

## Swahili

Harold Somers (2011)

Swahili is a Bantu language spoken by various ethnic groups that inhabit large areas of eastern Africa. Although only 5-10 million people speak it as their native language, Swahili is also a lingua franca for much of the region, is a national or official language of four nations, and is the only language of African origin among the official working languages of the African Union.

Study the following sentences with their translations, and then translate the sentences given below. Swahili does not have any words for 'the' or 'a'.

<i>Mtu ana watoto wazuri.</i>	The man has good children.
<i>Mto mrefu una visiwa vikubwa.</i>	The long river has large islands.
<i>Wafalme wana vijiko vidogo.</i>	The kings have small spoons.
<i>Watoto wabaya wana miwavuli midogo.</i>	The bad children have small umbrellas.
<i>Kijiko kikubwa kinatosha.</i>	A large spoon is enough.
<i>Mwavuli una mfuko mdogo.</i>	The umbrella has a small bag.
<i>Kisiwa kikubwa kina mfalme mbaya.</i>	The large island has a bad king.
<i>Watu wana mifuko mikubwa.</i>	The men have large bags.
<i>Viazi vibaya vinatosha.</i>	The bad potatoes are enough.
<i>Mtoto ana mavuli mkubwa.</i>	The child has a large umbrella.
<i>Mito mizuri mirefu inatosha.</i>	Good long rivers are enough.
<i>Mtoto mdogo ana kizi kizuri.</i>	A small child has a good potato.

Translate into Swahili:

- 1 The small children have good spoons.
- 2 A long umbrella is enough.
- 3 A bad potato has a good bag.
- 4 Good kings are enough.
- 5 A bad river has large children.
- 6 The rivers have long islands.

7. If the Swahili word for 'prince' is *mkuu*, what do you think the word for 'princes' is, and why?