

1. Description

- 1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Bwisi (Democratic Republic of Congo), Babwisi (Uganda); Language is Talinga in Democratic Republic of Congo and Bwisi in Uganda; Niger-Congo Bantu language family
- 1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): 639-3: tlj
- 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): In Uganda: 0.45 degrees N, 30 degrees E; Democratic Republic of Congo: Between latitudes 6 degrees north and 14 degrees south, longitudes 12 degrees and 32 degrees E; located on the Equator – 2/3rds of country in South and 1/3 in north; Regions spoken in Uganda: Border shared with Democratic Republic of Congo, Bwamba County, Bundibugyo District, Fort Portal near Kilembe; Regions spoken in Democratic Republic of Congo: North Kivu Province, Benni Territory, Butalinga County, border shared with Uganda
- 1.4 Brief history: Bwisi of Democratic Republic of Congo: Formerly part of Tooro Kingdom, won independence in the 1960s and became a separate district called Bundibugyo
- 1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:
- 1.6 Ecology (natural environment): Uganda: Heavy forest and plains; Democratic Republic of Congo: Tropical forest and jungle, including the Congo Rainforest; high precipitation
- 1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: Uganda: 68,500 speakers of Bwisi; Democratic Republic of Congo: 30,000 speakers of Talinga

2. Economy

- 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): In Democratic Republic of Congo: rice, sweet potatoes, cassava (root vegetable); In Uganda: sweet potatoes and root vegetables, bananas, plantains and rice
- 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: In Uganda: fish, beans; In Democratic Republic of Congo: chicken, fish; In Uganda: goat, chicken, beef and fish
- 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: N/A
- 2.4 Food storage: N/A
- 2.5 Sexual division of production: N/A
- 2.6 Land tenure: N/A
- 2.7 Ceramics: N/A
- 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: N/A
- 2.9 Food taboos: N/A
- 2.10 Canoes/watercraft? N/A

3. Anthropometry

- 3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): N/A
- 3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): N/A

4. Life History, mating, marriage

- 4.1 Age at menarche (f): In Uganda: no specific age gathered, but expected in early teen and pre-teen years; females regularly have children at age 15
- 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): In Uganda: early teens, ~15 years
- 4.3 Completed family size (m and f): In Uganda: Babwisi tribe has a high percentage of women with more than 15 children
- 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): In Uganda: every 2 years, starting around age 15 and continuing into the 40s
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): In Uganda: early marriage for females– ages 13, 14, 15; in the age group 20-24 years, only a quarter of Ugandan females were listed as never married, compared to 60 percent of males who have never married; there is no specific data for just the Babwisi; between ages of 15-19, 30 percent of females were married
- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: In Uganda: 5.8% of Ugandan marriages end in divorce, but no data specifically for Babwisi
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: In Uganda: Nine percent of men 30-34 years old were listed as in polygamous marriages, compared to 10 percent of women of the same age group (data for Uganda and not specifically Bwisi)
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: In Uganda: Couples regularly elope and buy a chicken together to establish themselves as a couple, though the family has to formally accept the marriage; during wedding ceremony, groom's family provides bride's family with gifts of mineral oil, fertile goat
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns: N/A
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: N/A
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: In Uganda: marriage and relations between homosexuals is strictly prohibited
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): In Democratic Republic of Congo: instances of marriage within neighboring communities and language groups, not necessarily isolated to other Bwisi
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows"): In Uganda girls are expected to bare children in marriage around early teens and should continue producing children until no longer capable physically
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?: N/A
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: In Uganda: instances of rape high for Ugandan women, but no specific data for Babwisi
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): n/a

- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?: In Uganda: inside marriage, yes, but much expectation is placed on bearing more children; contraception is used sporadically and some women believe it will cause deformities in offspring
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: n/a
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? N/A
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: N/A
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): In Uganda: fathers usually older than mothers
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?: N/A
- 4.24 Joking relationships?: N/A
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: N/A
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: N/A
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?: In Uganda, the event is elaborate, important; bride and groom appoint a “spokesperson” and the families of the bride and groom get seated across from each other; goats are presented to the bride’s family from the groom’s family, and the bride’s family accepts or rejects the gift based on whether or not they think the animal is fertile (as evidenced by its physical health); if it is deemed to be too small, the groom’s family provides money for feeding the goat to make it grow more healthy and fertile; in addition to the animal, the bride’s family demands mineral oil; there is also a portion of the wedding where the two families discuss any conflicts between them and try to reach compromise or offer forgiveness for transgressions so that they can go forward in peace after the two families are joined in marriage;
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? N/A
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?): N/A for Uganda, but in Democratic Republic of Congo it is not unusual to marry within neighboring communities
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?: In Uganda: couples are free to elope, but it is important for families to agree on the union together
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: N/A

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: N/A
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Rebel activity in Uganda responsible for deaths from warfare; in Democratic Republic of Congo, conflict between neighboring communities over access to farmland and natural resources
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Uganda: Conflict between rebel armies and government soldiers; Democratic Republic of Congo: Conflict between ethnic and socio-economic communities due to disputes over access to resources (farmland and natural resources)
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): In Democratic Republic of Congo, there is a coexistence between linguistic groups within communities in proximity to each other; these communities are divided by family bounds and can migrate from place to place, having an effect on linguistic development and mixing dialects; language barriers aside, there still remain conflicts over increasingly rare farm land and access to natural resources
- 4.18 Cannibalism? Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo: No

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: N/A
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): N/A
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Democratic Republic of Congo: Uganda: Clan system, led by a male chief
- 5.4 Post marital residence: N/A
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): N/A
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): N/A
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: N/A
- 5.8 Village and house organization: N/A
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses): N/A
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Uganda: Sleep in huts
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: Uganda: Divided into hundreds of clans led by male chief; Democratic Republic of Congo: Live in communities of families
- 5.12 Trade: N/A
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? N/A

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

- 6.0 Time allocation to RCR: N/A
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): Uganda: 10% of Babwisi are animists; in terms of medicine, there is a “neutral diviner” who is charged with finding the cause of an ailment by deciphering dreams, determining if a person is experiencing a spirit possession, by communicating with the dead or through astrology; a shaman is charged with lifting the curse causing that ailment; under animist belief, ailments can potentially be cured by counter-curse or sacrifice made to ancestors
- 6.2 Stimulants: Ugandan animists: stimulants can produce the hallucinations necessary for communicating with the dead and to tap into trance states that help shamans/diviners determine ailments and courses of treatments; hallucinogens produce visions

- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): In Uganda: After death, it is tradition for the family of the deceased to sleep outside of the former home of the dead relative for four days while on the ground
- 6.4 Other rituals: Under animist belief, communicating with spirits may reveal suggestions for choosing a wedding day, entering into business partnerships, choosing where to live and build a home
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): N/A
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): In Uganda, animist Babwisi hold that drumming can produce a trance state; the Muleddu is a popular dance around a fire with movements portraying farming activities
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: N/A
- 6.8 Missionary effect: Uganda: Vast majority (75%) of Babwisi in Uganda are Christian because of efforts of missionaries; according to Ethnologue, some parts of the Bible have been translated into the Bwisi language for use in Christianization efforts
- 6.9 RCR revival: N/A
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: Uganda: animists believe that spirits live on after earthly death, can become malevolent or benevolent; bad spirits can be exorcised and good spirits are to be appeased for protection/favor; In Uganda: burials are one of the more important ceremonies; they are events for the entire community; in remembering the deceased at the funeral ceremony, emphasis is placed on the person's lineage, their offspring and their property
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? N/A
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy? N/A
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): Uganda: Christian 75% (Church of Uganda and Catholicism, Anglican), Muslim < 10% Animist 10%, < 10 % other traditional religions; animists believe in power of curses, astrology, communicating with the dead, existence of spirits and the possibility of spirit possession; totems: certain plants (specifics unknown) utilized for hallucinogenic purposes

7. Adornment

- 7.1 Body paint: N/A
- 7.2 Piercings: N/A
- 7.3 Haircut: N/A
- 7.4 Scarification: N/A
- 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): n/a
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: N/A
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment: N/A
- 7.8 Missionary effect: Uganda: 75% of Babwisi are Christian, parts of Bible have been translated into Bwisi language
- 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: N/A

8. Kinship systems

- 8.1 Sibling classification system: N/A
- 8.2 Sororate, levirate: N/A
- 8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): N/A

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

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