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**Country of Origin:** Germany

**Finished SIA in:** summer semester 2016

**Current Position:** Works for GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer International Zusammenarbeit GmbH) in Ethiopia. Position: Project Advisor (M&E, Project implementation) for the “Integrated Soil Fertility Management” Project under the BMZ special initiative “One world-no hunger” (SEWOH)

My interest in agriculture came hand in hand with my interest in tropical and subtropical agroecosystems. Before I started my Bachelor in Agriculture sciences in Goettingen, I did part of my agricultural internship in Nigeria and therefore aligned my studies towards continuing my masters with a focus on tropical and subtropical agriculture. It was satisfying to find such a master program in Goettingen. Since I enjoyed living and studying in Goettingen I was happy to have been accepted to the SIA program. The first thing I appreciate about the program is its wide range of courses from different specifications one can choose from - *rural development, business, soil biology, crop production etc.* Since one can also choose from other study programs from two universities, one can really select according to one’s interest and preference and is able to look beyond one’s own nose (or one’s specification). This still helps me in my job today since my tasks vary from Monitoring and Evaluation to workshop management right through to giving technical backstopping about soil related processes. I liked that the different focus of the two universities allowed me to see things from different perspectives, hear various opinions and therefore was given the room to explore my own stance. Listening to and understanding various stakeholders is crucial when working in international cooperation.

Secondly, I appreciated and still profit from the multicultural study community which, together with the opportunity to include an exchange semester and the master thesis research to be conducted abroad, allowed me to widen my horizon and enriched the “classroom and greenhouse theory” with experiences from all over the world. The family, personal and warm study environment allowed me to explore topics and subjects beyond the “script of the course”.

The experiences of the time studying in the SIA program gave me the technical and intercultural background and the self-esteem to pursue a career outside of Germany. After an internship at the GIZ-SEWOH project “Integrated Soil Fertility Management” in Ethiopia I got a chance to continue as Junior Advisor and now as a Project Advisor. In the project, we follow a participatory approach to engage farmers in the rehabilitation of their land through the adoption of soil fertility enhancing technologies while supporting favorable political frameworks. One of my responsibilities is the Monitoring and Evaluation of the project and using the figures that we collect with our partners on the ground to help to design and adjust project activities. Furthermore, together with colleagues we design and give trainings as well as produce extension material. By far the most rewarding task is being in the field with farmers and extension workers to discuss progress and to see on the ground, what works well and what ideas are there to further learn and adjust technologies and extension approaches to the local conditions. I am very grateful to work within the topic that has always been my pet issue during my study time. While I love my work as well as living abroad I still enjoy coming back to Goettingen and remembering the “good old” study days.