

# Pedagogical Value of Indigenous Knowledge for Food Security: Learning from Women Sages in East Africa

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Humphrey Ojwang & Doris Gwako Arodi



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**Wednesday, April 14, 8 to 9:10 p.m.**



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Women in East Africa are engaged in environmental activities daily. Women play key roles in food security, safety, sustainability, and sovereignty. With his background in linguistics and education, and due to the influences of H. Odera Oruka's sage philosophy project as well as Okot p'Bitek's studies in African culture, Humphrey Ojwang, Ph.D., conducted life story interviews with 36 women who were engaged in farming, preparing, and trading in foods. They shared with him their knowledge regarding indigenous crops, and seed banks in which they served as the custodians. He shares the stories of Nyatiti, a woman who taught herself the lyre, traditionally a male musical instrument in the Luo community. She shared songs about fishing, churning milk, pounding grain, winnowing, as well as men's songs about hunting and herding livestock. He also shares the story of Mama OTC, a tireless agricultural trader. Those of us interested in community gardening will no doubt find much of interest in the practical philosophies of these East African women.

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