

Basic Luo Phrases for Tiba Staff and Volunteers

This is a brief introduction to Luo Language, locally referred to as 'Dholuo'. The dialect is spoken by 4.2 million people who live in the Western Region of Kenya (Nyanza Province) including the natives of Siaya (Wikipedia). Swahili language is a more common, nationally spoken language – but may not be well understood or spoken by people in rural communities. Using a local dialect, even if only a few words goes a long way in fostering friendships with the locals.

Greetings and introductions

Greeting in English	Luo translation	Luo response
Hello	Amosi [plural – Amoso u]	Ber ahinya
Hi [informal]	Koro?	Ber
How are you?	Idhi nade	Adhi ma ber
Good morning	Oyaore	Oyaore ahinya
Good afternoon	Osaore	Osaore ahinya
Good evening	Oyimore	Oyimore ahinya
My name is...	Nyinga...	
What is your name?	Nyingi nga?	
Where are you from?	I ya kure?	
I am from (the USA)	A ya (Amerika)	
I am a doctor	An daktari	
I am a nurse	An sista	
I work at Matibabu Hospital	A tiyo Matibabu	

Etiquette

Thank you (very much)	Ero kamano (ahinya)
(Very) Sorry	Mos (ahinya)
Goodbye	Oriti
You are welcome	Karibu
Please help me with ... (e.g. water)	Konya gi... (pii)
Give me... (e.g. some money)	Mi ya... (pesa)
I want	Adwaro
I like	Ahero
I am happy	Amor
Stand up	Chung malo
Sit down	Bedi piny

Lie down	Nindi piny
Call me	Gochna
Come visit me	Bi ilima
I am lost	A lal
I don't know	A kiya
I don't understand	Ok ang'eyo
How do you say...in Luo?	Iwacho nade...e dholuo?
Can you repeat that please?	Nuoye mano
Repeat that slowly	Nuoye mano mos
Who? E.g. who is that?	Ng'a? Mano ng'a?
What? E.g. what is that?	Ang'o? Mano ang'o?
Why? E.g. Why are you at the hospital?	Nang'o? In e osiptal nang'o?
Where? E.g. Where are you going?	Kanye? Idhi kanye?
When? E.g. When are you coming?	Sa-a dii? Ibiro sa-a- dii??

People and relationships

My friend	Osiapa
My spouse	Jaoda
My child	Nyathina
Girl	Nyako
Boy	Wuoyi
Toddler/infant	Nyathii matin

Useful clinical terms

Hospital	Ospitaal
A patient	Jatuo [Plural – jotuo]
Drugs/medicine	Yaath
Needle (in syringe)	Sindaan
Water	Pii
Blood	Remo
Sickness	Tuo
Healing	Chango
Death	Tho
Doctor	Daktari
Nurse	Sista
Bad	Rach
Good	Ber
Clean	Ler

Dirty	Olil
I feel bad	Awinjo marach
I am in pain	Awinjo lit
I feel cold	Awinjo koyo
I feel hot	Awinjo liet
I have a headache	Wiya bara
I have a stomachache	Iya kaya/ Iya rama
I feel sick	Awinjo ka atuo
I am fatigued	Aol
I am vomiting	Ang'ok
I am not eating (no appetite)	Ok achiem
I have diarrhea	Adiewo
My nose is running	Uma chwer
I'm injured	Ahinyora
I got burnt	Awang'
To get admit/hospitalize (a patient)	Rwako e wod
Eat/eating something	Chiem/Chamo
Drink/drink something	Madhi/Madho
Ich	Pregnancy
Nyuol	To give birth

Locations

School	Skul
Home	Dala
Chemist/pharmacy	Duka yath
Church	Kanisa
Market	Chiro
Home	Dala
Store	Duka
Garden	Puodho

Other common phrases

Yes	Eh (Nod up and down)
No	Ah-ah (Shake head side to side)
Now	Sa-a ni
Later	Saa moro
No worries	Ong'e wach

Cold	Ma ng'ich
Hot	Ma liet
Food	Chiemo
Phone number	Namba simu
Today	kawuono
Tonight	otieno ma kawuono
Tomorrow	kiny
During the night	gotieno
During the day	odiechieng'
There is..	Nitie...

Counting numbers

1	achiel
2	ariyo
3	adek
4	ang'wen
5	abich
6	auchiel
7	abiriyo
8	aboro
9	ochiko
10	apar
11	apar gachiel
12	apar gariyo
13	apar gadek
19	apar ga ochiko
20	piero ariyo
21	piero ariyo gachiel
22	piero ariyo gariyo
30	piero adek
40	piero ang'weny
50	piero abich
60	piero auchiel
70	piero abirio
80	piero aboro
90	piero ochiko
100	Mia achiel
200	Mia ariyo