

# Donso Dana

(last edited on 17 June 2021)

*Donso Dana* is a hunter's rhythm from the *Bwaba*. The story behind it: *Dana* was once the only hunter in a *Bwaba* village and therefore the only one who supplied wild meat to the village. He always asked the "Chef de Village" which meat to hunt. Apparently the chief liked variety, and so successively an elephant, a lion, a gazelle, a buffalo and so on were hunted. But the animals from the forest were also not crazy and moved further and further into the forest and hunting became increasingly difficult for *Dana*.

One day, the "Chef de Village" asked for a Hyena. So *Dana* set out to hunt a hyena. After a long journey, he eventually found a sick and hungry male, he shot and skinned it. Normally he took the whole animal with him, but now he decided to leave the skin and head behind. But when he got back to the village, the chief didn't believe it was a hyena. "Only when I see the head and skin do I believe it is a hyena; we don't eat it!". *Dana* went out to pick it up but he also found the (pregnant) female of the killed hyena. She was crying. *Dana* tried to pull the trigger again but was unsure and asked the hyena why she was crying. "You killed my husband, and shoot me, then I will be rid of my grief." "No," said *Dana*, "I just want to take your husband's skin and head with me." She didn't want that, "I want to mourn here." *Dana* told him to bring something or he would be expelled from the village. He suggested that he never shoot a hyena again if he could bring the head and skin. She said, "You should make a whistle from the head / skin and blow it to warn you are on the hunt." *Dana* went to work but he did not succeed, he needed (he thought) another animal to make a flute. The hyena woman, however, made it a condition that he had to make it on the spot. He shot a deer and picked up the receiver and went to work. Only after he dug a hole for the hyena to throw the young. After the throw, he blew the whistle. The hyena warned the little ones, "That's the sound of the hunter who killed your father." *Dana* returned to the village and told the chief the story. But the chief didn't believe it again, and *Dana* had to go back into the woods to get the killed deer.

(moral: with only one hunter, the work and the questions never end).

One day he went hunting again, but on the way he became seriously ill and could not return. A turtledove saw it hiding under a tree. *Dana* said, "I can't kill you now because I'm sick." The turtledove asked not to shoot him if he arranged a medicine. That was agreed. The pigeon said that the bark of the tree under which he was sitting is the right medicine. *Dana* used it and got well and returned to the village. Meanwhile, a new chef had come: the son of the previous (deceased) chef. The village sages had refused to die until *Dana* had returned. *Dana* said that he had not brought any meat, but "the flesh of the tree", a medicine that had been designated by the turtledove. The

turtledove is a special bird, because it is not afraid of humans. Seeing a turtledove is considered an omen; both good and bad. The chief said that from now on he should also bring medicines from the forest. Since then, the hunters have also become plant connoisseurs and medicine halters. They also never hunt birds in that tradition. *Dana* had also saved his own life with this approach.

*Bi naa, sahoui sounoun wa bi naa wa banza*  
*Bi naa, nagnou sounoun wa bi naa wa tyoza*  
*Bi naa, diarra sounoun wa bi naa wa banza*  
*Bi naa, danyuo sounoun wa bi naa wa banza*

"I made a flute from the skin of the hyena and the deer. With my whistle I enter the "brous" (Savanna forest) and warn the animals. The birds are not afraid of the flute; they whistle themselves too! They stay in the trees and tell me which plants to use". (*diarra* = lion, *nagnou* = deer, antelope, gazelle, *sahoui* = hyena, *dan yuo* = felines, *banza* = flute)

*A mi wé, lo donso Dana a-ah, Dana va mwé*  
*A mi wé, nyanama mine donso, Dana va wa mwé*  
*Lo Dana va ho moin a yo douma, Dana va mwé*

Hey, that brave Dana the hunter, he went into the savanna ("brous")  
 The hunter who hunts and finds the living animals  
 Dana went out, but he is sleeping (he was ill!), But not forever.  
 (*nyanama mine donso* = he who chases the living animals)  
 (I didn't hear the second song (a kind of verse actually) play, but I added the vocal line in the schematic))

Source: Youssouf Keita and Hakiri Koita, Bobo Dioulasso, January 2020

Possible percussion accompaniment

Bara (djembé)	:S	T	S	T	S	T
Bara doundoun (sangban)	T	S	S	S	T	S
Shaker		★		★	★	★
Beat	●	○	●	○	●	○



Melody right,  
accompaniment left

X	/	*	▲	O	X	/	*	▲	O	X	/	*	▲
		*						*					
		*											
		*						O					
										/			
				O									
		/	or	O								▲	
		/	or	O						/			*
		*						X					
		*								/			
		*						O		X			
		*										▲	
										X			
												X	
X	or		▲									X	
X	or		▲										▲

X	/	*	▲	O	X	/	*	▲	O	X	/	*	▲
		*						*					
		*											
		*						O					
										/			
				O									
		/	or	O						O			
		/	or	O						O			
		*						X					
		*								/			
		*						O		X			
		*										▲	
										X			
												X	
X	or		▲									X	
X	or		▲										▲

Pattern E  
solo accomp.

O	/	*	▲	O	X	/	*	▲					
								*					
		*										*	
				O						*		*	
								▲				▲	
								▲					
		/								/			
		/		O						/			
								▲				▲	
								▲					
										X			
		*								*		*	
				O						*		*	
								▲				▲	
								▲					
X										X			
										O		X	
start								▲				▲	
								▲					

Melody  
& Song 2

		*	▲	O	X	/	*	▲					
a				O				start					
mi				O									
we								/					
										/			
										O			
										/			
								▲					
don								/					
										*			
so										*			
Da								X					
na								X					
a								O					
ah								O					
Da								/					
na								/					
va								O					

		*	▲	O	X	/	*	▲					
mwè				O									
a				O				start					
mi				O									
we								/					
										/			
												▲	
ny										*			
a												▲	
na												▲	
										/			
ma													
										*			
mi										*			
ne								X					
don								X					
so								O					
o								O					
Da								/					
na								/					
va								O					

		*	▲	O	X	/	*	▲					
mwè				O									
lo										/			
Da										/			
na										/			
va								O					
ho								O					
mwè								▲					
a								O					
yo										*			
dou										*			
ma										X			
Da								/					
na								/					
va								O					