

Mark's Diary – Visit to The Gambia February 2016  
2/27: Shopping, Naming and Return

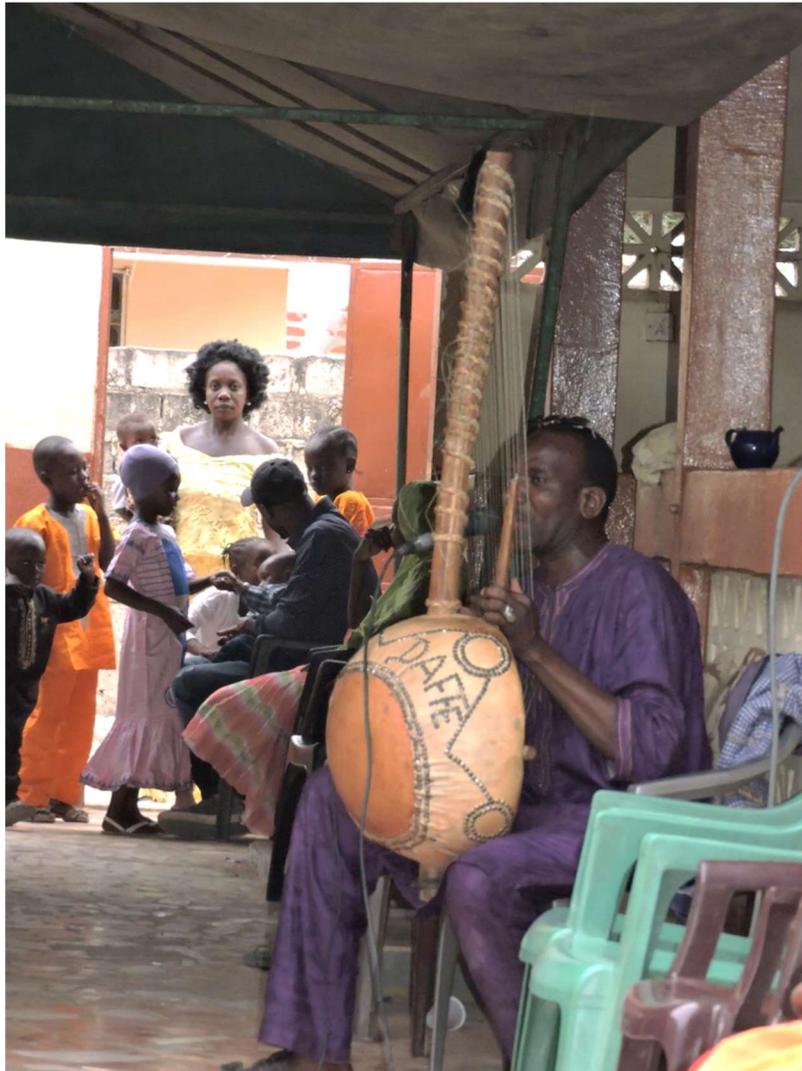
Shopping day. Remember what the market was like in Thailand? The crowded streets and smells and people? The people in Thailand are much different than the ones in Gambia. Their attitudes are different, the way they sell things are different, the way they treat outsiders is all different. Bought some things and also went to get my hair braided.



## Serrekunda Market

2/28:

Naming ceremony time. Everyone in the village came to this small compound I called home. I got new clothes and everyone dressed up. I had to wear a big, thick cloth over my head for the actual naming part. An elder gave a speech which I couldn't understand and they prayed for my good health and long life. The idea that all these people who I either don't know or barely know, came to see a white person have their naming ceremony. The ceremony normally takes place 7 days within the baby's birth so having it at 15 years old came off as surprising. With my mom being someone who is known for helping, everyone wanted to see me become part of the village. After a few hours rest we got back into festive clothes for the kora player. You would go up and give him dalasi. Everyone tried to or they would hand their money to someone who was already out of their seat. Once the people left we ate in the dark outside then went to bed.



The Kora player at the naming ceremony at

Essa's family compound in Banjulinding.



Me with Fatou placing money (Dalasis) into the Kora opening



Gathering for Prayers to Allah for the bounty provided for the Naming ceremony.

Imam is the man farthest to the right who is smiling.

2/29:

Didn't leave for airport until 5:30pm so chilled with the family during the day. We took photos and talked about coming back and staying longer. Once we got through security we started our 18ish hour trip back home.



Me, aka Joks Camara, and Essa Camara, my Gambian Father

