as those responsible for Culture, Education, and Foreign Affairs in the GLR member state governments.

II RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Expected Results	Indicators	Activities	Resources
Use of Kiswahili as a working language in GLR forums	Kiswahili used as a working language in all the GLR forums, and if possible in the forthcoming GLR Summit.	Using Kiswahili in the GLR summits	1. Member States of the International Conference
Establishment of Regional Kiswahili Coordination Committee	Regional Kiswahili Coordination Committee established	Establishing and using mechanism for the institution of the Regional Kiswahili Coordination Committee	2. Bilateral and multilateral partners
Creation of scholarships for training	Fundraising campaign aimed at the private sector and other sources so as to create scholarships for the training of interpreters and translators for the GLR forums done	Fundraising activities at regional and national levels	3. Donations from private sources / the private sector (corporate and individual)
Translated documents of the GLR forums	GLR documents and publications - including all Protocols, Declarations, and Projects translated into Kiswahili	Translation work done at national and regional levels	4. Relevant UN, AU and other African agencies such as the ADB
Identified translators and interpreters	Kiswahili interpreters and translators within the GLR identified	Identifying translators and interpreters through relevant ministries and institutions of higher learning across the GLR	5. Relevant Government Ministries
Training of Trainers	Scholarships for the training of trainers who will train GLR interpreters solicited.	Acquiring scholarships	
Development of Kiswahili terminologies relevant to GLR forums	Kiswahili terminologies relevant to the different forums and summits of the GLR developed	Using different bodies such as National Kiswahili Councils and Departments/Institutes of Kiswahili at universities to develop relevant terminologies	

<p>Identification of Research Areas related to use of Kiswahili as a working language and development of Research Proposals on the same</p>	<p>Identify further research areas that will enhance the use of Swahili as a working language in the GLR</p> <hr/> <p>Research proposals on the use of Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR developed</p>	<p>Developing proposals and solicit funds for sub-projects</p>	
<p>Building Swahili Language Technology Environment for the Great Lakes Languages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The necessary corpora, i.e. language data in a machine-readable form compiled. • Machines and systems appropriate for storing, processing, and extracting language data acquired and installed • Staff trained in the use of relevant computer technology and systems. • Working stations across the GLR suitable for keeping and running the specialized computer systems and programs built • Sponsorship for training of students across the GLR in computational linguistics done 	<p>Developing project proposal on Building Swahili Language Technology Environment for the Great Lakes Languages and solicit for funds for the project</p> <p>Creating or soliciting for scholarships to train students on computational linguistics.</p>	

**HUMANITARIAN AND SOCIAL ISSUES
YEARLY ACTION PLAN AND BUDGET (2006 – 2008)**

Project 4.3.3: Promotion of the Use of Kiswahili as a Working Language in the Great Lakes Region

ACTION PLAN

ACTIVITIES		YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3			
		QUARTER				QUARTER				QUARTER			
		I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
ADVOCACY AND INTERPRETATION WORK AND DEVELOPING TERMINOLOGIES / WORD LISTS	Put into place, a regional policy that will elevate Kiswahili into a working language in the GLR and start using Kiswahili in regional and other forums.												
	Establish a Regional Coordination Committee of Language Experts that will oversee matters related to the promotion of Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR												
	Carry out awareness campaigns and advocacy activities with regard to the promotion of the Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR.												
	Identify Kiswahili interpreters and translators within the GLR												

	Identify and fund the training of trainers who will train GLR interpreters														
	Develop Kiswahili terminologies relevant to the different forums and summits of the GLR														
TRANSLATION AND RESEARCH WORK															
	Translate into Kiswahili all GLR documents relevant to the GLR Summits and Meetings. These will include all the Declarations, Protocols and Projects														
	Identify research areas that will enhance the use of Kiswahili as a working language in the GLR and develop research proposals on the same.														

Budget

Please double click on the icon below to view the budget

Microsoft Office
Excel Worksheet