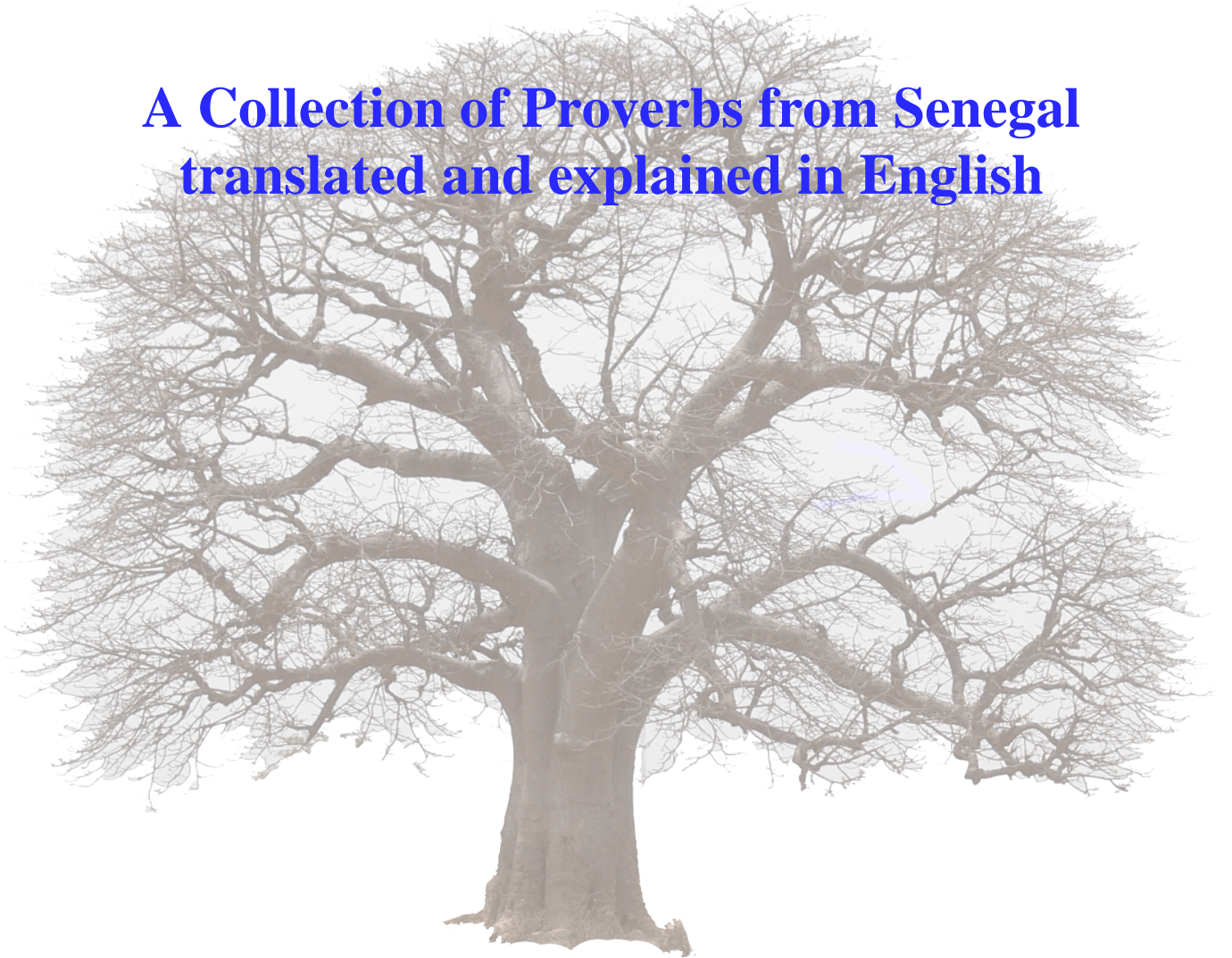


Wisdom of the Wolof Sages

**A Collection of Proverbs from Senegal
translated and explained in English**



Dr. Richard Shawyer

First Edition

© 2009

Foreword

The Wolof love proverbs. The wisdom of generations of Wolof sages is recorded in thousands of proverbs and sayings. And the Wolof sages can teach us much in this day and age, especially in an area which has become a weakness of Western societies - community and relationships. We would save ourselves a lot of pain and shame if we listened to the wisdom of the Wolof.

This first edition was quickly organised into topics, and it can be improved. I invite you, the reader, to suggest improvements to the classification system - better titles, or perhaps combining several similar topics together, or including particular proverbs under different topics.

For those who speak Wolof, proverbs are an excellent tool – both for teaching and for resolving problems in relationships. As oral communicators the average Wolof person can remember a message contained in a proverb and take it home with him, when he could never remember the main points of a lesson. A Wolof person will listen to the advice contained in a proverb when he would never listen to the same things said to him directly.

This work is hardly original. Rather it is a compilation of the collections found in the bibliography at the end of the book. I am particularly grateful to Maam Daoud Wade who translated about 100 of the proverbs in this collection. Thanks also to those who helped with proofreading and offered suggestions for improvement including John Bardsley, Galen Currah, Graham Keen, and Jeanette Lee.

I hope to enlarge the number of proverbs in future editions, as well as incorporate your suggestions for improvement.

For each proverb, the main proverb and any alternative versions are in *Times New Roman italics*, a literal translation follows in *Arial font*, followed by explanatory notes. Where possible approximately equivalent English proverbs are supplied in *blue text*. Scattered throughout the book are quotes from the Holy Scriptures in the *Lucinda Calligraphy font*.

All biblical verses are taken from the New International Version © 1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society, used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

Richard Shawyer (dit Musaa Sarr)
August 2009

shawyer.richard@gmail.com

Action

1. **“Maa mën” : defal ñu gis. (2)**
“I can do it”; (then) do it so we can see.
“Actions speak louder than words.”
2. **Àkk àkkum gaynde, song songum bukki. (6)**
Charge with the spirit of a lion but attack like a hyena.
Enthusiasm before action, composure at the moment of action.
3. **Def ca ba ngay man. (12)**
Do it while you can.
“Strike while the iron’s hot.”
“Opportunity knocks but once.”
“Seize the day.”
“Time and tide wait for no man.”
4. **Fa ñuy tëgge ab xàndoor, deesu fa ñaani njël ; fa ñu koy bey lañu koy ñaane. (11,12)**
Where they make hilaires (an African tool for removing weeds from a field) they do not pray for dawn; it is those who are weeding who pray for it.
It is in the place where a good idea is put into practice that its value becomes visible, not in the place where the idea was spoken.
5. **Jabar, doonte ne yeena jéllooy sàkket, ab xer damm. (2,3)**
(In the matter of a) wife, even if you only have a wall of reeds between you, a post can break.
Even if a marriage seems easy to organise, the future bridegroom will always have to do more and spend more than he anticipates.
Tanor owns a large garage and his business is going well. One day, one of his cousins is promoted to head of an important public service. Tanor expects that his cousin will give him the contract to maintain the service vehicles. Some time later he learns that the contract has been given to another mechanic. Tanor makes known his resentment to one of his friends who says to him that he had been too confident and that he should have gone to see his cousin right after his promotion, and quotes this proverb.
6. **Maa la men deesu ko wax, dees koy jëf. (11,12)**
“I am better than you” is not something which is said; it is shown by action.
“Actions speak louder than words.”
It is not words which count but action.
7. **Nit la mu jëf la du la mu wax. (15)**
A man is measured by what he does, not what he says.
“Actions speak louder than words.”
8. **Soo jiwul, doo góob. (20)**
If you do not sow, you will not reap.
“Nothing ventured, nothing gained.”
“The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.” (Proverbs 13:4 NIV)

9. **Wax yomb na, wànte def yombul. (13,20)**

Talk is easy, but doing is not.

“Actions speak louder than words.”

“It is easier said than done.”

10. **Jëm ci làmb di bàkku, jóge cay bàkkoo ko gën. (11,12)**

Dem sa làmb ja di bàkku jóge fa di bàkkoo ko gën. (7,14)

It is better to boast coming from the wrestling match, than to boast on the way to the match.

“Actions speak louder than words.”

Glory comes from the results of action, not from talk.

“The king of Israel answered, “Tell him: ‘One who puts on his armour should not boast like one who takes it off.’” (1 Kings 20:11 NIV)

11. **Pëndub tànk a gën pënduw taat. (2,6,8)**

Tànk yu pënd a gën taat yu pënd. (14)

Dust on the feet is better than dust on the behind (from sitting).

Action is better than sitting doing nothing.

Advice

12. **Boroom làmmiñ du réer. (20)**

Someone with a tongue will not get lost.

One should always ask when one doesn't know.

“Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.” (Proverbs 19:20 NIV)

13. **Tere, tere, mu të, bàyyil mu gis. (2,6,7,14,15)**

Prohibit, prohibit, he refuses to listen, leave him to see.

If someone refuses to listen to advice, leave him to discover the consequences himself.

“Blessed is the man who always fears the LORD, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble.” (Proverbs 28:14 NIV)

14. **Ku la ne “sangul”, sab taar la bëgg. (2,8,19)**

Ku la ne “sangul”, sab taar a tax. (11,12)

Whoever tells you to go and bathe wants you to be beautiful.

The person who gives you good advice is your friend and has your best interests at heart, even if it is hard to hear.

“Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.” (Proverbs 27:6 NIV)

15. **Déggal ndigal i ñett, bàyyil ndigal i ñett. (1)**

Follow the advice of three people, and ignore the advice of three (others).

A saying of Kotche BARMA. When he said this he was advising people to follow the advice of one's father, one's mother and one's eldest son, and to resist the advice of one's wife, one's slave and one's griot. The first three are motivated by the interests of the man, whereas the latter are motivated by self interest and are only interested in his belongings.

Anger

16. *Bul mere li ci kaas bi, mereel ki ko xelli. (18)*

Don't get angry with what is in the cup. Rather get angry with the person who poured it.

It is good to distinguish between an annoying situation and the author of that situation, between the cause and the effects of a situation.

During a meeting in the office of a bank, the president reacts violently against his collaborators because of a situation brought about by the non payment of debts. The secretary, wanting to indicate to him that he should call the bad debtors rather than the employees, cites this proverb.

17. *Mer, noonub boroom la. (19)*

Anger is the enemy of his owner.

Anger makes you do things that you regret later.

18. *Mere màndiŋ, mèn a waaxoo ko gën. (17,18)*

Mere màndiŋ, dox bu gaaw a ko gën. (4)

There is no point in raving against the desert; better to lengthen your stride.

“If you gently touch a nettle it will sting you for your pains. Grasp it like a man of mettle, it as soft as silk remains.”

“Don't curse the darkness, light a candle!”

It is better to face up to the situation one is in than to be slowed up by the event itself.

There are certain things that lie beyond our control. It is better to find an intelligent solution to each situation.

See also Proverb 67.

Appearances

19. *Bul xeeb nit ndax tuutaayam. (18)*

Do not scorn someone because of his small size.

“Don't judge a book by its cover.”

“Appearances can be deceptive.”

“All that glitters is not gold.”

“Handsome is as handsome does.”

We should not scorn someone who does not seem to be much in our eyes because of his small size or limited means.

20. *Bu sol mànto doon maye daraja, kon géleem du tëdd biti. (9)*

If merely wearing a coat gave dignity and presence, then a camel would not sleep outside.

A camel is sometimes covered with fine drapes which give it a grand appearance, but of course does not change the fact that it is a camel.

This proverb is used for someone who carries on in an ostentatious manner to draw attention to himself with the sole intention of impressing people willing to be taken in by his game.

21. **Bëñ weex na, waaye deret a ko lal. (2,7,12,19)**

Bëñ bu weex tàll, te deret ju ñuul kukk lal ko. (9)

Bëñ de na ree, wandey deret anga ca suufam. (4)

Bëñ weex na, nde deret a ko ronu. (13)

Teeth are white but they lie on a bed of blood.

“Appearances can be deceptive.”

Beauty is only skin deep. Behind smiles there are sometimes hidden thoughts.

Beauty

22. **Bu la taar bi taxa bew, ndax laago du wees. (2,3,5)**

Don't let your beauty cause you to become conceited and self-satisfied because you can always be struck by infirmity.

“Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.” (Proverbs 31:30 NIV)

23. **Taar tigi ci jikko lay ne. (7)**

True beauty is found in one's character.

“Beauty is as beauty does.”

24. **Taarub kanam taarub xol a ko gën. (14)**

A beautiful heart is better than a beautiful face.

“Beauty is as beauty does.”

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.” (1 Peter 3:3-4 NIV)

25. **Rafet kanam, rafet jikkoo ko gën. (9)**

Jikko gën a taar. (20)

It is better to have a beautiful character than a beautiful face.

Good manners are better than beauty.

“Beauty is as beauty does.”

“Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.” (Proverbs 31:30 NIV)

Behaviour

26. **Boo xejjatee ci péey ba fa jee ja. (19)**

If you are allowed to be at ease in the king's village, don't mess with his wives.

You should behave properly wherever you are given hospitality and freedom of action.

“When you sit to dine with a ruler, note well what is before you, and put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony. Do not crave his delicacies, for that food is deceptive.” (Proverbs 23:1-2)

Belongings

27. *Deñcin wu ñaaw moo gën jiiñ sab xarit. (18)*

It is better to guard your belongings in security, however badly, than to accuse your friend of theft.

If you do not guard your things well you risk having them stolen, and you will be suspicious of all the friends who have passed by at the time of the theft. Thus you risk damaging your friendships as well as losing your belongings.

“If a malicious witness takes the stand to accuse a man of a crime, the two men involved in the dispute must stand in the presence of the LORD before the priests and the judges who are in office at the time. The judges must make a thorough investigation, and if the witness proves to be a liar, giving false testimony against his brother, then do to him as he intended to do to his brother. You must purge the evil from among you.” (Deuteronomy 19:16-19 NIV)

Benefit

28. *Kuy wékk njoowaan, dangaa yaakaara féexlu. (2,19)*

Whoever puts up a hammock / swing expects to relax.

When you invest your time and money in something you expect to gain some benefit in the end.

“The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops.” (2 Timothy 2:6 NIV)

29. *Kuy xalam di ca jaayu. (2,6,7,19,20)*

Kuy xalam di ca jaayu (barke ba yaa ko moom). (2)

Kuy xalam di ci jaayu barke ba yaay boroom. (14)

The one who plays the guitar should be the first to enjoy it.

When one does something it is normal to profit from it. It is acceptable to be the first to harvest the fruit of one's efforts.

“The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops.” (2 Timothy 2:6 NIV)

Boasting

30. *Saabu du fóot boppam. (2,3,5,7,8,13,18,20)*

31. *Saatu du wat boppam. (2,4,8,11,12,13,19)*

30. Soap does not wash itself.

31. A razor does not shave itself.

“Self-praise is no recommendation.”

One does not praise oneself. It is for others to make those judgements.

“Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips.” (Proverbs 27:2 NIV)

Cause and Effect

32. *Boo gisee lëf lëf a tax, boo gisee yàpp, rab a dee. (15)*

If you see something, something else was the cause. If you see meat, then an animal has died.

This proverb talks about cause and effect. Nothing comes about by chance. There is a reason for everything. Every action has its consequences, whether good or bad.

Character

33. *Baax ak bon, loo ca man a nëbb dafa wóorul. (1,6,15)*

If you can hide your goodness or your meanness, the reality is that the goodness or meanness is not real.

It is impossible to hide true goodness or meanness that is natural to a person. It will always eventually reveal itself.

“The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them.” (1 Timothy 5:24 NIV)

34. *Lu la réer ci juddu feeñ ci jikko. (2,6,15)*

Lu réer cib juddu, feeñ ci jikko. (7,19)

Lu nëbb ci juddu, feeñ ci jikko. (8)

What is unknown to you about a person's origins will be revealed in his character. One's habitual behaviour reveals one's hidden origins. The Wolof have a strong belief that one's character is determined by one's ancestry. A nobleman will always act nobly. If they find an exception then they will trace his ancestry expecting to find some contamination somewhere in his family line - a descendant who married below his status such as a slave or member of a caste. For any individual about whose origins one knows nothing, it is sufficient to observe his character for a time to know his origins.

35. *Mbër mu nëbbu bu yàggee feeñ. (20)*

A wrestler who hides his skills will eventually be discovered.

One's character always reveals itself in the end.

“The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out.” (Proverbs 10:9 NIV)

36. *Toxal dëkk a gën a yomb toxal jikko. (9)*

It is easier to move a village than change a character.

“A leopard cannot change his spots.”

“Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.” (Jeremiah 13:23 NIV)

37. *Ñaaw jikko, rafet jikkoo ko gën. (13)*

Rafet jikko moo gën jikko ju bon. (4)

A good character is better than a bad one.

38. *Sori Sañaxóor taxul ron doon ngeer. (3)*

Sori Sañaxóor taxul ron a doon geer. (2)

Ron, sori sañaxóor du ko tax a yem ak geer. (19)

Ron, sori sañaxóor du ko tee di ron. (12)

Even far from Sagnakhor, a ron palm does not become a “ngeer” (*Guiera senegalensis*)

An elderly woman is filled with worry concerning her son who has left to look for work in the city. She is afraid he will fall in with the wrong crowd and leave the straight path. A neighbour who has just returned from visiting him in the city reassures her. Her son has found an honest job and still has good manners. In order to calm her he quotes this proverb.

[Sagnakhor is the name of the great plain of Cayor, famous for its ron palms. The *Guiera senegalensis* is a bushy shrub which reaches a height of one to three metres.]

39. *Jikko dana soppiku jaan walbatiku màtt boroom ba. (2,3,5,6)*

Character transforms into a serpent and bites its master.

The character of a person can be harmful to himself.

A certain woman is particularly demanding and quarrelsome. After a certain time her husband sends her back to her parents. Her father, who knows her well, tells her this proverb.

40. *Xam nit, xam jikkoom a ko gën. (2)*

Xam sa waay, xam jikkoom a ko gën. (19)

It is better to know a person's character than to simply know him.

Choice

41. *Wat a gën wef. (4,6)*

It is better to shave your hair than pluck hairs out.

"You're between the devil and the deep blue sea."

"You're between a rock and a hard place."

"Better lose the saddle than the horse."

You should choose the lesser of two evils.

Co-operation

42. *Benn loxo du tàccu. (2,3,5,6,7,20)*

One hand cannot clap.

People who share a common interest need to work together to achieve a common goal.

43. *Janax yu bari duñu gas menn pax. (18)*

Many mice do not dig the same hole.

"Too many cooks spoil the broth."

It is not practical for several to do the work that only requires one person. When we do not have the same interests, then the results of calling others to help where we could have done it on our own risk being mediocre. This is often used by the facilitator of a meeting to prove that working in smaller groups is more efficient than working in large groups.

44. *Lu kenn mën, ñaar a ko ko dàq. (2,6)*

What one person can do, two can do better.

"Many hands make light work."

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NIV)

45. *Sanqaleñ yu bari men nañoo watat janax ju dee. (18)*

Many ants can drag a dead mouse.

"Many hands make light work."

"Little strokes fell great oaks."

"There is strength in numbers."

"United we stand!"

"Strength through unity."

46. **Wat gaal, ak yëgoo. (7,9,15,16,19)**

Come to an agreement to work together before dragging the boat (up the beach).

Ideas and actions must harmonize together in order to accomplish something.

Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? (Amos 3:3 NIV)

47. **Mbooloo mooy doole. (11,12,20)**

Mbooloo indi doole. (2)

There is power in a group.

“Union is strength.”

“There is strength in unity.”

48. **Bu fukk dee gas, fukk di suul, pënd ay bari waaye pax du fa am. (2,6,9,15,16,18,19,20)**

Bu ñaar di gas, fukk di suul, pënd ay bari, waaye pax du am. (7)

If ten men are digging, and ten men are filling in the hole, there will be plenty of dust but no hole.

When many people are working and many people are destroying it, nothing is going to be done. To achieve anything of importance everyone needs to co-operate and work in the same direction. This proverb is often invoked in organisations to encourage people to work together on the same goals.

49. **Menn picc mënula yàq ndiiraan. (2,3,5,6)**

Menn picc, bu beddiku, yàqul ndiiraan. (9)

Menn picc mënula yàq am ndaje. (14)

Menn picc yàqul um ndaje. (19)

A single bird cannot disperse a flock.

In a village, all the youth decide to rent their services to landowners who were lacking workers. They put all they earn into a shared fund in order to organise a large party once the harvest is over.

At first all went well, but one day Abdou could not agree with his buddies. The field that they had to cultivate was very large and they should have asked for more payment. The others said it was too late and that they could not renegotiate the price. Abdou persists and declares that under those conditions he can no longer participate in the collective work. Someone quotes this proverb to him.

50. **Yenukati xëddéen dañuy yëgoo bala ñoo jóg. (2)**

Yenukati xëddéen, dañuy waxtaan bala ñoo jóg. (19)

Yenukati xëddéen dañuy waxtaan bala ñoo yenu. (6)

Yenuy xëddéen, ak yégóo. (9)

Yenukatu xëddéen dañuy yëgoo. (14)

The carriers of ron palms should be in agreement before they start work.

It is important to be in agreement concerning the conditions of a matter before beginning.

Community

51. **Yàlla du la jox njëgu saaku ceeb, jox la doole joo ko yenu. (2,15)**

God does not ever give at the same time, the price of a bag of rice, and the strength necessary to carry it away yourself.

God gives to some what others lack, so that we will always be in need of others.

Companions

52. *Béy, bu àndul ak béy ya, ànd ak cere ja. (2,3,6,9,19)*

If a goat is not with the other goats then it is with the couscous.

“Bad companions ruin good morals.”

A person must choose his companions carefully. He should stay with his relatives and not go off on his own or with bad company for if you have problems which are beyond you then you have no way of solving them.

Omar is a boy from a good family and a good student at high school. His best friend, Laiti quit school and lives by his wits. Omar’s father is worried about the bad influence which Laiti could have on his son and advises him not to frequent his friend, citing this proverb. A person should stay with his friends. Going alone only leads to danger and problems.

53. *Ginaar du am faru siiru. (2,3)*

A chicken does not have a wildcat for a fiancé.

Mansor found a good way to earn a living through contraband. One of his friends is a customs officer. They see each other often, but the customs officer does not know anything about the activities of Mansor. One day Mansor’s elder brother tells him to be careful of his friend because “a chicken doesn't have a wildcat for a fiance”.

54. *Ku boot bukki, xaj baw la. (2,4,6,7,8,9,13,14,15,19)*

Whoever carries an hyena on his back, the dogs will bark at you.

If you associate with bad people, others will despise you.

55. a. *Ñax gu wow dina lakk gu tooy. (2,11,12,16)*

b. *Ñax mu wow dina lakk gu tooy, waaye it mu tooy dina wallu bu wow. (9)*

a. Dry grass will burn wet grass.

b. Dry grass will burn wet grass but wet grass will save dry grass.

“One rotten apple spoils the whole barrel.”

A bad person can bring harm to himself, and at the same time harm innocent people around him. One says this when someone has a bad companion, to indicate the dangers of the bad influence; or to a person wanting something but whose character is unknown and who belongs to a group who do not repay debts.

Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” (1Co 16:33 NIV)

56. *Àndandoo sag maas, diir koo yemal mbagg. (2,3)*

Àndandook say maas, diirook koo yemal i mbagg. (19)

Go with those of your own generation, choosing those who are equal with yourself.

If you try and keep up with those who are better and stronger than you, you only create problems for yourself, as they will take you past your limits. It is better to surround yourself with those on the same level as you are.

57. *Béy wu ne, am nag déem. (3,19)*

Béy wu ne am nag déem, (te yaay samag déem.) (2)

Bëy wu ne am na ag déem. (6)

Every goat has its jujube (red date) plant.

Everyone is privileged somewhere. Everyone has someone with whom he finds favour for comfort, advice, help etc.

Massila has a reputation of living comfortably but not of being generous. One day at a celebration a griot sings his praises and those of his ancestors. When the griot has finished, Massila gives him a large note. The griot shows the note to everyone and proclaims he has found favour with Massila, citing this proverb.

58. Nit ku bon jikko mat na moytu. (13)

A person of bad character is worth avoiding.

“Better be alone than in bad company.”

59. Ku am xaritu golo sa ngemb du tag. (2,3,6,18)

Kuy xaritook golo, bu sa ngemb tagee, mu àjjil la ko. (19)

The person who has a monkey for a friend will not find his loincloth caught in a tree.

The person who has a friend or protector with power has nothing to fear in their company. This proverb was used by Laurent to explain to his son that his fellow student who received his baccalaureate the same year as he, and now had received a scholarship to study overseas was the nephew of the rector of the university. Same meaning as Proverb 59.

60. Ku am kuddu, du lakk. (2,3,5,6,8,9,19)

Kenn du am kuddu di lakk. (13)

Ku am kuddu du lakk, walla bu lakkee, di cuune. (7)

He who has a spoon does not burn himself.

You can avoid doing things yourself if you have someone to do it for you. The person who has a friend or protector with power has nothing to fear in their company.

A village is particularly affected by a drought. The majority of the village only eat once a day, and a poor meal at that. From Madhior's the smell of fish and rice emanates. His neighbours are surprised by such abundance. One of them tells the others that one of the sons of Madhoir has just arrived in the village bringing him a sack of rice and some dried fish, and that he is very lucky to have sons who provide for him. And he cites this proverb.

Competence

61. Gumba du jüite yoon. (5,9,15,16)

Gumba du jüiteew yoon. (2,3)

Gumba du jüiteew yoon. (18,19)

Gumba du jüite aw yoon. (6)

A blind person does not lead anyone along the path.

Someone who is not competent should not be the leader. This proverb is often used just before elections to draw attention to those who seek to be elected but do not have the required capacity.

He also told them this parable: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?” (Luke 6:39 NIV)

62. Ku mënul, bawoo : lu yàqu yaw a. (2,12,15)

Ku mënul, bawul, lu yàqu yaw a. (7)

The person who is not competent but does not renounce his place, is responsible for any deterioration which occurs.

63. Ku mën te defoo lu yàqu yaw a. (2,7)

Ku mën lu bare te du ca def dara mooy ki yàq. (20)

The person who is capable of doing much but does nothing is responsible for failure.

64. Mën ko, defoo ko, tëlee ko gën. (2,3,5)

It is better to be incapable of doing something, than to be capable and not do it.

65. *Ku mënul dara, du def dara. (4)*

He who can do nothing, does nothing.

Complaints

66. *Fekkee waral jàmbat. (14,18)*

Being present at an event gives one the right to complain or comment about it.

67. *Toog di jàmbat te defoo dara du maye dara. (7)*

To sit and complain without doing anything will not achieve anything,
“Don't curse the darkness, light a candle!”

See also Proverb 18.

Confidence

68. *Fii, kekk la, golo du fi raweeb xaj. (2,3,6)*

Here the ground is hard, a monkey cannot escape a dog.

At an animal market, a Peul wants to sell a sheep at any price to Abdou. He speaks highly of the qualities of the sheep and goes so far as to propose easy payments. Ngalandou, Abdou's companion, whispers to him to let it drop, as he is suspicious that the relentlessness of the Peul is hiding something. Abdou responds with this proverb as his way of saying that he is sure that he is not being had.

[raweeb = rawe ab]

Conflict

69. *Gannaaw ay, jàmm. (2,3,6,7,8)*

After a conflict comes peace.

70. *Ay du yem ci boppub boroom. (2,7,9,12,14)*

Ay du yem ci boppu boroomam. (11,15)

Musiba du yem ci boppu boroom. (20)

A conflict is not confined to the one from whom it originates.

71. *Bëre reenu ñàmbi la, kenn xamul fa muy damme. (12)*

Bëre, reenu ñàmbi la ; fa nga ko foogewul lay damme. (6)

A wrestling match is like a cassava root which breaks where you do not expect.

It is better to solve a problem between people through informal means at the source rather than through official means as you never know how the court/king will decide the matter.

“I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favour to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all.” (Ecclesiastes 9:11 NIV)

72. *Kuuy dawul ; dafa wuti doole. (20)*

Xar dawul ; dafa wuti doole. (2)

Mbër dawul, dafa wuti doole. (7)

If a ram backs up, it is not to flee but in order to charge with greater force.

In a dispute, the fact that one of the combatants is no longer visible doesn't necessarily mean he has given up the fight. It could simply be that he is off finding the means to more effectively attack.

Conformity

73. *Fu ñépp di say, ku sayul, yaa dof. (15)*

In the place where everyone is having convulsive fits, the person who remains calm is a fool.

“When in Rome, do as the Romans do.”

74. *Soo demee dëkk fekk ñépp di fecce benn tànk defal na ñoom. (20)*

If you go to a village where everyone dances on one leg, you should do the same.

“When in Rome do as the Romans do.”

75. *Ku ñépp tēfli, nga tooy. (6,14,15,19)*

If everyone spits on you, you will be wet.

If everyone accuses someone then that person is guilty.

One should not speak or act against the opinions of others. An excess of ostentation is to be avoided. If many people make the same bad comments about someone then it will ruin that person's reputation.

Conscience

76. *Ku sam xel yeddul, nit ñi yedd la. (2,15)*

The person who is not rebuked by his conscience will be rebuked by others.

If you do not listen to your conscience, you will end up doing things better not done, and others will rebuke you instead of your conscience, to your shame.

77. *Màggatum guddi, ku ko gisul mu gis boppam. (2)*

Magum lëndëm ku ko gisul it mu gis boppam. (19)

Magum lëndëm, ku ko dajatul, mu daj boppam. (7)

The adult who only acts in the dark, even if others do not see him, can see himself.

A person who is doing something dubious, even if it is unknown to others, should be rebuked by his conscience.

Consequences

“As I have observed, those who plough evil and those who sow trouble reap it.”

(Job 4:8 NIV)

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.”

(Galatians 6:7 NIV)

78. *Neenug neen, du rey bukki. (6,13)*

Nothing of nothing does not kill an hyena.

An hyena does not die for no reason whatsoever.

79. *Nit ku nekk ab tool la, lu ca waay ji, moom la cay góobé. (12)*

Everyone is like a field – whatever one sows in it is what one will reap.

“One reaps what one sows.”

80. *Puubi njugub ci boppam la rot. (13).*

The dung of a bat falls on its own head.

“One reaps what one sows.”

81. ***Ku bey sa bannex, góob saw naqar. (2,3,6)***

Ku topp sa bannex, góob sa naqar. (5)

Whoever sows pleasure will reap misery.

“One reaps what one sows.”

82. ***Lu waay góob, gar ko. (15,16,19)***

Lu ca waay góobe, gar.

The grain that a man harvests, he grinds.

“One reaps what one sows.”

83. ***Lu waay def, boppam. (2,6,15,19,20)***

Lu waay def, mu tees ci boppam. (13)

Everything that an individual does, himself.

“One reaps what one sows.”

Everything that you do, whether for good or for bad, you do to yourself. Your deeds, good or bad will come back to you.

84. ***Lu waay rendi, ci say loxo lay nàcc. (2,14,19,20)***

Lu waay rendi mu nàcc ci loxoom. (15,16,20)

Lu waay rendi, ciy loxoom lay nàcc. (7)

Lu waay rendi, ca suba, ba ngoon ci yoxoom lay nàcc. (9)

Whatever you slaughter, bleeds in your hands.

“One reaps what one sows.”

85. ***Ku sóobu tooy. (20)***

Bu sóoboo dex tooy xépp.

86. ***Géej, ku ko xuus, tooy. (4,8,13)***

Ku xuus, tooy. (19)

85. He who dives in the water will get soaked

86. He who crosses the sea will get wet.

“One reaps what one sows.”

87. ***Loo ji ngay saxle. (19)***

What you sow is what you will cause to grow.

“One reaps what one sows.”

88. ***Ku sumb tooy. (18,19)***

She who does the washing will get wet.

Any venture requires sacrifices to bring about success. One must be willing to pay the price.

89. ***Tilim dina dem fu saabu mënula dem. (2,3,6,15,20)***

Dirt will get where soap cannot reach.

There is damage which cannot be repaired. One can be accused, denigrated, and have one's reputation sullied in such a way that nothing can restore your reputation.

Malobe is an untrustworthy mason. He has a habit of asking for an advance, then disappearing without completing the work. His family have had to intervene on a number of occasions to compensate his victims in order to avoid legal problems. One day he swindles a man who is less conciliatory than the others. He refuses to accept any settlement and makes a complaint to the police. One of Malobe's previous victims hears about it and he says this proverb.

90. *Luy daw am na fu mu jëm. (10)*

Whatever runs is going somewhere.

Everything in motion is heading somewhere. This could be a literal object or figuratively a given action which will have a consequence.

91. *Ku jaaxaan di saw, balaa kenn a tooy nga lóor. (2,3,5,6)*

92. *Ku jaaxaan di colal, ci sa kaw lay dellusi. (2)*

Kuy jaaxaan di saw, ci sa kaw lay dellusi. (9)

91. Anyone who urinates while lying on his back will get wet before anyone else.

92. Anyone who urinates while lying on his back will find it falls back on himself.

Someone who does not listen to advice or an interdiction will be the first to suffer the consequences.

Contribution

93. *Ñaq du feeñ cib taw. (2,3,5,20)*

Sweat is not visible in the rain.

A village organises a collection for the restoration of the local mosque. One of the leading citizens offers 5 tons of cement and 50,000 cfa cash. Another person brings his modest contribution and quotes this proverb.

Control

94. *Ku la abal i tànk, nga dem fa ko neex. (2,3,6)*

95. a. *Ku la abal i gët, nga xool fa ko neex. (12,19)*

b. *Ku la abal i gët fa ko neex ngay xool mbaa mu nangu ko. (2)*

c. *Ku la may bët, nga xool fu ko neex. (7)*

96. *Kuy ñuy diri, doo taamu fu ñu lay jaarale. (2,3,6)*

94. If someone loans you feet, you will go wherever he wishes.

95. a. If someone lends you eyes, you will look wherever he wishes.

b. If someone loans you eyes, you will look at wherever he wishes, or else he will take them back.

96. The person who is being dragged does not choose where he is made to go.

“He who pays the piper calls the tune.”

The person who pays for something should control how it is spent or used.

Abdul Azis and Alassane are reading, commenting on an article in the local paper. The Dakar subsidiary of a large multinational company had laid off one third of its personnel. Abdul Azi asks himself whether this could have been prevented, and Alassane quotes the proverb.

Conversation

97. *Lu cin xat xat, xorom ba xaj ca. (2,3,5,6)*

98. *Waxtaan, ñam la, ku ko teewe ca nga. (2,3,6)*

97. No matter how confined a cooking pot is, there is always room for salt.

98. Conversation is like a meal; anyone present participates.

Anyone present during a conversation has a right to participate in that conversation.

Omar is visiting his friend Sakhir. The family of Sakhir are discussing a matter concerning someone, and they ask Omar for his opinion. Omar politely responds that he is not part of the family and therefore does not want to get involved. They then quote this proverb to him.

Courage

99. *Ku bëgg akara, ñeme kaani. (2,3,5,6,7,14)*

Ku bëgg akara, dangay ñeme kaani.

100. *Ku bëgg lem, ñeme yamb. (2,4,5,6,19)*

Ku bëgg lem, war a ñeme yamb.

Ku bëgg lem, dangay ñeme yamb.

101. *Ku ñeme yamb, lekk lem. (2,3,13,20)*

99. Whoever wants (to eat) a bean fritter must brave the hot chili sauce.

100. Whoever wants honey must brave the bees.

101. Whoever braves the bees can eat the honey.

There are often unpleasant or undesirable steps which must be faced with courage and determination before one can achieve one's goals.

[akara is a kind of fritter made with pounded beans and eaten by dipping into a hot chili sauce.]

Cowardice

102. *Woññ bëñu gaynde, day fekk mu dee. (18)*

It is not possible to count the teeth of a lion unless it is dead.

There are certain people that others do not risk attacking except behind their back or if they have come into a very weak position. It is an act of cowardice.

During a reunion the treasurer of an organisation made serious allegations concerning the president who was absent. The secretary rebukes him for his lack of courage and loyalty using this proverb.

Credibility

103. *Caga du digleb séy. (2)*

A prostitute does not give advice on marriage.

Someone who is not an participant in something cannot give advice in that area.

Curiosity

104. *Deñ-kumpa baaxul. (20)*

It is not good to be curious.

“Curiosity killed the cat.”

Day of Rest

105. *Njàng mu ne am na àllarba. (2,20)*

Every course has a Wednesday.

Every week has one day of rest, no matter what your work.

Death

106. *Dee du jaas. (2,7,6)*

Death is inescapable.

107. *Kenn du gàlli dee. (6,13)*

No one can avoid death.

No one is exempt from death.

108. ***Deru sëllu wëgg na ndeyam ci teen. (9)***

Deru sëllu wëgg na ndeyam. (2)

The skin of a calf watered its mother at the well.

If you think that it is only the elderly who die you deceive yourself. Parents can bury their children, and a calf can be born and die and its skin turned into a well bucket which brings water to its mother.

109. ***Nelaw tax naa gëm dee. (6)***

Gëm naa dee ndax i nelaw. (2)

It is because of sleep that one believes in death.

Sleep gives us an idea of what death is like and leads us to accept its reality.

110. ***Nit ku nekk a ngoo xasaw néew. (1,13)***

Nit ku nekk, xasaw na néew. (13)

Every person has the smell of a corpse.

Every person is mortal.

111. ***Ku sag nàkk jeex, nga aj say koog. (6,11,12,15,19)***

Ku sag nàkk jeex, nga wékk say koog. (2)

When you have finished cooking your rice cake you should hang up your calabash spoon.

When one has used up all one's advantages one should retire.

According to Sylla this proverb also talks about our future deaths. One should prepare for death through a detachment to material things, mastery of one's desires and good works.

Debt

112. ***Àtte bor ak fey. (12)***

Àtteb bor, fay. (19)

The judgement of an unpaid debt is reimbursement.

113. ***Bor du am rakk. (2)***

A debt does not have a little brother.

If you have not paid your existing debt you cannot expect to borrow more.

114. ***Nit ku wóor te doon gor du bari bor. (20)***

A man who is sure and honest will not have many debts.

Deception

115. ***Bu la ngelaw mayee mbaam, ngelaw a la koy xañ. (15)***

What is brought to a donkey by a gust of wind will be taken away by another gust of wind.

A person should avoid giving the illusory impression of having achieved a result which might evaporate with the slightest change, leaving him ashamed. It is better to be happy with what one has achieved by one's own efforts while waiting for better.

116. ***Ku yewwu ren dañu la naxoon daaw. (9)***

Ñi yewwu ren la ñu naxoon daaw. (19)

The person who is enlightened this year was deceived last year.

“Once bitten, twice shy.”

117. *Naxe, ku ca am mbubb, am ca tubéy, mbaxana të la ca. (2,15)*

Kuy nax may mbubb, tubëy ja të la. (19)

You may manage to get the mbubboo by deception, and even the pants and fail to get the hat.

“You can fool all the people some of the time, and you can fool some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time.”

You cannot continually deceive people without it becoming plain one day. It is not possible to get everything you want by deceiving others.

Decisions

118. *Falleen bët, folli nopp. (2,15)*

119. *Kilifa day folliy noppam fal ay gëtam. (9)*

118. Elect the eyes and dethrone the ears.

119. A ruler should dethrone his ears and elect his eyes.

We should believe what we see ourselves not what we hear. A ruler should get his facts right before taking a decision based on what he sees rather than on what he has heard.

Dependence

120. *Ku ëmb sa sanqal, ëmb sa kersa. (2,6,7,11,12,14,15,19)*

Ku yëy sa sanqal ëmb sa kersa. (14)

He who keeps the millet flour that feeds you in a sack, keeps in the same sack your dignity.

“Don't bite the hand that feeds you.”

He who lives off you, or in dependence on you, must also defer to you. Dependence is debasing. When a person is dependent on someone, he must show them respect.

121. *Lafañ, boroomi mbaam lay faral. (6,15,16)*

Làggeek boroomi mbaam ay far. (19)

Lafañ, boroomi mbaam lay àndal. (2)

A paralytic always takes the side of the man with the donkeys.

Advantage is the cement of a union. One always sides with a person on whom one is dependent, even to the point of lying to avoid telling a truth which might not please him.

Deprivation

122. *Xale bu tàmmul tumuranke du xam àddina. (15)*

The child who is not accustomed to deprivation will not attain the maturity of spirit to live a normal life.

“It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young.” (*Lamentations 3:27 NIV*)

Desires

123. *Bu bëgg-bëgg doonoon jëmm, dina bëmëx boroomam ci kàmb. (11,12)*

If desire had a body it would knock its possessor into a ditch.

There are those that once they desire something they lose all reason.

124. *Bëgg a dem taxul a dem, mën a dem ay tax a dem. (2,5,6,8)*

The desire to go alone does not result in leaving; it is the ability to go which does. One cannot leave every time one wishes to.

125. *Bëgg-bëgg yee wuute, moo tax njaay may jar ca ja ba. (2,3)*

Tastes are different and for that reason all that one sells in the market will find a buyer.

“One man's meat is another man's poison.”

“There's no accounting for taste.”

Moustapha is surprised that Moses has married Nafi whom everyone finds unpleasant, without grace and not very bright. He mentions it to Abdul who responds with this proverb.

126. *Gaynde bëggul mbuum, yàpp lay dunde. (2,3,5,6)*

The lion does not like a sauce of leaves; he lives on meat.

It is also used to refer to someone with a high social rank who lowers himself to frequent those below his rank.

Aissa learns from her friends that her husband intends taking Binta as a third wife. They are all of the opinion that Binta is not attractive or well brought up; in a word unworthy of him. Aissa who is the first wife and knows her husband's tastes says it is not true, quoting this proverb.

127. *Xel du namm fu mu xamul. (11,12)*

The mind does not miss the place it does not know.

“Ignorance is bliss.”

“What the eye does not see, the heart does not grieve over.”

A person does not crave that which he does not know.

Destiny

128. *Béjjénu nag jégeñe na lool, waaye bu ñu laalee du sagos boroom. (6,15)*

The horns of a cow are very close but if they touch it is not because of the will of the cow.

If it only depended on us, certain things would never happen; but sometimes we find ourselves in the situation where a major force imposes on us a disaster which we never sought.

129. *Nit ku nekk, juddoom a ko mag. (20)*

For every human being there is a superior birth.

Every person is born with something higher than himself, ie. a destiny in life. David Maranz explains that this proverb means that there is more to a birth or to a person than the physical facts. That is, that crucially important, inherited, spiritual factors greatly affect and even determine all that an infant will become in life.

130. *Ku Yàlla sànni fitt, doo ko mëna fegu. (6)*

Ku Yàlla sànni fett doo ko mana fàkk. (4)

Ku Yàlla sànni fitt doo ko mana fàkku. (13)

Fittu Yàlla mënesu ko moytu. (13)

The person at whom God shoots an arrow cannot deflect it.

One cannot deflect an arrow which comes from God. There is nothing one can do to oppose one's destiny.

Destroy

131. *Yàq a gëna yomb defar. (2)*

It is easier to destroy than to build.

Difficulties

132. *Alxamdulilaay ju àndul ak coono, amul. (19)*
“Praise God” which is not accompanied by trouble does not exist.
133. *Coonooy njalbéenug njariñ. (15)*
Difficulties are the beginning of success.
134. *Jaaxle, jaaxaan faju ko. (19)*
Lying on your back will not solve your problems.
135. *Mënuñu am dara tey sonnuñu ca. (4)*
“No pain, no gain.”
There is nothing worth having that is not accompanied by difficulties.
136. *Bés du ñàkk day sore. (20)*
Bés du ñàkk. (7)
Days of want are far.
Days of want might be far off but they always arrive.

Dignity

137. *Juddu bu rafet ndey ak baay, waaye faayda boroom. (2,12,17)*
Juddu bu rafet ndey ak baay, faayda boroom. (15,16,20)
Juddu bu rëy, ndey ak baay, faayda, boroom. (19)
Juddu bu rëy ndey ak baay, waaye faayda boroomam. (11)
Juddu bu rafet : ndey ak doom, faayda : boroom (7)
A good ancestry comes from your mother and father, but you yourself are responsible for your dignity.
Ancestry may give an individual a theoretically high place but the all important qualities of dignity and esteem depend on the individual imposing himself or herself on others.
Meekness is not of value. One cannot count on the reputation he has from his birth.

Discernment

138. *Ceddo magul pël da kaa jëkka juddu rekk. (9)*
An animist is not older than a Peul, he was only born first.
Used when one sees through the scheme that someone is bringing.

Discretion

139. *Ku dee ca ja ba, yaa tàgge sa bopp. (2,7,3,5,9,15,19,20)*
Ku dee cib marse yaa tàgge sa bopp. (12)
He who dies at the market does his own death announcement.
“Don't wash your dirty linen in public.”
When you commit a blatant offence in public, you yourself are responsible for spreading your own shame.

Disputes

140. ***Ku la xeexe daw. (19)***

The person who uses you to fight will run away (to joke with a friend).
You are of no use to anyone.

141. ***Coow la ca teen ba, ña amul baag a ko waral. (2,3,6,20)***

Xuloo ba ca teen ba ña amul baag a. (20)

Coow la ca teen ba gaaya amul baag a. (12)

An argument at the edge of the well will be caused by those who do not have a well bucket.

A fight breaks out between two students in the schoolyard. A teacher separates them and asks them what the fight was about. It turns out that Assane had borrowed the pen of Salif and then lost it. Assane often comes to school without a pen or notebook and takes those of others. When the teacher returns to the staff room and talks about the incident he quotes this proverb.

Downfall

142. ***Njalbéenug toroxte dey neex. (2,15)***

A downfall starts with things that are pleasant.

“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.” (Proverbs 6:10-11 NIV)

Dress

143. ***Lekkal lu la neex, waaye solal lu neex nit ña. (2,15)***

Eat whatever you like but wear clothes that please others.
One should always behave in a way that is pleasing to society.

Ease

144. ***Bu for yombee, sëgg jafe. (2,8,15)***

When picking up is easy bending is hard.

A man of honour should refuse on principle easy and lazy solutions which are a source of corruption.

145. ***La ngeen tàyyi toppleen ko, la ngeen sawar bàyyileen ko. (1,6,13,15)***

Follow that which tires you and leave what you are enthusiastic about.

Don't turn up your nose at those things which are hard, but rather at those things which are easy.

146. ***Daw du may i taalibe. (4)***

Running about does not result in disciples.

“A rolling stone gathers no moss.”

People always moving, with no roots in one place, who avoid responsibilities and cares, will not accomplish anything of significance. A teacher who does not sit still will not have any disciples.

Elders

147. ***Ku la mage fukki fan, war a xam fukk yoo xamul. (19)***

Whoever is ten days older than you should know ten more than you.

148. ***Mag mat naa bàyyi cim réew. (1,2,7,11,12,13,15,17,19)***

It is important to keep elders in a nation.

The elders are a source of knowledge which must be preserved. They know the past and present. Their presence in a village is a necessity. The person who listens to them will not stray. This was one of the sayings of Kothie Barma from the famous story of the four pigtailed.

149. ***Mag a moom xamam, su ko neexee làlko toog. (20)***

The wise elder is master of his knowledge; if it pleases him, he spreads it out and sits.

It is with respect, patience and politeness that one receives a share of the wisdom of an elder.

150. ***Ku la mag, ëpp lay sagar. (2,3,5,7,8,10,11,12,15,19)***

Ku la mag, ëpp la xel, ëpp la sagar. (9)

Ku la mag ëpp la ay sagar. (6)

Ku la jëkka juddu, ëpp la ay sagar. (4,13)

He who is older than you will have used up more clothes than you.

An older person is more experienced than you. An older person who has experienced things you have not experienced, and been to places you have not been will always know things you do not know.

[lay = la ay]

151. ***Mag toog na séen lu xale taxaw te séenu ko. (8,20)***

Mag dina sóonu di séen lu gone gu taxaw gisul. (19)

Xale séentu fu sori te gisul, mag toog fi mu toog di gis. (18)

Mag dana tëdd di séen lu sori, gone jóg taxaw te du séen dara. (2)

Mag dina tëdd gis lu gune gu yéeg gisul. (15)

What a child standing up does not see, an old man sitting down sees.

There is nothing so valuable as the experience of years. Youth, in spite of their ambitions and youthful strength cannot understand certain things which are tied to the experience of life, whereas an adult has the benefit of his experience.

152. ***Ba béjjéni kuuy di lëñaaru, mag ñaa nga fa woon, te mënu ñu ca woon dara. (2)***

Man maay béjjén, bi may déng mag ñaa nga fi, dañu cee mënul dara. (17)

Béjjénum xaaf ba muy woñaaru, mag ñaa nga fi dan cee mënul dara. (20)

Béjjénu xaaf, ba muy màgg bay wëndéelu, booba mag ñaa nga fa. (7)

When the horn of the ram became twisted, the elders were around, but could do nothing to prevent it.

The knowledge of the elders has its limits.

153. **a. *Mag du gaaw.***

b. *Nu ngoog xamal nag ne : mag du gaaw.*

a. An adult does not hurry.

b. It is known that elders don't hurry.

154. **Waxi mag doyula weddi. (4,13,20)**

One should not contradict the words of old men.

“Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father...” (1 Timothy 5:1 NIV)

155. **Waxi mag "waaw" la sant. (2)**

The words of an elder have the surname "Yes".

One should respect and follow the words of an elder.

156. **Waxi mag, weddi, gis. (19)**

The words of an elder – deny them and you will see.

157. **Waxi mag dana guddee àll, waaye du ca fanaan. (2,3,5)**

Waxi mag day guddee, waaye du fanaan àll. (6,8,12,14,16,19)

Baatu mag dafa guddee ca àll, waaye du ca fanaan. (13)

An elder's advice will stay late in the bush but will not pass the night there.

An elder's advice or warning will eventually come to pass. Therefore one must respect the words of the elderly.

Youth

158. **Boroom karaw gu ñuul ñàkkul dara. (18)**

As long as there is still black hair, nothing is lost.

“While there's life, there's hope.”

While one is young there is always still hope. The youth has everything before him and plenty of time to succeed.

159. **Dox sag ndaw aayul, waaye dëkk cee bon. (20)**

It is not bad to live like a youth; it is bad to live it forever.

One should not live like a youth all of one's life.

160. **Gone, bu jàqee, tàllal mag ab naqam. (2,3,6)**

A child when he is at a loss will show his pubis to his elder brother.

A moment arrives when one is obligated to reveal what one has been hiding.

161. **Gune dafay seetlu mag. (15)**

A child puts an adult to the test.

Before following his whims a child will carefully observe an adult to discover the extent of his weakness, and behave more or less within the limits of that weakness, be it wide or narrow.

162. **Xaleel amul bopp. (13)**

A child has no sense.

“Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.” (Proverbs 22:15 NIV)

163. **Gone bu loxo la setee, mu mën a bokk ak mag. (8,11,12,19)**

Gone bu loxoom setee mu mën a bokk ak mag ña. (2)

The child whose hands are clean, can eat with the elders.

A well-behaved child can associate with the elders.

Encouragement

164. *Aw naaru-góor lu mu mēna mēna daw ñu bàcc ko ab yar. (2,6)*

Fasu naaru-góor, lu mu mēn-a-mēn daw ñu làbbili ko. (3)

Lu naaru-góor gaaw-gaaw, fàww ñu làbbali ko. (19)

A thoroughbred racing horse, no matter how fast it can already run, is still whipped with a riding crop.

A little word of encouragement is needed sometimes even for the most valiant. One should not let a person rest on their laurels; that is to say, to stop trying because of what they have already achieved.

Environment

165. *Doomi mbott, ndox du ko rey. (2,18,19)*

Water will not kill a tadpole.

When one has adjusted to living in a particular environment or a certain place, one learns how to avoid the dangers of that place. Like the tadpole each person has a place where he is secure and at home.

This proverb could be used by a policeman to reassure his wife that he does not take large risks when he frequents the haunts of criminals in the course of his work.

Envy

166. *Joori waay bu mu la tax a sànni say sagar. (19)*

Jooru waay du ma taxa wocc samay sagar. (20)

Joori waay, bu mu tax nga sànni say sagar. (17)

Seeing the beautiful clothes of someone else is not a reason to throw away your own rags.

Never throw away your own clothes because of the beauty of someone else's. Be admiring of someone else's wealth or belongings but value what you own.

167. *Kiñaan fanqul muur, Yàllaay maye. (2,20)*

Añaan fankul muur Yàlla moo la may. (19)

Jealousy cannot hinder the destiny which God gives you.

Evidence

168. *Ku gis nen ne nen-a ngi, waxatumala-ak nenu baa. (15)*

Whoever sees an egg says, "Here is an egg", to say nothing of an ostrich egg. One needs to face facts.

Evil

169. *Néegu mbon, ku nekk dana ca fanaan, wànte biddantee ca amul njariñ. (2)*

Everyone will pass a night in the room of evil, but there is no value in sleeping in late in it.

"You can't stop a crow flying over your head, but you can stop him making a nest in your hair."

170. *Nit ku saay-saay a bañ ku ko gëdd. (13)*

The scoundrel hates the person who rebukes him.

“Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you.” (Proverbs 9:8 NIV)

Evil tongue

171. *Cat, bu la reyul, semmal la. (6)*

Cat du reyul sembal. (14)

When ‘evil tongue’ does not kill you, it does at least harm you.

“but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.” (James 3:8 NIV)

Excess

172. *Ku fecc ba génn ub géew, kenn du la seetaan. (2,3,6)*

No one continues to watch the person who dances (to excess) to the point of leaving the circle.

No one is interested in the person who tries to outdo his rivals. This proverb expresses the horror that the Wolof have of excess, of the person who exceeds the norms of the society.

Failure

173. *Kuy bëre yaay daanu. (2,3,6,12,15,20)*

He who wrestles is the one who suffers a defeat.

The person who does not wrestle is not worthy even of defeat. Better to try and fail than to not try at all.

Fame

174. *Siw, du jàmmi boroom. (5)*

Fame does not bring peace to the famous.

Family

175. *Dëkkandoo bu baax a gën mbokk mu sore. (13)*

A good neighbour is better than a relative who is far away.

176. *Dëng ànd ak say mbokk a gëna jub tàggook ñoom. (20)*

Unrighteousness which allows relatives to remain together is to be preferred to justice which causes them to break up.

177. *Doom yomb na, ju baax jaa jafe. (2)*

It is easy to have a child. The hard thing is to have a good child.

178. *Boo bëggee xam luy laabiir, amal doom. (2,3,5,6,15,20)*

If you want to know what kindness / generosity / indulgence is, have a child.

179. *Doomu béy, yóbbe na yaayam taq am xaaxaam. (6)*

The mother goat was covered with grass burrs because of its kid.

One accepts irritations for the sake of one's child.

180. *Doomu ndey dañu mel na baaraamu benn loxo. (20)*
Siblings of the same mother are like the fingers of a single hand.
181. *Gone, lu luppab ndeyam lax-lax, ca lay wuufu. (2,3,5,6)*
Even if the thighs of his mother are very withered, a child will always snuggle up there.
Alfa leaves Mbediene, his home village, to finish primary school in Louga. He is boarding with a friend of his father, where he is welcomed like one of the family. He has everything he needs and his lifestyle there is much better than his actual home. However he is sad and uncommunicative. The mother asks herself what is happening. She discusses it with her husband who replies with this proverb.
182. *Goro, deesu ko wax dëgg. (20)*
One never speaks the truth to one's in-laws.
183. *Jaboot day boot ñépp, te du wàcce kenn. (2,3,5,6)*
The mother of a family carries all the family on her back, and does not let any one of them down.
When one is responsible for several people one must not neglect any one of them.
184. *Kéwél du tëb, doom ja bëtt. (2,3,5,6,9,11,12,15,19,20)*
If the gazelle jumps over the hedge, its offspring will not burrow through it.
“Like father like son.”
“The fruit does not fall far from the tree.”
A child will resemble his parents. He will follow in their footsteps. The good or bad example of his parents will determine the future conduct of a child.
185. *Lu juddoo cim tàgg, bu naawul, jaaxal i mbokkam. (2,9,14)*
Lu juddoo cim tàgg naaw, mbaa mu jaaxal ay bokkam. (11,12)
Lu juddoo cim tàgg, màgge cim tàgg, soo naawul, jaaxal say bokk. (19)
That which is born in a nest, if it does not fly, its relatives will be worried.
“Like father, like son.”
An offspring will resemble his parents.
186. *Garab du meññ lu dul la ñu ca gajj. (20)*
Garab la ñu ca gajj lay meññ. (20)
A tree only reproduces a bush.
“Like father, like son.”
187. *Janax du jur lu dul luy gas. (20)*
A rat only begets something which digs.
“Like father like son.”
188. *Kenn bëggul ku la sut ba mu des sa doom ja nga jur. (20)*
No one wants anyone to be superior to them except for the child that they have begotten.
189. *Ku la jëkk ci néeg bi moo lay wax ni ngay tooge. (20)*
It is he who precedes you into the room who tells you how you will sit.
He who precedes you (the in-laws) will indicate how you are to act.

190. *Liibarub mbokk, moo gën kilób jaambur. (11,12)*
Half a kilo of family is better than a kilo of others.
191. *Nit ku dee te amul doom, raaf na. (13)*
A person who dies without children no longer exists.
One lives on in one's children.
192. *Reewalal sa jabar ak sab jaam, te yar sa doom. (2,15)*
You should spoil your wife and your servant, but discipline your child.
Through kindness and generosity you can cause your wife and your servant to become very attached to you, but you should not treat your child that way. A child needs to be disciplined firmly in order to prepare him for the difficulties of life.
“Spare the rod and spoil the child.”
“Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die.” (Proverbs 23:13 NIV)
193. *Sama nijaay a boot njaboot gi. (20)*
My maternal uncle is responsible for the family.
One should respect one's maternal uncle. If you have a problem with your father you go to your maternal uncle.
194. *Waajur du moroom. (12)*
A parent is not an equal.
One should always respect one's parents, knowing that they are superior to you.
195. *Koo jurul doo ko yërëm. (20)*
196. *Jurut du yërëm. (20)*
195. You will have no pity on the child that is not your own.
196. A stranger has no pity.
One does not take pity on someone who is not their child.
Parents are weak towards their children who are sometimes better educated by strangers.
197. *Doomu-jittle du doom. (2,6,13,15)*
Doom jittle du doom, xaré bu wafe-lë. (1)
Doom jittle du doom, ay la. (13)
A step-son (a child born from another marriage of your wife) is not a real son.
When it comes to the crunch, a step-son cannot be relied on.
This was one of the sayings of Kothie Barma Fall from the famous story of the four pigtailed.
198. *Geenu golo gudd na, waaye lu ca laal boroom yëg ko. (2,3,5,8,13,20)*
Geenu golo gudd na, waaye loo ca laal mu yëg ko. (4,19)
Geenu golo gudd na waaye foo ci laal mu yëg ko. (6)
Geenu golo gudd na, waaye lu ci dal boroom yëg ko. (9)
However long a monkey's tail, if you touch it, it will know.
If you do something to a person, the rest of his kin will immediately know of it.
Wali begins to work in an office. He is young and likeable, and his colleagues do all they can to make his start easy, helping him and advising him. To thank them, Wali invites his colleagues to his home one Sunday. At the end of the day, when they are about to take leave, Wali's father expresses his gratitude for the help they have given his son, beginning by quoting this proverb.

199. *Guy dina jur i dég. (5,6,9)*

Guy dana jur i dég. (2,3)

A baobab can produce thorns.

There can be a black sheep in any family, even if the parents raise their children well.

200. *Moo juddu ciy géléem nàmp ciy mbaam. (2,15,19)*

Born a camel, and suckles on a donkey.

This proverb expresses the fall of an individual which can occur in spite of a good birth.

One can be born into a family with a good reputation and still be a failure.

201. *Jur, mu dee, du yaradal ; jur, mu dund te baaxul mooy yaradal. (6,15)*

Jur mu dee taxula yaradal,

Jur mu né léng,

Te fajul dara ay yaradal. (2)

To lose one's children at an early age is not the true misfortune; the true misfortune is to see them grow up to be good-for-nothings.

[*yaradal* = indicates the misfortune of seeing one's children die successively one after another at an early age]

202. *Loo sopp-sopp doomu jaambur, sa doom a la ko gënal. (13)*

Lu nga sopp sopp doomu jaambur, sa doom gënal la ko. (4)

No matter how much you love the children of others, you will love your own even more.

“Blood is thicker than water.”

Family discipline

203. *Nag wéq na doom ja, waaye bañu ko. (2,3,5,6,9,12,20)*

204. *Ginaar dëgg na doom ja, waaye bañu ko. (8,19)*

203. The cow kicks its calf but does not hate it.

204. The fowl treads on its chick, but does not hate it.

A child needs to be disciplined. A parent punishes a child, but still loves it.

“because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.”
(Proverbs 3:12 NIV)

205. *Gone, lawtanu yomb la; boo walbatiwul mu law fu la neexul. (2,3,5,6,15)*

A child is like a creeper (calabash vine), if it is not trained in the right direction, it will spread in a direction that does not please you.

“Spare the rod and spoil the child.”

A child needs to be disciplined.

All the family have gone out to the field, leaving young Aminata alone at the house to guard it and prepare dinner. When everyone returns they find the house empty and the meal not prepared. Her father finds Aminata playing at a neighbours, and beats her. Her mother rebukes her husband who replies with this proverb.

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” (Proverbs 22:6 NIV)

206. *Waxtaan woo gis diggante baay ak doom dafa war mel na taggtoo. (20)*

The conversation which a father has with his son should be like one's last words as though he would soon disappear.

207. *Xale xamul Yàlla waaye xam na yar. (15)*
 A child does not know God but he does know discipline.
 A child cannot be left to his natural instincts but he can learn to live by rules enforced by discipline.
208. *Xaleel poto-poto la, noo ko raaxe rekk lay wéye. (20)*
 A child is like clay; he takes whatever form that is given to him.
 A child reflects the upbringing he has been given.
209. *Xalele bañ na loo mu tàmm. (4)*
 The child hates him who gives it all it wants.
210. *Yar ca kër. (20)*
 A good education (only) occurs at home.
 Only a child's parents can bring up a child properly.
211. *Yar sa doom taxul nga bañ ko. (2)*
 Disciplining your child does not mean that you hate him.
212. *Yaru maam du yar. (15)*
 The education (discipline) given by grandparents is not a real education.
 Grandparents are not able to bring up their grandchildren, as they are not firm enough in disciplining the child.
213. *Lu jooyloo xaleel a gën lu jooyloo mag. (6,15,16)*
Jooyu xaleel a gën yu mag. (9)
Jooyi gune moo gën jooyi mag. (7)
 That which causes a child to cry is preferable to that which causes an adult to cry.
 There are two possible interpretations of this proverb:
 (1) One should never hesitate to bring tears to a child by disciplining him. Better the tears of correction as a child than the tears of an adult that come because of ignorance or lack of self discipline.
 (2) One should never allow a child do something dangerous. It is better to stop him even if he cries than allow an accident which will cause the adults to cry.

Family firstborn

214. *Taawub baay, baay la fu baay nekkul. (6,15)*
 The eldest son represents the father when the father is not present.
 This underlines the right of firstborn in Senegal.

Family marriage

215. *Bala nga wuti jabar, wutal goro. (20)*
 Before seeking a wife, look for good in-laws.
 Marriage does not involve only the husband and wife, but also the two groups of kinsfolk.
216. *Dërëm bi génnul gaal gi. (2,7,6)*
 The penny doesn't leave the boat.
 When cousins or relatives marry... the money stays in the family.

217. *Diggante jëkkër ak jabar, kersa gi warula bare. (20)*
There should be little shame between a husband and wife.
218. *Góor bu takkee tubeyam gaynde la, bu ka tekkee xarum tubaa beer la. (20)*
A man is a lion when he puts on his pants, but becomes a lamb when he takes them off.
This proverb speaks of the ambiguity that exists in the relations between a husband and his wife. In public she must show proper respect. In private there should be an intimacy free of any shame.
219. *Këll bu ne am na mberoom. (2,3,5,6,20)*
Këll bu nekk ak mberu ma koy ub. (11,12)
Every calabash bowl has its lid.
Everyone has his match. There is someone (a spouse) out there for everyone.
Astou is a hard working and well-educated girl. However she has a handicap – she has one leg shorter than the other. All the girls her age are already married, and some already have several children. Her parents are worried that she will be left on the shelf. One day Abdou, a handsome deaf man who is mute, returns to the village after a long absence. He asks for the hand of Astou in marriage. Some people are in favour and others disapprove. The elderly Baro cuts short the discussion by quoting this proverb.

Family women

220. *Boo bëggee xam luy muñ, amal jabar. (2,3,5,6,15,20)*
If you want to know what patience is, take a wife.
221. *Jigéen, soppal te bul wóolu. (6,8,15,19)*
Jigéen ju ndaw, soppal te bul wóolu. (2)
Soppal sa jabar, te bu ko wóolu. (1)
Love your wife, but do not trust her (with your secrets).
This is one of the sayings of Kothie Barma from the famous story of the four pigtails.
222. *Jigéen, jëkkëram mooy sangam. (2)*
Her husband is the head of a woman.
“For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.” (Ephesians 5:23 NIV)
223. *Aawo buuru këram. (2)*
The first wife is the queen of her home.
224. *Liggéeyub ndey; añub doom. (2,6,8,19)*
The work of a mother is the lunch of her child.
When a mother accepts the pains of housework, the fruit of this appear in her children. David Maranz explains that means that the child directly inherits either benediction or malediction from the mother. It is not inheritance in the physical sense, but the inheritance of spiritual qualities. Much importance is attached to what is called liggéeyu ndey `mother's work', or jëfu ndey `the mother's acts and deeds'. Having a moral, obedient, submissive (to her husband) and pious mother is extremely important.
225. *Jigéen ju wujjam dee, dara bugalu ko ca. (4)*
Jigéen ju wujjam dee, dara soxalu ko ca. (13)
A woman who has lost her rival has no sorrow.

226. *Sagoy jigéen mooy wujj wu dee ci ngóobte. (20)*

The happiness of a wife is the death of her co-wife after harvest (when the work is finished).

Women do not like polygamy or having co-wives, but it still has certain advantages for them.

Fathers

227. *Baay, wékkukaayu yëre la, buy dem yëre bi ci gën lay sol. (9)*

A father is like a clothes hanger who wears the best clothes when he goes out.

A father is the father of all. Whoever gives to him to allow him to maintain his honour and decency is his friend.

Men

228. *Góor yombul. (20)*

It is not easy to be a man.

The man who is afraid of everything is not a real man. The real man is courageous (in the face of suffering).

229. *Góor du yox-yoxi. (9)*

A man is not afraid.

230. *Góor-góorlooy taxa doon góor. (2)*

Góorgóorlu mooy tax nga nekk góor.

It is by effort that one is a man.

231. *Góor wurus la, waaye jigéen a koy taxa yegg ci ngalam. (2)*

A man is like gold, but it is because of the woman that he attains the highest quality.

Women

232. *Jigéen doyul a wóolu, ndege lu mu la wax, wax ko sa moroom. (4,13,20)*

A woman is not worthy of confidences, for what she has told you, she has already told your fellow.

233. *Jongama benn lal jombu ko. (20)*

A beautiful woman is not unworthy of any man (lit. bed).

A beautiful woman, even from a low ranking or poor family, can marry upwards.

234. *Jongama du ñàkk laago. (13)*

235. *Jongama du ñàkk daaguwaale. (20)*

234. A beautiful woman will still have her infirmities.

235. A very beautiful woman is often not complete (in her behaviour).

No beauty is perfect. That is to say she may lack other necessary qualities.

Faults

236. a. **Bala nga fajaan, jëkka wér. (6,13,20)**

b. *Bala nga fajaan jëkka wérle.* (4)

Bala nga fajaan, wérle. (7)

Bala nga fajaan, fajal sa bopp. (13)

a. Before you heal someone, be in good health yourself.

b. Before healing others, heal yourself.

One should think of one's own faults before criticizing someone else.

“The pot calling the kettle black.”

“You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.” (Matthew 7:5 NIV)

237. **Xam sa bopp, moo gën ku la ko wax. (1,4,8,13)**

Xam sa bopp a gën nég ba ñu la koy xamal. (2)

Xam sa bopp a gën, nég ba nu la koy wax. (11)

Xam sa bopp a gen ñu xamal la ko. (15)

Xam sa bopp ca teel moo gën nég bañ la koy wax. (12)

It is better to know one own faults than to wait until others tell you about them.

Favouritism

238. **Ku fóotal mbëtt, roccil bar. (2,6,9,19)**

He who does the washing for the land iguana should strip the water iguana of his old skin.

One should not show favouritism.

239. **Ndey-ji-seex, njaaxaanaay lay tédde. (2,3,6,7,9,11,12,19)**

When the mother of twins lies down, she will lie on her back (so that both twins can feed at the same time).

When you have people under your responsibility, you should treat them all equally.

Fear

240. **Loo ragal da lay gaañ. (6)**

That which you fear will harm you.

The fact of fearing something makes it dangerous. It is the fear of harm which creates the harm of fear.

Finish

241. **Njëlbéen du dara, muj gu rafet rekka mata ñaan. (2)**

Njëlbéen du dara, ag muj rekk a takku. (19)

It is not a good start which is important but rather it is a good finish that we should pray for.

242. **Noppaliku, noppee ci gën. (6)**

Noppalu, noppee ko gën. (19)

To finish what you have to do is better than to rest while you are not yet done.

When you've work to do, do it straight away instead of resting once in a while.

Fire

243. *Niitu ba lakkle. (3,19)*

Kuy niitu ba lakkle. (2)

Dafa doon niitu, faf lakkle. (7)

To play with fire until the house burns down.

“If you play with fire you will get burnt.”

A wife, pampered by her husband was becoming more and more capricious and demanding. She wanted everything she saw and nothing was too good for her. When her desires were not satisfied, she would get angry. Her husband eventually could not cope with her anymore and divorced her. The neighbours commented on her departure, quoting this proverb.

“Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched?” (Proverbs 6:28-29 NIV)

First

244. *Jëkk cim pax, sab geen nekk ci biti. (2,3,5,6)*

To be the first to get to the hole and have your tail outside.

This proverb speaks of those who do not take advantage of being first, when another coming after can profit from the situation.

A man wants to marry a girl from the village. Instead of giving presents and hurrying to conclude the arrangements, he lets it drag on. A young man from the village arrives from Dakar with a car and much money, and marries the girl. The first man sighs and laments to his father who quotes this proverb.

Food

245. *Lu yaq aň, aň la. (20)*

What you ate to spoil your lunch is your lunch.

246. *Cin bu naree neex, bu baxee xeeñ. (2,6,8,19)*

Bu cin naree neex, bu baxee xeeñ. (7,10)

A cooking pot which is intended to be sweet, will smell good when it boils.

The pleasant odour given off during cooking is the promise of a treat.

Fool

247. *Dof sonnul, bokk yaa sonn. (19)*

A fool does not suffer; it is his relatives who suffer.

248. *Dof ba raw, moo gëna muus ba dee. (6)*

It is better to be saved by one's foolishness than to die through cunning.

249. *Waxi dof, taaw baay gën caat ma. (11,12)*

The first words of a fool are better than his last words.

The words of a fool start better than they finish.

Foolhardiness

250. *Bu la mën-ngawar jayee ba nga mafñàndum saaw, boo fa jógee, loo amati jënde koog teg. (2,3)*

Ku mafñàndum saaw, bu déwénee loo bey mu yem cig teg. (19)

Su la mën ngawar jayee ba nga mafñàndum saaw, boo fa jógee, loo bayati jënde kog teg. (6)

Ku namm ngawar tax a mafñandu suñeel, bu ren dee déwén loo am teg lay jar. (9)

If your ability to ride pushes you to the point of riding a porcupine bareback, when you finish you will spend all you have on a saddle.

There are some things that one never repeats.

A good wrestler challenges the national champion despite of the advice of his trainer. He is defeated so quickly that it is ridiculous. One of his seconds quotes him this proverb.

Friendship

251. *Sa xaritu noon, sa noon la. (20)*

Your friend's enemy is your enemy.

252. *Xarit dina gën doomu-ndey. (2,19,20)*

It happens that a friend is better than a brother.

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” (Proverbs 18:24 NIV)

253. *Xarit benn-lë, bañ ñett-ak ñenent.*

A friend is unique; one cannot have several.

254. *Wax ma sa ànd ma wax la sa jikko. (9)*

Won ma sa xarit, ma wax la sa jikko. (8)

Show me your friend, and I will tell you your character.

“A man is known by the company he keeps.”

Fruitfulness

255. *Garab gu dul meññ du am yoon. (6,8,15)*

Garab gu dul tàbbal ay doom doo am aw yoon. (1,2)

There is no path to a fruitless tree.

People will cease to visit someone who is not generous. This is a saying of Kotche BARMA. The king (Damel Daw DEMBA) looked down on his subjects whom he feared and despised at the same time. One day he wanted to go to war against the King of Baol. He alerted his warriors but no one responded. Perplexed he asked his royal council to explain but no one dared to respond to him. Finally he called Kotche BARMA who responded to his question with this saying. He wanted the king to understand that to receive the loyalty and devotion of his people he must love his people and treat them with respect. The proud king can only expect to be abandoned in times of trouble.

Future

256. *Ëllëg, ëllëgu Yàlla la. (2,20)*

Ëllëg, ëllëg gu Yàlla la. (15)

The future belongs to God.

Only God knows what the future will bring.

257. *Èllèg du ań, du reer, waaye dees na ko sédd. (7,15)*

Èllèg du ań du reer, waaye jar na sédd. (9)

Èllèg du ań, du reer, waaye mat nay sédd. (2)

Èlleg du ań, du reer, waaye lu mata sédd di leen yaxanal. (20)

Tomorrow does not have lunch or dinner, but one should put aside its ration.

“Save your pennies for a rainy day.”

You must save for the needs of the future. Prudence invites us to have foresight.

General

258. *Bul di njèkkee li mujjee. (20)*

Don't put first what should be last.

“Don't put the cart before the horse.”

259. *Dèkk gaar ba taxul a bare i gan. (2,3,6)*

To live at a bus station is not a reason to have many visitors.

Ndiasse works in a bank, His companions believe that they can count on him to obtain loans for them. He is bombarded with requests from his friends and cousins. In order to make them understand he cannot satisfy their demands he quotes this proverb.

260. *Èkk nit la. (20)*

That stump is a person.

“Little pitchers have big ears.”

Beware of talking in the presence of a child as he will report it to someone else.

261. *Ku aye, wol sa moome. (11,12)*

Whoever's turn it is should do the pounding the turn demands.

Each day is yours to do with as you wish. While he reigns a King can do what he wishes.

But his reign will one day come to an end, and another takes his place. Whatever he does whether good or bad, it will surely pass. This proverb is usually used in reference to a ruler or authority.

262. *Ku bërewul itam, ñu bëre daanu ci sa kaw. (2,19)*

As for him who does not wrestle, those who do wrestle will fall on top of you.

An honest person who does not engage in dubious activities can still get caught up with those who do.

263. *Ku mënoona dog sa bopp, su dogee sa baaraam rekk, na nga fab sa baaraam, daw te gërëm Yàlla. (13)*

If someone could have cut off your head and he only cuts off a finger, take your finger, flee and thank God.

264. *Ku njëriñ jot, nga yàgg fa. (1)*

Wherever you find that which is useful, spend a long time there.

265. *Lu bukki om-a-om, mën naa bëreek béy. (4,6,13)*

No matter how wasted a hyena is, he can still fight with a goat.

There are certain evil people, no matter how weak they are, who can ruin the affairs of someone who is good.

266. *Néew na a gën nañu ko bàyyi. (13,20)*

It is better to have a small amount than to refuse it.

“Something is better than nothing.”

267. *Neexum ngont, xam fooy fanaanee ko gën. (7,17,19)*

It's good to have a good afternoon but it's better to know where you are going to spend the night.

As good as the moment you are having is, you should ensure that the follow up is all set in place.

268. *Petax am rab la. (4,13)*

The pigeon of the animal is there.

A Senegambian phrase, used to stop a conversation concerning one who is absent, when suddenly there appears somebody who is likely to let him know what was said. M. Dard considers this proverb a proof that Negroes formerly used carrier pigeons. It may, however, allude to the mythical pigeon that whispered in the Prophet's ear.

269. *Ndigg toq moo gën taati neen. (2)*

270. *Faru lawbe gënug neen. (2,14)*

271. *Coqam a gën këmm, (2,12,14)*

272. *Sagaru tubéy a gën taati neen. (2,8,19)*

273. *Néew na moo gën dara.*

274. *Reer ci goloo gën fande. (11,12)*

275. *Fas wu làpp a gën fas wu réer. (6,13)*

276. *Rendi bu ñaaw a gën médd. (2)*

269. A small cache-sex is better than a bare backside.

270. It is better to have a fiancé who is a lawbe than to have nothing at all.

[Lawbe are generally looked down on in Senegal, therefore not considered to be a good choice for a marriage partner.]

271. To have a small amount of food is better than nothing.

[coqum and këmm are sounds that go with eating. Coqum is the smacking sound of moisture in the mouth. Këmm is the absence of sound.]

272. Ragged trousers are better than a bare backside.

273. A little is better than nothing.

274. It is better to eat dinner with monkeys than go hungry all night.

275. It is better to have an emaciated horse than one that is lost.

276. An ugly slaughter is better than allowing the animal to die of natural causes.

[In Islam it is forbidden to eat meat which has not been ritually slaughtered. Thus any animal which dies of accidental or natural causes cannot be eaten.]

“Something is better than nothing.”

277. *Picc, la muy wax ci banqaasu garab, du ko wax ci loxol gone. (2,3,6,8)*

What the bird says/sings high in a tree it will not say in the hands of a child.

Someone cries “thief” in a crowd at Kermel Market. The police come and arrest Abdou in spite of his protests. At the police station he is forced to confess. However, when the case comes to court he proclaims his innocence. When the judge asks why he confessed he quotes this proverb.

278. *Wàcc, daanoo ci gën a gaaw. (2,6,7,14,19)*

When it comes to getting down, letting yourself fall is the fastest (method).

When it comes to telling the truth say it frankly. One should get straight to the point, and head straight for the goal.

279. *Tànk ci suuf, jaan ci suuf, fu ñu jaar daje. (2,3,6,20)*

The feet are on the ground, and the snake is also on the ground, so inevitably they will meet.

Abdou was greatly offended by Alassane. He sought to meet him to make him accountable for his offence but Alassane continually avoided him. Abdou therefore asked a relative of Alassane's to pass on this proverb.

280. *Ana golo aka xastey daar-daar ? (3,5)*

Ana goloo ka xastey daar-daar ? (2)

Ana golo ak a xaste ay daar-daar ? (6)

What monkey would mock (another) for the calluses?

Bounama is in the process of disciplining his son with a stick. Bounama's father arrives and observes the scene. The child flees. The old man asks his son the reason for the correction. Bounama explains that he was sent home from school for copying several times. His father reminds Bounama that he too did the same things when he was his age, and smiling adds this proverb.

281. *Bóli gu dog, doktoor amu ca pexe. (9)*

Bóli gu dog, tiiñ nab doktoor. (2,7,12)

Bóli gu dog tiiñ na ab doktoor. (11)

Bóli gu dog, doktoor mënu ci dara. (7)

Put gu dog tiiñ na doktoor. (9)

A doctor does not have a solution for a throat which is cut.

There are problems which are beyond solution. This proverb is used to rebuke the person who has allowed a situation to get to a point where it is beyond solving, and also to encourage people to avoid allowing things to get that far.

282. *War fasu gattax ba am fasu weñ. (2,3)*

Dawal fasu gattax ba am fasu weñ. (6)

Ride a horse of millet stalks until you have an iron horse.

Make do with what one has until one has something better.

283. *Goloo la gëna xam kër gu barey xaj. (2,3,20)*

Golo xammee na kër gu am xaj. (14)

The monkey knows better than you the house with many dogs.

David is a real womanizer. All the village are talking about him and all the heads of family complain about his behaviour. Moussa makes a true remark, "Why does David not frequent the home of Maissa?" Everyone there exclaims and says this proverb because everyone knows that Maissa is particularly suspicious and vindictive.

284. *Nen du bëreek doj. (2,3,5,8,20)*

Nen du wuréek u doj. (19)

Nen du wure ak doj. (7)

An egg should not wrestle with a rock.

A person should not fight against someone or something which is much stronger than he is.

285. *Ku aj a gën a bañ ku séenu kaw. (2,7,9,17,20)*

Ku aj a gën a bañ ku téen. (19)

If you store your valuables under the ceiling you do not want anyone to look up.

The person who done some offence does not want someone announcing what he has done to others.

286. *Ñetti lonk, benn du ca fàq : lunku jigéen, lunku buurfari, lunku jinne. (13)*

Ñett ñu lunku duñu fàq : lunkum jigéen, lunkum buurfari, lunkum malaaka. (1)

There are three attachments which are difficult to break: the attachment of a woman, the attachment of a great king, and the attachment of a genie.

287. *Su Mbul bañee, Làmbaay nangu. (2,3,5,6,11,12,19)*

Su buur bañee lambaay nangu. (14)

If the king of Mboul refuses, the king of Làmbaye will accept.

You can refuse something, and your peers accept it, or certainly hate you while others like you.

A farmer goes to a business man to sell a portion of his millet crop. The business man offers a price which the farmer considers too low. They discuss the price but each holds his position. Someone observing the discussion whispers this proverb in the ear of the farmer to suggest to him that he try another business man.

[Mboul was the capital of the ancient Wolof kingdom of Cayor and Làmbaye was the capital of ancient Baol. The two kingdoms were rivals.]

288. *Xalam demoon na bay neex, buum ya dog. (2)*

Xalam demoon na bay neex, buum ga dog. (11,12)

Xalam demoon na bay neex, buum ya dogandoo. (19)

The sound of the xalam was so beautiful but the strings broke all of a sudden.

Sometimes some business will proceed to the point of bringing hope, then that hope will vanish. It is the same also with people.

“Don't count your chickens before they hatch.”

289. *Xarum waay, gayndeg waay. (2,15)*

Gayndeg waay, xarum waay. (19)

One is at the same time the sheep of someone and the lion of someone else.

In whatever domain of life there are always those who surpass you (which invites humility) and those whom you surpass (a reason for consolation, not for self-deprecation).

The proverb is illustrated by a story recounted by Mamousse Diagne. There was once a man in such dire poverty that he was on the verge of committing suicide. He was in such dire straits that all he had to wear as he walked to the edge of a cliff to throw himself off was a loincloth in rags. The moment he was about to jump off he heard someone whispering from the bushes nearby. The man was completely naked and obliged to hide in the bushes. He asked the other man in the name of God, to give him his loincloth before he jumped off the cliff. On realising that he wasn't the most miserable creature on earth, the first man reconsidered his decision to kill himself.

Generosity

290. *Bul sa loxo ubbiku ndax nangu te téju ndax maye. (13)*

Do not let your hands be open to receive and closed to give.

“There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be open-handed towards your brothers and towards the poor and needy in your land.” (Deuteronomy 15:11 NIV)

291. *Ku bëgg yaa baax, dangay maye sa alal. (2)*

Whoever wants to hear “you are good” should give of his wealth.

292. *Ku la ne : « mayeel sa alal », sa ngërëm la bëgg. (4,6,13)*
The person who tells you to give of your wealth wants you to be praised.

293. *Taaru, tabee ko gën. (2)*
It is better to be generous than beautiful.

294. *Yéwén : ci sa alal. (6)*
Be generous, but only with your own belongings.

Giving

295. *Bu joxe doon tax a ñàkk, kon ku watu doo sëq. (19)*
If giving away were to bring us to poverty, one who shaves would never get his hair back.
Giving to others will not make you become poor.

296. *Mayee lu baax ci kër laa njëkke. (20)*
Good giving begins at home.
“Charity begins at home.”

297. *Mayu nangu baaxul. (20)*
One who gives and then takes back is bad.

298. *Mbaam du jur ci kanam nit. (8)*
A donkey does not give birth in front of people.
Used when one is prepared to give someone something, but not in the middle of a crowd of people.

Goals

299. *Am bukki yomb na, waaye bukki buy xalam a jafe. (2,15)*
It is easy to capture an hyena, but it is another thing to capture an hyena that plays the guitar.
It is good to have high goals but all the same there are limits to what one can achieve.

God

300. *Boo ma jàppee fu Yàlla nekkul, rey ma. (15)*
If you can catch me somewhere where God is not, then kill me.
This is given as a response to someone who threatens you.

301. *Bu Yàlla amulwoon, nit du am. (2)*
If there were no God there would be no people.

302. *Buur Yàlla day nattub jaamam. (2)*
God the King tests his servants.
“Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.” (Deuteronomy 8:2 NIV)

303. **Koo yaakaar, Yàlla la yaakaar. (2,7,11,12)**
 He who hopes, hopes in God.
 Our hopes return to God, Lord of everyone, everything, everywhere.
304. **Ku Yàlla may mu am. (4)**
 He to whom God gives, will have.
305. **Ku wóolu Yàlla, dinga wér. (13)**
 He who trusts in God will succeed.
306. **Lèkkaayu Yàlla, xalangu du ko dindi. (4,6,13)**
 Rolling around on the ground will not remove the wraparound skirt God has placed on you.
 A person cannot remove what nature has given him.
307. **Lu jot Yàlla def ko. (12)**
 Whatever happens, God has done it.
308. **Lu am Yàllaa ! (12)**
 Whatever is, is because of God.
309. **Lu dul Yàlla, ag neen la. (2,8,15,19)**
 What is not of God, is nothing.
"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labour in vain." Psa 138:1 NIV
310. **Lu waay jaay fa Yàlla, fekk fa njëgam. (9,11,12)**
 What a person sells to God, he will find a price there.
 God will repay every man according to his deeds. Therefore we should do good.
311. **Xam Yàlla ca la nga weesu. (15)**
 Know God through what you have experienced in the past.
 It is through past life experiences that one discovers God.
312. **Yàlla rekk moo moom baax. (20)**
 God alone owns goodness.
 If I'm good, it's from God.
"Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments." (Matthew 19:17 NIV)
313. **Yàlla du teg nit lu mu àttanul. (7,14)**
 God does not place on a person what he is not capable of bearing.
"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." 1 Cor 11:14 NIV
314. **Yàlla amul palanteer bu mu naan la tollu ma foofu ma jox la. (15)**
 God does not have a window through which He says come here and I will give to you.
 That which God gives comes through the intermediary of another person.

315. **Yàlla bindul ku mu dul rey waaye am na ñu mu dul toroxal. (20)**

God has not created anyone whom he does not kill, but there are those whom he does not humiliate.

The elect of God will die just like everyone else, but God looks after their integrity. He will never abandon them.

316. **Yàlla, gémmiñ gu mu xotti sànni ca ab tib. (2)**

Gémmiñ gu Yàlla sàkk sànni ci pepp. (6)

God places grain in every mouth that He creates.

God feeds all his creatures.

317. **Yàlla buy séddale, ñatt, ñatti nit, dey jox ñaar kenn, jox benn kenn, ne ka ca des topp leen lu rot nga for. (15)**

When God divides something into three parts for three people, He gives two parts to one person, one part to the second, and allows the third to follow the other two and collect what falls from their hands.

This proverb speaks of the inequality of the lot of people in the world. It is enough to note the acts of God's wisdom without judging.

318. **Jaam ak pexeem, Yàllaak dogalam. (2)**

Jaam ak yéeneem, Yàlla ak dogalam. (6)

Nit ay bëgg-bëggam, Yàlla ak dogalam. (6)

Man and his plans and desires; God with his decisions.

“Man proposes, but God disposes.”

319. **Soo xamoon li lay yoot, nga bàyyi li ngay yoot te daw. (3,5,6,15,20)**

Ku xamoon li lay yoot, nga bàyyi li ngay yoot te daw. (2,19)

Ku xamoon li lay dàq, nga bàyyi li ngay dàq. (20)

If you knew what was stalking you, you would abandon what you were stalking and flee.

This is a warning to those who live in the world as though God does not exist and there is no coming judgement.

“Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,” (Hebrews 9:27 NIV)

320. **Lu la Yàlla jox, waruloo ko xeeb. (20)**

Nit lu ko Yàlla jox waru ko xeeb.

You should not despise what God deals you.

321. **Taal bu Yàlla taal, sànni cag matt a gën fey ko. (6,11,12,19)**

Taal bi Yàlla taal, sànni ci matt moo gën di ko jéem fey. (7)

Taal bu Yàlla taal, sànni cag matt a gëna jéem koo fey. (2)

It is better to throw wood on the fire which God lights than to try and put it out.

You will only tire yourself if you try and fight what God has put in place. Acts 5:33-39

Good deeds

322. *Duñuy fàttaliku laaxu daaw/démb, cifaay ba tax. (14)*

Laaxub daaw, bu ñu ko dee nettali cifaay laa tax. (2)

Laaxub daaw, bu ñu koy nettali, cifaay laa tax. (12,19)

If they remember/talk about yesterday's millet porridge, it is because of the sauce which is added to give it flavour (usually curdled milk).

When people remember events of the past, it is because of significant events that occurred then.

Gratitude

323. *Donn sa tabaxub baay, donn ngërëmam a ko gën. (19)*

It is better to inherit the gratitude of your father than his building.

324. *Ku iñaanul ne Yàllaak diw. (15)*

He who is not jealous should say, "It is because of God and so-and-so."

We owe gratitude to someone for whatever we have. After thanking God, we should also thank the person through whom the blessing has come.

325. *Ku gërëmul nit ñi doo gerëm Yàlla. (15)*

The person who is not grateful to man will not be grateful to God.

If one is not grateful for benefits which are received from people whom he can see, he certainly will not be grateful for blessings which he receives from God whom he cannot see.

326. *Lu mana am, gërëm Yàllaak sa ndey.*

Whatever happens, thank God and your mother.

Without God and one's mother a person would be nothing.

327. *Purux du gërëm ñamu daaw. (2,6,7,12,14,19,20)*

The throat is not grateful for last year's meal.

Favours of the past are quickly forgotten by an ungrateful person. Said to a person who has forgotten what others have done for him in the past; one who isn't grateful to those who have helped him a long time ago.

328. *Bu lëg lekkee aloom, na ko gërëme coy. (5,6,7,9,12,14)*

Lëg su lekkee aloom war na koo gërëme coy. (2,3)

Bu lëg mosee alom, na ko gërëme coy. (10)

Bu lëg ñamee aloom, na ko gërëme coy. (19)

When the hare eats jackal berries, it should thank the parrot.

When one enjoys something, one should be grateful to the person who made it possible.

As a result of a strike, the employees had obtained rise in salary. One of the workers, who had not participated in the strike was very happy. A union representative remarked to him that he had benefited from advantages won by others and quoted this proverb.

329. *Su tan gore woon, bu ñuy gubal mbaam, mu ëpp caw say. (2,3,6,14,17,19)*

Tan dafa gàtt xel nde kon bunuy gubal mbaam mu ëpp caw say. (9)

Bu tan gore woon, bu nuy gubali mbaam kenn du ko ca jiitu. (12)

If the vulture was honest, when they go to cut grass for the donkey, it would cut the largest sheath.

This proverb has the same meaning as Proverb 328.

[Wolof do not eat donkey meat. A dead donkey will be left for the vultures.]

Greed

330. ***Bëgge du mat, ngor mat. (2)***

Mbëgge du mat, ngor mat. (15,16)

One cannot have at the same time complete greed and perfect honesty.
According to the Wolof one must either master one's desires or else fall into dishonesty.
There is no compromise between these two extremes.

331. ***Ku bëgge tax a xar sab dënn, ñaw ko dina la jaaxal. (11,12)***

If greed causes you to cleave your chest, sewing it up again will be difficult.
If greed causes you to enter into wrongdoing, if you are not careful you will not escape from this.

Guest

332. ***Ku dikoon, da nga demati. (1)***

Whoever has arrived will eventually leave.

333. ***Lu gan sonal-sonal, dina ñibbi. (1,13)***

No matter how annoying a guest is, he will eventually go home.

334. ***Su gan ñàbboo, dëkk a ko ca bàyyi. (6)***

If a guest complains it is because he has abandoned his village.
If a guest complains it is because he is well established.

335. ***Gan du yewwiw béy. (2,8)***

Gan du yewwiw bëy. (7,14,16,19)

A stranger does not let out the goats.
A stranger has no business becoming involved in family affairs.

336. ***Ginaar gu bu ñu gaddu, xamul yoon wu sore. (8)***

Ginaar gu ñu gaddu xamul yooni je bu sore. (20)

The fowl you are carrying on your shoulder does not know how long the road is.
If you live off someone else you should be careful not to be wasteful.

Habits

337. ***Tànk du tàmm gudd, gàtt. (19)***

Feet that have the habit of wandering cannot give it up all of a sudden.
It's very difficult to get rid of a habit.

Heart

338. ***Kanam du kaso, waaye koo ca tëj mu xam ko. (2,19)***

The face is not a prison but if you close someone in it, he'll know about it.
Your face can show that you are mad at someone.

339. ***Xol du wóom ba ñu koy bës. (2,19)***

The heart is not a knee that you can massage at will.
Some pains in life are difficult to soothe.

340. ***Lu jebbi ci xol, focci ci jë. (6)***

Lu meññ ci xol, jebbi ci xar-kanam. (6)

That which germinates in the heart will sprout a head on the forehead.

That which is happening in the heart will be evident in a person's face.

Help

341. ***Ker, kenn du ca mbaar. (11,12)***

No one builds a shelter over shade.

No one helps someone who is capable of doing it himself, and leaves the person who needs help.

342. ***Ku amagul ab tool, maneesu koo may ab liggéey. (11)***

Whoever does not have a field cannot be helped with the offer of helping hands.

He who does not try anything cannot be helped.

343. ***Ndimbal, na ca fekk loxol boroom. (6,7,9,10,11,12,14,15,16,20)***

Ndimbal na ca fekk loxol boroom, (ba mu des lol liir mbaa lol néew). (2)

Help should find that the person being helped is already trying to help himself.

It is hard to help someone who is not making any effort himself. Before asking for help one should already be actively working on that which he desires help with.

344. ***Doomu ñey bu ko ñaanal mu réy, ñaanal ko mu wér to gudd fan. (18)***

Ñey wu ndaw, ñaanal ko fan wu gudd te bañ koo ñaanal réy. (19)

Do not pray that a baby elephant will become huge, but rather that he will have a long and healthy life.

An elephant will by nature become large so there is no point praying for this. Any help given to an individual should be directed at his needs, not based on what the helper would like to do.

345. ***Peccum liir bu neexee, ndey jaa jàpp ca wagg ya. (9,11,12)***

Peccum liir bu neexee, ndey jaa téyé ca wagg ya di yëngal. (2)

Peccum liir, bu neexee, ndeyam a téye ca tànk ya. (6)

Su peccum liir neexee, ndey jaa téye ca wagg ya. (7)

If the dance of a baby is pleasant it is because his mother is holding his shoulders/legs.

There are some things which a person can only do if there is someone more powerful helping him from above.

Hidden

346. ***Kuy naan, di nëbbu, boo jangee, feeñ. (2,3,6,11,12)***

Kuy naan di nëbbu, saa yu jangee feeñ. (5)

Ku nëbbu di naan, boo màndee feeñ. (19)

Nëbbu naan, màndi feeñ. (13)

The person who drinks (alcohol) in secret will be exposed when he reels and staggers.

Whatever you hide and do not abandon will be revealed with time.

“The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out.” (Proverbs 10:9 NIV)

Honour

347. *Ku la jam, doo nàcc ! (2,15)*

You do not bleed if you are stabbed.

This is an insult against those who suffer a humiliation or insult and give in without reaction. Honour demands that one fights.

348. *Nit bu ca jom jógee, dara desatu ca. (2,15)*

A man who has lost his *jom* has nothing left.

[*jom* is a sense of honour which shows itself by the refusal to be shown up, by a constant effort to reach what is expected of one, or by the great sacrifices made in order to protect one's respectability. It is a dignity which will not accept being ridiculed.]

Hospitality

349. *Man gan, man sa bopp la. (19)*

Being hospitable means mastering oneself.

350. *Teraanga du tuut. (19)*

Hospitality is not insignificant.

“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.” (1 Peter 4:9 NIV)

Human Condition

351. *Kër bukki xasaw na, waaye fa la bukki dëkk. (18)*

The home of an hyena stinks but all the same that is where it lives.

One should learn to conform to one's status, regardless of its weakness or insufficiencies, without regard to the opinions of others. This proverb is often used when someone wants to prove that he is at home in his status, social circle or environment.

Idiom

352. *Bu ma jiitu ci sama mbojj. (2,3,6)*

Do not precede me to my grain threshing.

Keep off my patch.

Yatma announced to his parents that he would like to marry Astou. A family meeting was called to discuss the marriage. Khali the older brother of Yatma said that Astou is closely related, and also she did not seem to be very good at housework, therefore she would make a poor choice for a wife. Their father interprets that Khali is encroaching on his prerogatives, and calls him to order with “Bu ma jiitu ci sama mbojj”.

353. *Bul yebu ci sama mbojj. (6)*

Do not interfere with my business. Mind your own business.

354. *Maa ngi ci sa simis bi/mbubb mi/létt bi. (20)*

I am in your shirt, your gown etc.

A way of complimenting someone on their clothes, hair etc.

355. *Meew mu wayul tuuru na. (2,11,12,19)*

Milk which hasn't curdled has spilled.

A young person has died.

356. *Ñaan gu daje ak amiin la. (6,8)*

It is a prayer that encounters an amen.

An idiom expressing that things could not have turned out better. This proverb is used when something that one had expressed a desire for happens by itself.

357. *Sama jaan wàcc na. (2,9,20)*

I have completed my task.

358. *Sàqami nga samab lanc. (2,3,6,7)*

You have chewed my mouthful.

“You have taken the words right out of my mouth.”

To say exactly what someone else was going to say or what they were thinking.

359. *Suma i bët dañoo rembet. (13)*

My eyes overflow.

My eyes cause me to covet (because they are full of all the good things that they see).

360. *Sunuy sikkim lakkandoo nañu. (13)*

Our beards were burnt together.

We are in the same embarrassing situation.

Ignorance

361. *Ku xamul “buur saay na”, xam “buur dee na”. (2,3,5,6,7)*

Ku xamul buur saay na, dees na ko wax buur dee na. (15,8)

He who does not understand “The king has passed away,” should be told “The king has died.”

Someone who cannot take a hint in polite language should be told plainly what is necessary. With some people you must call a spade a spade.

362. *Ku xamul “suur naa” dangay téye ca loxo ba. (2,3,5,6)*

Ku xamul suur naa, ñu téye sa loxo. (19)

You should hold back the hand of the person who does not understand, “I am full”. When a person does not know how to limit himself, he needs to be restrained.

[In Senegal, it is a mark of politeness for a host to encourage a guest to eat, and for a guest to limit what he eats with the excuse that he is full].

“When you sit to dine with a ruler, note well what is before you, and put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony.” (Proverbs 23:1-2 NIV)

Illicit

363. *Lu wagajaane maye du and ak njariñ. (13)*

That which is obtained by illicit means will not bring any benefit.

“Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it.” (Proverbs 1:19 NIV)

Impatience

364. *Ku yàkkamti sa wërsëg, amiin wa ñaaw. (2,15)*

Whoever is in too much of a hurry to receive his luck, the “amen” will be ugly.
The person who is in too much of a hurry to receive his luck will end up using dubious means and risk losing his reputation and his honour.

365. *Yàkkamti ak gaawantu, bu ñu jurée doom, réccu am caw yoon. (2,9,10,14,15,16,19)*

Yàkkamteek gaawtu bu ñu juree doom, réccu am caw yoon.

Yàkkamteek gaawantu, bu ñu juree doom, réccu am ca turandoo. (1)

“Haste makes waste.”

Impatience and hurry, when they have a baby, always bring regrets.

366. *Yàkkamti yàqule. (19,20)*

Yàkkamti, yàqati. (20)

Be in a hurry; suffer ruin.

“Haste makes waste.”

When you do things in a hurry you are likely to do things carelessly and make costly mistakes.

367. *Yàkkamti, muj ga : yàqati. (7)*

Hurry in the end brings ruin.

“Haste makes waste.”

“More haste, less speed.”

Impotence

368. a. *Merum ginaar lu muy wàññi tusuñe ? (2,3,5,6)*

b. *Merum ginaar saful tusuñe. (7,17)*

369. *Merum golo saful boroom tool. (2,3,5)*

370. *Merum janax saful muus. (14)*

368. a. How can the anger of a chicken harm the cook?

b. The anger of the chicken does not disturb the cook.

369. The anger of a monkey does not disturb the owner of the field.

370. The anger of a mouse does not disturb the cat.

At the market, Mary has set up her little stand. The local tax collector passes to receive her fee. She explains that she does not have anything to pay him as she has not yet sold anything, and asks him to pass by again later. He refuses, and the discussion gets heated. He insists that she pays immediately or he will call the police. To convince her of her impotence he cites this proverb.

Inevitability

371. *Doxatu géleem, kow la jëm. (6)*

The fart of a camel rises up.

One cannot prevent the evolution of something which will eventually be evident.

372. *Ngësëm wacce wu ma dama ñor tabbi. (20)*

It is not because you shook the tree that the fruit fell but rather because the fruit is ripe.

Everything happens in its time.

373. ***Bukki wiiri-wiiri, jaari Ndaari. (2,6,8,9,14,19)***

Lu bukki wiiri wiiri, jaari ndaari. (2,8)

However much an hyena wanders about, he will eventually come to his den. There are some things which a person will inevitably return to, things which he did habitually, even if planned to abandon them.

Influence of Others

374. ***Ndoxum kese du forox. (2,3,5,6,20)***

Pure water never turns sour.

Water does not alter itself. Any change is due to something foreign in the water. Likewise it is often due to the influence of others that people change their ideas.

Souleyman and Omar decide to leave their village to go work in the city. They agree to keep it secret until their departure. However Omar's family learns of their plans and prevents him from leaving. Omar accuses Souleman of having betrayed him. Souleyman defends himself saying he would never do anything like that. His uncle who has been listening to the argument interrupts with this proverb.

A man has a sheep to sell, and comes to an agreement on the price with a buyer. When he gets home he tells his wife that he is selling the sheep for 7,000 cfa. His wife tells him that he is stupid because the sheep is worth at least 30,000 cfa. The next day when the buyer comes around to pick up his sheep, the seller announces that the price has changed. The buyer then quotes this proverb.

Injustice

375. ***Lu waay nangu, teg ko ko dagan na. (2,9)***

Lu nit nangu, teg ko ko dagan na. (15,19)

It is legitimate to place on someone any burden he is willing to accept.

An injustice becomes a justice the moment a person accepts to carry the burden. It is an encouragement to fight against injustice and not just accept it.

Insolence

376. ***Ku reew, amul saans. (19)***

The insolent and rude person has no sense.

377. ***Ku reew ñàkk lépp. (1)***

The insolent lose everything.

378. ***Reewaande ga du jariñ mukk. (13)***

Insolence is never of use.

379. ***Xale bu reew, toolam du ñor. (19)***

The field of an insolent child does not ripen.

Insults

380. ***Ku xaste, waxeef nga loo doon. (1)***

He who denigrates someone reveals who he really is himself.

381. ***Ku bañ ñu saaga la, doo saagaante. (20)***

If you do not want people to insult you don't insult others.

382. *Saaga ku la man duw fit ñàkk jom la. (12)*

It is not courage that allows one to be insulting, it is a lack of honour.

Integrity

383. *Gàllaaj i nit mooy jub. (20)*

The (best) amulet for a human being is honesty.

384. *Ku sa bëgge bare, sa ngor néew. (1,8,13,15,20)*

He who wants too much has little honour.

The Wolof belief that too much ambition is not good, and leads to a loss of honour.

385. *Ku di loo xam wax ko, sa ngor yàqu. (1,15)*

Whoever says all that he knows demeans himself.

*A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.
(Proverbs 29:11 NIV)*

*Wisdom reposes in the heart of the discerning and even among fools she lets
herself be known. (Proverbs 14:33 NIV)*

386. *Ku di loo bëgg jaar ca, sa ngor yàqu. (1,13,15)*

Whoever enters into everything that takes his fancy will demean himself (lose his honour and integrity).

387. *Ku di foo yabu dem fa, sa ngor yàqu. (1,15)*

Whoever goes wherever his fancy takes him will demean himself (lose his honour and integrity).

388. *Néegub ngor, kenn terewu ko, ku ci duggul ci yow la. (7,10)*

No one is forbidden from entering the room of honourable behaviour; if you do not enter it is your own fault.

389. *Wéet duma tee gore. (18)*

To be alone will not stop me from being honest.

Even when we are not accountable to anyone, it is good to be honest and manage well what has been entrusted to us.

390. *Sorim réew bu m(u) la taxa fen. (2)*

Being far from your country is not a reason to lie.

391. *Du man rekk, bokkuma cee ko gën. (6)*

Du man doŋŋ, bokkuma caa ko gën. (7)

“I was not part of it” is better than “I was not the only one”.

It is better not to be part of something dishonest than later on when you are caught to say that you were not the only one.

392. *Ñaar a di yëf di jàmm ji àddina : ngor ak njullit. (8,13,20)*

Ñaar di def jàmm ca àdduna : ngor ak njullit. (1)

Two things bring peace in the world: honourable behaviour (ngor) and piety (njullit).

Interest

393. ***Yebu ca, namm ca, ku la ca bëmëx nga jël. (6)***
Namm ca, yabu ca, ku la ca bëmëx nga jël. (2,7)
So much the better to push someone to action who already wanted to do it.
394. ***Yebu ca, namm ca, ku la ca yónni, nga gaawa dem. (13)***
Yebu ca nangu ca, ku la ca yónni nga gaaw ca dem. (4)
If you have made a decision to go to a place, and wish to go there, when someone sends you on an errand there you will be quick to go.
We go quickly where we are sent when we take interest in the journey.

Intolerance

395. ***Ñaar a di def aye ci àdduna : Njéémé ak Mbanik. (1)***
There are two causes of disorder in the world: contrariness and intolerance.

King

396. ***Buur bu baax dina rafetal réewam. (13)***
A good king will improve his kingdom.
Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people. (Proverbs 14:34 NIV)
Love and faithfulness keep a king safe; through love his throne is made secure. (Proverbs 20:28 NIV)
397. ***Buur bu baax dina sàmm i nitam. (13)***
A good king will look after his subjects.
398. ***Buur aayul, dag yaa aay. (2,6,8,11,12,19,20)***
The King is not evil, it is the courtiers who are evil.
With many of the things that you are deprived of by a ruler, it is the people close at hand to the ruler who deprive you, not the ruler himself. A self-seeking, servile flatterer and fawning parasite is dangerous.
The plans of the righteous are just, but the advice of the wicked is deceitful. (Proverbs 12:5 NIV)
There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace. (Proverbs 12:20 NIV)
399. ***Jege buur, jege xol baa ko gën. (2)***
It is better to be close to the heart of the King than to be related to him.
400. ***Lu neex, Buur jël, ba mu des fuddu. (20)***
The King can confiscate whatever he wishes except the pleasure of stretching oneself.
No matter what a ruler might decide there are things which he has no control over, and things which he cannot stop you doing.
401. ***Mere buur, jege xol baa ko gën. (2)***
It is better to be close to the heart of the King than to be angry with him (which will serve no purpose).

402. **Buur bu amul i nit du doon buur. (4)**
Buur bu amul ay gaay, nguuram wóoral. (13)
 A king without subjects is no king.
A large population is a king's glory, but without subjects a prince is ruined.
(Proverbs 14:28 NIV)
403. **Buur du mbokk. (2,6,7,8,15,17,18,19)**
Buur du mbokk, du jeneen. (1)
 A king is not a relative.
 A ruler should rule with impartiality and not give privileges to his relatives and friends.
 This proverb was one of a series of four sayings from a famous story from the life of Kocc Barma Fall, a sage from the 19th century, concerning his four pigtails.
404. **Sopp buur aayul, wànte buur sopp laa ko gën. (4,6)**
Sopp buur aayul, wànte buur bu la sopp a ko gën. (13)
 It is not bad to love the King, but it is even better to be loved by the King.
405. **Waxu buur waaw lay sant. (20)**
 The words of a king have the surname "Yes".
 Mamoussé Diagne explains that there is always a risk in contradicting the words of a ruler or powerful person. His authority lies in his position, not his person. What he says is unimportant, and since he has power acquiescence is the wiser route to take.

Knowledge

406. **Gàcce ak xamadi, laajul a ko indi. (6,13)**
 Failing to ask brings shame and ignorance.
You do not have, because you do not ask God. (James 4:2 NIV)
407. **Laaj ay taxa xam. (2)**
 Questioning brings knowledge.
If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. (James 1:5 NIV)
408. **Xam-xam sorewul, dafa làqu. (6,7,14)**
 Knowledge is not far away, it is simply hidden.
409. **Bala ngaa xam, xamadi xaw laa rey. (5,8,16,19,20)**
Bala ngaa xam, xamadi xaw laa gaañ. (2,3,8)
Bala ngay xam, xamadi rey la. (6)
Ku daa-ta xam xamadi xaw la rey. (15)
 Before you know something, ignorance will almost have killed you.
 It is through making many mistakes that one gains knowledge.
410. **Du xamum nganj, yàgg a suub la. (9)**
Du xam nganj, mës a suub la. (6)
Du miin nganj, yàggal suub la. (2)
Lii du xam nganj, mën suub la. (7)
 It's not because you are familiar with indigo, but that you have been practising the art of dyeing for a long time.
 Experience is much more important than knowledge.

411. **“Xamul” aay na wànte “laajtewul” a ka yées. (2,3,6)**

Xamul aay na, tey laajtewul a ko raw. (4,13,20)

It is bad enough to not know, but it is even worse to not ask.

“He who asks may be a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever.”

Ignorance is bad enough but it is even worse not to inform yourself.

412. **Xam-xam ñeent a koy kulóor : di ko bind, di ko jàngale, di ko waxtaane, mbaa di ko jëfe. (7,10)**

There are four things to do with knowledge: write it, teach it, talk about it, and do it.

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2 NIV)

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (Matthew 7:24 NIV)

Leadership

413. **Njiit du ki jiitu, ki nu jiital la. (18)**

The true leader is not the person who is in front, but the person who is chosen to lead.

The fact of holding a position of responsibility is not a privilege in itself. The leader is called to serve the interests of those he leads. The good leader should make his decision conscious of the fact that he was chosen by others because of his qualities and availability. This is often used to put leaders who have become a bit full of themselves back in their place.

414. **“Su doon man”, dey yàq mbooloo. (18)**

415. **Mana, mana joo dégg, du moom. (18)**

414. “If it were me” destroys the group.

415. “It is me, it is me!” that you hear does not mean that that person has the necessary qualities.

The braggart destroys the unity of a group. “Me! Me!” cries the braggart without worrying about others. Someone who wants to become the leader at all costs is not necessarily the person with the best virtues to be leader. The good leader is often the person who waits patiently for the group to recognise his qualities.

416. **Sàmm bu baax moo xam fa ñaxum noor di baree. (11,12)**

A good shepherd knows where grass is plentiful during the dry season.

A good leader knows how to make arrangements for the benefit of his group.

I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. (John 10:9 NIV)

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10:11 NIV)

I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me... (John 10:14 NIV)

417. **Sikkim la, geestoo ko yóbbaaale. (2,19,20)**

Fu sikkim jëm, séen ko fa yóbbu. (4)

The chin goes with the head when it turns to look back.

One should take into account those who are affected by a decision before taking action.

Learning

418. *Jàng du wees. (2,7,8,10)*

It is never too late to learn/study.
“You are never too old to learn.”

419. *Ku jàngul du tari. (11,12)*

If you have not studied, you will not recite (the Koran).
What you have not learnt you do not know well enough to be able to do.

Life

420. *Àddina daramba la. (19)*

Dab: To reach, Raw: To bypass, Ba: to abandon, to live.

According to Maam Daour Wade this proverb is said to have been made up by the late Murid General Kalife Seex Abdul Ahad Mbàkke. Only the beginning of the words are used to form this proverb. Its meaning is that we come to life at some point in the world's evolution. We have to struggle to live, and we will die at the end anyway.

421. *Àddina gudd nab tank. (19)*

Life can lead anywhere.
“Look before you leap.”

One has to think before doing anything because the consequences, good or bad, are waiting for him or her in the future.

I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favour to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all. (Ecclesiastes 9:11 NIV)

422. *Àddina, kendandoo la. (15)*

Life is like a day spent together.
Life does not last forever.

423. *Àddina du kër, xaarukaayu dee la. (18)*

The world is not a house; it is merely the waiting room of death.

We will all die and it can come anytime, therefore we should live with that fact in mind.

Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. (Psalms 39:4 NIV)

Remember how fleeting is my life. For what futility you have created all men! (Psalms 89:47 NIV)

Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He springs up like a flower and withers away; like a fleeting shadow, he does not endure. (Job 14:1-2 NIV)

for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. (Psalms 103:14-16 NIV)

Man is like a breath; his days are like a fleeting shadow. (Psalms 144:4 NIV)

424. **Àddina Njéeme la tudd, sant Ba. (19)**
 The first name of life in this world is “try” and its surname is “give it up”.
 A person spends his life trying and always end up passing away.
425. **Àddina këru naxekaay la. (20)**
 The world is not a real house.
 Everything that we have in the world is temporary.
“For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.” (Hebrews 13:14 NIV)
426. **Àddina njoowaanu golo la, garab gu nekk lay wékku. (2,15)**
 Life is like the swing of a monkey which he hangs on any tree.
 The short duration and instability of life shows that life is not worth living if it were not possible to profit from life by meriting the gratitude of God and man through one’s good works.
427. **Àddina potu ndaa la, ku naan jox sa moroom mu naan. (2,9,15,18)**
 Life is like the cup of a water jar; the one who has finished drinking passes the cup to another to drink.
 We all die and pass on our heritage to others. The generations come and go. We all must give up our place to others. This proverb is often used at funerals.
I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. (Ecclesiastes 2:18 NIV)
428. **Àddina, reenub ñàmbi la, kenn xamul fu muy damme. (19)**
 Life's like a cassava root, no one can tell where exactly it will break.
 Things happen without us being able to know sometimes when or how.
Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. (James 4:14 NIV)
429. **Àddina, ñett a ci di yóbbal : ab xame, ab taar ak mbuus. (1,13)**
 Three things are necessary in this world: a friend, beauty, and money.
430. **Àddina ñett a ci gën : àjjana biti, ak weerteewlu ak mèneek say dëkk, ak ku la gis bëgg la. (1)**
 Three things are important in life: good health, strength and harmony with one's neighbours; that is to say, to be loved by everyone.
431. **a. Àddina ñett a ci gën, am a gën, man a gën, xam a gën. (1,13,15)**
 b. *Xam a gën. (4)*
 c. *Man a gën. (4)*
 a. There are three things in life which are best: to have; to be able; and to know.
 b. Knowledge is best.
 c. Power is best.
 Three things are desirable in this world: to increase one's wealth, one's power, and one's knowledge.
432. **Àddina ñetti fan la, démb ñoom baay, tey ñun, èllëg sunuy doom. (9)**
 Life consists of three days; yesterday was our father's, today is ours, and tomorrow is our children's.

433. *Àddina jigéen la, ju fu mu tollu, mu ngi ëmb te kenn xamul lu muy jur. (15)*
 Life is like a woman who is constantly pregnant, and no one knows what she will give birth to.
 No one can know what will happen during life.
434. *Àddinaa ngi ci sunu kanam. (19)*
 Life is ahead of us.
 What's going to happen is before us; meaning that we should not hurry, we will see what's going to happen.
435. *Bëñ du ree jàmm ! (2,19)*
 A tooth does not laugh at peace.
 We sometimes laugh at human tragedies.
436. *Bu ñii di jooy, ñee ngay ree. (19)*
 When these people are crying, others are laughing.
 Joys and pains are the two sides of life.
a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot... a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance... (Ecclesiastes 3:2,4 NIV)
437. a. *Àddina weeru koor la ; feek jant sowul, juubu du wees. (11,12)*
 b. *Dund gu jeexagul, weeru koor la : juubu weesoogu ca. (2,3,5)*
Koor gu jant sowagul, juubu weesoogu ca. (2)
 a. Life is like the month of Ramadan; as long as the sun has not set, one will not cease to make mistakes.
 b. Life is like the month of Ramadan; as long as it is not finished, it is always possible to accidentally break the fast.
 One should never be too sure of oneself, as it is all too easy to make mistakes.
 “Don’t count your chickens before they hatch.”
 “There’s many a slip between the cup and the lip.”
438. *Dund gu jeexagul, weeru koor la : juubu weesoogu ca. (2,3,5)*
 Life is like the month of Ramadan; as long as it is not finished, it is always possible to accidentally break the fast.
 “Don’t count your chickens before they hatch.”
 “There’s many a slip between the cup and the lip.”
439. *Liggéeyal àddina ja mu mel ni dootoo dee, liggéeyal allaaxira ja mu mel ni suba ngay dee. (20)*
 Work for the world as though you will never die, and work for the afterlife as though you will die tomorrow.
 Use all means possible (including occult) to live this life, and use prayers & rituals of Islam for the next one.
“If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.” (Romans 14:8 NIV)
440. *Bakkan waruw dàll la : fa muy dagge doo ko yëg. (2,3,6)*
Bakkan waru dàll la, buy dagg boroom du ko yëg. (19)
 Life is like the strap of a sandal which breaks without warning.
 Death comes without warning.

441. ***Àddina du cere, waaye dañu koy laalo. (2,6,7,9,10,14,16,18,19)***

Àddina du cere waaye lu mat a laalo la.

Àddina du cere waaye dees na ko laalo.

Life is not couscous but all the same one should add a binder to it.

Laalo is a vegetable powder made from the leaves of baobab trees which binds couscous to make it sticky and therefore easy to swallow. This proverb is a recommendation that one should know how to make life agreeable through humour, optimism, and leaving aside the drive to have one's own needs met. It is about learning to maintain friendly relationships in community.

442. ***Opp ju metti du taxa dee. (4,13)***

Opp ju metti bokkul ak dee. (13)

A severe malady does not always kill.

Limitations

443. ***Lëg mën naa daw, waaye àttanul teg. (2,3,5,6,14,19,20)***

The hare can run but it is not capable of carrying a saddle.

Everyone has his limits.

The people in a village decided to have a well dug. They put together all the money they had available which amounted to 640,000 cfa. As this was not sufficient, they appealed for help from a development NGO. A delegate from the the village visited a representative of the NGO with the sum that had been collected. He explained that all the villagers were poor, and in spite of their good will, they could not do more, quoting this proverb.

444. ***Ngaaxi tukkal, kenn du ko perngal mboccor. (2,3,6)***

No one places the large bags of an adult male camel on the flanks of a baby camel.

Sylla received a letter from the court in Thies. He asked his youngest son to go and find his older brother so he could read the letter to him. Fari who is in primary school says “I know how to read”. His father replied, “Of course you know how to read, but this letter is much too difficult for you”, and he quotes this proverb.

445. ***Lu reen jan-jan, reen a nga ca suufam. (11,12)***

Lu reen jan jan, reen a nga ca suuf. (2)

No matter how deep a root runs, there is another below it.

No matter how much a person knows or has, there are those who know more or have more.

446. ***Tool bu fi ñay ruuj, gëlém su koy ji, seet lay mana wey. (15)***

If a camel sows a field in the area that an elephant has cleared, he should limit himself to what he is capable of completing.

To be successful a person should know himself, his possibilities and his limitations, and not make judgements based on the capacities of others.

447. ***Ngasum ñàmbi ku ñu cay yoori goj, daa weesu reen ya. (11,12)***

Ngasum puloox ku ca wuti ay goj booba weesu nga reen ya. (20)

If you go to get a rope in order to dig up the manioc plants, that means that you have really gone past the roots.

He who restrains himself exactly where he should, will always be able to get out of whatever he gets into and no one will be able to fault him.

448. **a. Ku sa mbootu jotul, doo rogganti. (2)**

b. *Ku woddu jotul, doo boot i gamb. (2,19,20)*

c. *Kuy boot jotul, ngay dolliy gamb. (17)*

d. *Ku say sër jotul doo boot i gamb. (9)*

a. If your cloth for tying the baby onto your back is too short, you don't cover the baby with another wrap.

b,c,d. If your wrap-around skirt is too short (to reach around your waist) you will not carry calabashes tied onto your back (like a baby).

If you have limited means don't spend them on a project that's beyond them. One should have a sense of one's limitations.

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace." (Luke 14:28-32 NIV)

Listen

449. **Bala nga tontu, jëkkala dégg. (13)**

Before you reply, understand first.

He who answers before listening—that is his folly and his shame. (Proverbs 18:13 NIV)

450. **Ku amul baay, na sab nopp doon sa baay. (18)**

For the fatherless, his ear should be his father.

In the absence of a father, a child should listen and learn from the wisdom of his elders.

451. **Lu dugg ci benn nopp génn ca bale. (4)**

What goes in at one ear goes out the other.

452. **Bopp bu nar a barkeel, nopp ya cay sax day dégg um ndigal. (19)**

Bopp bu naree am jàmm, yàlla da cay saxal nopp yuy dégg. (9)

Bopp bu am njeriñ, noppi moo ca sax. (20)

A head that is going to be successful has ears growing on it that listen to advice.

If you want to be successful, you should listen to advice.

For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure.

(Proverbs 11:14 NIV)

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed. (Proverbs 15:22 NIV)

Loans

453. **Abb delloo la sant. (20)**

The name of "abb" is "reimburse".

Whatever one borrows should be returned.

454. **Àbb, delloo ca gën. (7)**

It is better to return that which is borrowed than to borrow.

Love

455. **Bëgg naa la, maa la raw mënu koo fey. (6)**

“I love you” is not repaid by “I love you more.”

It is not by saying “I love you more” that you can outdo the person who says first “I love you”.

456. **Xédd, dug bëgg. (11,12)**

Lust is not love.

“Love” based on lust is not real love.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV)

457. **Bëtub mbëggeel, jéll nab gàkk. (2,3,5,11,12)**

Bëtu mbëggeel jéll na ab gàkk. (6)

Bëti mbëggeel, jéll na gàkk. (19)

The eye of love passes over faults.

“Love is blind.”

The person who loves you ignores your faults and accepts you as you are, warts and all.

458. **Bëtu mbëggeel du gis melo. (9)**

Bëtub mbëggeel du xool melo. (19)

The eye of love does not see appearances.

“Love is blind.”

The eye of love does not take into account what you look like.

Luck

459. **Wërsëg dina jóge ci njoñ. (15,19)**

Opportunities can come from one's restraints.

One can learn good lessons by going through difficulties.

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11 NIV)

460. **Melax gaaw na, waaye yóbbuwul wërsëgu kàkkatar. (18,19)**

Melax a gën a gaaw, waaye du yóbbu wërsëgu kàkkatar. (7)

Gaaw taxul yelaana dunde wërsëgu kàkkatar. (2)

Lightning is certainly fast, but it does not take away the luck of a chameleon.

Adversity cannot stop the man who was born under a lucky star.

Regardless of the things he might deprive us of, a thief cannot deprive us of our luck or prevent us from knowing other opportunities.

461. *Tey yaw ëllëg sa moroom. (9,20)*

Today you, tomorrow your neighbour.

Your happiness of today could leave you tomorrow for another. That is why it is important to share with your neighbour.

Making Do

462. *Yaa fi sësay taxa donn/falu. (2,14,18)*

To be the last resort allows one to be elected.

“In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.”

When there are no alternatives one takes what one can, even if it be less than adequate.

463. *Dëkkub gumba patt a fay buur. (9)*

Dëkkub gumba, patt a fay njiit. (2)

In the city of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.

464. *Ku amul ndey, nàm̄p maam. (4,6,8,13,20)*

Ku amul yaay, nàm̄p maam. (2,18)

He who has no mother suckles on the breast of his grandmother.

“Half a loaf is better than no bread.”

“Beggars can't be choosers.”

“You have to cut your coat according to your cloth.”

If one cannot have everything which one desires, one should make the best of one's circumstances, and be content with what one can have.

Manipulation

465. *Bukki su la bëggee yapp, da la naan yaa ngi may xeeñi seel. (14)*

If the hyena wants to devour you, he will say to you that you smell to him like strips of dried meat.

When a person wants something from you (to his advantage and not yours), he will tell you things that support what he wants in order to manipulate you to do what he wants.

"It's no good, it's no good!" says the buyer; then off he goes and boasts about his purchase. (Proverbs 20:14 NIV)

Marabouts

466. *Bey ci sa toolu sëriñ bu doon maye barke kon seeni doom a cay jütu. (9)*

If cultivating the field of a marabout could bring blessing then you would see his children there first.

467. *Sëriñ du sàcc, dafa randal, ba ñu fàtte, mu jël. (13)*

The marabout does not steal; he merely puts it aside until no one thinks of it any longer, then he takes it.

Maures

468. *Bu naar sonnee wax i wolof. (2,3,6)*

When a Maure has problems he speaks Wolof.

When it is necessary a Maure will speak in Wolof.

469. *Lu Naar gis ci mbuusam, ba sànni ko, ku ko for it du am njeriñ. (20)*
What the Mauritanian has seen in his bag, and has thrown away, whoever picks it up again, will have no benefit.
A comment on the perceived stinginess of Mauritians.

Means

470. *Bala nga ne “naam”, ne fa. (2,6,8,9,14,19,20)*
Bala nga wuyu nekk fa. (4,13)
Bala nga naan naam, ne fa. (7)
Before you answer “yes”, you must be there.
To do something one has to have the means.
471. *Saaku bu deful dara du taxaw. (18,19)*
Saaku bu deful, du taxaw. (11,12)
An empty sack cannot stand upright.
One cannot put a lot of energy into a project without the means. Without a good material foundation any project is bound to fail.

Mercy

472. *Yërmande day wàññi doole. (14)*
Mercy makes one weak.

Merit

473. *Bu ñépp yemee, am ñu gedd seen cër. (7,9)*
Bu ñépp yemee, am ñu gedd seen wall. (15)
If one divides equally between all, there will be those who refuse their share.
One cannot put on the same level the worker and the idle; those who are knowledgeable and those who are ignorant; the traitor and the hero. Justice demands that each receives according to his merit.

Miserliness

474. *Kuy aaye xobu màngo, doo ca mayeeb doom. (2,6)*
The person who does not permit you to touch the leaves of the mango tree will not give you its fruit.
475. *Sakkantal du la taxa texe. (13)*
Being miserly will not cause you to be saved.
One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. (Proverbs 11:24 NIV)

Misfortune

476. *Dereti bopp du moy mbaggum boroom. (11,12)*
Deretu bopp, du moy mbagg. (20)
Deretu bopp, du moy mbagg moy baat. (2)
The blood which runs from the head will inevitably fall on the shoulders.
A misfortune which afflicts those close to us will also affect us.

477. *Picc mu lakk taat a fi gëna bëgg moroom. (6)*

Picc mu lakk bopp a gëna bëgg moroom. (2)

A bird with a burnt rump/head wants a fellow.

One does not like to be alone in misfortune.

Mistakes

478. *Njuumte du ñàkk, yàgg caa bon. (7,10,20)*

Mistakes will always happen. The bad thing is to persist in them.

Mocking

479. *Ku nekk ci xare warula ree ku ñu jam. (2,3,5,6,20)*

480. *Ku nekk ci biirub ndox, warula ree kuy lab. (12)*

479. Someone who is in a battle should not laugh at someone who has been stabbed.

480. Someone who is in the water should not laugh at the person who is drowning.

"People who live in glass houses should not throw stones."

One should not laugh at people in difficult situations as you never know when it might happen to you.

The friends of a young pregnant girl make fun of her. An elderly woman overhears them and cites this proverb.

Modesty

481. *Nebbon bi ci dënnu tuabéer, ba tax ko tëbëntu, mungi ci xàbban te mu ne tekk ak moom. (15)*

The hump of animal fat which hangs from the chest of the ram, and incites it to manifest its power is also found on the steer, which however remains calm.

Modesty is something to be valued. When one boasts of something whether it be knowledge, strength or fortune, there is always someone else who has far more yet without feeling the need to boast or show up the vanity of others.

[*tulaabéer* = race of sheep; *xàbban* = steer, (castrated bull)]

This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD. (Jeremiah 9:23-24 NIV)

Naivety

482. *Leketug kese, naxul i béy. (2,7,19)*

Leketu neen du naxu béy. (14,15)

An empty bowl will not trick a goat (into coming).

There are limits to naivety. One cannot let oneself be taken in by any old trap.

If you want someone to do something for you then you need to show them that you are genuine, not just use talk.

Name

483. *Sant dëkkul fenn. (2,3,20)*

The surname does not live anywhere.

The family name no longer allows one to know the origin (whether ethnic or geographical) of a person.

Nature

484. *Bant, lu mu yàgg yàgg cig dex, du tax mu soppiku jasig. (2,3,5,20)*

Yàggaayu bantu ron ci ndox, du ko tax a doon jasig. (11,12)

Bant, lu mu yàgg, yàgg ci dex, du ko tax a soppaliku jasig. (6)

No matter how long a log soaks in the river, it will never become a crocodile.

“A leopard cannot change its spots.”

One cannot change one's nature simply by imitation. This is often used in the context of changing culture. Learning Wolof language and culture will never be enough for a Westerner to become Wolof.

485. *Aw doj du yàgg géej ba tax mu doon aw jën. (7)*

A stone, no matter how long it spends in the ocean, will not become a fish.

“A leopard cannot change its spots.”

One cannot change one's nature simply by imitation.

486. *Golo ñaawul, baay ba la niru. (2,6,9,15,19)*

Bukki ñaawul, baay ba la niru. (14)

The monkey is not ugly; it simply resembles its father.

One should render to nature that which belongs to nature.

Need

487. *Ku jél rongooñ, siim cereem, bu ko ñaan ñeex. (4,6,13)*

Kuy jooy di bëse kenn du la ñaan am ñeex. (19)

Kuy jooy di siime du maye am ñeex. (11,12)

Someone who wets the couscous with her tears should not be asked for sauce.

There is no point in asking something from someone who has nothing. Someone who cannot meet his own needs, cannot meet the needs of others. He who does not have sufficient for himself is unlikely to give to others.

488. *Ku laaxul lekk, doo laax jaay. (2,8,9,20)*

Ku laaxul lekk, laaxtil jaay. (4,6,13)

Bala kenn di laax jaay, laax lekk. (7)

She who doesn't cook laax to eat, will not cook laax to sell.

Someone who is dying of starvation does not sell their food.

489. *Bala ngaa xam luw taat di jëriñ, mbate toog jotee. (2,3)*

Bala ngay xam li taat di jariñ, toog jot. (6,8)

Bala ngaa xam lu taat di jëriñ mbee jékki jotee. (20)

One only knows the value of the backside when one has to sit down.

A man leaves his village to go and live in the city. He abandons all contact with those of his age until the day he finds himself in need, and returns to the village. One of his old mates quotes him this proverb.

490. *Gor, bu ñàkke, fàttaliku bor. (6,15)*

When an honest man is in need, he remembers the debts that are owed to him.
When one is in need, one is forced to scrape the bottom of the barrel, and chase after all his outstanding debts.

491. *Mar du ma tax a naan póotit. (7,9)*

Mar du tax a naan am póotit. (12)

Bu la mar tax a naan póotit. (19)

My thirst is not a reason why I will drink the waste water from washing.

Even if one has nothing one must not steal or do wrong. Difficulties of life are not an excuse for bad behaviour.

*Better a poor man whose walk is blameless than a fool whose lips are perverse.
(Proverbs 19:1 NIV)*

*Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer knows
how to take warning. (Ecclesiastes 4:13 NIV)*

Neglect

492. *Alalu ku sàggan, ku farlu moo koy jariño. (7)*

The enthusiastic person will profit from the riches of the neglectful.

News

493. *Dég-dég amul i tànk, waaye jàll nam ndox. (2,3,6,20)*

Dég-dég amul i tànk, waaye dina jàll dex. (7)

News does not have feet but it will cross the river.

[*nam = na am*]

Nostalgia

494. *Namm reytil weer. (6)*

Nostalgia does not kill the month.

Nostalgia will not change the march of time.

Obviousness

495. *Tunguni du teew, ñu di ko nataal. (2,20)*

There is no need to draw a picture of a dwarf (to depict what one is like), if one is standing before you.

Things which are obvious do not need to be explained.

Opinion

496. *Wutinu xasin aminu ñeewin. (19)*

You are trying badly to get rich, while people gossip about you, but when you become rich, they will envy you.

Don't listen to those gossiping while you're doing your best to make it because they'll be the ones envying you once you succeed.

Opportunity

497. *Daw, ca ba ngay am i tànk. (2,7,11,12,16,20)*

Run while you still have legs.

“Strike while the iron is hot.”

To get up and go is better than waiting until it is too late.

498. *Ku bañ cébo nangum xaar. (18)*

He who turns his nose up at the first rains must wait.

“Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.”

The peasant who does not want to sow his field with the first rains must wait until the wet season is properly established. If you turn up your nose at the opportunity before you, you must have the patience to wait for another opportunity to present itself.

499. *Béy wéy na mbuus. (2,6)*

Béy wees na mbuus. (19)

Béy bi ñu yàpp, wees na mbuus. (13)

The goat has passed the bag.

The goat which has been devoured (by wild animals) is already past the point of being turned into a bag. In skinning the carcass of a goat if a slit is made on the chest it can no longer be made into a water bag. The occasion to use it as a bag has therefore passed. This time it is already too late for what one wants to do.

500. *Dund gu jeexagul, lu nekk xaj na ca. (6,7,11,12)*

Dund gu jeexagul, guddi gu bët setagul la, lu ne xaj na ca. (2)

Dund gu sotteegul, lu ne xaj na ca. (19)

While life has not yet finished all is still possible.

“While there is life, there is hope.”

501. *Baroom jur ci sa tool taxul nga yett güir. (6)*

Ku baroom jur ci sa tool, taxi la yett engu. (13)

The fact that an antelope gave birth in your field is not a reason to carve a bowl for milking (because she will not stay there).

One cannot always profit from an occasion.

Organisation

502. *Ku xëy tëdd, dinga gontoo daw. (18)*

The person who spends the morning in bed will spend the afternoon running around.

Good organisation is essential for success in work. It also has a wider sense that if one wastes one's youth, one will try and catch up as an adult often with pain.

At the age of 56 Alassane is having lots of problems finding a suitable wife, whereas his peers have been married for years. His friend and counsellor, the old Farba, quotes this proverb to help him understand that it would have been much easier to find a wife if he had begun looking before a certain age.

Patience

503. *Gan doxat la balaay reyee, dem. (20)*

A guest who farts, before it kills anyone, he will be gone.

Things which disturb you will not last for a long time.

504. *Ku muñ, muuñ. (2,3,6,7,8,9,19)*

He who is patient will smile.

All good things come to those who wait.

505. *Ku yàgg cib teen, baag fekk la fa. (2,3,5,6,7,8,9,14,15,18,19,20)*

The person who waits long enough at the well will eventually find a bucket to draw water with.

“All things come to those who wait.”

“Good things come to those who wait.”

506. *Lu waay muñ mu jeex. (12)*

What a person patiently endures will come to an end.

507. *Ndànk-ndànk mooy jàpp golo cib ñaay. (2,3,5,6,8,13,14,19,20)*

Little by little, one catches the monkey in the forest.

“Slow and steady wins the race.”

It is with little steps than one can achieve the big tasks.

508. *Koo ne duma la topp fa ngeen jëm dafa sorewul. (15)*

Boo nee nit duma ko topp, booba fa ngeen jëm soriwul. (7)

If you say to someone, “I will not follow up on you”, then where you are going together is not far away.

Patience has its limits. If you allow someone to do as they see fit it is only because you do not have to tolerate it for long.

Peace

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:27 NIV)
You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. (Isaiah 26:3 NIV)

Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble. (Psalms 119:165 NIV)

Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. (Psalms 34:14 NIV)

"There is no peace," says the LORD, "for the wicked." (Isaiah 48:22 NIV)

509. *Yoonu jàmm du wiir. (11,12,15)*

The way of peace is never winding.

The solution which solves the crisis and brings peace is usually the most simple. Peace is worth everything.

510. *Jàmm, ca la ñépp xaj. (2,15)*

Jàmm ci la lépp xaj. (14)

Everything is contained in peace.

Peace is the (only recipient) that all men can enter into and be at ease.

511. *Bakkan, jàmm la bëgg. (2,9)*

Bàkkan, jàmm lay laaj.

The soul aspires only to peace.

This proverb demonstrates the importance of peace in Wolof culture.

Peers

512. *Nawle, nit rekk ka ko sonnal. (20)*

There is no one that causes so much trouble as a peer.

David Maranz explains that this is understood to mean that the competition of the nawle forces a person to make uncomfortable or inconvenient efforts so as to not be left in an inferior position or fall behind in any way.

513. *Nit ku nekk àddina war na bàyyi xel nawleem. (20)*

Everyone in this world had better pay attention to his or her peer.

This mind-set results in extraordinary efforts to keep up with peers (“to keep up with the Joneses”) in dress, possessions, gift giving etc.

Perseverance

514. *Lu picc bare, bare, du teree ji dugub. (6,13)*

No matter how many birds there are, that will not prevent the sowing of millet.

Do not give up your project on the pretext of difficulties.

515. *Saan su baree, dal. (19)*

Throw many pebbles, and one will end up reaching the target.

“If at first you don't succeed try, try and try again.”

Pessimism

516. *Njort lu ñaaw dinay faral di wattu boroom. (18)*

Pessimism can guard its owner.

Pessimism and mistrust can prove to be beneficial. It can be useful to take into account the negative aspects of a situation in order to neutralise them.

Pleasure

517. *Tabaski du bés bu nekk. (18)*

Tabaski is not celebrated every day.

One cannot have pleasure all the time. Not every day is a special occasion. Life consists both of moments of joy as well as pain. This proverb is often used by fathers on the days when they do not bring home any treats, and the children complain.

Tabaski, when Muslims remember Abraham sacrificing his son, is the most important annual celebration in Senegal, of similar importance to Christmas in the West.

518. *Du bés bu nekk baay rey gaynde. (6)*

519. *Du bés bu ne baay ray nag. (14)*

520. *Du bés bu set baay rey mbëtt. (2)*

518. It is not every day that father kills a lion.

519. It is not every day that father kills a cow.

520. It is not every day that father kills a monitor lizard.

One cannot have pleasure all the time. Not every day is a special occasion. This proverbial expression is generally used lightly with amusement.

Politeness

521. *Ku yaru, falu. (1,6,15)*

The person who is polite will be elected.

“All doors are open to courtesy.”

Politeness brings respect.

522. *Sukk du tee yóbbu say wóom. (2,6,8,9,11,12,18,19,20)*

Kneeling will not prevent you leaving with your knees.

“Courtesy costs nothing.”

Humility and politeness do not take anything away from anyone. So you have nothing to lose from being polite, and showing your respect for the other person.

The proverb refers to the African traditional etiquette of genuflection or curtsy as a sign of respect.

Poverty

523. *Baadoolo dafay yemale bëgg-bëggam. (20)*

The poor must limit his desires.

524. *Kuy reere pann, boo woppee fande. (1,6,13)*

Whoever eats the leftovers from the night before for dinner, when you are sick you will go hungry that night.

If your means are limited when you are well, things will be even worse when you are sick.

525. *Baadoolo bu ragal naaj ragal na njariñam. (6,15)*

Baadoolo bu bañee naaj, bañ nak mbokkam. (1)

A peasant who fears the sun fears what is useful to himself.

A peasant who refuses to work under the sun, distances himself from the only means of escaping his poverty.

A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man. (Proverbs 6:10-11 NIV)

Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth. (Proverbs 10:4 NIV)

He who loves pleasure will become poor; whoever loves wine and oil will never be rich. (Proverbs 21:17 NIV)

He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son. (Proverbs 10:5 NIV)

Preparation

526. *Ku xarfa fuufawul, fuufa xarfa la. (15)*

He who fails to prepare, prepares to fail. [xarfa and fuufa have no meaning in Wolof.]

527. *Lu ni këtt, lu ne jonn a koy faj. (2,6,9,19)*

The unexpected can only be solved by what is on hand and available.

If you want to solve unexpected problems, you need to put something aside in advance.

Pretext

528. ***“Jàppal, ma yenni la”, du sawar laa yenni, waaye bēgga xam la nga yenu la. (2)***

Am na ku la ne “ma yen la” ; booba, la ca ndab la la bēgga gis. (6,13)

Am na ku la ne ma yen la, tey sa ndab la bēgg séet. (4)

“Hold on, let me help you put down the load on your head” does not come from a desire to help but rather to see what you are carrying.

When some offer their services to help you with what you are carrying on your head, they are only motivated to see what you are carrying.

Prevention

529. ***Aar moo gën faj. (20)***

Protection is better than treatment or cure.

530. ***Mag, day fāggandiku. (6)***

The wise will take precautions.

531. ***Ñag, bala ngay ruurle. (2,3,5,6)***

Enclose your field before the herds get in and devastate it.

“Prevention is better than cure.”

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

532. ***Fegoo gën faju. (7,9,11,12)***

Fāggoo gën faju. (19,20)

Fāggandiku moo gën a faju. (20)

Fagaru moo gën faju. (20)

“Prevention is greater than the cure.”

It is better to stop bad things from happening than trying to solve problems afterwards.

533. ***Nég ba jaan dem, nga topp ca watit way dóor. (2,3,6)***

Xaar ba jaan dem nga topp ca watit way dóor. (5)

Bàyyi nga jaan dóor watit wa. (15)

Bàyyi ba jaan wéy, nga topp ca watit wa di dóor. (7)

Bul bàyyi jaan ba mu dem, nga topp ca watit way dóor. (9)

Bul xaar ba jaan wéy ngay dóor ci watit wa. (14)

Wait until the snake has left then strike his track.

“It's too late to shut the stable door after the horse has bolted.”

Two friends, Awa and Ndey go to a jeweller. Ndey orders a piece of jewellery and pays a deposit. Two weeks later she returns to collect her jewellery, and the jeweller tells her he has no more gold and refuses to return her deposit. She tells Awa of her misadventure who says to her that she thought he looked dishonest and she should not have paid a deposit. Ndey exclaims “You could have told me earlier” and quotes this proverb.

534. ***Xoddiku bala ngay lakkle. (5,2,10,20)***

Xoddilu, ca ba nga lakkleegul. (6,11,12)

Clear the dry grass to prevent a fire before there is something burning.

“Prevention is better than cure.”

Pride

535. *Ku réy-réylu gaawa rus. (13)*

The proud are quickly put to shame.
“Pride comes before a fall.”

536. *Réy day sewloo nit. (19,20)*

Pride makes a man small.
When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.
(Proverbs 11:2 NIV)
Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.
(Proverbs 13:10 NIV)

Privilege

537. *Keppaarug ngunu jombul séq. (2,3,6)*

The shade of the chicken house does not exceed the merit of the rooster.
Such a privilege is completely natural to such a person.
A man had four wives who were not born in the same place, not brought up in the same manner, and did not behave in the same way towards him. To the wife who gave him the most respect, and held him in the highest regard, he gave the most happiness, and gave her secret favours which came from his heart. To the others who exasperated him, who did not follow his instructions he did not give the same favours. The other wives complained and he replied with this proverb.

Problem Solving

538. *Soppiw doxin jállulum tan. (19)*

Changing the way you walk, isn't of any help when it comes to crossing vast salinated lands.
One should not be making mistakes when choosing the means in solving problem cases.

Profiteering

539. *Fü, wund du fi naane ñeex. (2,3,6,20)*

Here the cat does not lap the sauce.
Opportunists have no chance here.
Ami likes to take advantage of others. She often borrows things or clothes which she forgets to return. And when she does the shopping for others, the prices on that day are always exceptionally high. One day she visits Faya and asks to borrow her good boubou. Faya who knows what she is like, refuses and quotes this proverb.

Proof

540. *Weddi, gis bokku ca. (2,6,7)*

One cannot deny what one has seen for oneself.
“Seeing is believing.”

541. *Werante xuuxaan, tekki tubéy. (2,6,14)*

Rather than arguing about a scrotal hernia, one should undo the pants.
Showing the proof puts an end to controversies.

542. **Weddi, boo gisee, gëm. (13,20)**

Weddil, soo gisee gëmal. (4)

Deny if you like, but when you see, believe.

“Seeing is believing.”

Prostitutes

543. **Caga, benn yoon la ñu koy nax. (2)**

Caga, kenn du ka nax ñaari yoon. (14)

No one deceives a prostitute twice.

“Once bitten, twice shy.”

“Experience is the best teacher.”

In your relations with people if you deceive them once you will find them closed to you in the future.

Protection

544. **Ku làqu ci ku ñu rus dinga raw. (18)**

545. **Sindax, ndaa lañu koy ruse. (18)**

544. He who hides behind someone whom people are ashamed to attack will escape.

545. If the lizard is safe from attack it is because of the water pot he is sitting on.

To attack a lizard on a water pot risks either breaking the pot or contaminating the water. It is at times strategic to count on protectors when in difficult situations. The cover of a person of influence or respect can sometimes be beneficial.

Provision

546. **Soo bëgg loo lekk nawet na nga di sakkantal ci noor. (13)**

If want to have something to eat during the wet season, then you need to be frugal during the dry season.

“Waste not, want not.”

Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer. (Proverbs 30:25 NIV)

Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. (Proverbs 6:6-8 NIV)

547. **Li béy doon dunde ba sax sikkim mën ca wéy ba dee. (20)**

Lu bëy daan dunde ba sax sikkim, man na kaa dunde ba, xëy dee. (9)

The food which has sustained the billy goat to the point where it sprouts its beard is sufficient to continue to sustain it until death.

One should be careful about despising the work that has sustained one until now by entering into something else which might be worse.

Provocation

548. **Tooñ du gàllaaj. (6)**

Provocation is not a protection.

Proximity

549. *Dendaale bu doon jariñ, dugub, xob yaa koy laalo. (2,3)*

Su dendale doon jariñ, dugub, xob yaa koy laalo. (6)

If proximity was sufficient to be of use to something, then the millet would use its own leaves to thicken the couscous. People or things that are close are not always in your proper interest.

[Laalo is a vegetable powder made from the leaves of baobab trees which binds couscous to make it sticky and therefore easy to swallow.]

Adam and Mary were born and grew up next door to each other. They love each other and want to marry. However Adam belongs to a caste. Adam's parents think that the good situation of their son will break down the customary social barriers. So they send a delegation to Mary's parents to ask for her hand in marriage. The delegation reminds them of their long-standing friendship, and close proximity as neighbours, and of the fact that the couple have known each other since childhood, so it would be best to allow them to marry. However Mary's father responds brutally with this proverb.

Prudence

550. *Béy du raas déemi guddi. (2,6)*

The goat does not glean jujubes (red dates) at night.
One should not head off for adventures.

551. *Bul mere ka la yakkal ci gaalu xaj, boo ca lekkul mu jar ko. (15)*

Do not be angry with the person who serves you a dog's bowl. It is sufficient to refuse to touch it.

552. *Def loo man, wax loo xam, boo téddee nelaw. (2,7,8,9,15,17)*

Do only what you are capable of, speak only of what you know, and you will sleep soundly when you go to bed.

If one is content to live within one's means, and only speak of what one knows for sure, one will live in peace and happiness.

553. *Gumba tal na leneen lu dul tëb i teen. (2,15,16)*

Gumba tal na lu dul tëb i kàmb.

Gumbaa ngaak yitte yu dul tëb i teen. (19)

A blind man has other things to do apart from jumping around a well.

Prudence before certain acts to be accomplished is all the more important when the smallest mistake can lead to a catastrophe.

554. *Jaan du tuut, saayu mattee boom. (15)*

The smallness of a snake does not prevent its bite being fatal.
One must never minimise a danger.

555. *Kenn du wax lu mu xamul. (4)*

No one should say that which he knows not.

556. *Nëbbul te ne gisuma kenn, waaye bul wax ne kenn gisu ma. (15)*

Hide yourself and say, "I do not see anyone", but don't say, "No one can see me".

As well as you might hide your actions from others, the eye of society is watching through cracks that you do not suspect. And your actions will become known and commented on.

557. *Kenn du toog ci bàngaas di ko gor. (6)*
 No one cuts the branch on which he is sitting.
 “Don't cut your nose off to spite your face.”
558. *Kenn du boole say nen yépp ci genn leket. (6)*
 No one puts all his eggs in the same calabash.
 “Do not put all your eggs in one basket.”
559. *Ku sol tubéyu nékk du jaaru. (6,13)*
 The person who wears pants of animal fat will not need to warm himself up.
 In certain situations, one does not take risks.
560. *Ni ñuy def saa njëkk kenn du ko def saa béjjén. (20)*
 That which one dares to do to a sheep without horns, one would never think of doing to a ram with horns.
561. *Bëréb bukkeek mbaam yàgg-yàgg mbaam ay dee. (12)*
Bëréb bukkeek mbaam. (2)
 In a wrestling match between an hyena and a donkey, eventually the donkey will die.
 The weak will always be overcome by the strong, so they should not fight with them.
562. *Bët du gis la koy fatt. (9,16,20)*
Bët, la koy fatt, du ko gis. (2,8,19)
 Something which gets into the eye, the eye cannot see.
 The things that you do sometimes come back at you with consequences that you do not expect. Therefore you should be careful in all that you do.
But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out. (Numbers 32:23 NIV)
563. *Làmbi bukki, béy du ca wàlli. (2,3,5)*
Béy du wàlli ci sabarug bukki. (19)
 The place where the hyenas put on a wrestling match is not an event for a goat to attend.
 Lamin is travelling far from home. Someone offers him a place to stay and tells him how to get there. But Lamin gets lost and asks an old man the way. The man is surprised that Lamin has the intention of passing the night there as the family has the reputation of being sorcerers. To try and persuade Lamin not to go there he cites this proverb.
 Rama is very proud to have received her first pay check. On her way home she stops to window-shop. Now being late she takes a shortcut along an infamous street where someone snatches her bag. She arrives home crying and tells her father the story. He cites this proverb.
564. *Boroom caq war nay moytu boroom baatub neen. (2)*
Boroom caq day moytu boroom yoqeel. (14)
 The owner of a necklace should beware of him who has a bare neck.
 One should be wary of one's company, especially the person in need.
565. *Suuxlu mbër, làng ak moom a ko gën, muy bëre di daan ngay ree. (20)*
 It is better to be on the same side as a champion than against him. If you are on his side you can rejoice in his victories.
 “Discretion is the better part of valour.”

566. ***Duma jënd jaan ci pax. (2)***

Duma jënd jaanum pax. (20,16)

Duma jënd jaar ci pax. (3,6,20)

Duma jënd janaxi pax. (19)

I will not buy a snake / ground squirrel / rat in a hole.

“Never buy a pig in a poke.”

I won't buy what I have not seen. Show me first before I buy.

567. ***Daw ba rëcc, ci ngóora la bokk. (2,15)***

Daw ba raw, ci ngóora la bokk. (4,12,13)

To succeed in escaping by running away as fast as one can is also part of heroism.

“He who fights and runs away, may live to fight another day.”

“He fights well that fleeth well.”

“Discretion is the better part of valour.”

It is wise to avoid needless rashness which could expose you to unnecessary danger.

568. ***Kooyi bukki du njoowaanug tef. (2,3,18)***

Kooyu bukki du njoowaanug tef. (6)

The penis of an hyena is not a swing for a kid (baby goat).

“Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

No matter how bold one is, one must know how to measure the recklessness of certain actions.

When the mother of John explained that John was more turbulent at home than at school due to the severity of his teacher, she used this proverb.

An old man known for his harshness had a mango orchard behind the village. After school the kids headed to the orchard to pinch the fruit. One day, the grandfather of one of the students surprised his grandson in the orchard and in warning cited this proverb.

569. ***Ku ndóbin rey sa maam, foo séenati lu ñuul, daw. (2,3,5,6)***

Ku ndóbin rey sa maam, foo séene lu ñuul war a daw. (19)

Ku ndobin rey sa maam boo séenée lu ñuul daw. (7,18)

Ku ndóbin ray sa maam, boo gisee lu ñuul wara daw. (9)

If a ground hornbill killed your grandfather, when you see something black you will flee.

“Once bitten, twice shy.”

570. ***Kuy jaay tamaate doo bëre : boo ca dëggee mu toj. (2,3,6,20)***

Kuy jaay kamaate doo bëre : boo ca dëggee mu toj.

Someone who sells tomatoes should not wrestle as he risks squashing his tomatoes by stepping on them.

If you do not have a firm hold on what you have, you should be careful about doing anything which could risk what you have. One should always be honest.

A certain man starts a business which is at first successful. He begins to live above his means, going out on the town each night with friends having had homes in desirable locations for a long while. His cousin seeing what he is doing advises him that all his actions should bring wealth not consume it, and he cites this proverb.

571. **Mag, lu dal xelam a koy may yaram. (2,15)**

Mag, lay dalam xelam, moo koy may yaram. (19)

It is only that which brings peace of mind which can permit him to put on weight.

Only that which inspires inner confidence will permit a person to develop personally. Take sufficient precautions and not make commitments beyond one's capabilities in order to live without too much worry, but rather with a tranquil and calm spirit.

*A man's spirit sustains him in sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear?
(Proverbs 18:14 NIV)*

572. **Su ñu la séddee ci gaalu xaj itam, nanga fexe ba bu ca lekk. (2)**

Mën nañu la yekkal ci gaalu xaj, waaye bu ca lekk. (6)

Su ñu la yakkalee ci gaalu xaj, fexeel ba bu ca lekk. (6)

Ku la sédd ci gaalu xaj, bu mu fekk nga cay lekk. (18)

If they serve you a dog's bowl, make sure you do not eat from it.

People can credit you with a bad reputation but don't act in a way that proves them right.

Do not give he who denigrates you an opportunity to make fun of you. It is often used when one wants to put someone on guard against traps put out by his detractors.

Proud men have hidden a snare for me; they have spread out the cords of their net and have set traps for me along my path. Selah (Psalms 140:5 NIV)

Free me from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge. (Psalms 31:4 NIV)

573. **Ñu yemul i lor, duñu mëqandoo sunguf. (2,3,4,6,13)**

Mëqandoo sunguf koo yemal i lor. (11,12,18)

Those who do not have the same amount of saliva do not compete to eat flour.

“Cut your cloth according to your coat.”

To face a rival it is best to have the same advantages as he. In life it is always essential to know one's capabilities and one's limits before starting something.

Anta is a young school girl who would like to participate in a holiday program organised by her school. The program costs 9,000 cfa and all her companions have already registered and paid the fee. She begs her mother to give her the money. Her mother replies with this proverb to remind her of their modest situation.

Mawa is a poor farmer. In spite of his meagre earnings, he invites all of his village and half of the next village to a celebration of the birth of his latest child. To pay for this he borrowed more than he could ever repay on time. He goes to find his principal creditor to ask him to be patient. The man rebukes Mawa for imitating those who are richer than he, quoting this proverb.

574. **Raay gaynde, dee fa yomb na. (11,12)**

Raay gaynde dee fa, ku nekk mën na ko. (19)

To stroke a lion and die there is easy.

It is easy to get into something that is beyond you. To get out of it again with honour is difficult.

575. **Wànnent ku mu bàyyi say bët nga bàyyiy bëtam. (19)**

Wànnent ku mu bàyyi say get nga wara bàyyi yosam. (20)

If conjunctivitis leaves your eyes intact, you should leave its eyes alone as well.

“Let sleeping dogs lie.”

“Don't beard a lion in his den.”

If someone stronger than you leaves you alone, you should leave him alone. Don't disrupt a situation that is going well as it will only lead to problems.

576. *Xalu ndéef gëmm na, waaye feyul. (18,19)*

Xalu ndéef gëmm na, ne feyul. (9)

The embers of cow dung are covered by ash but they do not go out.

“Don't think still water has no crocodiles.”

A fire hides its embers below a layer of ash waiting for the unsuspecting to put in their hand. In other words appearances can be deceptive, so care is necessary in every situation.

Rejection

577. *Bañ loo mënula wàññi dara, mook bëgg yem. (1,13)*

To refuse what you cannot stop is the same as agreeing.

578. *Bëgg ju sañul feeñe, mook bañaale yem. (1)*

A desire which one cannot manifest is the same as rejection.

579. *Ku bañ lu baax, lu bon nga bëgg. (2)*

Whoever rejects the good wants evil.

Relationships

580. *Bala kenn mën a làq ñeme li lay dàq. (20)*

Before someone can protect you, he must have the courage to face that which is chasing you.

581. *Bala ngay wut alal, na nga wut nit ñi. (18)*

Seek friendship above wealth.

Human relations are far more precious than worldly wealth.

582. *Boo yëkkëtee ab loxo ne yëguma kenn, yëkkëtil beneen bi ne kenn yëgu ma. (20)*

When you raise your hand and it says “I respect no one”, the other will say “No one respects me.”

When someone doesn't give a damn about anyone, he should know that in principle, no one gives a damn about him.

583. *Bul def jaambur loo beggul mu def la ko. (20)*

Do not do to your neighbour what you do not want him to do to you.

Do to others as you would have them do to you. (Luke 6:31 NIV)

584. *Cuuj, su woomalee, beru. (2,3,5,6,9)*

Once a chick has found something to eat, it goes off on its own.

Alfa, an older distinguished man, is often called to the office of the regional administrator, who sometimes even asks him to accompany him on his trips throughout the region, because Alfa knows many people and speaks several local languages. In the village, his friends note that since he has become a VIP, they hardly ever see him at the village meeting place in the evenings. One of them jokes saying they are not longer good enough for him. Another goes one up on this by quoting this proverb.

585. *Duma bëgg lu la neex ba ne la Yàllaa ngi lay nuyu. (6,15)*

I do not want to please you to the point of telling you that God greets you.

As much as we might desire to please someone, there are limits which one cannot cross.

586. **Ku la tooñ, bul feyyu. (13)**

Do not repay him who does you harm.

Do not say, "I'll pay you back for this wrong!" Wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you. (Proverbs 20:22 NIV)

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. (Matthew 5:38-41 NIV)

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse... Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:14, 17-21 NIV)

587. **Ku bëgg ku la дума, tooñal ku la mën. (2)**

If you want to be beaten up, then offend someone who is stronger than you.

588. **Ku am nit ñi, ñàkkoo dara. Ku ñàkk nit ñi, amoo dara. (2,15)**

Whoever has friends lacks nothing. Whoever does not have friends does not have anything.

It is through relationships with others that our needs are met and our potential is able to develop.

589. **Lépp a ngi ci nit ñi. (19)**

Everything is with people.

You should have as many friends as you can in order to be able to solve any problem you'll have in the future.

590. **Lu waay ñàkk, waayam a ko amul. (2,3,5)**

If an individual lacks something, it is because his friend does not have it.

Friends share their belongings. Between two friends, if one of them is missing something, it is because the other doesn't have it either.

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. (Proverbs 17:17 NIV)

591. **Néew, bu rombeey armeel, robam dootul neex. (2,3,6)**

The burial of a corpse, once it has bypassed the cemetery, will no longer be easy.

An uncle asks his nephew to give him a bag of rice. The nephew told him that he could not. A little while later the nephew loaned money to a neighbour. The uncle learnt of this, and being very unhappy he went to find his nephew and told him this proverb.

592. **Su àndub ñaar yàggee, kenn a muñ. (6,15)**

If two people manage to keep company for a long time, it is certain that one of them has been patient.

It is patience and tolerance which permits long term relationships.

593. *Nit, nit ay garabam. (2,6,7,8,15,18,20)*

The best medicine for a person is another person.

People are important...you can't solve everything yourself.

The most precious treasure on earth is not riches but relations with other people.

In Senegal the number of relatives, friends and neighbours who attend events such as naming ceremonies, weddings, funerals etc demonstrates the respect that one has.

A well off man who prepares a feast with great pomp and finds himself alone with his food will understand that he should have paid more attention to developing relationships.

594. *Ku amul i mbokk, amuloo dara, doo dara.*

He who has no relations has nothing and is nothing.

Mbokk in this proverb is in the broader sense of the word and includes relations of all sorts, blood or otherwise. The Wolof place a high value on relationships. The more relationships a person has, the greater his importance and respectability.

595. *Ña bokk lël, def ñu di ànd ba moos. (13)*

Those who shared the same circumcision group become friends for life.

596. *Ñu bokk teen ñooy laxasooy goj. (2,3,5,6,12)*

It is those who share the same well who tangle their ropes.

The houses of Moussa and Badara are adjoining. The two families — especially the children — are always fighting with much noise, shouts and arguing. Their closest neighbour one day asks Moussa the cause of their frequent fights. Moussa smiles and quotes this proverb.

597. *Bala ngaa toj gëmmiñu sàmm dangay xam la mu waliis. (2)*

Bala ngay fé! gëmmiñu sàmm, nga xam lu mu waliis. (20)

Bul fé! gëmmiñug sàmm te xamoo la muy waliis. (19)

Balaa ngaa toj gëmmiñu sàmm, xaaral ba xam la mu waliis. (15)

Balaa ngaa pes gëmmiñu sàmm xam lu mu waliis. (9)

Bala ngaa mbej Samba, xamal la muy waliis. (14)

Bala ngaa toj gëmmiñu sàmm, na nga xam lu mu waliis. (13)

Before you slap the shepherd on the mouth, you should find out what he is whistling.

Do not be rash in judging people. You should avoid accusing people before listening to their side of the story, or you are likely to be mistaken in your judgement.

598. *Dëmm rey la, jaale la. (2,3,6,9,11,12).*

Dëmm rey la ba noppi jaale la. (5)

The vampire kills you and then comes to pay his condolences.

Someone can do you harm (behind your back), then come and sympathise with you (in hypocrisy).

599. *Fakk naa laa gën a masuma laa gis. (20)*

Fakk na la, moo gën xamuma la. (4)

'I have forgotten your name' is better than 'I have never seen you before'.

600. *Bëñ ak làmmiñ ñoo dëkk, bés bu set dañuy xuloo, waaye dañuy jubóowaat. (2)*

Làmmiñ ak bëñ a dëkk. (19)

Teeth and tongue live together.

People living closely can quarrel but in the end they have to make peace.

601. **Réeroo amul, ñàkk a waxtaan a am. (6,8,19,20)**

Mbañ amul, ñàkk waxtaan a am. (15)

Ñàkk a juboo amul, ñàkk waxtaan a am. (2)

Ñàkk déggoo amul, ñàkk waxtaan a am. (7)

There is no such thing as a misunderstanding; there has simply been a lack of discussion.

Misunderstandings occur when people do not talk.

602. **Mbaxana moo teg sa bopp jekku ca, bul ko teg ci boppu keneen. (15)**

Mbaxana moo natt ci sa bopp, jekku ca, bu ko natt ci sa boppu nawle. (4,6,13)

If you do not consider that the hat on your head is appropriate, do not place it on the head of another.

Do not confer on someone else what you consider to be bad for yourself.

603. **Paaka bi lay rendi, sa waay a koy daas, jox la. (6)**

Paaka bi lay rey, say mbokk a koy daas. (7,20)

The knife which slits your throat was sharpened by your friend, and given to you. Your best friend could be the instigator of your misfortune.

604. **Kuy tëru, kuy teggee ca aay. (2,3,6,7,11,12,14,18,19)**

Tëru teggee ca aay. (15,16)

The best way to protect yourself against someone lying in wait for you is to take a different way to him.

The best way to respond to a menace is to avoid encountering it. If someone tries to offend you, it is best to avoid a conflict by maintaining an honourable conduct. Rather than responding with violence to someone who puts an obstacle in your path, it is best to go around the obstacle.

Repentance

605. **Gannaaw dee ga, tuub wees na. (13)**

After death, it is too late to repent.

Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment. (Hebrews 9:27 NIV)

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' (Luke 16:19-26 NIV)

Responsibility

606. *Balaa nga dundal ña ca mbedd ma nga dundal ña ca kër ga. (20)*

Before you feed those on the street, feed those in your house.

“Charity begins at home.”

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Timothy 5:8 NIV)

607. *Gàcce rey na xaj fa béy di mätte gan. (2)*

Shame killed the dog where the goat bit the guest.

Each person in a household or company has his responsibilities. If he neglects them so that others end up doing them he should be ashamed. This proverb is used to rebuke people when they do not fulfil their responsibilities.

608. *Bu bëy dàqee ab sàcc ci kër, xaj war naa rus. (11,12)*

Bu bëy dàqeeb sàcc ci kër, xaj war naa rus.

When the goat chases away a thief from the house, the dog should be ashamed.

Each person in a household or company has his responsibilities. If he neglects them so that others end up doing them he should be ashamed. This proverb is used to rebuke people when they do not fulfil their responsibilities.

609. *Ku tëb ak ay sabaar, dal ak ay gub, soo ko jëlulee it, yow lañu koy jiiñ. (4,6,13)*

Ku tëb ak i sabaar, daanu ak i gub, su nga leen lekkul, koon it ñu jiiñ la leen.

If you jump with sheaths of millet, and land with several ears, even if you have taken nothing, you will be accused.

For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men. (2 Corinthians 8:21 NIV)

Restitution

610. *Gàtt-geen, gàtt-geen a koy fey. (6,15)*

Ngatt geen, ngatt geen-a koy fey.

An animal with a short tail must be reimbursed by an animal with a short tail.

One must recompense another the exact value of the loss. This proverb refers to one of the stories of the hare and hyena.

Righteousness

611. *Saay-saay ñemewul ku jub.*

The bandit dreads the righteous person.

Rights

612. *Sàmm sañ naa maye meew, wànte sañula maye aw sèllu. (2,3,4,5,6,13)*

The shepherd has the right to offer milk but he does not have the right to offer a calf.

An employee was generously distributing office materials to his friends to the point where his supervisor noticed. He called him in and rebuked him, quoting this proverb.

[Traditionally a shepherd was not paid, but he had the right to profit from the milk from the morning, with the evening's milk going to the owners.]

613. **Boroom tubéy, bu jàngoo, sol. (2,3,9)**

Boroom tubéy saayu jàngoo sol. (11,12)

The owner of pants, after washing his feet, can wear them.

The owner has precedence to use what he owns.

The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. (2 Timothy 2:6 NIV)

614. **Jinne su béggee daqaar, ku yéeg daanu. (2,3,5,15)**

Bu jinne béggee daqaar, ku yéeg daanu. (6,9,11,12,14)

When the djinn wants a tamarind, whoever climbs (the tamarind tree) will fall.

One should not compete for something with someone who has a right to the object in question.

The person who owns something has precedence over its use.

Masylla had promised to loan his donkey to his neighbour. But at the last minute his father-in-law turned up also wanting to borrow the donkey, and Masylla was obliged to give it to him. Embarrassed, Masylla goes to his neighbour to explain the situation and for an excuse quotes this proverb.

[The tamarind tree is reputed to be a favourite haunt of evil spirits.]

615. **Seet seet du tere boroom alal jél alalam. (20)**

Coveting what you see will not stop the owner taking what he owns.

“You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife. You shall not set your desire on your neighbour’s house or land, his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.” (Deuteronomy 5:21 NIV)

Risk

616. **Fu nag nekk, bukki dee fa. (4,6,8,13)**

Where the cows are, it is there that the hyena dies.

Excessive greed leads the hyena into dangerous situations, i.e. encounters with bulls and herdsmen.

617. **Lu waay jéemul du ko mën. (17)**

No one can do anything if he does not try.

“Well begun is half done.”

If you do not try you will not succeed.

618. **Su may dee, ci àll, gayndee may rey ! (2,3,5,6,20)**

Kuy dee ci àll na la gaynde rey. (14)

If I must die in the bush, let it be a lion which kills me.

“One might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb.”

“In for a penny, in for a pound.”

The cashier of a company embezzled 110,000 cfa. He was arrested and sentenced to five years in prison. A friend went to visit him and said that he found it ridiculous that he allowed himself to be caught for so small a sum, that if it was him he would not risk prison for anything less than one million. And he quoted this proverb.

It is also used to refer to someone with a high social rank who lowers himself to frequent those below his rank.

619. ***Ku bëreey daan. (7,19,20)***

He who wrestles, wins.

“Nothing ventured, nothing gained.”

Ruin

620. ***Sëb, la ko bënn a nga ca biir. (11,12,19)***

Sëb la, la ko bënn a nga ca biir. (2)

Sëb, li ko mbët a ngi ci biir. (9)

Beans – that which makes holes in them is already inside.

Many things which are ruined already had the source of ruin within but you could not see it.

“For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.” (Romans 7:19 NIV)

Rumours

621. ***Mbamb reyul weer. (2)***

Mbamb reytil weer. (19)

Public rumours don't last the month.

People will gossip about an event for a while then forget about it.

Satisfaction

622. ***Bu reer doon doy, reeri daaw ya doy. (2,20)***

If a man could be satisfied with his meal, he would be satisfied by those from last year.

One is never satisfied with one's lot.

Self-control

623. ***Ngor moo di lekk suurul, mu jógi. (1)***

Ngor moo di lekk suuruloo nga jóg.

Integrity eats but not until full, then leaves the table.

Integrity only provides the natural self that which is strictly necessary.

624. ***Njullit moo di naan màndiwul, mu bàyyi. (1)***

Piety drinks but not until one's thirst is quenched, then leaves it.

The pious person does not know excess.

625. ***Bukki, balaa baax, yooy. (6)***

Bukki, balaa baax, mu yooy. (13)

It is only when the hyena is wasted that he is gentle.

Someone who has trouble controlling his desires is better off if he does not have the means to get into trouble.

Self-evaluation

626. *Bët du yenu, waaye xam na lu bopp àttan. (2,3,5,6,8,9,10,15,19,20)*

Bët du yenu, waaye xam na lu bopp antan. (6)

Bët du yenu, wande lu bopp àttan xam na ko. (4,13)

The eye does not carry a load, but it knows what the head is capable of carrying.
Everyone is able to judge for himself what his own capabilities are.

Self reliance

627. *Manees na laa takkal jabar, yóbbul la ko ci sa néeg, waaye il ci des, yow rekk a ko mana def. (6,15)*

One can give you a wife, and bear all the costs to bring her to your home, but the rest only you can do.

One must learn to depend on oneself, because there will always be situations where one is obliged to deal with a difficulty on one's own.

628. *Ku ñaan ñàkk, boo jëndee am. (2,15)*

Ku ñaan ñàkk, boo jëndee moom. (11,12)

What you cannot obtain by begging you will be able to obtain if you pay the price.

One should rely on oneself, not others, and maintain one's independence through hard work. What one earns for oneself is always better than what one is given.

629. *Lu la waay maye kon jën, na la ko jàngale napp moo gën. (12)*

As good as it is for your friend to give you fish, it is even better for him to teach you to fish.

“Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”

Shame

630. *Gàcce bu reyul semmal. (9)*

When shame does not kill you, it does at least harm you.

631. *Mbañ gâce. (9)*

Avoid shame.

632. *Bët bu rusul, toj. (2,7,9,11,12,19)*

Bët bu rusul, tuuru. (15)

The eye which is not sensitive to shame will explode.

In Wolof society, shame and scruples are the most important factors which condition an individual to submit to the moral and social values of the culture. The person who is not controlled by a sense of shame will inevitably fall in ruin or debauchery.

Sharing

633. *Ku amul bopp, na am ay tank. (6,13)*

He who does not have the head (of the sheep) should at least receive a foot.

He who does not receive the best parts should at least receive something.

Sleep

634. *Bët, bu reerul añ. (2,8)*

The eye which doesn't dine, must lunch.

"You can't burn the candle at both ends."

If you don't get enough sleep during the night you must make it up during the day.

Slyness

635. *Lu jinne màggat màggat, dese ɲelaju bu jommal gone. (2,3,5,6)*

Lu jinne màggat màggat, dese regeju bu jommal ndaw. (2)

A djinn, no matter how old it is, is still capable of making faces that panic children. Experience will triumph over strength.

Bismi Ndoeye, a wrestler in his nineties, attracted by the importance of the stakes, accepts a challenge to confront Bori Diouf, a young wrestler who is a champion in all categories, in a wrestling match. Following the signal to start the match, Bismi refused contact with his adversary, all the time playing the clown, doubling over towards the crowd with laughter. Eventually Bori is exasperated and forces Bismi to fight hand to hand. Bismi gets a good grip, and at the moment when Bori wants to unbalance him, he sticks a finger in the bottom of his back. Bori jumps and Bismi trips him up and thus gets the victory. Bori complains to the umpire who did not see anything, to no avail. At the moment of the final accolade after the match, Bismi whispers this proverb into the ear of Bori.

[ɲeleju = to make faces at someone with the goal of offending or demoralising them.

regeju = to roll one's eyes in an expressive manner.]

Small things

636. *Tepp-tepp ay yóbbu cim xuus. (11,12)*

Tepp-tepp ay indim xuus. (2)

Tepp-teppal mooy indi xuus. (20)

A small puddle will lead to wading through water.

"From little streams, great rivers are formed."

"Tall oaks from little acorns grow."

"Many a mickle make a muckle."

One should not despise small things. They can end up being very important.

"Who despises the day of small things?" (Zechariah 4:10 NIV)

Society

637. *Ku amul kilifa, jinne doon sa kilifa ! (2,7,9,15,20)*

Ku nanguwul nit yilif la, jinne doon sa kilifa. (8,19)

He who does not take a human being as his (religious) teacher, the devil will be his teacher.

This stresses the role of society in moulding the individual and establishing moral values. Anyone who rejects submission to the values of society will inevitably end up in debauchery.

"You will say, 'How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly.'" (Proverbs 5:12-14 NIV)

Solutions

638. *Bala ngay tuufu, teppalil. (6,13)*

Before you put drops in your eye, separate the eyelids.
“Don't put the cart before the horse.”
One should not do things in the wrong order.

639. *Ñàkk pexe, pexe la. (2,9,19)*

Even the wildest of solutions is a solution.

640. *Pexe du jeex. (2)*

There are no end of solutions.

641. *Dindi, loo fa defoon a ca gën. (2)*

Dindi, la nga defoon a ca gën. (19)

It's easier to undo yourself what you have already done.
It takes less time to solve a problem that you already know the solution to.

Spirits

642. *Guddi am na boroom. (2,3,5,7,12)*

The night has a master.

The night belongs to supernatural beings.

This proverb is used for those who scorn the popular belief that djinn inhabit the night and therefore it is unwise to be out late at night or leave before the predawn call of the mosque.

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—” (Hebrews 2:14 NIV)

“And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” (Colossians 2:15 NIV)

Status

643. *Jëkk a fecc taxul a mujjeb géew. (2,11,12,19,20)*

Being the first dancer doesn't mean you'll be the last dancer in the circle.

To be the first to do something does not mean that you are better or more important than others. You can lead in a group but that doesn't mean you're going to be the only leader.

[*mujjeb géew = mujje ab géew*]

Stranger

644. *Doxandéem nelawul ba yàndoor. (6)*

A stranger does not sleep soundly.

Success

645. **Bukki bu daanee ponkal ca doxin wa la. (15)**

Bukki, bu songee ponkal ca doxin wa la. (2)

646. **Bu bukki dabee gaynde, ca doxin wa la. (9)**

Bukki su yabee gaynde ca doxin wa la. (14)

If an hyena manages to defeat a giant/lion it is because of his (imposing) appearance.

Mamoussé Diagne explains that the hyena is an animal characterised by cowardice. How does a coward defeat a giant? When the giant deprecates himself so much that the hyena has the courage to attack. When a person acts in a way that is unworthy then he sets himself up to be defeated by anyone who comes along. When you lie down somewhere, it is your own fault if people step on you.

An imposing or frightening appearance can contribute to the success of a venture.

“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” (1 Peter 5:8 NIV)

Suffering

647. **Boroom lal a xam i mättam. (2,6,13,20)**

Tëddji lal, moo xam ay mättam. (11,12)

Boroom lal a xam mättu lalam. (7)

The owner of a bed is best placed to speak of his bedbugs.

“Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in his shoes.”

Only the person who experiences suffering knows the pain.

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15 NIV)

Superiority

648. **Garab gu la sutul, du la may ker. (4,9,14,15,19)**

A tree, if it is not taller than you, won't give you shade.

Meaning, before you can teach someone or help someone, you must first have something you have learned to offer them which will help them. Someone who has not surpassed you in some domain cannot help you.

649. **Ku la sut nee ko njool mi. (14,15)**

Ku la sut, nga ne ko njool mi. (4,6,12,13)

You should call someone who is taller than you “tall”.

You should admit it when someone is better than you, and fall behind him in the areas where he surpasses you.

650. **Ku la jëkka yeewu ne la sàngul. (2,15)**

Ku la jëkka yeewu, ne la sàngal say taat. (8)

The one who wakes up before you will tell you to cover your butt.

If someone has an advantage over you, he will manipulate you. Someone who applies himself better than you, or has been working longer than you, who has contributed more than you ends up with results or experience that you don't have. He therefore gains the authority to highlight your insufficiencies if necessary.

651. *Lu la sutul, du la mana may ker.* (18)

Lu la sutul manu laa keral. (11,12)

Someone who is not taller than you cannot give you shade.

Someone who is not better off than you cannot help you. If you want a protector you have to seek someone who is more powerful than you are.

Surprise

652. *Lu la bett, mën la.* (2,3,6)

Anything which takes you by surprise is stronger than you.

Tact

“Tact is ability to see others as they wish to be seen.”

653. *Lu la mar mayul, mätt du la ko may.* (2,3,6,20)

654. *Lu la yar ak teggin mayul, leneen du la ko may.* (6,15)

655. *Lu bëñ bu weex mayewul bu xuur du ko maye.* (19)

656. *Lu la raay mayul, wokk du la ko may.* (19)

653. Whatever you cannot get by licking you will not get by biting.

654. What you cannot get with politeness and courtesy, you will not get by any other means.

655. What you don't get with a nice smile, you won't get with a grim one.

656. Whatever you cannot get by caresses you will not get by scratching.

“Honey catches more flies than vinegar.”

Tact and diplomacy are the only successful means of influencing people. Whatever you cannot get by kindness, diplomacy, politeness and courtesy you will not get through violence, or meanness.

Kumba asks her husband, Modu for 110,000 cfa in order to buy a bracelet. He tells her that it will not be possible for 19 months. However she thinks that the delay is just an excuse. For a whole week she is extremely nice but speaks every time of the bracelet. When her goodness does not shake up the resolution of Modu, she loses the passion she had during the evenings of the previous week, then she becomes positively cold, and then aggressive. Seeing their harmony deteriorating Modu finishes by telling her this proverb.

Talk

657. “*Ayca nañu ko def*” joo gis, “*ayca nañu ko wax*” a ko jiiitu. (2)

“*Ayca nañ(u) ko def*” joo gis, “*ayca nañ(u) ko waxtaanee*” wara jiiitu. (2)

“*Na nu def*” joo gis, “*na nu wax*” a ko jëkk. (16)

Every “Let us do it” that you hear was preceded by “Let us talk”.

Action should be preceded by discussion and agreement.

658. *Ku wax feeñ.* (2,3,7)

Whoever speaks gives himself away.

“*The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.*” (Luke 6:45 NIV)

659. *Ay wax yu bare, du may lu ñu lekk. (4)*

Much talk does not provide food.

“Fine words butter no parsnips.”

Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. (James 2:15-18 NIV)

660. *Bu wax neexul, tontu du mën a neex. (11,12)*

If the word is unpleasant, then the reply cannot be pleasant.

If you want someone to speak pleasantly, you need to speak pleasantly.

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” (Proverbs 15:1 NIV)

661. *Gajjug xuloo, dëkk bu mu sax, sémmiñu waxtaan a koy gor. (19)*

The thicket of dispute, in the village where it sprouts, is cut down by the axe of discussion.

662. *Ki wax, waxul ; ki jottali moo wax. (6,7,8,20)*

It is not the person who first said it who said it. It is the person who transmitted it who said it.

The person who serves as the agent to transmit a statement is often considered to be the source.

663. *Ku waxul, sa xumbal du fey. (2,3,6,20)*

He who does not speak, his pipe does not go out.

“Silence is golden.”

This proverb is said to make it known that one refuses to speak in order to put an end to an argument.

“A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.” (Proverbs 12:16 NIV)

“Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.” (Proverbs 17:28 NIV)

664. *Ku xamoon lu ñu lay tontu bala ngaa wax, waaj ko. (20)*

If you knew how people would reply to you, you would be more careful in what you say.

665. *Lu nekk mënees na koo toxal, mu mel na mu meloon ba mu des wax. (6,15)*

One can move anything without changing it except words.

It is not possible to pass on the words of someone else without changing them.

666. *Na góor aay biir, wànde bu mu aay làmmiñ. (4,13)*

A person can have bad feelings inside but he should not show it by his words.

“A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.” (Proverbs 29:11 NIV)

667. **Ku tëb di wax, doo noppee juum. (6,15)**

Whoever speaks without thinking will make many errors.

668. **Nit ku baax dey xam lu bari, wax lu néew. (15)**

The good man knows much but says little.

“A prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself, but the heart of fools blurts out folly.” (Proverbs 12:23 NIV)

“Wisdom reposes in the heart of the discerning and even among fools she lets herself be known.” (Proverbs 14:33 NIV)

“Wise men store up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool invites ruin.” (Proverbs 10:14 NIV)

“The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.” (Proverbs 15:2 NIV)

669. **Wax ju neex sarax la. (18)**

Good words are like an offering to the poor.

To know how to speak well is of great value.

“A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.” (Proverbs 25:11 NIV)

670. **Wax, su guddee, ñaar a ko guddal. (6)**

It takes two people for a dispute to last for a long time.

“It takes two to quarrel, but only one to end it.”

671. **Wax ju bari, wax ju néew te wér a ko gën. (15)**

It is better to say little which is certain than to say much.

“Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.” (Proverbs 17:28 NIV)

672. **Wax, soxu fetal la, su rëccee, dabu ko wees. (2,3,5,6)**

A word is like a loaded rifle. If it goes off, it cannot be taken back.

“Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.” (James 3:5-6 NIV)

673. **Wax, ab xottiku la, kenn ku ne, yaa xam noo koy ñawe. (2,3,6,20)**

A dispute is like a tear. It is up to each person to determine how he will repair it.

674. **Waxin la déggin la laaj. (20)**

For allusive speech you need an allusive ear.

Speeches, proverbs and folk stories are filled with hidden meanings.

675. **Fu jàmm yendu nit a fa xam lu mu waxul. (2,3,15)**

Fu jàmm yendu, waay a fa xam lu mu waxul. (19)

Where peace reigns there is someone who knows something he has not said.

There is no peace if one says everything one knows about others.

676. *Xam lépp, wax lépp, baaxul. (2,20)*

To know everything and say everything is bad.

677. *“Waxoon naa koo” gën “xamoon naa ko”. (2,12)*

Magum waxoon naa ko moo gën magum xamoon naa ko. (16)

Duma magum xamoon naa ko, wànte magum waxoon naa ko. (19)

“I told you that” is better than “I knew that”.

It is better to have warned someone of a problem than to have been aware of it and said nothing.

“Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil on my head. My head will not refuse it. Yet my prayer is ever against the deeds of evildoers;” (Psalms 141:5 NIV)

“Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you.” (Proverbs 9:8 NIV)

678. *Buy, balaa jëriñ, toj. (6)*

Wuy, balaa jëriñ, toj. (2)

Before the fruit of a baobab tree is of any use it must be broken.

A person can only use what he knows. If you do not speak your thoughts, your advice or your needs, then someone cannot respond to them.

Taste

679. *La mu saf, ka ko macc a ko xam. (2,3,6,7,11,12)*

Only the person who actually tastes it will know what it tastes like.

One cannot criticize what one does not understand. Only the person who has tasted and understood can be critical of others.

Every week Iba sees M. Dupont coming to his village to chase butterflies. Iba, who finds this past-time somewhat trivial, says to Abdou one day, “This guy is bizarre. To come such a long distance, burn up so much fuel just to run behind butterflies! Ah these *Tubaabs!*” But instead of laughing Abdou quotes this proverb.

Teachers

680. *Loo doonul ndongoom doo doon ub sëriñam. (9,11,12)*

Loo nekkul taalibeem doo nekkub sëriñam. (2)

If you have not been a disciple you will not be a teacher.

What you have not been taught you will not be able to teach.

Thoughts

681. *Yéene néeg la, boroom a cay fanaan. (2,3,5,6,7,11,12,15,19,20)*

A wish is a bedroom; the person who forms it will pass the night in it.

“Curses, like chickens, come home to roost.”

A wish (good or bad) and the thoughts that one has towards another is like a boomerang. A blessing or curse will come back on the head of the person who makes it.

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” (Matthew 7:1-2 NIV)

Time

682. *Yàgg du saabu, waaye dana fóot. (2,3,6,15)*

Time is not soap but it can wash the dirty washing.

“Time will tell.”

With time, the truth always manifests itself.

A stranger arrived in a village in which lives a man with a reputation for wisdom and honesty. Everywhere he went he heard people mention this man but hesitated to believe all that was said of him. One day he shared his scepticism with someone, who told him he would end up being convinced, and quoted this proverb.

An honest man was accused of taking something that didn't belong to him. Although he proclaimed his innocence no one believed him. He continued to proclaim his innocence, quoting this proverb.

683. *Yàggaay dindi tuuma. (19)*

Time clears accusations.

Over time people can see whether or not what someone has been accused of is true or not.

Traditional Values

684. *Ku wàcc sa and, and boo war mu toj. (15,16)*

Whoever abandons his incense pot will find that other incense pots will break wherever he sits on them.

Whoever denies his origins or the traditions with which he grew up ends up on a path of permanent imbalance as he will never be able to adapt himself to other traditions and environments.

685. *Ku wacc sa and, and boo dem fekk boroom toog ca. (2)*

And bu mu dem fekk fa boroom. (15)

Ku wacc sa and, and boo dem fekk ca boroom. (6)

Ku wacc sab and, and boo dem fekk fa boroom. (10,19)

Whoever abandons his incense pot will find that everywhere he goes the incense pots are already occupied by others.

You should hold onto your values because it's very difficult to get someone else's values.

Travel

686. *Doxkat du fekke deewug baay ba. (2,8,19)*

One who travels too much will not be present at his father's death.

“A rolling stone gathers no moss.”

If you never stay somewhere long enough, you will always miss important events.

According to Sylla this pejorative proverb indicates a person who does not undertake his share of family responsibilities, thus he does not defend his heritage. To know how to 'travel' for a man, is to move for useful purposes – to act as an intermediary, to settle differences.

687. *Ku yàgg dox, yàgg gis. (8,20)*

He who travels for a long time sees a lot.

Travelling gives experience.

Treasures

688. *Àddina, ndoxum joor la ; buy taa, mu ngay j̄iis. (6,15)*

The things of this world are comparable to water on a sandy plane; no sooner has it spread over the sand than it infiltrates and disappears.

The things of this world are only temporary, We should therefore make preparations for our eventual deaths by a detachment from things of this world, self-control over one's passions and by doing good works.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21 NIV)

689. *Àddina ak li ci biiram jarul a xiirook a jaayoo. (19)*

The world and all its wealth are not worth quarrelling over and falling out with someone.

You should not let yourself be led by material belongings to fight like cats and dogs.

“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” (1 Timothy 6:10 NIV)

690. *Alal joo gis, alaa ka fa ba. (20)*

The treasure that you see, “no” will see that it is left there.

This proverb is a mixture of Pulaar and Wolof. *alaa* is “no” in Pulaar. So the expression is in expanded form *Alal joo gis déédéet moo ko fa bàyyi*.

It is said when someone asks for something to say that they can't have it.

691. *Alalu jaambur ba la sant. (20)*

Alalu jaambur ba fa la sant. (16)

Someone else's treasure has as its surname “leave it alone”.

This proverb is a play on words between the verb *ba* meaning to leave something alone, and the Fula family name *Ba*.

692. *Alalu golo : ca lex ba. (2,3,5,6,9,20)*

All the treasures of a monkey are found in his cheeks.

One keeps things of value close to oneself.

693. *Am saxul, ñàkk it saxul. (15)*

Possessions do not last; and neither does destitution.

Riches and poverty do not last long. With time both will pass.

694. *Barile, baaxlee ko gën. (2,11,12,16)*

It is better to have something good than something in abundance.

Having something useful, even if it is lacking in quantity, is better than having much of something of little use.

695. *Ku moomul sa alal, sa alal moom la. (15)*

If you do not master your wealth, you will become its slave.

Riches become a kind of bondage for those who do not know how to handle them with wisdom.

696. *Bu la am-am tax a bew, ndax nàkk du wees. (2,5)*

Don't let your possessions cause you to become conceited and self-satisfied because you can always lose them.

“Do not trust in extortion or take pride in stolen goods; though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them.” (Psalms 62:10 NIV)

“Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf.” (Proverbs 11:28 NIV)

“Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow.” (Proverbs 13:11 NIV)

697. *Li gën a jafe ci àddina mooy am alal ju ne gànñ, lew domm. (15)*

The hardest thing in the world is to have great wealth acquired completely honestly.

698. *Nit ay liggéey alal, waaye alal du liggéey nit. (2)*

Man should work his riches; his riches should not work him.

699. *Alal fajul dee, gâce lay faj. (2,12,14,15)*

Alal du faj dee, gâce lay faj. (7,9,18,19)

One's wealth does not prevent one from dying, but it can solve your immediate problems which would bring shame.

If you own something, in the face of need, sell it to solve your problem and avoid facing shame. As long as you are still living and are in need, sell what you own to solve your problem and thereby avoid facing shame.

700. *Alal yu bare, yaram wu wér a ko gën. (13)*

Good health is more important than many riches.

“A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.” (Proverbs 22:1 NIV)

Trust

701. *Béy du gëmal gënn. (2,3,6,9,19)*

A goat will never believe that a mortar is empty.

You will not believe when you are told that you can no longer have something you are used to having.

702. *Bukki, kenn du ko dénk ay seel. (6,19)*

Kenn du dénk Bukki ay seel. (14)

No one entrusts an hyena with strips of dried meat.

“Don't put the fox in charge of the chicken coop.”

Don't entrust someone with things that they particularly want themselves.

Truth

703. *Ak lu nar teel a xéy, bu dëgg gontee, jot ko. (6,8,13)*

However early a lie sets out, even if truth sets out in the evening, it will catch up with it.

“Truth will out.”

Truth always wins out.

704. *Lu nar barey barey su dëgg jógee jot ko. (4)*
Lies, however numerous, will be caught by truth when it rises up.
“Truth will out.”
705. *Baatu dëgg yomb naa xam. (4,13,20)*
The voice of truth is easy to know.
706. *Bu caaxaan wéyee, dëgg a des. (2)*
When the joking around has passed, truth will remain.
707. *Dëgg du yendu àll, fanaan fa. (2,15,16)*
Truth having spent the day in the wilderness will not also pass the night.
“Truth will out.”
Truth might be slow to come home but come home it will. The truth always eventually reveals itself.
708. *Fukki nit mēnuñoobokk fen. (9)*
Ten people cannot share a lie.
709. *Gēmmin gu waxul dëgg wax fen. (14)*
The mouth which does not speak the truth, speaks lies.
710. *Làmmiñu luu a gën làmmiñu fenkat. (13)*
The tongue of a mute person is better than that of a liar.
711. *Lëkkale ay fen taxula am dëgg. (6,15)*
Lining up a series of lies does not put the truth on your side.
712. *Lu dul dëgg du yàgg. (2,7,10,19)*
That which is not true won't last.
“Truthful lips endure for ever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.”
(Proverbs 12:19 NIV)
713. *Saay-saay waxul dëgg, waaye yàq nam xel. (7,12,19,20)*
Saay-saay waxul dëgg, waaye yàq na xol. (6)
Seytaane waxul dëgg waaye yàq nay xalaat. (20)
The loud does not tell the truth, but he does trouble hearts.
The treacherous create doubt by their lies.
714. *Yàgg ay wone légétub taat. (2,3,6,20)*
It is with time that one discovers scars on someone's backside.
Time reveals the hidden aspects of something. A person's true character will only become evident with the passage of time.
Guilaye rents a room privately. He initially presented himself as friendly and helpful to all the family. He was particularly kind with the children, and tolerated their din in his room. Everyone appreciated him. However after several months he began spending less and less time talking with the family and was not longer available to help. Several times he even got angry with the children and chased them from his room. The grandfather told someone who was surprised by the change in attitude that his real character had come to light and quotes this proverb.

715. **Dëgg a neex Yàlla. (15)**

Only the truth pleases God.

This is usually said before telling someone an unpleasant truth.

“He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.” (Deuteronomy 32:4 NIV)

“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.” (Psalms 51:6 NIV)

716. **Dëgg, puso bu réer la : gune man na ko for, mag man na ko for. (6,15)**

Dëgg, puso bu réer la : mag dana ko for, ndaw dana ko for. (2)

717. **Xel, puso bu réer la, mag dina ko for, xale dina ko for. (10,20)**

718. **Xam-xam, puso bu réer la, mag dina ko for, xale dina ko for. (7)**

The truth/wisdom/knowledge is like a lost needle: a child could pick it up just as easily as an adult.

One says this when a child happens to say a truth which surprises an adult.

719. **Dëgg, kaani la, ku ñu ko xëpp nga toxoñu. (2,3,5,6,20)**

Dëgg kaani la, koo ko tuuf mu toxoñu. (14)

The truth is like chilli. If it is thrown in your face, you will rub your eyes.

Truth hurts. The truth is not always pleasant to hear.

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.” (Ephesians 4:15 NIV)

“Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.” (Proverbs 27:6 NIV)

720. **Fen wuy defarug mbokk a gën dëgg gu koy yàq. (2,3,5,20)**

Fen wuy defar moo gën dëgg guy yàq. (6,19)

A lie that reconciles people is better to a truth that puts them apart.

If you know of someone, something which can be hidden to another person or family, whom knowing about it can break their relationship with that particular person, it's better to keep that truth to yourself.

721. **Bukki nee : “Li ñépp wax ay dëgg !” (2)**

Li ñépp wax ay dëgg. (19)

The hyena says “What everyone says must be the truth!”

What most people say will be believed as being true. The hyena is often quoted as a source of wisdom.

722. **“Sa gémmiñ xasaw na”, sa doomu-ndey a la koy wax. (2,8)**

“Sa gémmiñ gi xasaw na” sa mbokk a la koy wax. (19)

Only your close relative can tell you that you have bad breath.

One should not take offence at what such a relative says. But a cross-cousin equally well has a duty to criticize when necessary, and say what it would be offensive for others to say. Because he cares, a close relative might tell you an unpleasant truth.

Usefulness

723. *Geenub géléem sàngul uw taat te dàqul i weñ. (2,3,6)*

The tail of a camel cannot cover its rear nor chase away flies.

Diéri is short of money. He does the rounds of his relatives in the village but in vain. He hopes that his best friend, Baidi, will be able to help him out of his difficulties. Even though Baidi lives in a village far away, he goes to visit him. Baidi cannot do much to help Dieri apart from giving him a little to help pay for his fare to return home. When Dieri gets home he tells his wife that not only was Baidi unable to give him what he hoped for but he could not even pay a half of his travel costs, and he cites this proverb.

Victory

724. *Ku yëy yaxub bukki, yëy na yaxub yëykatu yax. (11,12)*

Ku yëy yaxi bukki, yëy nga yaxi yëykat. (2)

Whoever chews on the bones of an hyena, you are chewing on the bones of someone who chews bone.

Defeating a champion wrestler does not mean he is not a champion.

Waste

725. *Lu sakkantalkat ba denc, sallaxkat ba sànni. (13)*

That which the miser saves, the prodigal will fritter away.

Wisdom

726. *Nit a ngay jëggaani lu ni gànñ ca péeyam. (19)*

A person travels very far to seek for something which is in abundance in his own capital.

There is no need to go very far if you want to learn wisdom.

727. *Xel du doy. (7,14)*

Benn xel doyul. (9)

One cannot have enough advice.

One mind is not enough.

728. *Xel koomum boroom la. (19)*

Wisdom is the resource/wealth of its owner.

Work

729. *“Yàlla, Yàlla”, bey sa tool. (2,3,5,6,7,8,9,14,15,16,19,20,20)*

Pray to God, but cultivate your field.

“God helps those who help themselves.”

It is not enough to simply rely on God, and ignore one's responsibilities. One must also work.

730. *Bala nga am dara, nga wiccaxndiku sa nàq.*

Before you have something, you must shake off your sweat with your fingers.

One must be willing to work and make sacrifices in order to have something.

731. ***Bu mbey matee faj baaraam des. (15)***
 When the work in the fields is finished, all that is left is to treat the fingers.
 One cannot achieve a task without suffering the sacrifices which the task entails.
732. ***Farala liggéey dina sawarloo. (13)***
 To be in a habit of working makes one eager.
733. ***Ku bëgg xalis, liggéey. (4)***
 He who loves money must labour.
734. ***Ku biddante, xiif. (13)***
 He who sleeps late will go hungry.
 Laziness brings poverty. Prov 6:11-12; 24:33-34
“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.” (Proverbs 6:10-11; 24:33-34 NIV)
735. ***Ku sawar ci liggéey, oomle. (13)***
 Whoever works with eagerness will be wealthy.
736. ***Ku sonn, jëriñoo. (20)***
 One profits from difficulties and tiredness.
 There is no success without effort and trouble.
737. ***Liggéey bu amulug pey, yàgg lay taawloo, caatloo bon. (11,12)***
 Work without pay, if it first gives birth to a long time, it finally gives birth to evil.
 If you do not pay your worker what pleases him, he will not do work that pleases you.
738. ***Mbey bey a koy jeexal. (18)***
 Only working the field can finish the season.
 A farmer will only reap the rewards of his fields through his sweat. A task not yet carried out will remain incomplete until someone gets out and does the work.
739. ***Nit mënul lekk lu gën li mu liggéey ci loxol boppam. (7)***
 A person cannot eat anything better than that which he has worked for with his own hands.
740. ***Ñaq jariñu, jëf jël. (2,20)***
 Sweat and profit; act and take.
 A person will eventually profit from the sweat that hard work brings. One must accept the need to act and work hard to be successful.
741. ***Toolu golo du meññ. (2,3,5,6).***
Toolu golo du ñor.
 The field of a monkey will not bear fruit.
 Bara is a shopkeeper. He has a well-situated shop and regular customers, but every time he makes a profit, he buys a sheep and invites all his friends to a feast. Eventually, his extravagance put his business in peril. One day at a family reunion, a cousin remarked that the shop was almost empty of stock. An uncle, in order to comment, quotes this proverb.

742. *Su liggéey mettee, setal mpey ma. (13)*

If the work is difficult, keep in mind the pay.

World

743. *Lu dul raaf amul ci àddina si. (13)*

There is nothing in this world that does not eventually perish.

“The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives for ever.” (1 John 2:17 NIV)

Bibliography

1. **BOILLAT** 1858 *Grammaire de la Langue Woloffe*
 2. **CISSE, Mame Thierno; GUEYE, Mamadou; TOURE, Mangone** 1982 *Proverbes Wolof* (Centre de Linguistique Appliquée de Dakar (CLAD), Dakar)
 3. **CRIBIER, Jacqueline; DREYFUS, Martine; GUEYE, Mamadou** 1986 *Léebu proverbes wolof* (Conseil International de la Langue Française, Paris) Collection of Wolof proverbs with an explanation of how the proverbs are used.
 4. **DARD, J** 1826 *Grammaire Wolofe*
Reproduced with English translation in **BURTON, Richard** 1865 *Wit and Wisdom from West Africa*
 5. **DIAL, Abdoulaye** 2002 *Apprentissage rapide de la transcription du Wolof (wolof-français)* 2nd Edition (Saint Louis)
 6. **DIOUF, Jean Leopold** 2003 *Dictionnaire Wolof-Français et Français-Wolof* (Karthala, Paris) The most comprehensive of the Wolof-French dictionaries to date with over 10,000 words in the Wolof-French section and 4,600 words in the French-Wolof section.
 7. **FAAL, Aram** 2000 *Mbindum baat yi ci làmmiñu wolof* Dictionnaire orthographique de la langue wolof illustré de proverbes (OSAD, Dakar)
 8. **GAMBLE, David P**, *Wolof Proverbs*
 9. **JUUF, Liisa Samba** 1998 *Léebu Wolof ak Séeni tekkin ànd aki Tàggat ci Biir* (PAPA, Dakar) Wolof proverbs
 10. **KAN, Buubakar; FAAL, Aram; NJAAY, Mamadu** 1993 *Njàngum Wolof* (Organisation Sénégalaise d'Appui au Développement [OSAD], Dakar) Student book for literacy lessons.
 11. **KANJI, Sèriñ Lamin Baara** 2004 *Ndaamakocc* (PAPA II, Dakar) Explanation of game with Wolof proverbs explained in Wolof 3rd edition
 12. **KANJI, Sèriñ Lamin Baara** 1986 *Ndamakocc* (Ministere de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille, Dakar) Explanation of game with Wolof proverbs 1st edition
 13. **KOBES** Proverbes et énigmes wolof cités dans le Dictionnaire wolof-français de Mgr Kobès et du R.P. Abiven Collected by **BECKER, Charles; MARTIN, Victor; MBODJ, Mohamed**
 14. **NJAAY, Manel** *Léebu ci Kallaama wolof* (Projet Alphabétisation Priorité Femmes [PAPF]) Wolof proverbs
 15. **SYLLA, Assane** 1994 *La Philosophie Morale des Wolof* (Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire [IFAN], Dakar) Excellent treatise on the world view of the Wolof. Also an excellent source of Wolof proverbs, which the author uses to analyse Wolof thinking. Highly recommended for all workers in Senegal.
 16. **SYLLA, Assane** *Ijjib Wolof* (Projet Alphabétisation Priorité Femmes [PAPF]) Literacy book
 17. **SAAR, Xaalima** 1998 *Téereb Dawal* (PAPA, Thies) Advanced literacy reader
 18. **TINE, Alphonse Samba** *Proverbes nones et wolof du Càngin et du Kayoor Miroir du langage populaire Tome I* (ENDA GRAF SAHEL)
 19. **WÀDD, Maam Daawur** 2004 *Léebuy Wolof* Collection of Wolof proverbs
 20. Miscellaneous sources
my notes
DIOP, Abdoulaye-Bara 1985 *La Famille Wolof* (Editions Karthala, Paris)
Yoonu Njub
GAYE, Pape Amadou *Practical Course in Wolof - An Audio-Aural Approach* (United States Peace Corps, Lome)
JOOB, Lamin 1998 *Gis-gis ci Kocc Barma Faal* (PAPA)
LY, Boubakar 1966 *L'Honneur et les Valeurs Morales dans les Sociétés Ouolof et Toucouleur du Sénégal* (Université de Paris)
SAMB, El-Hadj Amadou Ndiaye *Sagesse Africaine - Proverbes Wolof*
<http://www.osad-sn.com/proverbes.php> (Araam Fal)
<http://www.ausenegal.com/-Proverbes-wolof-.html>
<http://lesenegalais.jeun.fr/apprendre-le-wolof-f7/vos-proverbes-en-wolof-t502.htm>
<http://linguaromana.byu.edu/Sow-Fall4.html>
- DIAGNE Mamoussé** 2005 *Critique de la raison orale: les pratiques discursives en Afrique noire* (Karthala, Paris)
MARANZ David 1993 *Peace is Everything : Worldview of Muslims in the Senegambia* (SIL, Dallas)

Index

Action	3	Death	17	Family	26	Guest	44
Advice	4	Debt	18	Family discipline	29	Habits	44
Anger	5	Deception	18	Family firstborn	30	Heart	44
Appearances	5	Decisions	19	Family marriage	30	Help	45
Beauty	6	Dependence	19	Family women	31	Hidden	45
Belongings	7	Deprivation	19	Fathers	32	Honour	46
Benefit	7	Desires	19	Men	32	Hospitality	46
Boasting	7	Destiny	20	Women	32	Human Condition	46
Cause and Effect	7	Destroy	20	Faults	33	Idiom	46
Character	8	Difficulties	21	Favouritism	33	Ignorance	47
Choice	9	Dignity	21	Fear	33	Illicit	47
Co-operation	9	Discernment	21	Finish	33	Impatience	48
Community	10	Discretion	21	Fire	34	Impotence	48
Companions	11	Disputes	22	First	34	Inevitability	48
Competence	12	Downfall	22	Food	34	Influence of Others	49
Complaints	13	Dress	22	Fool	34	Injustice	49
Confidence	13	Ease	22	Foolhardiness	35	Insolence	49
Conflict	13	Elders	23	Friendship	35	Insults	49
Conformity	14	Youth	24	Fruitfulness	35	Integrity	50
Conscience	14	Encouragement	25	Future	35	Interest	51
Consequences	14	Environment	25	General	36	Intolerance	51
Contribution	16	Envy	25	Generosity	39	King	51
Control	16	Evidence	25	Giving	40	Knowledge	52
Conversation	16	Evil	25	Goals	40	Leadership	53
Courage	17	Evil tongue	26	God	40	Learning	54
Cowardice	17	Excess	26	Good deeds	43	Life	54
Curiosity	17	Failure	26	Gratitude	43	Limitations	57
Day of Rest	17	Fame	26	Greed	44	Listen	58

Loans	58	Opportunity	65	Rejection	76	Success	86
Love	59	Organisation	65	Relationships	76	Suffering	86
Luck	59	Patience	65	Repentance	79	Superiority	86
Making Do	60	Peace	66	Responsibility	80	Surprise	87
Manipulation	60	Peers	67	Restitution	80	Tact	87
Marabouts	60	Perseverance	67	Righteousness	80	Talk	87
Maures	60	Pessimism	67	Rights	80	Taste	90
Means	61	Pleasure	67	Risk	81	Teachers	90
Mercy	61	Politeness	68	Ruin	82	Thoughts	90
Merit	61	Poverty	68	Rumours	82	Time	91
Miserliness	61	Preparation	68	Satisfaction	82	Traditional Values	91
Misfortune	61	Pretext	69	Self-control	82	Travel	91
Mistakes	62	Prevention	69	Self-evaluation	83	Treasures	92
Mocking	62	Pride	70	Self reliance	83	Trust	93
Modesty	62	Privilege	70	Shame	83	Truth	93
Naivety	62	Problem Solving	70	Sharing	83	Usefulness	96
Name	63	Profiteering	70	Sleep	84	Victory	96
Nature	63	Proof	70	Slyness	84	Waste	96
Need	63	Prostitutes	71	Small things	84	Wisdom	96
Neglect	64	Protection	71	Society	84	Work	96
News	64	Provision	71	Solutions	85	World	98
Nostalgia	64	Provocation	71	Spirits	85	Bibliography	99
Obviousness	64	Proximity	72	Status	85		
Opinion	64	Prudence	72	Stranger	85		