

LANGO



A LANGO WOMAN IN MODERN ATTIRE

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LANGUAGE & CULTURE

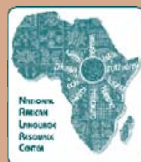
Lango is a Western Nilotic language under the Luo branch and Nilo-Saharan classification. It is also sometimes referred to as Leb-Lano and Lwo. Lango alphabet utilizes Latin characters. The most common form of art among Langi was music. The finger piano, drum and flute were principal musical instruments among the tribe. Singing is done by women who are widely respected for their talent. Although Langi were traditionally pastoralists, most are agriculturalists in present times. Millet (okama) is the staple crop and it is often used to brew beer. Pigeon peas (atunuru ngor), cucumbers (okwer), ground nuts, sweet potatoes and various other vegetables are frequently grown.

Langi traditional religion was based on *Jok*, a creator spirit who was also an all-powerful deity. The term Jok also means deity, and there are two main types of deities among the Langi:

1. Spirits associated with the wind that often attack people for no good reason,
2. Shadows or souls of a deceased person. This shadow self is also called *tipo*. When a person died, it is believed that their living guardian spirit called winyo that was with them during their life was liberated from the corpse and only *tipo* was left. For this reason, ancestors were very important to the Langi and each home had a family shrine or Bila that was viewed as highly sacred.

STUDYING LANGO IN THE UNITED STATES

Please contact the National African Language Resource Center, or check the NALRC website at <http://www.nalrc.indiana.edu/>



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WHO SPEAKS LANGO

Although accounts of the history of the Langi are debated and somewhat conflicting, the group is most likely descendants of the Luo-speaking Nilotic people who migrated south from Abyssinia in the early 15th century. Langi tradition asserts that Langi originated from a mountain called Otukey or Awil. The mountain was alleged to have abundant rainfall. Due to linguistic evidence, the Langi are also related to several neighboring Ugandan and Kenyan tribes such as the Karimojong, Jie, Dodoth, Lotuko, Toposa, Turkana, iteso, Kumam, and Karimojong, suggesting a similar history and origin.

The Langi people traditionally had a somewhat centralized system of governance and instead organized themselves into a number of clans based on patrilineage. Each clan had its own village and territory. Villages contained several huts and each hut had its own granary as well as the community cattle corrals. There were various different types of huts in each village such as the *iguruguru*, a small hut for sleeping in as a guest house, and *otogo*, huts for unmarried youths to sleep in. Chiefs were selected based on heredity and presided over the clans. There were also the senior chiefs called *rwot* who presided over groups of three to six subordinate chiefs.

WHY STUDY LANGO

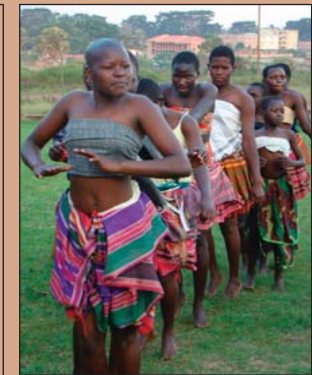
Lango is a language spoken in Uganda by approximately 1.5 million people. Langi people make up approximately 6% of the population of Uganda. Lango language is spoken mostly in the Central, Apac and Lira districts, north of Lake Kyoga and is taught in primary schools. There are also several Lango newspapers. Furthermore, it is frequently heard on the radio and television programs in the region where it is spoken. People interested in the African languages and literature, sociology, anthropology, linguistic, peace and conflict studies, international development, non-governmental organization (NGO) work, government work, African art, or African history will also find Lango very worthwhile to study.



Lango Camp (Guest Room) in Lango Sub-Region



Lango Home



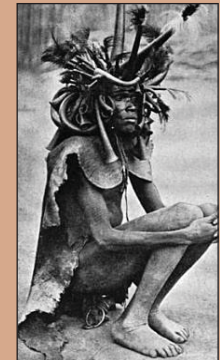
Lango woman dancing



Lango Flute



Lango Wheel Trap



Lango Chief



Lango farmer Cooking