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The 'My Heart's Appeal,' a charity organization assisting children who suffer down-syndrome and are intellectually challenged held a festival with their beneficiaries at their Old Road Gaye Town headquarters on Saturday, ahead of the country's Independence Day celebrations. The gifts provided the children were from the Ebola Command Center, in the compounds of the General Service Agency (GSA) and the My Heart's Appeals' Foundation.

Down syndromes are usually forms of irregularities discovered in human beings especially from birth and considered as 'witchcraft' in Liberia but with study down, it is proven that those who suffer from such disorder are carrier of six cells instead of five and because of that, they behave abnormally and sometimes appear disabled.

My Heart's Appeal was organized nineteen years ago in the USA and has been actively operating in Liberia for over three years. It has an IT Lab where the children with special needs learn how to play with the keyboards, a space where they are taught how to bake and a yard used for recreation.

The co-chair of the Board of Appeals, Anthony Deline, said in other countries, children with such conditions are peculiarly cared for and is therefore appealing to government to continue to create the awareness for such children because the organization is not private and cannot be left alone; it needs every support mustered through the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education so that together they can reap success.

He said the pre-independence day's event was intended to thank the volunteers and share gifts with some 50 beneficiaries adding that My Heart's Appeal's efforts cannot reach out into their homes therefore from time to time encourages the children with such needs by assembling them just to show them love.

My Heart's Appeal is borrowing from the facility of the St. Andrew Lutheran Church for its programs therefore the parents of its present beneficiaries have vowed to assist the organization by pulling together their meager resources through due payments while at the same time it is requesting training of parents so that they can better take care of their children too.

The head of the parents association said they need doctors to diagnose their children's problems so that they can better understand the case of their children and know how to take care of them instead of collectively classifying them as 'down syndrome.'

The parents called on the organization to establish a mission for their children where they or some other parents of a normal child would be volunteer staff that will teach the parents and as well serve as experts for the children because to take care of such children is very difficult.

The Director of the Special and Inclusive Education Section at the Ministry of Education, Mohamed Konneh assured the organization that the government is concerned and that the organization can count on his department as partners in creating the atmosphere for those children to learn.

He expressed sympathy for the condition of the children adding, "Your story is very telling, and as Liberians, we need to give all children a chance to learn regardless of their disabilities and that can be a reality if we work together to give them all the chances."

Mr. Konneh motivated the volunteers to use their time to put a smile on the faces of the children because by doing so it is God's work noting, "All of us coming together to volunteer our time to help the children, God will bless you immensely."