

Short profile:

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Country of origin: NIGERIA

Finished SIA: Winter semester 15/16

Organization: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Job position: Country coordinator/Value Chain Advisor for Competitive African Rice Initiative (CARI) programme in Nigeria.

Article: My career after I studied in a M.Sc. program - Sustainable International Agriculture (SIA)

After I earned a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics and Farm Management in my home country in the year 2012. I then started working, but I knew I wanted more. I wanted to deepen my knowledge to enable me do better at my work and expose myself to greater employment opportunity within the agricultural sector. So I started thinking about going back to school, at that time I was searching specifically for a M.Sc. degree program to further develop my career in agribusiness and food sector development. I later came across this joint degree programme - Sustainable International Agriculture (SIA) offered by Agricultural Faculties of University Göttingen and University Kassel. I was excited to be part of this programme because I was convinced that it will increase my employability after degree completion.

For obvious reason known to me that SIA master program design is comprehensive and well-structured in developing candidates that can tackle global problems in agriculture as well as promote sustainable agriculture, especially with available options in area of specialization and a major focus on sustainability. My final decision to study SIA was solid because University of Göttingen is a university of reputation with high level of education global ranking in agriculture studies. Thereafter, I was admitted into SIA master program in the Winter Semester (WS), 2013 with a specialization area of International Agribusiness and Rural Development Economics.

SIA helped me gain skills and knowledge I didn't have before the program. The hands-on approach allowed me to understand lot of agricultural development challenges and solutions to them across the globe. Not only did I learn about agricultural value chain topics from senior instructors and renowned professors among a diverse student body, but the courses, research papers and presentation in world agricultural markets and trade, socioeconomics of rural development and food security, strategic management, sustainable nutrition, evaluation of rural development project and polices and agricultural policy seminar round out the experience.

After completing the program - M.Sc. in SIA (profile in International Agribusiness and Rural Development Economics), my journey as a professional and a career in agricultural development started. It was a major transition, graduating from Uni-Göttingen and entering the "real world." Right after I completed SIA program, I returned back to my home country (Nigeria). I didn't just return but began an internship programme with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH – German development cooperation working in Abuja, Nigeria. I was working in one of GIZ agricultural value chain development project – Pro-poor Growth and Promotion of Employment in

Nigeria (SEDIN), was responsible to provide support to technical team, the value chain development unit of the project in carrying out their duties related to the provision of capacity development and extension/ advisory services to beneficiaries/value chain actors in all aspects.

I completed my internship with GIZ within a 3 months period. I must say that this never ended there because I was hired as an agribusiness development consultant by AFC Consultant International working on behalf of GIZ in the same project that I intend. This was possible because of their satisfaction with my work, which I hold it on to the technical knowledge and skills that I learnt from SIA master program and was reflected in my work. For the last three year, I have been working with GIZ in Nigeria and I am currently working in one of its project on rice value chain development - Competitive African Rice Initiative (CARI) as a Country coordinator and Value chain advisor.

Taking break from my last job before SIA master degree was a great step and worth more at the end. Besides the enriching classroom knowledge that I acquire from SIA program that have made me to be more successful in my career today. SIA program also helped me in getting adjusted to other people's culture and that as kept me working in a diverse and multicultural environment. My experience as an international student has been incredibly stimulating and rewarding as well. All this gives me a healthier sense of self-esteem and a feeling of great accomplishment.

SIA program was a perfect fit for me because it is unique, enriching, challenging, rewarding and success is celebrated.