ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3

This form is to be used in conjunction with a “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code” form

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Name of Primary Requester: LABOKA BASIL MODI ABURI

E-mail address: labokabm2002 at gmail dot com

Names, affiliations and email addresses of additional supporters of this request:

1. Prof. Scopas J. Dima, Kuku Community Trust, dimascopas at gmail dot com
2. Mr. Korsuk Charles, Kuku Community Trust, charleskorsuk at gmail dot com
3. Dr. Anthony Sokiri Wani, Kuku Community Trust, aswkenyi at gmail dot com
4. Dr. Lopita Micah Inyaga, Kuku Community Trust, lopmicah at yahoo dot com
5. Mr. Kenyi Richard Duku, Kuku Community Trust, rduku2002 at yahoo dot co dot uk
6. Zamba Michael Duku, Kuku Community Trust, zduku at yahoo dot com
7. Mr. Taban Evans, Kuku Community Trust, evanstabana at yahoo dot com
8. Mr. Luwaya Sokiri Anthony, Kuku Community Trust, asokiri at gmail dot com
9. Mrs. Joyce Juan Akidas, Kuku Community Trust, purujoyce dot hotmail dot com
10. Mr. Dini Champlain, Kuku Community Trust, dinichamplain at yahoo dot com
11. Mr. Nyonda Robert, Kuku Community Trust, nyondaro at yahoo dot com
12. Mr. Lubang Champlain, Kuku Community Trust, barakastationary2018 at gmail dot com
13. Mr. Babu Reagan Bungu, Kuku Community Trust, Reaganbabbu11 at gmail dot com
14. Mr. Musisi Alex Jansuk, Kuku Community Trust, alexmusisi168 at gmail dot com
15. Dr. Chris Kenyi, Special Affiliate, ckenyi250 at gmail dot com
16. Mr. Kaya Robert, Kuku Community Trust, kayarobert123 at gmail dot com
17. Rev. Lubajo Stephen, Kuku Community Trust, labajostephen123 dot gmail dot com
18. Mr. Sula Joseph Tadayo, Kuku Community Trust, jtadayo at yahoo dot co dot uk
19. Mr. Luwi Dick, Kuku Community Trust, luwidika at yahoo dot .com
20. Mr. Jekat Chris, Kuku Community, cjekat at yahoo dot com, Kuku Community Trust
21. Mr. Sai Suka Lo-juan, Special Affiliate, sai.suka.lojuan at gmail dot com
1. NAMES and IDENTIFICATION
   a) Preferred name of language for code element denotation:
      KUKU
   b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
      KUKU
   c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
      KUKU/KUKUU/KUUKU'
   d) Reason for preferred name:
      Kuku is the original name referring to the language of the Kuku tribe. The Kuku is the tribe. Kuku is the language spoken by the Kuku people of Uganda and South Sudan. The Kuku cradle in South Sudan and its peripheries in Uganda Districts along the bundary is also fondly referred to as Kuku.
   e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
      The approximate Kuku population is: In Uganda the Kuku population was approximately 46,479 according to Uganda Housing and Population Census, 2014. In South Sudan the Kuku population was 196,373, according to South Sudan Population Census, 2008. The total population of the Kuku in both countries was then estimated at 242,857. The population figure could now however be higher and it keeps increasing.
   f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: KKU or KUK

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifiers is not intended to be an abbreviation for a name of the language, but to serve as a device to identify a given language uniquely. With thousands of languages, many sets of which have similar names, it is not possible to provide identifiers that resemble a language name in every case.

2. TEMPORAL DESCRIPTION and LOCATION
   a) Is this a
      ☒ Living language
      □ Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival)
      □ Recently extinct language
      □ Historical language
      □ Ancient language
      □ Artificially constructed language
      □ Macrolanguage

(Select one. See explanations of these types at http://www.sil.org/iso639%2D3/types.asp)
For individual languages, also complete:

b) Countries where used:
   Uganda and South Sudan

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
   1) GPS for Bari in Central Equatoria State in South Sudan.
      
      i) In Juba County by Bari: Longi. 4.8594#N, Lati. 31.5713#E

      ii) In Terekeka County by the Mundari: Longi. 5.6189#N. Lati. 31.4456#E. Tali: Longi. 5.53N; Lati. 30.46E

      iii) In Lainya County by the Pōjulu: Longi. 4.2551#N; Lati. 31.0048#E

      iv) In Rokon by the Nyangawra: Longi. 5.07#N; Lati. 30.55#E

   2) GPS for Kakwa of Yei in South Sudan and Kobokao District in Uganda.

      i) In Yei County by the Kakwa of South Sudan: Longi: 4.0953#; Lati. 30.6775#E

      ii) In Koboko District by the Kakwa of Uganda: Longi. 3.4167#N. Lati. 31.800#E

   3) GPS for the Kuku of Kajokeji County in South Sudan and of Uganda in Yumbe. Moyo, Oboŋgi, Adjumani and Kayunga Districts.

      i) In Kajokeji by the Kuku: Longi. 3.9613#N; Lat. 31.5370#E

      ii) In Yumbe by the Kuku: Longi. 3.4667#N; Lati. 31.144880#E

      iii) In Moyo by the Kuku: Longi. 3.652738#N; Lati. 31.738095#E

      iv) In Oboŋgi by the Kuku: Longi. 3.3779#N; Lati. 31.7909#E

      v) In Adjumani by the Kuku: Longi. 3.36#N; Lati. 31.81#E

      vi) In Kayunga District in Central Uganda by the Kuku: Longi.0.986038#N; Lati. 32.85357#E
Summary.

1) Bari for the Bari, Nyangwara, Mundari and Pøjulu in South Sudan

2) Kakwa for the Kakwa of Uganda, Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan

3) Kuku for the Kuku of Uganda and South Sudan

d) For an ancient or historical language, give approximate time frame; for a recently extinct language, give the approximate date of the last known user’s death

3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

a) This language is: □ Signed □ Spoken □ Attested only in writings

b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:
   Kuku is of Nilo Saharan, Eastern Sudanic, Eastern Nilotes family (Greenbergs Report: 1955).
   It was classified as of Bari family and initially as a dialect of Bari.

c) Closest language linguistically. For a Macrolanguage, list the individual languages (adopted and/or proposed) to be included in its group. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:
   Kuku is formerly grouped and classified as closely related to Kakwa and Bari.

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:

i. Kuku has no orthography, literacy and written Literature yet bur the orthography is about to be completed.

a) Kuku has had no orthography, no literacy and no written literature. This is because Kuku is supposed to have been operating as a dialect of Bari whose orthography and system of writing was developed in the Rajef Language Conference of 1928. But Bari orthography and system of writings is different from Kuku. Kuku orthography and system of writing has finally been developed to suit Kuku speech and its writing system. The attachment and linking of Kuku to Bari as as a dialect has negatively affected the development of Kuku orthography and its literacy.
b) Bari, which has the orthography where Kuku is a dialect has no grammar and is not taught at any level of formal school education since it development in 1928. Bari also has no literacy, written materials and no literature. It is only the translated Bari Bible which is read for spreading of the scriptures and the word of God by the collective groups of the so called Bari-speaking communities. Bari is only read in the Bari translated Bari Bible but it is not written in order to produce Bari literacy. There are no written materials, since the disappearance of the Bari Prima after Sudan’s independence in 1956 and General Aboud’s military coup d’état in the Sudan in 1958. If there are any written materials these must be sub-standard, unreadable and not taught in schools because they are ungrammatical and there is lack of interest since there is no Bari grammar and Bari is not taught in formal teaching and learning setting.

c) The Bari Bible is now only read by a small percentage of Kuku clergy and old committed Christians who have learnt it informally through practice and experience. The high level clergy are trained in English and not in Bari but are expected to preach in Kuku. Bari is a static language. This is why as a dialect of Bari; Kuku has suffered all the negative consequences. Kuku has no literacy to be able to develop written materials and literature. The Ugandan Kuku is greatly affected by the lack of Kuku orthography, which has been depending on Kuku orality. But when a language is centred on orality, with no orthography and literacy, this language is bound to disappear very fast. Fortunately Kuku has not disappeared yet though all the signs for its disappearance are visible. This is one of the very many reasons for Kuku to request for its own ISO because research has shown that Kuku is a language of its own and is not a dialect of Bari. There has been no effort and there will be no any to develop Bari because most of the communities which are related to speaking Bari in South Sudan except the Kuku of Kajokeji are heavily influenced by colloquial (Juba Arabic) and classical Arabic.

d) During the Arab rule of southern Sudan and the long period of civil wars in Southern Sudan and South Sudan, there was massive influence and assimilation of the indigenous languages by Arabic. The central position of the Bari-speaking communities in southern Sudan then was populated with many Arab merchants, soldiers and police where Arabic was spoken and taught in schools but not indigenous languages. The influence is now very vivid in the population, in Government offices, the armed forces, churches, academia and schools, markets and in social gatherings, such as marriage ceremonies, funerals, and social occasions, attire and the entire socio-cultural, economic and political life of South Sudanese. The influence is so massive that Bari may not stand its assimilation into colloquial and classical Arabic which is still being taught in all levels of education in South Sudan. The Kuku of Uganda fortunately is not part of the influence but quietly suffer because the language they are assumed to be part of which is being swallowed up by Arabic. This is the reason that warrants the Ugandan Kuku and Kuku of Kajokeji in South Sudan to demand its own ISO since the Kuku of South Sudan are not different from being influence by Arabic. But the Kuku of Kajok-köji whose majority is in refugee in Uganda should be considered as part of this demand for ISO by the Ugandan Kuku. In any case the Kuku of Kajok-köji have lived as refugees for a long time in Uganda. The Kajok-köji Kuku are more related to Uganda in socio-linguistic, socio-economic and all other aspects of life than to South Sudan.

e) On the availability Kuku inscriptions and manuscripts, there are definitely available but not in written and print form because of lack of Kuku orthography. The Kuku are not able to print their written works in Bari because it would not come out exactly in written Kuku since Kuku orthography and system of writing has not been developed. But now that Kuku orthography and system of writing is available and the granting of Kuku its ISO, there will soon be flood of written materials and literature because Kuku literacy is available and Kuku is taught in schools.
ii. Kuku teachers and artistts.

a) There are many teachers in Uganda and even in South Sudan who are trained to teach other disciplines but not Kuku or in Kuku. These teachers can easily adjust to teach Kuku and teaching in Kuku the moment Kuku orthography is officially launched and teaching materials are developed and are available.

b) There are quite a number of Kuku artists both in Uganda and South Sudan who have recorded both secular and gospel music in Kuku. The leading Kuku artist is Emanuel Losu’ who has composed and recorded both gospel and secular music. The artists composed and sing in Kuku, with messages inscribed in Kuku. The music recordings are played over radio programmes, in churches, social occasions, social media and various types of celebrations such as marriages ceremonies. The programmes are aired live through radio, church services, Christian crusades, political rallies, social places, marriage ceremonies and other forms of traditional celebrations.

iii. Radio Broadcasts.

The Kuku of Ugandan and the Kuku refugees in Uganda have radio programme in Kuku on Spirit Radio, FM 96.6 (Yupet). The programme is called “Yupet” (Faith). This is only a religious programme for preaching the scriptures and the word of God in Kuku. It is aired twice a week. On Saturdays it starts from 6:00-7:00 PM. On Sundays is from 8:00-9:00 PM. It is the only programme where the preaching in Kuku is perfected but not the reading of the Bari Bible. Plans are however, underway by the Kuku Community Trust, the body that oversees the Kuku of Uganda, to request the Government of Uganda to allocate a programme for Kuku in the National Uganda Broadcasting Corporation. If funds are available, secular programmes can be started in other FM Radios.

In South Sudan, and specifically in Kajokeji, there were three FM radios stations. But these are out of operations at the moment because of the ongoing civil war, in South Sudan. The Kuku in Kajokeji have fled into Uganda for refugee. All the Kuku in Uganda now depend on Spirit FM which occasional broadcasts its christian programmes from Kampala to all the Kuku in Uganda including the Kuku refugees.

b) Is this language officially recognized by any level of government? Is it used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction (for other subjects)? Is it taught in schools?:

i. The official recognition of the Kuku tribe and language.

The Kuku and the language are officially recognized by the Government of the Republic of Uganda at all levels; from parish, county, traditional authorities, district and national. The Kuku tribe is number forty eight (48) in the list of the indigenous tribes of Uganda in the third schedule of Article 10(a) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995. The Government policy requires that local languages are taught from Nursery to Primary three in all schools in the country. The Government of Uganda has been urging the Kuku
community to fast-track the development and completion of Kuku orthography and system of writing through the National Curriculum Development Centre. The completion of Kuku orthography and system of writing will enable the Uganda National Curriculum Development Centre help to prepare Kuku curriculum, syllabi, teaching and learning materials for teaching of Kuku. The process is ongoing and it is coming to its completion.

ii. Use of Kuku in formal education

Kuku is not used for formal education for the reasons stated above. It has no orthography and system of writing yet. But Kuku is used informally in orality, teaching of Kuku etiquettes at homes and singing in pre-schools and Kuku churches by the Kuku children but without written materials. This is extended to primary one in Kuku community schools. The preparation is to lay foundation for Kuku curriculum, syllabi, teaching and learning materials when Kuku becomes a written domain in schools.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:

i. Kuku ethnolinguistic identity.

Kuku ethnolinguistic identity is based on orality because Kuku has not been written yet. There is no Kuku literacy and body of literature because Kuku orthography has not been developed yet. Kuku is ethnolinguistically spoken by the Kuku tribe in Uganda and South Sudan. Kuku is recognized in Kuku speech, orality, composition and singing of traditional songs for traditional dances which make the Kuku different. These are applied during marriage ceremonies, merry-making occasions and in church services for praise and worship of God. The Kuku tribe in Uganda is number forty eight (48) in the third schedule Article 910) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995. There is however, socio-political contradiction with the Bari element. The confusion and contradiction is that the Kuku are regarded as Bari because they speak Bari. In Uganda and even in South Sudan, this is a socio-political blunder because there is no Bari tribe in Uganda. The Kuku of South Sudan does not even accept to be referred to as Bari. The Kuku, both in Uganda and South Sudan are not Bari and they do not speak Bari but Kuku. Bari is a tribe in South Sudan. The Bari tribe, speak Bari. Bari tribe is very far from the Uganda-South Sudan boundary. The contradiction has put the Kuku of Uganda into uncomfortable and awkward socio-political difficulty. The contradiction is effectively interpreted to mean that there is no Kuku tribe in Uganda but there is Bari. This has subjected the Kuku of Uganda into ridicule, discrimination and marginalization since they are referred to as Bari and are therefore not citizens of Uganda. It is a socio-political stigma for the Kuku of Uganda. The assumption and contradiction is a socio-political blunder which should be corrected with no more further delay.

ii. Kuku informal domains of use.

a) Kuku informal domains in use are varied. The informal domains are all centred on orality since Kuku is only spoken and not written. There are no written plays or drama in Kuku. But there is a lot of unwritten oral literature amongst the Kuku. It is the informal oral transmission of Kuku folklores, traditional beliefs and practices which are still maintained. The rich Kuku oral stories have not been written down...
because they are transmitted by the word of mouth from one generation to the next. Many of these folktales have disappeared because they are not recorded in written or audio or videos. Many Kuku elders who knew the oral stories very well have died.

b) The Kuku informal domains of use are only oral because Kuku is only spoken and not written. Kuku orality is based on social-linguistic speech in conversations and discussions. The socio-linguistic domains are at home settings, in trading centres, shops, markets, hospital and clinics. The others domain use include meetings, discussions, arguments, religious crusades and political campaigns. Preaching the scriptures and the word of God in churches, conventions and public crusades are effective domains for passing messages of the scriptures and the word of God, and imparting knowledge and converting believers into the Christian faith. Some aspects of domains are composition and singing of traditional, secular and gospel songs and pop music by Kuku artists. Jokes or comedies (wontokonyon) are domains use for leisure, release of inner tension but are important domains for public entertainment. Informal instructions for baptism and confirmation classes in churches are domains carried out orally. Sensitization and enlightenment are informal domains used for creating awareness in education, health, agriculture and socio-economic developments and for spreading Government policies and programmes. The informal domains use equips the Kuku with knowledge to improve their health and livelihoods. Idioms, proverbs, wise sayings and wit are spread orally and are important domains in Kuku society.
You do not need to repeat sources previously identified in the form, “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code”

a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:
   Reading Bari Bible and its liturgies.
   i) Reading the Bari Bible presents a challenge. Firstly, the sentences are too long to sustain breath, comprehension and understanding of the texts. Long sentences are strenuous not only to read but also to comprehend and understand the contents and the subject matter. Besides, they make the reader strain and lose breath in the process of reading of the text. ii) Secondly, many of the words and expressions used contain more than one meaning. For instance, the word kiden is a female name. It is equally written the same as kiiden which is an adverb which is being in the middle. Another example in Bari Bible is the word kata. Kata in Kuku has five different meanings as in katta (a kind of an arrow) kata (present), kaata (inside), kattaa (bad-hearted) and ka'ata (sweet potatoes). The use of many such words with different compels the reader of Bari Bible, whether silently or aloud to contextualize the meaning all the time and involves strenuous guessing of the meaning intended. In most cases the contextual guessing is wrong. Writing for all purposes and intents is supposed to be clear and free from ambiguity of application and use of words, expressions and meaning. This is not the case in the Bari Bible and its liturgies. The consequence is that it makes people reluctant and not interested in reading the Bari Bible and its liturgies especially of a language which is not taught. iii) Another challenge is the lexical use. Many words and expressions used in the Bari Bible equally present a challenge to Kuku reader and listener to the reading of the Bari Bible. The lexical usage, for instance, the word paleleŋ (sweet) in the Bari Bible in Kuku is to'biibin. Other lexical differences in the Bari Bible are: ‘dok’/boŋ, tiiga, liiŋ, kotuumolu, moołu, bukan, gboğboo; in Kuku. But in Bari Bible the same words are: köti, te’ya, ‘bukuluŋ, ko’bure, mo bukön and rigwa. The lexical differences, which are many, inhibit comprehension and understanding of the scriptures and the word of God to the Kuku.
   iv) A close look at the Bari Bible, one gets the impression that, it could have been written without grammatical rules. This could be true because Bari lacks grammar. The one developed in 1908, which is not seen to date, was only developed but not simplified for teaching purpose and for use in Bari literacy. The lack of grammatical use in the Bari Bible inhibits the flow, consistence, comprehension and understanding of the scriptures and the word of God. There are many such lexical differences which make Kuku incomparable and incompatible with Bari.

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:
   Attending Sunday services in the Kuku and thBari churches. i) The selected Kuku churches are in Busaana and Gangagama in Kayunga District of Uganda. The Kuku churches in Wibigaalo and in Nsambye in Kampala. The Kuku Church at Guseene in Juba, South Sudan was the main centre for the research and Bari Church in Juba Parish in South Sudan. The Sunday services attended in Kuku churches are more or less the same. The Kuku churches, funeral services and socio-religious ceremonies attended were in Juba, South Sudan. This was the part of the research when gathering information to compile Kuku orthography and system of writing. The Guseene church experience and knowledge represent all the Kuku churches, conduct of wedding ceremonies and funeral service where reading of the Bari Bible is involved. However, in Juba, Arabic heavily influences and interferences in the Kuku church services, conduct of weddings, funeral prayers and other social occasions. For any Kuku visitor to Juba from Uganda and Kajoji attending such services and occasions he can neither follow. ii) When attending Sunday services in
Kuku Church in Guseene in Juba, South Sudan in 2015/2016, the experience was enriching. The church was full to capacity but a few people carried Bari Bibles along with them. There were a few with English and Arabic Bibles, especially the youth most of whom were either from Uganda or Khartoum had various versions of the Holy Bibles. The attendants were all of Kuku identity. The majority appeared to be of advanced age and adults. Many of the old were of Revival Movement (Balaakole). Revival Movement started in Rwanda in 1930s and spread across East Africa in 1930s and 1940s. Revival Movement or Balaakole is a group of saved people who publically denounce their sins and get converted into Christianity. It spread to Uganda and to Kajoijeji to 1940s and to Yei and Juba in 1950s in the Sudan by combined powerful group of Kuku, Kakwa, Baganda and Acholi Revivalists. It was this group that kept the church alive and almost burning in the word. The singing of the hymns, praise and worship was hilarious and everybody appeared to be deadly involved. The prayers were long but the congregation appeared not to be bothered. iii) When it comes to the reading of the texts from the Bari Bible, there was near disasters. It was punctured with murmurs of correction especially from those with Bari Bibles and even those without seemed to get involved in the murmured corrections. The course is that the reading is not fluent because of mispronounced words which are supposed to fit into Kuku or otherwise. The readers of the texts jerk, fumble and stumble over words and expressions. This comes about as the readers try to contextualizing and guessing the actual meaning of the words and expressions in the process of reading. This is because the words and expressions jerked, fumbled and stumbled over are not written matched to Kuku speech and writing. The sentences are too long to sustain the breath of the reader. This experience happens in Kuku church services, weddings, funeral service and any occasion that demands the reading of the Bari Bible, both in Uganda and South Sudan. This draws the conclusion that writing should be match to the language speech of people for easy reading, comprehension and understanding. iv) When it comes to the preaching in Kuku, there is a big contrast to the reading. It is fluent, flows, interesting and sustains the message. The reason is that the reading in Bari is not Kuku. But the preaching is effective because it is preached by a Kuku and in fluent Kuku. It is important to point out that, the Kuku clergy are trained in English and not in Bari. Yet, they are expected to read the Bari Bible which does not match their speech and writing. The influence of Arabic and its use in Kuku Church services and other social occasions in Juba impacts negatively and affects the comprehension and understanding of the Kuku visitors from Kajoijeji and Uganda. v) Attending service in Bari church at the Bari Parish was the worst experience. The singing of hymns, prayers, reading and preaching were totally unrelated to Kuku mannerism, in the conduct of church service, contents and speech. A Kuku from rural Kajoijeji and Uganda would keep guessing but not able to comprehend and understand the reading of the texts and preaching as well. iv) Non-Kuku preachers in Kuku Churches, though he or she is one of the so called Bari-speaking groups, presents a challenge. The preacher would seem to preach, communicate and jokes to himself when preaching to Kuku congregation. The Kuku congregation follows him with difficulty. The seven tribes which are assumed to use Bari as lingua franca, each is not fluent and comprehensively understands the other. The points being preached is guessing. The Kuku for all practical purposes and intents should not continue to suffer under Bari because their differences are damn obvious and its continued link to Bari as a dialect will lead to its extinction.

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):
Speech and accent. i) It is noted that all the tribes which speak their languages as dialects of Bari have each speech variations suited to their speech communities. There is no going
into details of how each speech community varies from each other. But what is known is that Bari, Kuku, Kakwa Pöjulu, Nyangwara and Mundari speech communities are different from each other. Kuku speech and its tonality emanate from the advance tongue root (ATR) and the vocal cords. This explains the use of the apostrophe symbol in Kuku to indicate the glottal stops in the sound inventory at the Advanced Tongue Root and the vocal cord.

Kakwa is no longer a dialect of Bari. The knowledge got and the experience of personal interaction in communication with people of Bari-speaking dialects are different from Kuku speech altogether. It is strenuous for a Kuku to follow, comprehend and understand a Bari and any of the speech languages of the Bari because of the differences in language speeches which are not the same. The speech speed of these languages is too fast for a Kuku speaker. The Arabic influence and interference contribute negatively to any comprehension and understanding. It is worst for a Ugandan Kuku and those directly from Kajokeji to comprehend and understand the Bari-speaking communities because of the many dialectical differences and Arabic influence. ii) The differences in Kuku speech, lexical and intelligibility do not deserve Kuku to be a dialect of Bari. The enforcement of co-existence of Kuku as a dialect of Bari prohibits and erodes the development, growth and expansion of Kuku. The end result is that Kuku will disappear though Bari will be the first to disappear because of its heavy influence and erosion by Arabic. The Kuku of Uganda, in the absence of Kuku literacy will shift and get assimilated into Lugbara, Ma’di, Acholi, Lunyoro, Luganda Lunyoro and Lusoga. Thus, the efforts to retain and improve the threatened languages in the world, where Kuku is one of them will go to wast. The seven languages will not survive the Arabic influence if and when they are retaines as Bari. Bari cannot be developed because the so called Bari-speaking community do not have a common language-speech and and it is not been taught becaue it lacks common orthography. The language of the Bari Bible cannot be considered as the language of Bari-speaking communities. The truth is that Kuku can stand as a language that can develop the Kuku to be able to generate Kuku literacy and literature. As Ugandan Kuku, we do not want to be swallowed up by other languages, when we are capable to have our orthograpgraphy shared in common with the Kuku of South Sudan. The biggest population of Kuku in South Sudan is in any case currently and for many years have been in Uganda.

Knowledge from published sources:

Please return this form to:
ISO 639-3 Registrar
SIL International, Office of Language Information Systems
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, Texas 75236 USA
Email: iso639-3@sil.org
An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

Further information:
If your request for a new language code element is supported by the Registration Authority as a formal proposal, you may be contacted separately by researchers working with the Ethnologue or with LinguistList asking you to provide additional information.

Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers: