



NGUZO

African Diaspora Culture

Funerals: The Whole Village Business

The University of British Columbia
African Studies Course - AFST 450R
March 20, 2025

Agenda

History of NGUZO

Objective

Cultural Challenges facing members of NGUZO

Key Events, celebrations (cultural aspects of funerals)

Maintaining links with home country Tanzania



Disclaimers

- Africa is not a country.
- There is wide variation of cultures Amongst African Countries and within countries.
- Will concentrate on examples from Tanzania - country of birth.



History of NGUZO

Established

- November 2020.

NGUZO's mission

- To enable members to pre-plan their funeral costs and, therefore, defray the unexpected and usually high costs.

Governance

- Volunteer Board of directors –10 members currently, articles of association.

More information

- Please Visit our website
- www.nguzo.ca



Cultural Challenges facing members of NGUZO



Tanzanian diaspora in Ontario have been financially burdened by the death of fellow community members in the recent past.



When such deaths occur, members have had to organize numerous meetings to raise enough money for the cost of a funeral.



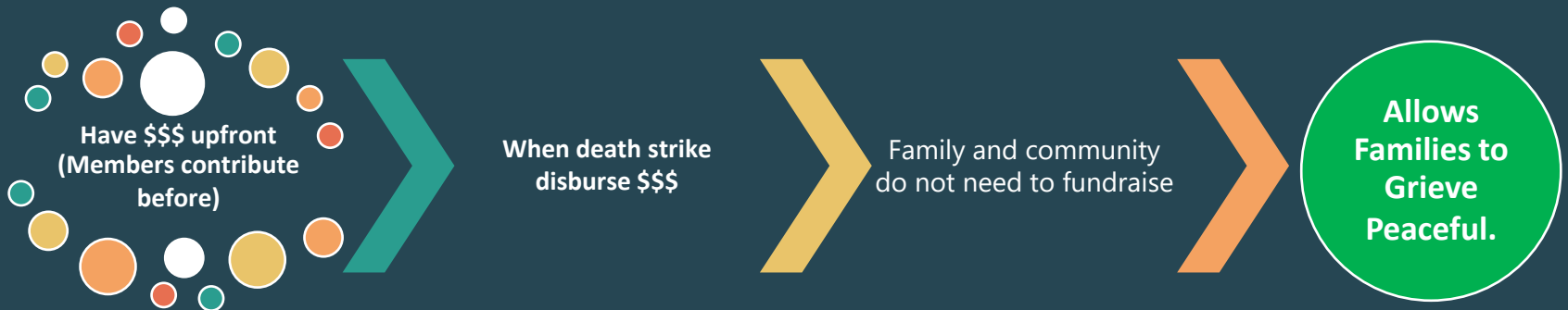
Contribution per family can be very expensive (e.g. between \$50 to \$100).



Not everyone has Life/Term Insurance.

Proposed Solution

- We proposed inauguration of a self-help program to support ourselves with easy (i.e., formed NGUZO).



NGUZO's Mission

- The mission of NGUZO is to:
 - help NGUZO members plan for their funerals to alleviate some or all associated costs (i.e., transportation, embalming, burial and or cremation costs).
 - Gives members a peace of mind that upon their death, they will be handled with respect and dignity at the burial of their choice
 - create an organized way of securing funds from all interested members, in a financial account, from which money will be withdrawn and given to a member beneficiary or beneficiaries promptly upon the death of a member.



NGUZO Current Status & Future Goals

- NGUZO was incorporated with Corporations Canada on August 6, 2022

NGUZO
is registered
entity
(Canada-wide)

- 1st payout \$3,275 (131 members)
- 2nd payout \$4,350 (170 members)

So far helped
2 members

Strategies for
recruiting
members
Canada wide

GOAL

- Need volunteers
- Word of mouth.

To recruit 400
members from
across Canada in
the next two years.



Membership Eligibility

Reside in Canada

- NGUZO members relocating to other countries will not be covered, and their membership will be automatically withdrawn. NGUZO will refund only the portion of their unused commitment fees.

21 years or order

- Those under 21 are required to be registered under a parent/guardian who is a member.

Tanzania by origin/ancestry

- Both parents are Tanzanian by origin or ancestry
- One parent is Tanzanian by origin/ancestry
- One grandparent is Tanzanian by origin/ancestry
- Either spouse is Tanzanian or has Tanzanian origin/ancestry
- Are adopted child of a Tanzanian.

NGUZO Membership – March 15, 2025

- NGUZO has so far members from
 - Alberta
 - British Columbia
 - Ontario: Greater Toronto Area/Greater Ottawa Area (Majority)



Cultural Aspects Of Funerals



Cultural Aspects Of Funerals

cont'd

How long does the funeral take place?

- Depends if the deceased is a Muslim or Christian. The former funeral/burial is immediate while later can take time. From death to burial (you will not work; you will have people in your house)

Sleeping arrangement

- Family, close friends and neighbors will sleep at the bereaved family home from the time of death up until burial. One way of consoling the family.

Dress code

- In the past women covered themselves with Khanga or scarves and men wore dress shirts or kanzu. Recently there is a dress -up dress code e.g. white or black dresses for women and suits for men

Food

- must be served to all those who attend the wake, funeral and burial. If that stretches for a couple of days, food must be served every of those days

Departed person

- Deceased body is brought to the home/house of the deceased for the final respect. Then to a place of worship (church/mosque) for final respects as well. No funeral homes in TZ

How about cremation

- Not commonly practiced TZ but adopted by some diaspora.



Maintaining links with home country

- Variable /individualized

Congregate with family
friends with Tanzanian
background

Travel to Tanzania with
kids Immigrants (strong
ties vs 1st generation
immigrants (less ties)

Language –Swahili

Tanzanian Community
Association

Social events e.g.,
Celebration of
Independence/Flag
raising

Sports events/

Social Media e.g.,
WhatsApp Groups



Questions & Answers

