



## **Skills Sharing Travel Manual**

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# Introduction to the Culture and Religion of the Pokot

by Rachel Finsaas

*Daylight Center & School is located in the Pokot region of Kenya. Students who attend Daylight come from tribes other than just Pokot. However, it is important to note that most of these tribes have a similar lifestyle as the Pokot, which is why Daylight has included the study below as part of trip preparation.*

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**\*\*\* EXCERPT \*\*\***  
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## **GLOSSARY**

Lopoyin	a Pokot name for God, meaning “the Light”
Mt. Mtelo	the tallest mountain in Pokot, also recognized as a holy mountain
Pokot	a tribe in northwest Kenya and northeast Uganda
Religious Syncretism	the merging together of two or more religions that at one point were considered separate and distinct
Sacred	a category for ritual, meaning special or religious
Tororot	a Pokot name for God, meaning “most high”
Totem	an animal that represents a community of people, and is therefore respected by that community of people
Totemism	a religion in which participants believe the community is sacred and worship the community through a totem
Turkana	a neighboring tribe of the Pokot in northwest Kenya

## **BACKGROUND: THE POKOT**

The Pokot are a people, a language and a region located in northwestern Kenya and northeastern Uganda. It is impossible to estimate the total land area and population of Pokot due to the constant movement of the Pokot people.

Two major landscapes exist in Pokot: the cool highlands and the arid lowland plains. These landscapes significantly dictate the lifestyle and occupations of the Pokot. The lowland Pokot are a nomadic people. They own and raise livestock: goats, camels, and cattle. For the lowland Pokot, land ownership is a foreign concept. The highland Pokot think otherwise and are engaged in business and agriculture because the climate is suitable for growing maize, a popular Kenyan staple.

The Pokot have lived in northwest Kenya for over one thousand years.

### **Lowland Pokot**

The lowland Pokot live in desert-like conditions. The ground is sandy dirt, scattered with thorny bushes and withered acacia trees. Kenya is popular among tourists for the wildlife, but the great beasts and predators of the Serengeti do not roam as far north as Pokot due to the impending Sahara. Thus, the wildlife of Pokot mostly consists of wild turkeys, vultures, and dik-diks (a distant relative of jack rabbits). Occasionally, one may come across leopard tracks or elephant manure patties.

There are two seasons in lowland Pokot: rainy and dry. Their rainy season begins in May and continues through September. The lowland Pokot see the rainy season as a blessing from God, as it grows what little vegetation that can be had in their desert-like conditions for their livestock to eat. But the rainy season also significantly impairs their infrastructure, washing out the dirt roads leading to urban market centers in the highlands.

There are no major lakes in Pokot. Lake Turkana, to the north, is the source of a major river that flows through east Pokot. The Pokot who live inland get their water from offshoot streams, many of which only supply water during the rainy season. These lowland Pokot rely on a few working water pumps during the dry season, remnants of past aid efforts. The pursuit of water and vegetation for their livestock are the major reasons why the lowland Pokot still are nomadic. Villages may have to leave their settlements in order to be closer to a more stable water source during the dry season. This migration makes the Pokot vulnerable because neighboring tribes have been known to raid Pokot livestock as they travel.

### *Inland Settlements*

There are two major types of settlements in lowland Pokot: those near tribal borders and those that are inland. The difference between these two settlements is significant.

The inland settlements are like country town centers. There are typically a few general stores to purchase clothing, beads, warm bottles of Coca-Cola, and cell phone minutes. There might also be a small primary school and church in the town. Family groups will surround the town center by a few miles. Each family group, which often consists of three generations, has its own collection of huts made of sticks and branches, covered in mud and animal dung. The huts are approximately ten feet in diameter and are primarily used for sleeping. They sometimes have a built-in bunk bed or shelves for storing milk gourds and ceremonial jewelry. A small fireplace for cooking might also be inside the hut.

Miniature huts, approximately four feet in diameter, made of sticks are nearby. These are used as baby goat pens. A larger pen of thorns, three to four feet in height, is also in the family settlement to keep adult goats, cattle, or camels. A wall of thorns measuring at least six feet high and four feet wide to keep leopards out surrounds the entire family settlement of huts and pens.



These inland settlements remain fairly stable in location, though men are typically gone throughout the long dry season, traveling with their cattle to find water and vegetation. The goats and camels are better seasoned for the dry season, so they stay behind in order to sustain the food supply for the women and children.

### *Border Settlements*

While inland settlements consist of small, single-family structures, settlements near tribal borders are like fortresses. The entire community erects a large wall of thorns, much like the inland settlements to surround their huts and animal pens. But the border settlement walls are much larger: measuring six feet deep and ten feet high. There are two entrances to the settlement in the wall of thorns and both of them are quite small, just large enough for a bull to squeeze through. The brush has been cleared for a half mile from the settlement in all directions to increase visibility. These efforts are to keep out predators, but these are different kinds of predator than those that afflict the inland settlements. These high walls, the narrow entrances, and the half-mile approaches are all to protect the community against livestock raids from neighboring tribes.

Being near the tribal border brings security risks. The men carry semi-automatic weapons to both protect themselves against a raid, and to use when raiding another tribe. It is illegal for these men to keep these arms, so they trade livestock for them across the border in Uganda. There is no Kenyan government presence in these border settlement areas to confiscate the arms or provide security. The men cannot leave the women and children to fend for themselves during the dry season. Thus, the entire settlement will migrate to a new location.

### *Occupation, Gender & Generational Roles*

Regardless of whether the women and children travel with the men, or whether they stay in the settlement, the gender and generational roles of the lowland Pokot are the same. The men are responsible for herding and protecting cattle. These cattle herders, or “cattle rustlers,” can vary in age from early teens to late thirties. A typical day for these men consists of waking up at dawn to attend a meeting to determine where to take the cattle that day. Then they go graze their cattle together. They return to their camp or settlement in the early evening; put the cattle in their thorn pens; and then relax and socialize with one another. They might do some housekeeping, such as repair an animal pen or rifle, eat, and then go to bed. If the men are away from their settlement, they will often sleep under the stars, near a slow-burning campfire with



their cattle-rustling kinsmen and friends. The men will take turns being on guard and awake during the night.

The lowland Pokot practice polygamy. Pokot men may marry one woman, or twelve or more women. The number of women a man marries, in addition to the size of his herds, illustrates his wealth, as a poor man cannot afford to marry and provide for many wives. Pokot women are valued for childbearing. As a result, women often marry and become mothers in their early teens. These women assist with herding goats or camels, haul water and firewood, build family huts and animal pens, and cook. Their day begins at dawn, fetching water and making porridge

for the young children to eat. If there is settlement work to be done, such as building huts or pens or repairing the thorn wall, they stay at home to do this work, or they might go and assist women in nearby settlements with their work. If there is a town center nearby, they may walk into town to buy maize if they have the money. All return to the settlement by early evening to socialize and rest.

Men who are forty and older, known as “elders,” are respected for their wisdom and age. Very few lowland Pokot live beyond forty years of age due to harsh weather, fatality during inter-tribal raids, and scarcity of health facilities. These elders are responsible for conducting ceremonies, such as animal sacrifices to Tororot—the Pokot name for God—as well as acting as intercessors between the community and Tororot. These elders generally spend their day relaxing and socializing with other elders. But they may occasionally help watch over the camels or goats with young boys and girls.



### *Food*

Although in recent years the lowland Pokot have attempted to grow crops, the sandy soil and frequent droughts have rendered these attempts fruitless. The only way the Pokot obtain maize is, infrequently, by trading at a nearby (or distant) town center or through the charity of government or non-profit organizations.

The lowland Pokot depend on a diet of milk from their livestock. A typical diet consists of about one cup per person, per day. In order to gain iron and other important nutrients, the Pokot mix the milk with animal blood, by wounding a cow in the throat and draining some of the blood. This act is not fatal to the cow, and does not even disable it. The Pokot will only enjoy the meat of a goat or cow during celebrations and rituals or in the event that a special guest visits the community, when a large number of people are known to gather or be in attendance. In this way, the meat benefits the entire community.



### *Currency and Economy*

Livestock serves not only as the lowland Pokot's food source but also as their currency and a sign of wealth. For the Pokot, concepts of wealth and food are tied closely together, as they believe an overweight person must be wealthy, owning enough cattle to eat meat regularly.

Due to the few poor dirt roads that lead out of the lowlands, the Pokot have little contact with urban Kenya, or with the world economy at large. However, cellular phone minutes are inexpensive in Kenya, and cell towers exist even in the most rural areas of Kenya, including Pokot. As a result, it is common to see a Pokot man dressed in traditional lowland Pokot attire holding a cell phone to his ear that he purchased with a few of his goats. Many lowland Pokot are aware of the country's currency, the Kenyan shilling, but have no need for it, as all of the small markets in lowland Pokot are willing to trade for the Pokot livestock.

If he has many livestock, a herdsman who wishes to marry is attractive to a young woman and to the woman's father, especially since he is expected to pay a bride price for the young woman. Fifty years ago, a typical bride price was above thirty cows. With recent droughts, fifteen to twenty cows is the current average bride price.

### **Highland Pokot**

The highland Pokot enjoy rich, fertile soil, rolling hills covered in grass, and forested areas. Being in the highlands, these Pokot receive more rainfall than the lowland Pokot and are therefore able to grow crops. The cooler climate and ability to grow vegetation allows the highland Pokot to raise chickens, donkeys and sheep, as well as cows. But they are also subject to the harsh conditions of drought, and forest fires are a common threat during the dry season.

Few predators that afflict the lowland Pokot survive the cooler climate of the highlands, populated marketplaces, and diesel automobiles. Birds and rodents are the only representatives of wildlife.

The highland Pokot live with their immediate family in mud brick homes with tin roofs and benefit from a treated water supply, outhouse toilets, and infrequent electricity. Although littered with potholes, a paved road has allowed the development of market centers throughout the highlands. The major Pokot town of Kapenguria is home to a library, police station, museum, art studio, development offices, gas stations, cafes, hotels, an open market center, grocery and clothing stores, a few primary and secondary schools, as well as a mosque and a number of churches of various Christian denominations.



Because the highland Pokot are more urban, connected to the capital center of Nairobi by a paved road, obtaining food is no more an issue than it is for the average American: they are only limited by the amount of money in their pockets to spend at grocery stores, open markets, and cafes. The Kenyan shilling is widely used in the urban highlands of Pokot.

### *Professions, Gender & Generational Roles*

Due to the great variety of jobs available, highland Pokot men may be farmers, businessmen, government officials, educators, artists, or pastors. The same respect for older men in lowland Pokot is present in highland Pokot. Although there is more of a government presence in highland Pokot, the local government officials often attempt to work in collaboration with the Pokot elders to resolve issues within the community.

Education is a higher priority in highland Pokot than in lowland Pokot because there are so many more occupations available in the bustling highland communities. Not all children are able to attend school, however, because most of the schools charge a fee for tuition. Government-provided public schools are a very new idea and practice in Kenya.

Just as with the lowland Pokot, the main occupation for women is motherhood. The Pokot version of “Miss” or “Mrs.” is Kama, which literally translates as “Mama.” This is a sign of respect and word of endearment for women, illustrating the great significance of motherhood in Pokot. Women might also be educators and businesswomen, in addition to being mothers. But due to the better opportunities for education and occupation, many women in highland Pokot are married and become mothers later in life than the lowland Pokot, i.e., in their twenties.

### **Government Intervention & Authority**

Britain colonized Kenya in 1888. With colonization came white settlers and missionaries who began moving into the country in the early 1900s. Kenya declared its independence from Britain in 1963. Because Christian missions and political colonization occurred at around the same time in Kenya, it is understandable that the Kenyans closely tied Christianity with political power. The relationships between tribal Kenyans, white colonizers, and Christian missionaries is extremely complex and interesting.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about these relationships, the author suggests reading from the following sources listed on pg. 16: Boddy-Evans, Alistair; Kotomei, Albino; Shadle, Brett L.; and Wamagatta, Evanson N.

## **The Pokot Elders as Government**

Traditionally, the Pokot have had success with their own form of government: the Pokot elders. Pokot elders are respected for their wisdom in resolving conflicts within the community. They also act as intercessors to Tororot, praying on behalf of the community for rain and protection. Members of the community do not elect elders; rather, elders simply reach an age when the community as a whole respects them and their wisdom.

Pokot elders exist both in the lowlands and the highlands. Because the highland Pokot have better access to health facilities and do not have issues of cattle rustling, they have a longer life span; therefore, there are many more elders in the highlands than the lowlands. Because the highland Pokot have more of an opportunity to interact with a formal Kenyan government than do the lowland Pokot, the highland Pokot occasionally work alongside the local police to resolve conflicts in the community.

The Pokot elders have a list of traditional punishments that they choose from and deliver to people. From greatest to least in severity, these punishments include:

- Capital punishment
- Whipping or beating the criminal
- Lapay, which is essentially a huge fine for damages rendered
- Bull sacrifice
- Forced excommunication
- Voluntary excommunication

The Pokot very rarely resort to capital punishment or beating the criminal. The most recent case the elders recalled regarding capital punishment was approximately fifteen or twenty years ago when a woman was accused of performing witchcraft. The elders said that they chose capital punishment because they believe witchcraft is dangerous and did not think the woman would stop performing witchcraft or could be cleansed. All of the other forms of punishment can be considered methods of cleansing; cleansing is of great importance to the Pokot in the effort to return the community back to the way it was before the criminal act was performed.

The elders take their time making decisions. Much of this has to do with the way these meetings are conducted. One elder is chosen to facilitate the meeting, but this responsibility is dynamic, as a different elder will often facilitate the next meeting. Each elder has the opportunity to share his thoughts during the deliberation meetings. One person will stand and begin talking

as he stands. When he has finished saying what he thinks, which can take anywhere between ten seconds or three minutes, he sits down. If two elders begin standing at the same time, the one who begins talking first has the floor, and the other voluntarily sits down again.

An “elder meeting” can last all day, from around 10:00am until 9:00pm, and serious issues discussed at these meetings are often not resolved within one day’s meeting. The elders do take hour-long breaks during the day, and the wealthiest highland elders in attendance often pay for chai and a pastry or some other small meal for all in attendance. There were over sixty elders in attendance at a meeting concerning a man who hosted thieves and murderers. These elders attend throughout the day as their other responsibilities allow.

Pokot elders are volunteers of the community, and are not officially compensated for their time. Although most of the issues they resolve on a day-to-day basis are within their community, they will occasionally offer wisdom on issues between their community and other tribes. In traditional lowland cases, this wisdom may be to raid a neighboring tribe for its cattle. But in more recent years, elders from both the highlands and lowlands have come to recognize that raiding neighboring tribes is a poor solution for resolving their issues of hunger.

### **Conclusions on Development**

The great diversity in development between the lowland and highland Pokot, as illustrated above in the sections providing background on the highland and lowland Pokot, is partially due to the historical lack of intervention in Pokot from the Kenya government or anyone else. At one point, Kenya even offered Pokot to Uganda, but Uganda refused. It is not clear why neither of these countries wanted Pokot, but one might conclude that due to the great amount of dry desert land, these countries did not believe the land to be valuable for development purposes.

Without better roads to lead into lowland Pokot, few law enforcement officials travel to lowland Pokot to deal with the issue of the lack of security between neighboring tribes. Without security, few teachers and health professionals are willing to live in lowland Pokot. Even if the insecurity issue were to be resolved, the nomadic lifestyle of the lowland Pokot is a challenge for traditional educators. Without educators and roads, the lowland Pokot have very little connection with the world beyond their dry desert lands. They do not understand that a person can become something other than a herder, because they simply either do not know that other occupations exist or do not have the opportunity to pursue a different career.

In September 2010, Kenya's third president, Emilio Mwai Kibaki, signed a new constitution that states that a percentage of the country's revenue will be distributed to the marginalized areas of Kenya, which includes Pokot. Those Pokot who are educated and understand the new constitution are excited at the promise of development but believe it will take years before they will notice any significant change.

### **Traditional Religious Beliefs**

Historically, the Pokot have practiced African Traditional Religion. Those who practice African Traditional religion are monotheistic, believing that one God created the universe:

“It is generally believed all over Africa that the universe was created. The Creator of the universe is God. ... it seems impossible that the universe could simply have come into existence on its own. God is, therefore, the explanation for the origin of the universe.” (Mbiti)

In African Traditional Religion, God is the creator and master of the universe, whereas man is the center of the universe. This religious belief structure values spiritual and supernatural beings, ancestor veneration, magic, and traditional medicine. Certain individuals within the community are believed to hold powers to predict the future. There is a “rain reader,” a man who predicts when it will rain next. There is also a “shoe thrower,” and if a person were to give the “shoe thrower” his shoe, and tell the thrower where he was planning to go, the thrower will toss the shoe and read whether it is safe for the owner of the shoe to set off in that direction or go to that place at all. If the shoe thrower predicts an unsafe journey, then the shoe owner often chooses to change their travel plans.

Although the Pokot have historically practiced and currently practice African Traditional Religion, the majority of both highland and lowland Pokot express that they practice Christianity. Because the Pokot do not view African Traditional Religion as a religion but rather as a way of life, these two belief structures can and often co-exist.

The Pokot have two names for God: Tororot, meaning “the Supreme God,” or “the Most High”; and Lopoyin, meaning “the Light.” This imagery of “the Light” possesses strong resonance with Pokot tribe members. After a full day of work, the Pokot relax and converse around a glowing campfire. The fire may be used to cook some maize and beans, if they are available, for supper. Everyone communes to tell stories and jokes around the campfire until the moon and stars appear; that is when people would begin to disperse.



In Pokot, elders are also considered powerful people as they serve as intermediaries between Pokot and Tororot. Specifically in lowland Pokot, where these old traditions are still regularly practiced, individuals will bring the elders a gourd full of “honey beer” as a form of payment for the elders to pray on behalf of the individual.

Under the leadership of the elders, the Pokot people participate in a number of religious ceremonies. These ceremonies include:

- Kiriket. A bull or goat is sacrificed and an elder leads a prayer. The fire is directed toward the holy mountain, Mt. Mtelo.
- Atowoi. Elders gather all the people of the community into an open field, perform kiriket, pray for mercy, and smear cow dung on each other.
- Osonot. Young girls, during a bad drought, take water in a jerry can and go out to a dry area. They simulate rain by pouring the water on themselves, laughing, and pretending that they are in better circumstances. It is believed that God will have mercy on the girls and send rain.

As indicated in the kiriket ritual above, the Pokot face Mt. Mtelo when performing a sacrifice. Mt. Mtelo is the tallest mountain in Pokot, and the name Mtelo means “standing out” or “like no other.” Mt. Mtelo is where the Pokot believe Tororot, “the Most High,” has made a presence.

In most of the rituals mentioned above, the Pokot perform animal sacrifice in which the blood of a cow or goat is shed for the ritual. This blood-letting is only performed under the most dire of circumstances, such as during a severe drought when lives are at risk.

“In African societies, life is closely associated with blood. When blood is shed in making a sacrifice, it means that human or animal life is being given back to God who is in fact the ultimate source of all life. [...] The kind of situation that calls for a sacrifice may include drought, epidemics, war, raids, calamity, insect pests, and destructive floods.” (Mbiti )





## **Religious Syncretism**

When the missionaries arrived in Kenya, they discovered that many aspects of Christian scripture were already present in the oral history of the Pokot people. The Pokot claimed they already knew the story of Moses crossing the Red Sea, although they call him Lormosei, and say they believe that those who started their long migration from Egypt were their ancestors. The animal sacrifices mentioned in Jewish scripture were also nothing new to the Pokot.

When the missionaries realized that the Pokot already knew much of the Jewish scripture, they agreed that the God of the Pokot is also the God of Christianity. And so the mission of the missionaries changed from spreading the Word of God to sharing the Christian scripture's news of Jesus Christ, although the Pokot also claimed they already knew about Jesus too, but only as a wise teacher, not as the Son of God or savior of the world.

As formal churches and worship services developed by the missionaries sprang up in Pokot, Christianity and the elements of African Traditional Religion practiced by the Pokot began to blend. One example of this syncretism is seen in the use of sacred “totem” animals in sacrifice and in worship. Pokot revere certain animals as “totem” animals. These are seen as valued, protected, and are used for specific, sacred occasions. While regular, everyday animals can be killed or eaten by the clan, the totem animal is designated specifically for clan rituals.

The totem animal for lowland Pokot (as well as for neighboring tribes) is the bull. The bull is the lowland Pokot's totem animal because they identify the bull as a symbol of wealth, which means the bull is highly valued, and each lowland Pokot man decorates one bull and designates it to be a representation of himself. Because the bull is valued so highly, Pokot men risk their lives protecting their cattle herds—whereas boys and old men who graze goats are in less danger of being raided—and they participate in “revenge raids” in order to take back the cattle stolen from them. All of these factors identify the bull as the Pokot totem animal. When the Pokot sacrifice their totem animal, they are in essence, sacrificing themselves, because the totem animal represents them.

**For more information about the Pokot, see the “Sources Consulted” list on the next page, or contact email [rachel.finsaas@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.finsaas@gmail.com) for the unabridged version of this thesis.**

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# Daylight Travel Tips

## Food & Water

### *Meals*

Three meals per day are included with the cost of this trip. If you are recruited to help buy groceries, your trip leader will provide you with the necessary cash.

Note that if you happen to go out to eat a snack with people from Kenya, they will expect you to pay for their meals. It is Pokot custom that the wealthiest person at the table (when going out to eat) pays the bill for everyone. Because you flew all the way to Kenya, whether or not you paid your own way, it will be assumed by many you meet that you did pay your own way and therefore have more funds than they do in order to pay for their meal/snack.

This is a typical outline of how meals work in Kenya:

- Breakfast (around 8 or 9am): 2-3 cups of chai per person, plus some kind of pastry or other breakfast item
- Lunch (around 12:30pm): rice and beans, and 2-3 more cups of chai per person
- Dinner (around 6:30pm): ugali (cooked corn meal) and cooked shredded vegetables; occasionally meat, boiled potatoes, cooked bananas.

When you go to a travel clinic to get your necessary immunizations, they will also tell you all about what to avoid regarding food, water, etc. Rest assured that Michael and your trip leader are very good about vetting the food you will eat.

### *Snacks*

It's a good idea to pack a favorite snack bar from home for each day or two you will be in Kenya, or pack peanut butter or other spread to eat with bread. Most of the food in Kenya is low-calorie and bland, so it's nice to have something to snack on between meals.

### *Water*

To ensure the purity of water, we will be purchasing large bottles of purified drinking water to share amongst our travel group. Bring a reusable water bottle so that you can refill from the group's water supply.

Consider purchasing and bringing drink mix packets (like Crystal Light). It's really easy to get sick of drinking plain water, but it's really important to stay hydrated, as you don't realize how much you sweat. Many people expect to get diarrhea when they travel to Kenya, and are alarmed when the exact opposite—constipation—occurs. Staying hydrated will help in either situation!

## Accommodations, Toilets, and Showers

The hotel(s) you will be sleeping in have beds, mosquito nets, flushable toilets and cold-water showers. However, there is no guarantee your direct room will have a flushable toilet. Outhouse type toilets are widely available. Keep in mind that you will need to bring your own tissue to use in the outhouse-type toilets.

## **Clothing**

### *What to Pack*

#### Clothing basics:

- 2 short-sleeved shirts
- 1 tank top (women only)
- 1 light-weight jacket
- 1 pair of pants (men and women)
- 1-2 pairs pants (for men)
- 2 shin- or full-length skirts (for women)
- Pajamas
- Underwear
- Socks
- Hiking boots or tennis shoes if helping with construction at Daylight or visiting rural areas
- Sandals
- Flip Flops (mostly just for wearing when taking a shower)
- Money belt/passport holder
  - Wear underneath shirt or pants.
  - Keep KShs 1000 bills in money belt, and smaller denominations in pants/jacket pocket. You don't want to keep reaching into a money belt for small denominations.

### *Accessories*

- Pictures from home! (The people you meet will love to learn about the United States and about you. Bring some pictures of your family, friends, work, etc to share!)
- 2 pairs sunglasses (in case you lose or break a pair)
- Flashlight!!!

## **Hygiene/Toiletries**

### *What to Pack*

- “Sea to Summit Wilderness Wash” from REI
  - This stuff is concentrated, and can be used for shampoo, body wash, and laundry detergent
- 8 fl oz. “No Rinse Shampoo” from REI
  - A nice option if you do not plan to take a shower every day.
- Large travel towel (waffle style fabric)
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- deodorant
- face wash
- moisturizer with SPF 30 (or other sunblock for the face)
- body lotion

- Qtips
- Tweezer
- Nail clipper
- Feminine products (for women)
- Chap stick with SPF
- Toilet paper (without the cardboard roll) from REI
- Hand sanitizer
- Small scissors
- Spool of thread and some needles in case you need to repair clothing
- Safety pins

### *Sun & Bug Protection*

- **50 spf sunblock**
  - It's extremely difficult to find sunblock in Kenya, so be sure to bring some!
- Mosquito repellent

### **Medicine**

- Common Immunizations for traveling to Kenya  
(**for a complete/up-to-date list, consult a travel doctor**)
  - Menactra
  - IPV
  - Tdap (Tetanus)
  - Typhoid
  - Yellow Fever (I already had this one from a previous trip)
- Prescription Meds
  - Personal prescription medications
  - Malaria prevention
    - When you go to the travel clinic to get your immunizations, they will write you a prescription for a malaria medication, and give you a few options to choose from
  - Ciprofloxacin
    - Most commonly prescribed for bad diarrhea; your travel doctor may (or may not) prescribe it for "just in case"
- Over-the-Counter recommendations  
(**your trip leader will have a first-aid kit**)
  - Thermometer
  - Preferred cold medications
  - Tylenol
  - Band-Aids
  - Pepto-Bismol
  - Antihistamine allergy relief
  - anti-diarrheal
  - Oral rehydration salts, to replenish fluids if you becomes sick with diarrhea or vomiting; also good for altitude sickness

- Laxative
- antiseptic (cleansing spray for wounds)
- Antibiotic cream, for wounds
- Hydrocortisone, for rashes or itchiness
- Eye drops
- Gauze pads
- ACE bandage

## Laundry

If you have laundry that needs to be cleaned during the trip, the hotel or Kimpur family might wash it for you, or our group may be given a Skill Share course on how to wash laundry, Kenyan style!

## Money/Cash

If you want to purchase snacks outside of the trip-provided meals, or buy souvenirs to bring home, you will need some cash. You can either bring U.S. dollars to exchange in Nairobi, or use an ATM card.

**If you bring cash, do not bring any bills that are \$50 or larger** expecting to exchange them. It is extremely difficult to find anyone who will exchange \$50 bills or higher. Also, **bills will not be exchanged if they were printed more than 5 years ago.**

There are ATMs in Kapenguria and Kitale as well as Nairobi. Remember to inform your credit card and debit card companies/banks that you will be out of the country!

## Phone & Internet

There will be limited access to phones and internet while on the trip. Please inform your friends and family that “no news is good news.” We encourage you to leave your mobile phones at home, especially since your phone will not work in Kenya (unless you have an international calling plan) or be charged expensive roaming fees if you attempt to use it.

If your friends or family have an emergency to report while you are on this trip, have them call 612-293-7476 and Daylight personnel will get them in touch with Michael or relay the message.

A way for your family to stay informed of what is happening during the trip is for them to subscribe to Daylight’s “1-Minute Update” emails through our website, [www.daylightcenter.org](http://www.daylightcenter.org).

## Begging

Strangers will ask you for money, whether it is a passing beggar on the street, or one of Michael’s friends.

- Generally, Michael or Peter will handle the situation.
- If it is one of Michael’s friends, and Michael is nearby, tell Michael if you feel uncomfortable being asked for money, and he will help change the subject.

- If one of Michael's friends asks you for money, and he isn't there, simply tell them that you will ask Michael about it.
- It is hard to be surrounded by all of this need, and for you to want to help as many people as possible. Just remember that you are only one person, and you cannot end the world's poverty by yourself. If someone sees you help one person, they will expect help too, and so on and so on. If Michael feels there is a special case, he will ask you if you are able and willing to help that one person. Let Michael take the lead, and be honest with Michael about what you can and cannot do.

## **Gifts**

Many of your Skill Sharing lessons may already include objects that you will be giving out. But, these are just some ideas. Perhaps everyone on the trip can go in together on some gift ideas.

### *Daylight*

- Kids
  - Like all children, the kids at Daylight love candy. Michael can point you to the kinds they like in the Nairobi or Kitale markets. Consider bringing your favorite fun-sized candy to share from the U.S.
  - The kids also love playing soccer, volleyball, and jumping rope.
- Staff
  - Some gifts that have been given to the Daylight staff are neck ties for the men, jewelry for the women.
  - Other ideas could include Minnesota-themed t-shirts or other state-themed items from the state you grew up or live in.

### *Host*

- Angelina, Michael's wife
  - In Pokot tradition, a common hostess gift is: 2 kg of sugar and a packet of tealeaves. Angelina truly appreciates this tradition. This costs about \$3. Wait to purchase this in Nairobi or Kitale and Michael will help you pick out the right stuff!
- Michael's Kids
  - Again, they are children and love candy, potato chips, and soccer! New clothes are also a treat.





## **Skills Sharing Example Templates**

As a Daylight team member you will have the unique opportunity for Skills Sharing with the Daylight community. Skills Sharing is choosing a topic of interest to you (hobbies, abilities, talents) to be presented to a specific group (kids, teachers, mothers, etc.). If you prefer, you may co-lead with another trip team member to present two to three one-hour sessions regarding your chosen and approved topic. This will be a fun way to interact with the community and share your knowledge. This activity will be further discussed at the first team meeting.

## Example #1: Dental Hygiene

The following plan is a lesson outline of a skill I would like to share with students, teachers, and/or the community at Daylight Center in Kapenguria, Kenya. I will be responsible for leading or co-leading 2-3 separate lessons, typically about an hour long each. Some ideas for types of skill share lessons include topics such as:

- Healthcare (prenatal, basic hygiene, etc.)
- Agricultural skills
- Music
- Education (English, games, providing curriculum training for teachers, etc.)
- Construction (techniques, tools, etc.)
- Cooking
- VBS/Bible study
- Crafts
- Any other area that I would love to share and is appropriate to my audience

*I understand that it is possible that I may not have an interpreter and will plan accordingly.*

Name \_\_John Doe\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_January 12, 2013\_\_\_\_\_

<b>Lesson 1</b>	<b>Skill or knowledge that I would like to share:</b> Healthcare (introduction to dental hygiene)
	<b>Materials needed/money needed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 toothbrush (\$1)</li> <li>• Poster of mouth/teeth (\$20)</li> </ul>
	<b>Interpreter needed?</b> Yes or No
	<b>Intended audience (for example, children, teachers, women in the community, etc.):</b> The children at Daylight Center
	<b>Time needed to complete lesson 1:</b> 45 minutes
	<b>Am I leading this with another team member?</b> Yes or No
	<b>Lesson 1 description:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce self</li> <li>• Introduce topic (taking care of our teeth)</li> <li>• Show poster of teeth</li> <li>• Children guess how many teeth we have, then count on poster  <b>-Adults have 32</b>  <b>-Young children only have 20</b> (under 6 years old)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce basic brushing technique (2 times a day for 2 minutes- or 2 for 2)</li> <li>• Teach children the “Brush Your Teeth” song</li> <li>• Children “practice” brushing their teeth with their finger, then take turns using a toothbrush on the poster.</li> </ul>
Lesson 2	<b>Skill or knowledge that I would like to share:</b> Dental hygiene (brushing our teeth)
	<b>Materials needed/money needed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 toothbrushes (\$30 if bought in bulk)</li> <li>• 50 tubes of toothpaste (\$100 if bought in bulk)</li> <li>• Poster of teeth used in Lesson 1</li> </ul>
	<b>Interpreter needed?</b> Yes or No
	<b>Intended audience:</b> Children at Daylight Center
	<b>Time needed to complete lesson 2:</b> 45 minutes
	<b>Am I leading this with another team member?</b> Yes      Yes or No
	<b>Lesson 2 description:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children review “Brush Our Teeth” song</li> <li>• Teach specific brushing technique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use short brush strokes moving away from gum line</li> <li>- Start with inside upper teeth, then inside lower teeth</li> <li>- Continue with outside upper teeth, then outside lower teeth</li> <li>- Finish with brushing your tongue</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Children are given toothbrushes to practice technique without toothpaste first</li> <li>• Children are shown how to put toothpaste on brush, and then fully brush their teeth while leaders supervise and assist</li> <li>• Children are “tested” on brushing and given stickers for brushing correctly</li> </ul>
Lesson 3	<b>Skill or knowledge that I would like to share:</b> Dental hygiene (flossing)
	<b>Materials needed/money needed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 packets of floss (\$50 if bought in bulk)</li> <li>• Poster of teeth from Lesson 1</li> </ul>
	<b>Interpreter needed?</b> Yes or No
	<b>Intended audience:</b> Children at Daylight Center

	<b>Time needed to complete lesson 3:</b> 45 minutes
	<b>Am I leading this with another team member?</b> <b>Yes</b> or <b>No</b>
	<b>Lesson 3 description:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of “Brush Our Teeth” song</li> <li>• One child volunteer comes up and demonstrates on poster how to brush teeth</li> <li>• Teach basic flossing technique (show how to floss between each pair of teeth) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First, show on poster</li> <li>- Next, show on self</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Children are broken into small groups, given floss, and taught how to floss on themselves</li> <li>• Children are “tested” on flossing and receive stickers for flossing correctly</li> </ul>

## Example #2: Phonics Curriculum

The following plan is a lesson outline of a skill I would like to share with students, teachers, and/or the community at Daylight Center in Kapenguria, Kenya. I will be responsible for leading or co-leading 2-3 separate lessons, typically about an hour long each. Some ideas for types of skill share lessons include topics such as:

- Healthcare (prenatal, basic hygiene, etc.)
- Agricultural skills
- Music
- Education (English, games, providing curriculum training for teachers, etc.)
- Construction (techniques, tools, etc.)
- Cooking
- VBS/Bible study
- Crafts
- Any other area that I would love to share and is appropriate to my audience

*I understand that it is possible that I may not have an interpreter and will plan accordingly.*

Name \_\_John Doe\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_January 12, 2013\_\_\_\_\_

<b>Lesson 1</b>	<b>Skill or knowledge that I would like to share:</b> English Phonics Curriculum training
	<b>Materials needed/money needed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phonics curriculum, including flashcards, worksheets, and CD (I developed this at the cost of around \$20)</li> <li>• Laptop computer (I will bring my own at no cost, and will make sure there is enough battery power in case the electricity is out)</li> </ul>
	<b>Interpreter needed?</b> Yes or No
	<b>Intended audience (for example, children, teachers, women in the community, etc.):</b> The teachers at Daylight Center
	<b>Time needed to complete lesson 1:</b> 1 hour
	<b>Am I leading this with another team member?</b> Yes or No
	<b>Lesson 1 description:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce self</li> <li>• Introduce phonics curriculum (consists of three different levels, and made so that students can start at the easiest level, and then “graduate” to the higher levels)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show phonics curriculum binder to teachers, including all worksheets, flash cards, and the CD (with use of the computer). The CD will be the hard copy for teachers to use when they eventually will have access to a printer.</li> <li>• Specifically show Level 1 curriculum (the lowest level), and pass out worksheets for the letter “A”</li> <li>• Show teachers a “mock” lesson of how to teach basic handwriting and knowledge of the letter “A” (through worksheets and flash cards)</li> <li>• Ask teachers to think of ideas they can use in this type of lesson</li> <li>• Answer questions if teachers have any</li> </ul>
Lesson 2	<b>Skill or knowledge that I would like to share:</b> Phonics Curriculum (Level 2)
	<b>Materials needed/money needed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phonics curriculum, Level 2</li> </ul>
	<b>Interpreter needed?</b> Yes or No
	<b>Intended audience:</b> Teachers at Daylight Center
	<b>Time needed to complete lesson 2:</b> 45 minutes
	<b>Am I leading this with another team member?</b> Yes or No
Lesson 3	<b>Lesson 2 description:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Lesson 1 (Level 1 Curriculum)</li> <li>• Introduction of Level 2 Curriculum (mid-level phonics)</li> <li>• “Mock” lesson using flashcards and worksheets to teach knowledge of words that begin with the letter “B”, and handwriting skills to write words that start with the letter “B”</li> <li>• Teachers brainstorm in small groups ideas that would be useful for this level of curriculum, then share with the rest of group</li> <li>• Teacher questions, if any</li> </ul>
	<b>Skill or knowledge that I would like to share:</b> Phonics curriculum (Level 3)
	<b>Materials needed/money needed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phonics curriculum (Level 3)</li> </ul>
	<b>Interpreter needed?</b> Yes or No
	<b>Intended audience:</b> Teachers at Daylight Center

	<b>Time needed to complete lesson 3:</b> 1 – 1.5 hours
	<b>Am I leading this with another team member?</b> <b>Yes</b> or <b>No</b>
	<b>Lesson 3 description:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Level 2 curriculum</li> <li>• Introduction of Level 3 curriculum</li> <li>• Pass out worksheets and show teachers how advanced students will need to be to complete Level 3 lessons</li> <li>• “Mock” lesson using Level 3 curriculum and flash cards</li> <li>• Teachers are divided into two different groups (one with me, one with my co-leader)</li> <li>• Teachers attempt to teach Level 3 curriculum using ideas from earlier lessons</li> <li>• Other teachers and leader and/or co-leader give feedback and suggestions.</li> <li>• Two groups meet together again, and leaders answer teachers’ questions, if any</li> </ul>





## MY SKILL SHARE PLAN

The following plan is a lesson outline of a skill I would like to share with students, teachers, and/or the community at Daylight Center in Kapenguria, Kenya. I will be responsible for leading or co-leading 2-3 separate lessons, typically about an hour long each. Some ideas for types of skill share lessons include topics such as:

- Healthcare (prenatal, basic hygiene, etc.)
- Agricultural skills
- Music
- Education (English, games, providing curriculum training for teachers, etc.)
- Construction (techniques, tools, etc.)
- Cooking
- VBS/Bible study
- Crafts
- Any other area that I would love to share and is appropriate to my audience

*I understand that it is possible that I may not have an interpreter and will plan accordingly.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Lesson 1</b>	<b>Skill or knowledge that I would like to share:</b>
	<b>Materials needed/money needed:</b>
	<b>Interpreter needed?</b> Yes    or    No
	<b>Intended audience (for example, children, teachers, women in the community, etc.):</b>
	<b>Time needed to complete lesson 1:</b>
	<b>Am I leading this with another team member?</b> Yes    or    No



<b>Lesson 3</b>	<b>Skill or knowledge that I would like to share:</b>
	<b>Materials needed/money needed:</b>
	<b>Interpreter needed?</b> Yes      or      No
	<b>Intended audience:</b>
	<b>Time needed to complete lesson 3:</b>
	<b>Am I leading this with another team member?</b> Yes      or      No
	<b>Lesson 3 description:</b>