

EXPERIENCE ON OUR VISIT TO SEMAMAYA.

Semamaya community is a community located in Semamaya section Wara Wara Berfodia chiefdom.

Its resident comprise of mainly Limba people with beautiful culture, and within the section there are nomadic cattle rearers (Fullahs). The center of the village or the biggest village is Semamaya village where the section chief lives and perform his function respectively.

The major source of economic income are palm wine tapping and farming.

During the farming season, the people face lot of challenges in term of labour and security for their crops because of the Cattles and the Goats pose disturbance without strong fence.

The community have a long history of tribal war during the 14th and 15th century this war was fought for conquest and dominance by kings (Warriors) from the Yalunka kingdom, but not withstanding they (Limba) succeeded and established their kingdom it become the major tax collection area within the chiefdom ("Beea Yaliya") meaning special people among others.

Later the center become Bafodia as a result of education and Paramount chief has to reside at Bafodi, and Bafodia is the chiefdom head quarter.

Yet still, the mindset of the people of Semamaya has not change completely toward education.

They believe that education, especially girl child education change nothing but reduce labour at the farm and deprive of marrying the young teens of their choice, lots of NGO, CBO and government bodies have tried but no success was achieved, CYAB which was later transformed to YAN first visited this community and its people in 2015 and began their advocacy skill, by then the number of school attendance was less than 10%, and in 2016 due to our small involvement it rose to 15% or above. In 2017 we finally formed The Youth Advocacy Network (YAN), and became a community based organization receiving sponsor from Stichting Taiama-Andreas (STA). Semamaya become one of its main focus and interest as a result of low school attendance with the highest population in the chiefdom, lot of success has been made so far with almost 50% (primary)school attendance, with a result of these improvement STA – YAN decide to support 11 girls from Semamaya school material and many more things have really improve on both the community and the school going pupils, some of them are now in JSS3 while the others are in JSS2

But now they get another bad experience, as a result of the corona virus, schools were shut down and they have no option but to go back to the village and stay long with their parents.

It is not bad to go to the village and stay with their people! But they are faced with lots of challenges, such as hard labour, fear of teenage pregnancy, early marriage and family carrier (selling fire woods, brooms and crops in Kabala) to feed their parents.

They were happy to see their members from YAN, who pay visit to them on the 17th June 2020, the purpose was to keep them safe from this child offence above and remind the parents that YAN still is alive and have a great concern in these girls and the community people!! despite the support YAN gave them which is bucket and soap, as a way to prevent them from covid 19. They were happy to received us and they promise to keep the agreement which was "No to early marriage, teenage pregnancy and child abuse" they hope we continue to visit them on regular bases! And we too hope so.

By the acting secretary general,

Lamin Mansaray.