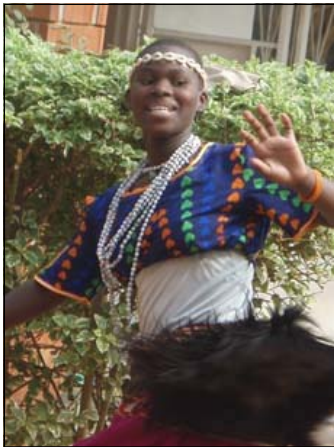


Bitone Children's Home/Troupe Center for Disadvantaged Children

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Bitone: Home to Authentic Ugandan Folklore!

The Mission of The Bitone Children's Home/Troupe is to restore the lives and hopes of Ugandan children between 8 and 18 years old who have been traumatized by the death of their parents or loss of their home due to disease, war, or economic hardship.

Our Vision is that by providing basic food and shelter, a nurturing environment, an academic education, and training in traditional Ugandan dance, music, and theater, our children's lives can again become joyful and meaningful.

Bitone Means Talents.

Bitone's unique approach allows us to assist the healing process of our children and youth heal through instruction and performance in traditional African performing arts; music, dance, folklore and theater.

By Helping Disadvantaged Children explore their rich heritage and then providing them the skills to share that heritage with others, children build self-esteem and self-reliance. With these skills our children contribute to the creation of a peaceful future for others.

This Core Objective has led to the formation of the Bitone Performance Troupe comprised of the children who are housed at the center. It is a key component of our work and remains a central element of reintegrating our children into society.

The Bitone Troupe gives our children the opportunity

to develop the skills to survive and thrive on their own, exposes them to a variety of different people and settings, builds communication and interper-



Bitone Children after a performance for Albion College students

Our Philosophy remains that every child, regardless of their cultural background, color, gender or race has the potential and deserves the chance to excel and shine.



It's always time for music at the Bitone Center!

Bitone News and Highlights:

- Read Bitone Children's Stories. Pg. 3
- The Launch of the Bitone website. Pg. 4
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- Albion College students visit Kampala. Pg. 4
- Find out how you can get involved. Pg. 4

The Bitone Troupe in Spain!!

Dec. 2006. Four children in The Bitone Troupe were chosen to represent the organization in the music and dance festival in Spain. Damalie, Rose, Dirisa and Joan flew to Spain

to promote awareness of the plight of Ugandan children through traditional African performance arts. They were lead by Hassan Kayemba, a Bitone staff volunteer.



Bitone boys at the Bitone Center in Kampala

Restoring Hope by Nurturing the Body and Spirit: Backgrounds and Beginnings

Background

Many children and youth in Uganda have been victimized by a twenty-year civil war, HIV/AIDS, poverty, and other forces beyond their control. As a result, many children's lives have been lost and many survivors have lost their homes, their parents, their hope, and meaning in their lives.

Our Start

Bitone (which means Talents) was founded in January 2004 by its current Executive Director, Ugandan native Lawrence "Branco" Sekalegga who holds a B.A. in Music from Makerere University, Kampala-Uganda. Bitone operates from a rented home that accommodates 25 children in Lugoba village, in Kawempe division, 6 kilometers from the capital city of Kampala, Uganda.

The current all-volunteer staff includes: Branco Sekalegga, Executive Director; Hassan Kayemba, Managing director; Ronald Lumu, Human Resource Manager; Rita Kisakye, Dance and Folklore Teacher, and Eva Namutebi, Therapist.

Bitone Aims

We seek to provide children and youth with the physical, emotional, intellectual and artistic foundation that will help them rebuild their lives, regain their sense of self-worth, self-reliance, and contribute positively to society.

Bitone Programs and Resources

Music, Dance and Folklore

Children are trained in various traditional African music, dance, theater, and folklore. Children are also given the opportunity to learn how to make and repair musical instruments and sew crafts and costumes. As a therapy, children and youth develop the skills necessary to re-enter society.

Education and Guidance

Children undergo a diversified educational outlook in order to live a fully productive, informed and disciplined life. Due to their varying backgrounds Bitone provides human formation and

behavior classes. Through this, we ensure a competent and resourceful future generation.

Career Guidance

Children are introduced to exploring their future s not only in the arts, but also in leadership management. They receive training skills in assembling and repairing music instruments, and other vocational sectors.

Food and Shelter

Bitone kids are given a home and trained how to prepare basic meals at the center.

Medical Attention

Uganda is a developing country with many diseases. Health programs that ensure children's well being are given maximum attention. With the help of health volunteers, children learn and are guided in sanitary matters, both individually and as a group. A healthy body leads to a healthy mind!



Rita Kisakye, Dance and Folklore instructor, helps Maria prepare for an upcoming performance.

Counseling and Guidance

Bitone children are exposed to routine emotional, psychological, and physical transformation through counseling and therapeutic healing. We ensure total transformation of children's physiological and psychological welfare. This is an on-going activity that involves all Bitone staff and outside volunteers.

"We are committed to saving more lives and exploring children's potential. This is just the beginning..." said Branco, Bitone's Executive Director.



The Bitone Troupe performs Runyege-Ntogoro, a courting dance from Southwestern Uganda.

Steven

STEVEN'S STORY - as told by Steven in a local language. This is a translation by Deborah Nabatanzi.

My name is Steven Kyobe and I came from the street. To come to the street my parents had died of Aids and I was the only child at home with nothing to eat. And when I reached the street I found there many children who had different characters and many of them used to steal people's properties. So I decided to get one friend so that he could help me to get what to eat. I got a friend and his name was Herbert. He had some 'tins' he used to play with and



he also trained me how to play the tins. So one day my friend had gone to steal and I remained alone on the street playing my tins and two men came towards me and gave me sweets and told me that I should go with them because the sound of the tins I used to play from the tins was good and interesting. But as I was still talking with them, my friend Herbert came back and asked me what those men were telling me. I was

fed up of being on the street, so I accepted to go with them. After one month when I was in Bitone Children's Home, I found out that the situation was good and I went back for my friend when I was looking good and smart. Good enough my friend was also attracted to come to Bitone. We are now living at Bitone home and we are so happy that we were saved. We can dance, sing and even play music instruments which are very good. I thank God and I discourage children most especially those with talents from going to the street that one time God will remember them since he is their creator. **Lord I don't know how I can thank you. But thank you!!!**

Afosian

AFOSIAN 'S STORY -as told by Afosian in a local language. This is a translation by Deborah Nabatanzi.

My name is Afosian Joan. I am from war affected areas of Uganda (Gulu). It was one night when we were sleeping and rebels attacked our home. They killed my father and they cut off my mother's breasts. Rebels did not kill me because they did not see me and I survived like that. I cried till morning and nobody could help me...when it

came to evening time...a mother took me in, but after two months she turned against me and she told me that she no longer had money to look after me... so I decided to work in a near by shop. I used to go to that shop every day and mop it and I even mopped all the verandas. There was a



man who used to come to that shop everyday and he used to find me when mopping. So one day he came and asked that "Young girl don't you go to school?" and I answered him that I don't go to school and explained to him what had happened to me, and he asked me whether I wanted to go to school so that he could pay for me school fees and I was so exited about that. He then asked me whether I could dance and I told him that I could so he brought me to Bitone Home Care and that was Sir. Branco.

loved and supported Bitone Children's performances.

Even though Bitone's vision is brought to light, a lot more is desired for the children to live a more meaningful, happier and practical life.

I therefore challenge everybody to partner with us in our mission of saving and empowering Ugandan traumatized children towards a life of self-reliance. **Together we can make a difference and save the world. "In art we unite!"**

-Branco Sekalegga

Notes from the Director

Salutations to you all!

On behalf of Bitone Staff and children, I wish to thank everyone who has generously supported Bitone Children's Home/ Troupe. Your advice, love and material support has promoted our hearts' desires to continue saving the lives of Ugandan traumatized children.

For the past three years, Bitone has generated a lot of children's hopes by nurturing their body and spirit. We are committed to reaching out to more children who are disadvantaged in

order to create a peaceful. I greatly thank the Albion College students and Albion community, Michigan US for your full-time involvement in promoting Bitone mission.

Thank you Sarah and Alyson for visiting Bitone Children's Home. The love and hope you brought to Bitone children will always be appreciated.

Special thanks go to the Sunrise Rotary Club, Howell Rotary club and all those individuals who have passionately supported our dream and vision. Thanks to all Ugandans who have

"Art without Practice is Dead"

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Roscoe and Deborah let their smiles shine!

"In Art We Unite!"

www.bitonechildren.org



We are committed to providing food, shelter, schooling and a strong Uganda performing arts training program for our current capacity of 25 children.

Our goals for 2007 include:

- provide compensation to our director and staff (who currently donate their time, their money and their hearts)
- improve the home which we rent for our children
- improving the nutritional balance of the meals
- provide necessary medical attention for our children
- strengthen our ability to provide schooling and performing arts training for our children
- showcase our children's performance programs

Our projected budget to meet our 2007 objectives is 848 U.S. dollars per child per year - about \$2.30 per day.

We also hope to acquire basic infrastructure needs such as a laptop computer, a sound system for our children's performances, a video camera, photo camera, music instruments, costumes and any other social related needs including clothing and medical facilitation.

If you would like to sponsor a child for a year (or part of a year), help with infrastructure needs, ensure Bitone's future, or provide other forms of assistance and support, **please contact our website or the addresses provided.**

www.bitonechildren.org

Albion College Students Visit Bitone Children

Jan. 2006. "We were welcomed into the Bitone home with open arms and treated like family for the entirety of our stay. Our days were spent playing with the children, observing performances, eating wonderful Ugandan cuisine, and touring the beautiful city of Kampala.

We learned so much in our short stay and our lives will be forever changed. Whether we were learning to play the drums, dance in the traditional Ugandan style or make beaded jewelry, we experienced Ugandan art from the best teachers possible!

We were treated to so many dance and musical performances, all of which amazed us beyond words. We

never grew tired of watching the beauty of the dances or the smiles on the children's faces as they performed. There were so many moments filled with awe and amazement at the talent and spirits of the children. It is hard to express in words, how much they have given us.

They have more love, courage, passion and heart than anyone children we have ever met. I think we all learned something from the way they live.

We will be forever grateful for your hope, understanding and devotion—but most of all your love!!



Sarah Heddon and Alyson Howe participate in traditional dancing.