

- Student Exchange Report

- Report by: DEEN Tamrath

- WeitblickMünster (Germany)

- 31/09/2018 - 06/10/2018



My name is DEEN Tamrath, I am 23 years old and I was blessed to be the first female that received a scholarship from Weitblick to spend a semester in Münster/Germany. My adventure started in 2017 when I decided to apply for the scholarship offer from Weitblick which was pasted on my University walls. I then made some researches about the association and was impressed with their actions and the impact a community of students could make in the world, especially in less fortunate countries which has low GDP like Benin. Few months after applying for the scholarship, I received a call from the University of Abomey-Calavi inviting me for an interview. On the day of the interview I was so stressed out that I remembered literally spending all the morning stressed and cry out to God for help. One thing was for sure I was going to be myself and be as honest as possible. Amazingly, my honesty and personality conquered the heart of my interviewers because few weeks later I received the news that I was selected to spend a semester in Münster. On the day I received the news that I was selected, we met some of the members of Weitblick that came to Benin. On that faithful day we discussed and signed the terms and contracts that conditioned our stay in Münster and agreed to the rules and regulations regarding the exchange program.



Paterne, some of the Weitblick Members and I.

Few months after we signed the contracts we started the processes regarding the Visa application. This was very stressful; the German embassy in Benin only gave us the visa the afternoon before our flight. If I could do something to prevent this from happening again to future exchange students, I would say that the people in charge of the program in Benin must follow closely the candidates and make sure early enough that the competent authorities working in the embassy are aware of the visa request so as to deliver the visa as swiftly as possible.

On the 31th of August, I got on the plane with Paterne for Münster. The flight was good and not as tiring as I thought it would be, the only part of the trip that was really exhausting was the road trip from the Frankfurt Airport to Münster. Thankfully, two members of the association came to pick us up and their welcoming was really nice.



Paterne, the welcome committee of Weitblick and I.



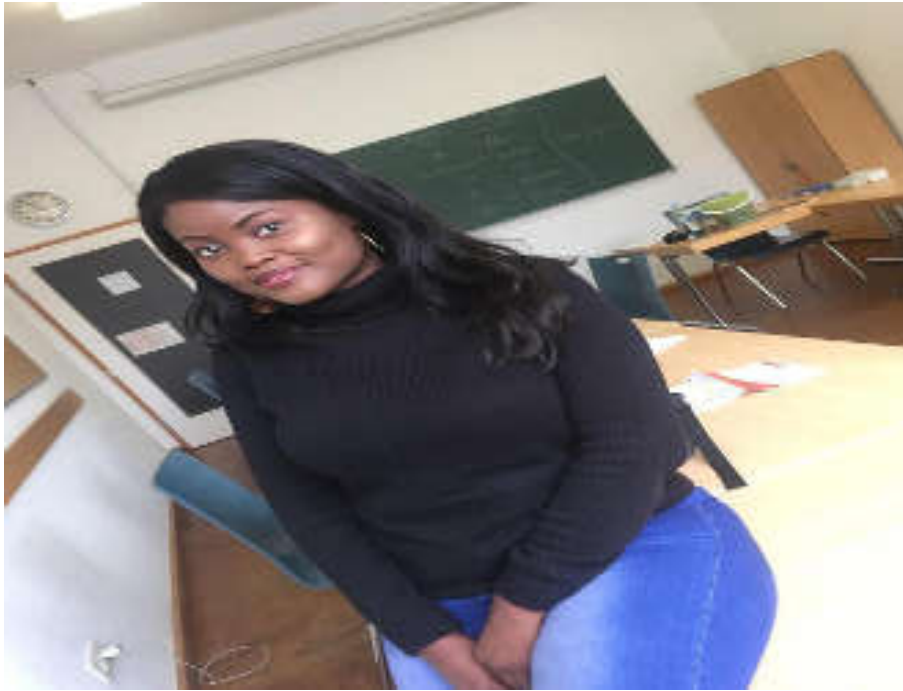
After a long journey I finally got to my apartment in Münster. The apartment was beautiful and my room was splendid, the moment I step food in it I felt home, my first flat mate “Hannah” was nice and kind to me. She welcomed me and made me feel comfortable. I was very impressed and happy with the accommodation and the comfort Weitblick wanted us to have. The next days was all about getting us the necessary things to be able to start our new life in Münster. The street full of bicycles, the cars, the roads and the city were beautiful. The air was clean, the technologies and the traffic lights everything seemed so different from where I came from. I truly felt like a

“Fish in the sea”.





The first weeks were amazing, everyone one was present to help us every step of the way. I always had assistance for most things and I felt really welcomed. I the first month was spent learning Deutsch with other students from all over the world! I had an amazing experience learning German at the Wipdaf institute.





My social life in Münster has been okay so far, I still feel lonely at times because I see and feel the difference in culture between Germans and me but they always try to make a bridge, to get to know me and make me feel comfortable. For the food, I quickly continue with my habit which was to cook my food. I enjoyed cooking so much that some people felt that I didn't want to eat outside for some reasons which weren't true. When I explained to some of the Weitblickers that I actually love cooking we decided to have a Pizza night at my house, this was one of my favourite moments.



Pizza night at my place 😊

After my one month integration course came the orientation week. This was like nothing I've ever seen before, a whole week dedicated to partying and drinking. I realized that German students do not have the same problems as Benin students. Where I come from we are so conscious about life and goals that we forget the simple things life. Because we grow up in a highly competitive environment everyone is looking for a way to make it in life or should I say "survive". Whereas in Germany it's all about meeting new people, making friends, having fun and drinking like there was no tomorrow.





The difficult moments for me in the first weeks were with finding my way, knowing how to get where I was supposed to go and the weather. At first the weather was great but by ending September it got rainy and cold, so cold that sometimes I felt like crying. Nevertheless I wasn't ready to give up because I knew that elevation and self-growth comes only when you come out of your comfort zone. There was some miscommunication and misunderstanding at times but it quickly got better. I am really looking forward to see what the next days are going to reveal especially when I will start my lectures😊.

07/10/2018-  
02/12/2018

## **WeitblickMünster (Germany)**

DEEN Tamrath



**[STUDENT EXCHANGE REPORT]**

My cover picture sets the tone for this report and of my feelings after spending 3 months in Münster. I feel home and cared for, the weather has become familiar and going around town by myself is no longer a challenge. The months of October and November were months of traveling and discovering new things. Pictures couldn't reflect the reality and the beauty of the places we visited. We went to places like Marburg, Köln and Berlin. This second report will cover some of the activities that we did with the weitblickers, the places we've been and an exhaustive presentation of the trip to Berlin and the meeting with the founder of Weitblick.

It all started with the "Kennenlernen" weekend, which was basically a weekend where weitblickers welcome the new members. We went to a little town close to Münster, weitblick rented a house in the woods and we had a lot of fun games, activities together but also some little presentations about the activities of the association in other countries.





Our house in the woods ☺



On that weekend we shared rooms, food, cooked together and we got to know each other. I was impressed about the way the organizing team planned the whole weekend. There was planning, order and a strong bond among them. Seeing young students, being able to handle a group of 30 other students with so much maturity and order impressed me. There was fun but at the same time discipline!



PS: Sorry I decided to play my African queen with this large head scarf which now I regret lol! Because this picture is going to last forever haha! :-D



Our next trip was to Marburg, a town full of hills! It was a lot of sports but during this trip not only I discovered places but I discovered a new face of the weitblickers. Unlike the first trip, this trip was all about WORK. Weitblickers had many workshops. During this weekend I was impressed about one thing; their hard work. The work discipline they exercised during this trip was impressive. The first months, I only saw them partying and having fun, it was the first time I experienced their work ethic and it was really impressive. I was always asking myself how these young people were able to have such a big impact in other countries and during this trip I got the answer to my question. When it's time to party, these people party hard, but when it's time to work they work even harder.

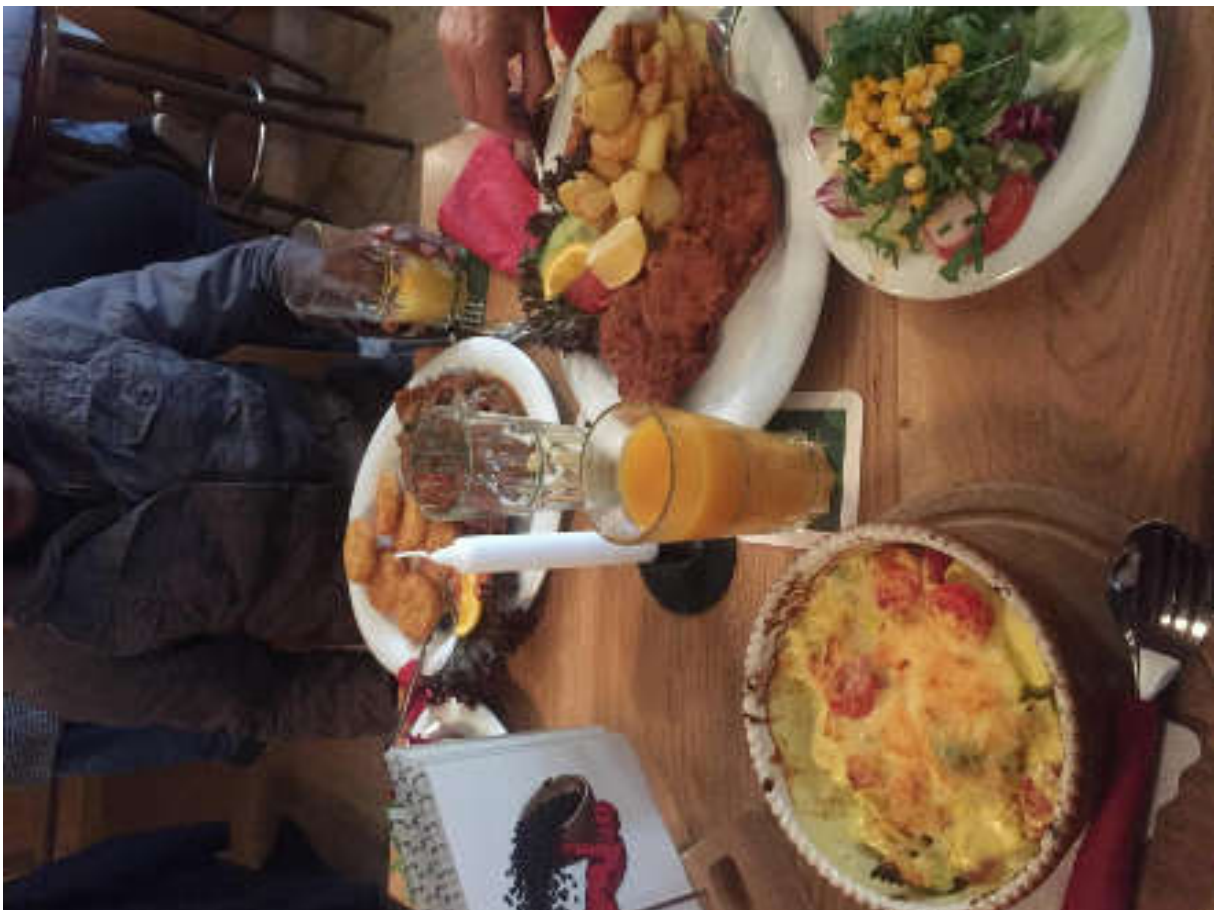
One of the workshops that really touched me was the "critical whiteness" workshop. Here, weitblickers invited an African man to teach them. Just the fact that they were ready to be taught by an African man portrayed a lot of humility. When we get to the content of this workshop is much more impressive because it was about racism. Basically, this man shocked them, hurt them, humbled them and faced them with the truth about how Africans are being treated abroad. Seeing that they were ready to come out of there comfort zone and hear some truths about some of their characters, was really impressive. I am sure that if the participants of this workshop knew what to expect, not all would have still attended it. It was a bitter truth that needed to be addressed and they handled it with great humility. After this workshop the person that touched me the most was Lena. This young beautiful medicine student, told me some things that made me feel that there was no barrier no skin difference, but at the same time acknowledged her differences, her flaws and her fears. She listened to me, to my feelings, to my testimony and to my faith. She made me feel comfortable enough to open up my heart and tell her things that I never thought I would tell any weitblickers because it could make me look weird, vulnerable but at the same time weak.

I cannot finish talking about this weekend without talking about Hannah and Her mother. Hannah welcomed us in her home, I wouldn't say house because it was a "home" there was love, care and it felt warm. Hannah's

mother took us around town, offered us lunch and was truly a mother to us. I pray that this woman lives long and that the Lord will have her by his side for eternity.



The magic of this town was so real in the evening that while we were doing our second visit of the town in the evening, I prayed to come back to this place in the next 10 years with my husband and kids. The feeling I had here, the experience of this town was nothing like others. I loved it so much that I prayed I will have the grace to have this experience again with those I love, the flesh of my flesh, the bones of my bones, my future family. The reason why I am putting this in my report is because I know that written words do not disappear and it's somehow in the hope of this prayer to be fulfilled😊.







The next weekend was our trip to Köln, during this trip we were with Jule and Line, two beautiful law students. Köln is a big and beautiful town, not too big not small; it's a little bit like Berlin but smaller. In this town I felt like I could live there. Not with my future family but maybe have a carrier there, learn some new things and experience infrastructure that do not exist yet in Africa. Jule's parents were very kind to us, her house and her cat (Bella) was impressive. On that weekend was the Köln Carnival, it's basically people in different costumes having fun and drinking lots of alcohol. When I say people, trust and believe that I mean the whole town, we saw some crazy costumes and some really happy people which appeared to appreciate life! It was a wonderful thing to watch.



Me in my costume 😊



On the right is Line, Jule in the middle and I.





A picture of a happy child discovering new things 😊



The last part of this report will present our trip to Berlin and our meeting with Andy the founder of weitblick. Who is Andy according to my understanding and not according to what you will read on the internet and hear about him? According to me, Andy is a fun grown man, he is the funniest person I met in Germany, he is full of life, knowledge of different cultures and with a high level of intercultural competences. His house was impressive and looked expensive! On the first night he welcomed us in a classy environment, we could immediately feel the difference between being welcomed by young students and being welcomed by a full adult. He welcomed us with wine and some “amuse gueule”. The next day we visited Berlin, we went to historical places such as the Berlin Wall, the parliament, Alexanderplatz, the Brandenburg Gate and many more impressive places. We walked for about 6 hours equal to approximately 20 000 footsteps. In the evening we had a dinner with Haiko one of the ex-presidents of weitblick, Andy’s beautiful girlfriend and some other people. This trip was really nice, I felt grateful when leaving that town.



Andy's place 😊



The Berlin wall.



The Brandenburg Gate.



Paterne, Andy and I 😊

At the end of this 3 months, one thing I would remember and leave with weitblickers is this saying ***“when a friend offends you write it down on the sand, when a friend saves you, does something nice to you, shows love or a character that you really like, write it down on a stone. Because the offense that was written on the sand will be erased by the wind and forgotten, but the good deeds written on a stone will never fade away and will be remembered forever”***.

Oups!!! I was ending my report and almost forgot to talk about school! School has been great, my German classes are also going well😊.





Weitblick

## ECHANGE



Université d'Abomey-Calavi

Promotion : 4<sup>eme</sup>

RAPPORT DE SÉJOUR  
EFFECTUE DU 31/08/2019  
AU 15/10/2018 A  
MÜNSTER

Réalisé par:

TCHAGNONSI M. Paterne

Année académique : 2018-2019



## **I. PROCESSUS ET VOYAGE**

Le processus de voyage me fut tout particulièrement très difficile compte tenu de la distance entre mon lieu de travail et celui des formalités administratives. Il m'a donc toujours fallu faire plus de 400km à chaque appel soit du responsable à charge de la bourse au Bénin soit de l'Ambassade. Sur demande de Basil HOUNDEGNON, nous avons déposé les dossiers de demande de visa 6 semaines avant notre date de départ et il nous est demandé de revenir dans 4 semaines pour le retrait. Comme convenu, nous nous sommes rendu à l'Ambassade 4 semaines plus tard mais le visa n'était pas sorti parce qu'il est dit que aucune réponse n'est encore reçue de l'Allemagne. Le seul choix qui s'offrait à nous était donc de revenir dans une semaine pour toujours avoir la suite. Le résultat du second rendez-vous était pareil que la première à la différence qu'on nous demande de passer le mercredi car il nous restait rigoureusement une semaine pour prendre le vol. Il a fallu l'intervention de l'Allemagne pour que cette affaire soit résolue à la satisfaction de tous. Nos visa sont en effet sortis le Jeudi 30 Août 2018 à 4 heures ce qui nous a permis de prendre normalement départ le vendredi 31 Août 2018 à 4 heure comme prévu. Un changement de vol a été fait à Casablanca pour enfin atterrir à Frankfurt.

A notre arrivée à l'aéroport de "Frankfurt", un accueil chaleureux nous était réservé. Une équipe composée de Hannah et de Mauritz était venu à notre rencontre à l'aéroport. Nous avons donc fait environs 5 heures de route de Frankfurt à Münster pour des raisons d'embouteillage. Nous avons néanmoins eu le temps de beaucoup échanger lors de ce trajet sur des sujets généraux. Une fois à Münster aux environs de 19h avec une température de 19° chacun a été installé chez lui ( Tamrath à Grvener strasse 27 et moi à Peter Strasse 2). Ce fut donc notre première nuit à Münster.

## **II. LA VIE A MÜNSTER**

La vie à Münster est très riche en couleur et en même temps comme une rupture dans notre existence. Il faut notifier que la vie jusqu'à présent s'exprime par une succession d'évènements, de découverte qui constituent une très grande expérience pour nous en tant que boursier de Weitblick. Nous verrons ci-dessous sous forme résumée, notre vécu quotidien à Münster.

#### ❖ Willkommen Nacht

Organisée en notre honneur, c'est l'évènement au cours duquel nous avons été officiellement reçus et présentés aux membres de l'association. A cette occasion, nous avons pu prendre contact avec beaucoup de personnes et échanger de beaucoup de choses ; En guise de reconnaissance, nous avons pu offrir à certains de porte clé, de bracelet et un joyau avec quoi est écrit le nom de l'association en perle. Ce fut tout simplement parfait, cette séance marquant notre arrivée.

#### ❖ **Les cours de langue**

Prévues pour commencer le lundi 03 septembre 2018 et finir le 29 septembre 2018, nous nous sommes rendus au lieu de cours. Ce fut non seulement un lieu d'acquisition du savoir mais également un lieu de rencontre d'autres personnes et donc un lieu de découverte de beaucoup d'autres cultures. Les cours de langue se sont très bien passés jusqu'à la fin et j'y ai beaucoup appris.

#### ❖ **Rencontre de Mario Götze**

Toujours dans le cadre de l'échange, nous avons effectué une rencontre sur Dortmund avec Johannes et Janaina à la rencontre du professionnel footballeur Mario Götze. C'est encore le moment de lui présenter les projets de weitblick exécuté par son aide et lui en remercier. Cette séance a fini par la réalisation d'une séquence vidéo de Mario exprimant son engagement pour le social aux côtés de l'association Weitblick.

#### ❖ **La semaine d'orientation**

C'est la semaine lors de laquelle sont données toutes les informations nécessaires aux nouveaux étudiants en ce qui concerne le choix des filières et des matières y afférentes. C'est aussi la semaine de découverte, de rencontre et d'intégrations des nouveaux étudiants. La participation à cette semaine nous a permis au-delà de la réception d'information, de nous distraire avec des amis et de nous intégrer socialement.

#### ❖ **La reunion hebdomadaire de weitblick**

Elle fut la toute première réunion de l'Année academique 2018-2019. Au cours de cette réunion, nous avons fait une présentation portant sur nos connaissances sur weitbklick et sa vision, puis sur le bénin et ses ressources.

#### ❖ **La visite de site**

Pendant notre séjour, nous avons pu visiter Münster dans sa globalité. Mais plus précisément, nous avons visité :

- ✓ Le Aasee ;
- ✓ Le musée LWL ;
- ✓ Bauhaus de Albersloher ;
- ✓ La grande église catholique à Domplatz ;
- ✓ Hauptbahnhof ;
- ✓ Hauptautobahn ;
- ✓ Etc.

#### ❖ **Sortie avec les weitblicker**

Nous avons pu effectuer plusieurs sorties avec les weitblicker selon leurs disponibilités. En effet, nous avons été plusieurs fois mangé à la cantine située au AAsee. On a également fit de sortie "Münster by night" où on a joué de jeux. Des sorties ont été faites dans le cadre des achats.

### **III. DIFFICULTES**

Si nous ne sommes pas parvenus à identifier les problèmes auxquels nous nous sommes confronté, c'est dire que nous avons eu la facilité à surmonter ces derniers de par notre capacité d'adaptabilité à toutes nouvelles situations. Néanmoins il serait bien appréciable de souligner de façon générale ce qui parait nécessaire à d'autres qui seront en situation de boursier pour qu'ils puissent prévoir et anticiper sur les



actions à mener dans ce sens vu que nous n'avons ni les mêmes tempéraments ni les mêmes capacités de résistance ou d'adaptabilité à de conditions nouvelles.

Nous voulons mentionner par là la différence de culture qui est un grand facteur jouant sur les relations interpersonnelles ici à Münster. Tout varie selon les circonstances mais il faut admettre que nous avons beaucoup de points différents que de points communs, ce qui est tout à fait normal vu que nous vivons chacun dans deux mondes totalement opposés.

#### **IV. EXPERIENCES ACQUISES**

Cette période d'immersion que nous avons passée à Münster nous a été très bénéfique en matière d'expérience vécue. Au cours de notre séjour à Münster, nous avons pu grâce aux conseils, dynamisme et accompagnement de nos amis weitblicher, nous familiariser à la vie en Allemagne et nous imprégner des réalités qui y vont avec. Elle nous a permis d'évaluer l'écart entre les préjugés que nous avons sur l'Allemagne et ce qui est vraiment. Ceci nous a permis de comprendre plus ce qui sera notre tâche en tant qu'ambassadeur de Weitblick une fois de retour au pays.

## ANNEXE

