



Homeland: Chapter 1, is an album from Seckou Keita. One of the leading tracks is called Wakili which means 'changes'. In this session the group can listen, explore the lyrics and learn to sing the chorus of the song in Mandinka.

Background information

- This track is an uplifting and celebratory song which features children's voices. The children are from Ziguinchor. Senegal.
- The music video was also recorded in Ziguinchor.
- The lyrics are written in phonetic Mandinka as it is not a written language. There is also a refrain sung in English. [Mandinka is sometimes written down using Latin alphabet, sometimes Arabic, and sometimes pan-Mande N'Ko Alphabet].

The Session

1. Show the group the video *Wakili* without the sound (Slide 2 of the ppt) and ask the following questions:
 - *What kind of song do you think this is? (uplifting? Sad? Happy? Etc).*
 - *What clues are there that tell us about the music?*
 - *Where do you think it was recorded?*
2. Play the video again with the music. Some of the group may want to move or clap along to the music! Ask:
 - *How does the music make us feel?*
 - *What languages do you recognise (Mandinka is the main language. There is also a little French (changer) and English.)*

Resources

1. Powerpoint including *Wakili* music video, and chorus
2. Downloadable Lyrics
3. 3 audio versions of the song for learners to sing to - a version with the Mandinka chorus vocals removed; a version with the chorus and refrain vocals remove; a version with the chorus looped.
4. You will also need to access the song:
 - *Wakili* from the album *Homeland: Chapter 1* by Seckou Keita.



3. Give a copy of the lyrics to pairs. Ask them to read the lyrics and annotate them with any questions that come to mind. Ask what the challenges might be when it comes to translating from Mandinka to English.

(Note: as in many languages, there are some deeper, hidden meanings behind some of the words in Mandinka which are not easy to translate into English. Sometimes compromises have to be made to enable the lyrics to sound a little more poetic in English as well as Mandinka – learners could adapt the English translation to convey the meaning of the song slightly differently for example, 'Don't always believe others' becomes 'Be careful of others', or 'Beware today's tricksters').

4. The lines in section 4 start with 1, 2, 3, 4 (In Mandinka - Killin, Fula, Saba, Nani). Ask learners:

- *Are there nursery rhymes or other songs you have grown up with that start with 1,2,3, etc? These can be any language or from any part of the world. Encourage learners to share these.*
- *Why do you think Seckou may have included this verse in the song?*

Share the chorus lyrics on the ppt ([slide 3](#)) and use these to teach the chorus to the group. Play the audio version without the chorus and ask learners to sing the chorus. There is also a looped version of the chorus you can use.

5. You can also use the version without the refrain and either ask learners to make up their own refrain on the theme or sing the English version. If you have learners who use British Sign Language (or indeed any of the other sign languages) a signed version of the chorus might be included using the English translation.

6. The song can be performed (see guidelines about rights to perform the music, on the website).

You might ask learners to think about what they would like to achieve in their own lives, in the short, medium, long term, inspired by the song. For example: learn to skateboard; join a choir; take part in the Olympics; do well in a test; compose a song; learn an instrument; pass their driving test; do a backflip; score a goal in football etc. As part of the performance, they could hold up signs to show the audience what they are thinking of whilst performing the song or show some of their skills!

7. If you do perform the song we would love to see a video and share on social media (if permissions allow).

8. **Reflection:** This song features on the album Homeland: Chapter 1. You might ask:

- *What message does the song and the video convey about home and homeland?*
- *What message does it have for the people in the video?*
- *What message does it have for all of us?*
- *How does coming together to perform make us feel?*

You can use these questions to draw out ideas of belonging and community.