

Drums of the Dagomba

The performers of Dagomba music are *lunsi*, members of a hereditary clan of drummers. Lunsi fulfill many vital duties in the life of the Dagomba - genealogist, counselor to royalty, cultural expert, etc. There are two main drums played by the Lunsi: the *Lunga* (talking drum) and the *Gungon* (bass drum).

The *lunga* is a double-headed hourglass shaped tension drum carved from the Shea Butter tree. By squeezing and pulling on the leather cords, the player can change the tension and thus the pitch of the drum. Pitches can vary over an octave and many intervals can be attained. In the hands of an expert, the drum becomes a way of communicating Dagbani, the spoken language of the Dagomba people. Many styles of Ghanaian music are based upon speech, therefore the bond between language and music are so intimate that it is actually possible to tune and play an instrument so that the music it produces is linguistically comprehensible. These drums come in two sizes
- Medium and large.

The *Gungon* is a medium sized cylindrical bass drum used to accompany the *Lunga*. It is a double headed drum with snares on each head. It produces a rich bass tone when struck in the middle and has a wide array of overtones and buzz when played above the snares. These also come in medium and large sizes.

All the shells are carved in Tamale, Northern Ghana. The drums are made by Sulley Imoro, an expert and exponent of Dagomba music, dance, and culture. These drums are the highest of quality and satisfaction is guaranteed.