**Report of the experience in Bamenda, Cameroon**

In March-June 2017 I have conducted an empirical research for my master thesis in rural Cameroon, Bamenda. The aim of the research was to find out the willingness to pay of the consumers for safe vegetables. The research was based on the Contingent Valuation Method, which means conducting direct interviews with households’ representatives. The sample of the research was from 300 to 350 random households. During the research 332 households were reached. Collected data is being analysed and evaluated in my master thesis.

In the preparation phase of my experience the most important tasks were:

- apply for the research abroad at IEE (Institute of Development Research and Development Policy)
- plan financial support (applying for a scholarship, personal savings)
- apply for a visa
- make necessary vaccinations and receive doctor’s consultation about malaria prophylaxes and other possible diseases due to the fact, that research was in Africa
- find the place to stay in Bamenda
- buy airplane tickets
- insurance
- get a credit card
- get to know main attributes of the cultural differences, food peculiar properties etc.

Institute of Development Research and Development Policy at the Ruhr-University Bochum has a partnership with SHUMAS (Strategic Humanitarian Services) organization in Cameroon, Bamenda. This has helped us a lot in searching for assistance and finishing all the formalities when we are there. Thus, we lived in the
guest house “Asa-Neh”, one room cost about 10 EUR per night. Guest house had a restaurant, where you can get food (breakfast + dinner) for around 3-5 EUR per day. Institute at the RUB also provided a huge help in searching for airplane tickets and supported us in applying for a visa. Health insurance is very important, especially if you travel to the developing country, where the standard of living is low and the risk to get sick is higher. I have searched for an insurance on my own in Internet. The best option is to ask your current insurance company about travel insurance, but if the tariff does not satisfy you – you can easily get another one. For three months the cost can vary from 100 to 150 EUR.

As mentioned above, research was based on making interviews and filling out the surveys. For that I got an assistant, a local student provided by SHUMAS, who helped me to communicate with local people, especially with those who could not speak clear English, but rather a local dialect. The duration of the research was around 2.5 months. Each interview was about 30-40 min. Per day we could manage from 7 till 10 interviews. During an interview I got an opportunity to receive answers as well as to get a general idea about food security problems in Bamenda. This gave me also an understanding of lifestyle, main mentality characteristics, current political and social problems, which I personally find a great opportunity to get to know another country. Since we have worked 5 days per week, at weekends we mostly went to the city centre, to the local markets or to the cities around (Sabga, Bafut). Bamenda is situated in the mountains, therefore we had an opportunity to enjoy amazing landscapes and beautiful views.

All in all, the communities in Bamenda are very sociable, people look always happy, however they are always loud. You never feel alone or helpless.
I did not have any huge problems while being in Cameroon. The only thing is that you have to adopt to the cultural differences and do not compare anything to the life in Europe. Cameroon is also very corrupted country. For example, at the check points or even at the passport controls everyone wants money from you, especially if you look like the foreigner. Due to the political crisis in Bamenda we did not have internet until May. Additionally, we did not have running tab water during the whole stay, which is the common local problem there. However, all this did not affect my experience negatively. I could reach my goal and besides that get to know a lot of amazing people and cultural features of Cameroon.