

SAMUEL KARIUKI GITONGA

PHOTOGRAPHER, VIDEOGRAPHER, AND AI MARKETER

Samuel, born the last son of three children of Gitonga Runo and Joan Kariuki Gitonga, a family of teachers. His father is a veteran procurement specialist at Kenya Wildlife Service for twenty-six years as the Deputy Director Supply Chain Manager and holds a master's degree. His mother was a high school teacher, lecturer in Special Needs Education at KISE (Kenya Institute of Special Education), holds a master's degree, and is currently Director of Juja Junior Montessori School.

Samuel trained at Pan Africa Christian University in video editing and photography, as a golf coach for Golf4Kids, and as an AI Journalist & Digital Strategist through ALX (African Leadership Accelerator) and Outskill Generative AI Mastermind.

He served as Project Coordinator & Digital Marketing Specialist at Kalimoni Fish Farm, as Photographer and Videographer at Kevlar International Properties, as a traveling videographer and photographer for a Kenyan film director of Save A Life Foundation, as well as helping out on his family's farm.

He is currently an AI Journalist & Digital Strategist, Founder of Maridadi Online, Content Creator covering AI, Fintech & African Affairs, Youth Tech Trainer, Mentor at The Career & Business Excellence System, and AI Systems Consultant at ALCA Kenya Limited (based in Nairobi. Samuel is known as *Samtheaimarketer* on LinkedIn with 19,053 followers and 2.9 million impressions.

Passionate about education, he helps professionals and SMEs adopt AI, trains youth in digital skills, and builds the bridge between technology and the people it is meant to serve.

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From Wreckage to Witness

SAMUEL KARIUKI GITONGA (500 Words)

I remember the moment our car began flying through the air. I was nine years old, traveling with my mother, brother, and uncle when we got into a horrific accident. Everything went silent before we came crashing down and started rolling over and over. I remember climbing out the shattered back window, glass scattered across my clothing. I stood outside, confused, as people rushed towards us. Everyone else was badly injured, but somehow, I walked away without a scratch. I cannot explain how I escaped completely unharmed. I believe that God saved my life that day.

I had always felt that God walked beside me. Yet believing in Him didn't mean I understood Him, and little did I know, some of my most difficult dilemmas were still ahead.

As a teenager, I suffered severe depression from excruciating pain that I never understood. I felt lost, like I was drowning. During that dark period, I attempted to end my life. Fortunately, I survived and began to learn things I had never been taught—like the importance of choosing yourself, and realizing we're here for a reason.

Years later, I traveled as a photographer and videographer alongside a missionary, a critical care nurse, and a Kenyan film director working through *Save A Life Foundation,* documenting and supporting people with abnormal growths. I witnessed people enduring debilitating pain, isolation, and rejection because of their conditions. I wondered why God allowed them to suffer so much.

Then my best friend suddenly died. I felt empty, alone, and angry with God. Again, I wondered, why did God spare me, but not my friend?

For a while, I struggled to reconcile how the God I believed had continually protected me would allow the intolerable suffering of others and the personal loss I experienced. I had no answers.

At the time, I was performing backbreaking work pushing a wheelbarrow. Even when life felt broken, I kept moving forward. The money I earned helped me buy a computer and build my first website. Then, a new door opened. Through learning new AI-augmented computer skills, I began discovering possibilities I had never imagined. Technology became more than a career path; it became a way for me to teach, create opportunities for others, and serve.

During Kenya's Gen Z protests,[1] I wrote numerous articles and streamed videos online, highlighting young people who had been abducted. My platform gained traction, giving me an opportunity to amplify other voices.

We live in a universe filled with endless mysteries. If we cannot begin to grasp everything around us, why would we assume that we can comprehend God? Likewise, our inability to understand the meaning of life doesn't disprove the divine. I believe that faith doesn't come from having every answer, but begins where human understanding ends. My life testifies that when we decide to choose ourselves, strive to learn life's lessons, persevere to overcome hardships, and work to serve others, that faith is incubated, and God and His purposeful design are finally revealed.

Footnote:

1) The major Gen Z-led protests in Kenya began peacefully on June 18, 2024, escalated nationwide with the storming of Parliament on June 25, 2024, and continued through subsequent waves of demonstrations into 2025 and 2026.