

Abaana News

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Issue # 36



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**Bringing Hope to the
Children of Africa**

Charity No: NIC102174

Zuri Girl

Zuri Girl Classes Commence



Empowering girls to reach their full potential

At Abaana, we are passionate about education and equality and never before have those been more compatible than in our Zuri Girl project. We have created Zuri Girl in response to the overwhelming challenges which girls in Africa face on a daily basis. Zuri means 'beautiful' in Swahili, and we want the girls who attend our schools to feel beautiful inside and out.



Miss Aidah

In Uganda, many families don't have the basic necessities and sanitary items are considered a luxury. Without these items, girls regularly miss valuable school days and end up behind in their education. Only 9.4% of girls who sit the Primary Leaving Exam in P7 go on to sit their A Levels. The education of these girls is at risk simply due to their gender.

Senior teacher, Miss Aidah from Strathearn School remembers one girl who started her periods at school. 'She used paper from an exercise book instead of a pad. I thank God for this project because the children always come to me asking for pads. Now they are learning to make their own plus they have the knowledge of what materials are best to use.'

We would love your help to balance this inequality. We don't want our girls to use exercise books or dirty rags in delicate places which can lead to painful infections.

Zuri Girl provides education on puberty, menstruation and sexual health to children aged between 10 and 14 years old. 25% of girls in Uganda have had a child or are pregnant before they are 20 years old. Sexual health education can help combat unplanned pregnancy.

We are also training teachers and pupils to make their own reusable sanitary towels. Three schools are participating in Zuri Girl this term – Buyobe Primary, Strathearn Primary and New Foundations Primary.

Sharon Blessing has loved Zuri Girl clubs. 'Being part of Zuri Girl clubs has been so interesting! I learned how to sew pads and how to manage my menstrual periods. I even learned how to protect and defend myself if I'm in a dangerous situation through the self-defense class. I learned about relationships and what is good self-esteem. My favourite part was learning to sew the pads, but I also enjoyed learning that I am a unique creation, and that I am wonderfully and fearfully made!'

If you would like to support our Zuri Girl project, please contact: Louise@abaana.org or visit the website www.abaana.org/zurigirl



Sharon Blessing



Thank you for not giving up on me!

For a number of reasons, a child may struggle to learn in a formal school setting, which will affect their education and their results. This may lead their attendance to become irregular and they drift away, embarrassed by their inability to learn as they see their friends progressing.

But one very positive help for a child who is struggling at school is the knowledge that someone is there for them, cheering them on, despite their difficulties.

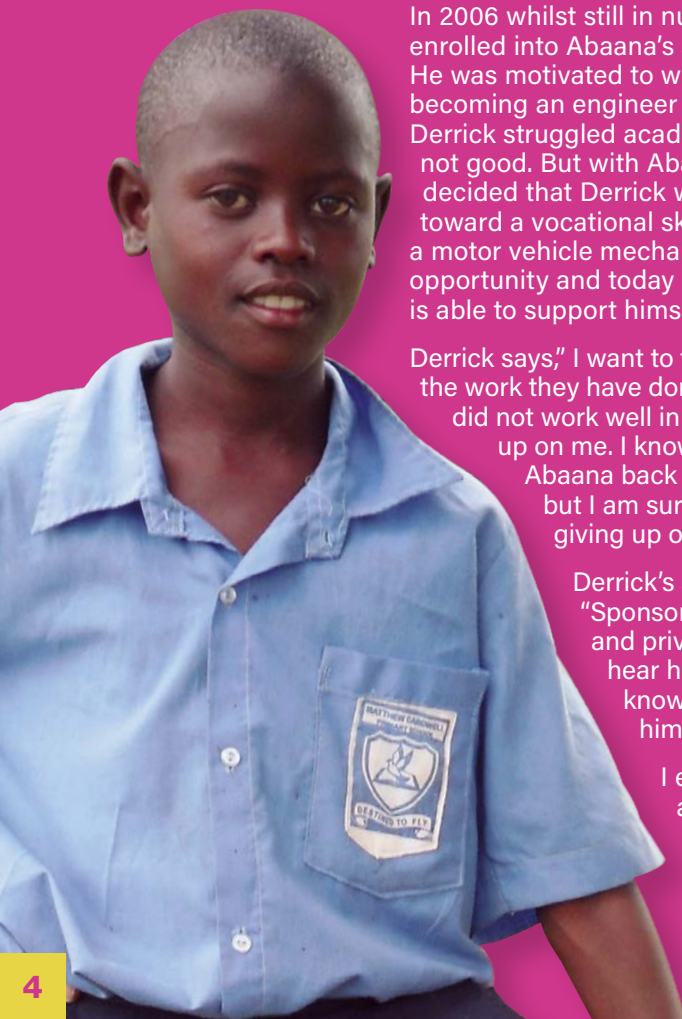
One such child was Derrick Lukoda. He is now 23 and has recently successfully completed Abaana's sponsorship programme. But Derrick's educational journey was far from easy.

In 2006 whilst still in nursery school, Derrick was enrolled into Abaana's sponsorship programme. He was motivated to work hard and he dreamt of becoming an engineer – but throughout the years, Derrick struggled academically and his grades were not good. But with Abaana's intervention, it was decided that Derrick would do better in working toward a vocational skill and he studied how to be a motor vehicle mechanic. He threw himself into this opportunity and today he is working in a garage and is able to support himself and his family.

Derrick says, "I want to thank God for Abaana and all the work they have done in my life.... When things did not work well in class, still Abaana did not give up on me. I know I can't pay my sponsor and Abaana back for all they have done for me, but I am surely grateful. Thank you for not giving up on me. God bless you so much."

Derrick's sponsor, Ryan, says, "Sponsoring a child is a real blessing and privilege. It's been amazing to hear how Derrick is doing and to know that Abaana are championing him every step of the way.

I encourage anyone thinking about sponsorship to go for it - help a child get the opportunities we all take for granted!"



Our desire at Abaana is that no child should be left behind in their education. If you want to support a child, like Derrick, through their education, then to find out more about our sponsorship scheme please visit: www.abaana.org/sponsorship



www.abaana.org

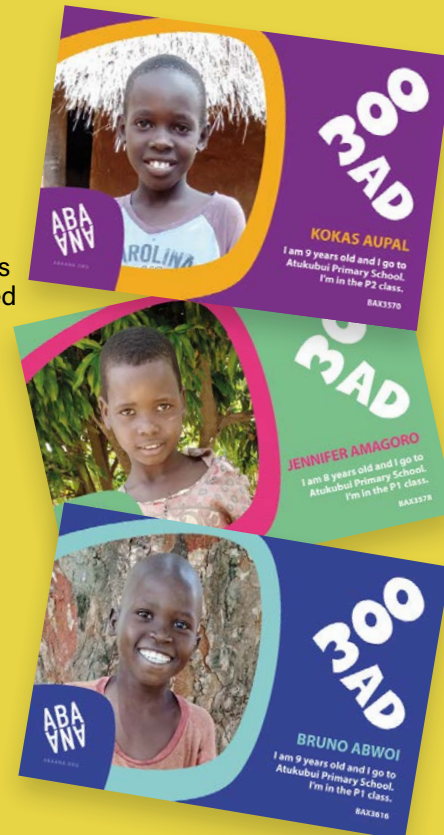
MAD 300 (Making A Difference 300) Update

We have now launched our MAD 300 campaign where, over the course of a year, we hope to make a difference in the lives of at least 300 more children by finding sponsors for them. Through this campaign, we currently have 55 children sponsored and we are so thankful to those who have begun this sponsorship journey.

If you would like to join our MAD 300 campaign and help encourage others to consider sponsorship, please:

- Access our online folder with profiles of children who need sponsorship (www.abaana.org/mad300rep)
- Follow Abaana on social media and like and share our posts
- Share what it means to you to be a sponsor with family and friends
- Arrange a talk or presentation within your group setting e.g. work or church etc. (Abaana are happy to help with this)

Contact Chris at chris@abaana.org or phone the office on 02891 451918 for more information.



Three children who all now have a new sponsor thanks to MAD300

Who knew there was someone thinking about Brian?



Brian David Apodu is 11 years old, and he lives with his grandmother, two brothers and a sister. His mother passed away about 3 years ago due to complications during pregnancy. As so many do, his father works away from home to try and earn a living to support his family. This leaves Brian and his siblings in the care of his elderly grandmother, who has no source of income.

Brian and his two brothers sleep in a small single room, with mud walls and a grass thatched roof that was in a very poor state. His grandmother sleeps in another similar room together with Brian's sister. His living conditions were dire and reflected a terrible level of poverty and hence vulnerability. For example, following a night of rain during the rainy season, Brian either got to school late or missed classes the next day. Water leaked through the thatched roof and parts of the mud wall would break off and fall to the floor, soaking Brian's books, bedding and school uniform.



Brian's Family



New Roof

Sometimes he would lie awake throughout the night because of the discomfort of the wet floor as he doesn't have a bed.

The absolute poverty of Brian's family was brought to the attention of Abaana and he was enrolled into our sponsorship scheme, and in 2020 his sponsorship began. Recently Brian's sponsor gave a generous donation by way of the Personal Gift scheme to help Brian and his family directly.

The wonderful result of this gift is that Brian has had his house renovated! When Brian returned from school and saw it completed, he was so excited and he had this to say, "Now I will be attending all my classes at school without missing a single day. No more of water spoiling my books. I am very happy to see that this house is looking beautiful now. On behalf of my little brothers, I say to my sponsor, thank you for your loving and caring heart. We are going to have a comfortable sleep. This is great! From coldness to warmth. May God bless you in everything you do".

Brian's grandmother was equally thankful and she could not hide her joy as well saying, "I am exceedingly grateful to Abaana Ministries and Brian's sponsor for the love and kindness shown to my family. This is God's working.... Who knew that there is someone thinking about Brian?"

Brian is currently attending Rainey Summit View Primary school in Morukakise and is in Primary 3.

(For details of the Personal Gift scheme see www.abaana.org/personalgifts)



New Floor

Filled with Hope for a Brighter Future

Alex is a bright child who has always loved school. He grew up with his parents near a sugar cane plantation where they both worked. When his parents separated, his father started drinking and sadly became an alcoholic. Alex stayed with his father, so his father's drinking was a problem. He was unable to work and therefore was unable to provide Alex with the basic necessities for living. Alex had to leave school at the beginning of Primary 6.

Running about the village, without much supervision (nor much to eat), Alex left his home to find work in the bigger capital city, Kampala, with a friend. But work was a lot harder than Alex thought, and he ended up like countless others, collecting scrap plastic and metal to be sold for a meagre income, whilst sleeping rough on the streets.

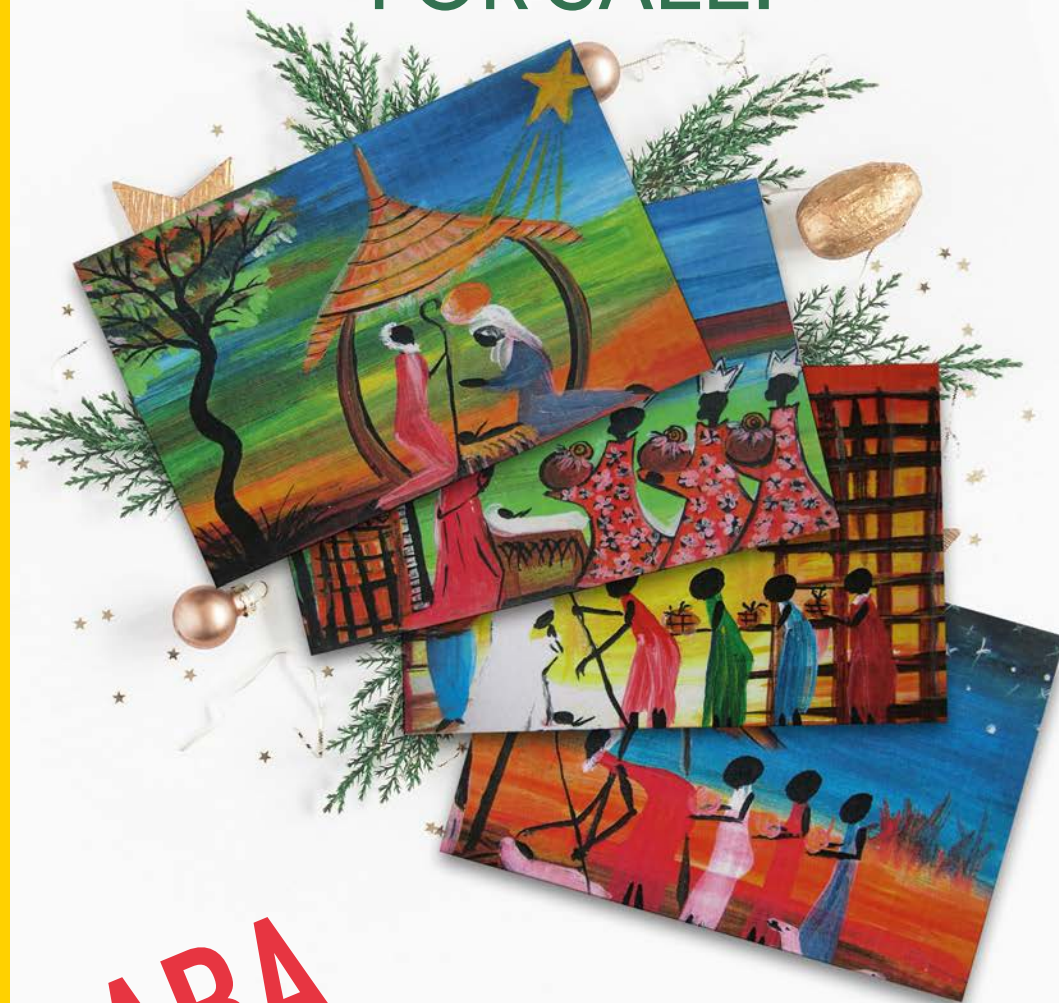
In 2016, Alex discovered Street School for the first time, an outreach where Abaana social workers met with Alex. He had a natural aptitude for learning and was keen to go to school full time. It then became possible for Alex to move to the New Life Homes. There he found refuge, a place to be a child again, sleep in a comfortable bed with a roof over his head, food to eat and a school to attend.

Alex has been reunited and resettled with his mother and is happily boarding at St Julian's High School. He will be sitting his O-level (equivalent) before the end of the year and so far his academic performance has impressed his teachers. He aims to study Computing, Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics for his A-Level studies.

"Being at senior four right now is a big testimony that I will never forget. When my Dad started drinking endlessly and I stopped schooling, I totally lost hope. But now, each time I look at myself and see how far God has brought me, I get so amazed. I'm always filled with joy and gratefulness for what my sponsors have done for me through Abaana Ministries; that's why I want to study and not shame them. I want to get a first grade in senior four so that I can continue to A-level and become an engineer in the future to help other people. I want to thank many people who have supported me in this academic journey, may God bless you."



CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR SALE!



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Each pack of 8 cards contains 4 different images with a Bible verse and Christmas greeting inside.

£2.50

News From New Life Homes

We have welcomed 6 boys into Abaana's New Life Homes.

Offering a refuge from harm and a safe place to live, Abaana is supporting children who have found themselves with no home to go to at the end of the day, no bed to lie in and no family with the means to support them.

We are so pleased to welcome Joseph, Joshua, Shamiru, Elvis, David and Akram into the Abaana family this year. There is huge potential in each of them and we can't wait to see how they grow up!

Education is crucial to a child's development and these boys have joined New Foundations Primary School. Akram has such determination to study hard because he wants to get a good job to buy a car and help support his mother. He came home with his first report card, coming second in his class. He said, 'You see, I told you! I can do it!'

**Akram, Joseph, Shamiru,
Elvis, Joshua, & David**



Will you help Akram achieve his goals?

These boys are part of the MAD300 campaign. Can you sponsor one of them, and help them reach their potential? Sponsorship costs just £24 per month. Go to www.abaana.org/NLH to sponsor, or email louise@abaana.org for more information.



Akram



David

David says, 'I love going school everyday. When I came here I didn't know how to do house chores but now I know everything and I participate, I had no clothes nor shoes but ever since I came here I have been given new clothes and shoes.'



Elvis

Elvis says that his dream is to see himself back to school. His best subjects are maths and English and he would like to become a pilot or a doctor in future.



Joseph

Joseph tells us he's very excited being at NLH, 'I feel relieved and secure while at NLH because I can get good food and I sleep well, unlike before.'

Bringing Hope to the Children of St Mary's

It's hard to imagine the excitement at St Mary's Primary School in Kagoli village. "What?A new school? ...In our village?"

What an amazing difference this would make to the children, staff, and the local community.

For the first time in their school lives, pupils could be sitting at proper desks in weatherproof purpose- built classrooms.

No longer would they have classes out in the open, in the shade of the trees or in temporary buildings.

School life will never be the same again!

We launched our appeal to build a new school at St Mary's earlier this year. Our target is to raise £80,000 to enable us to provide two classroom blocks (one with four classrooms, and one with three classrooms and an office), and two latrine blocks.



Emmanuel is in Primary 6 and he says, "Our classroom doesn't have windows and doors, when it rains we become wet!"

We have been so moved and humbled by the kindness and generosity of the Abaana family of supporters. £51,560 has been raised so far. Thank you so much to everyone who has already donated.

If you would still like to help, you can donate:

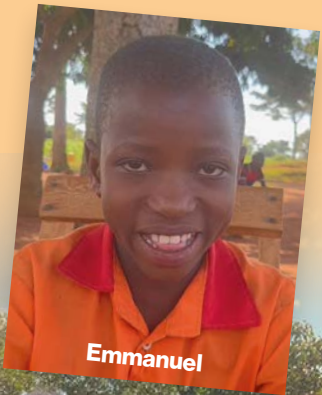
- Online via our website www.abaana.org/stmarys
- By text - text STMARYS 5, 10 or 20 to 70490 to donate £5, £10 or £20 (this donation will be added to your mobile bill)
- Could you share the QR code below this please and ask 5 others to donate £5 to help build St Mary's?



Please go to www.abaana.org/stmarys for more information on sponsored event ideas and how to set up a Just Giving page.

Please help us raise the remaining £28,000 so that children like Emmanuel don't get soaked when it rains during school time.

Thank you!



Our CEO, Scott Baxter, presented with a chicken when visiting St Mary's as a gift of thanks



God Did Something Special

Christine is a 22-year-old young lady who has recently finished her Certificate in Early Childhood Development and has started her own nursery school in the local community with the support of her father!

Back in 2007, life for Christine was very difficult and her attendance at school was irregular as her parents struggled to meet the required school fees and the supply of basic school requirements.

But one day, while Christine was in Primary 2, she says, "God did something special. My life changed immediately." She was enrolled into Abaana's sponsorship programme and suddenly the concerns over the payment of school fees and the meeting of certain school requirements were gone. And Christine recognised, even though only in P2 at the time, what a significant opportunity this was. She says, "This made me very determined to work for a bright future." And that new found determination, fuelled by being supported by her sponsor, enabled her to progress through education and this year she graduated with a Certificate in Early Childhood Development which is something she says she, "never thought of achieving before sponsorship came in my life."

Since graduating she has started up her own nursery school in her community. "This gives me so much joy because in this community where I did not have hope ... I am giving others hope. I am so grateful to Abaana for all they did to see me achieve such a great milestone and I will forever be grateful."

We are delighted with Christine's progress so far over the 14 years of sponsorship thanks to her sponsors. We wish her well in her studies for her diploma which she will undertake during the school holidays.

To find out more about sponsorship please see www.abaana.org/sponsorship



Christine teaching her class

New Life Choir

Recently, our CEO, Scott Baxter, travelled to Uganda and he was able to visit with our choir children. We are happy to report they are doing well in school and still singing!

It is hoped that Choir 3 will be able to tour the UK and Ireland in 2024, but more on that in our next newsletter!





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Christmas Gift Appeal

We would love to give a gift to as many children as possible.

Each Christmas our sponsors buy gifts for their sponsored children, but we have many more children needing our support.

This Christmas, you can support your child or a child that has no sponsor by visiting: Abaana.org/Christmas to find out more and make a donation.

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