



Getting to know new ways of life and people who shape me in the long term

Interview with Julius Possel, Applied Plant Biology student

How did you become aware of the Project Aid The Gambia?

” As part of my studies, I am supposed to do an internship. Since I am interested and interested in the Moringa tree and it is also the subject of my Bachelor's thesis, I wanted to do the internship with a project/company that deals with the Moringa tree. I found the Moringa plantation of Project Aid The Gambia on the internet.

Why did you decide to do an internship in Jahaly?

It was clear to me that I wanted to do the internship abroad. Since I had never been to Africa before and I liked the philosophy of Project Aid The Gambia, the decision to do the internship in Jahaly was made relatively quickly.

How did you experience your arrival and the first days in The Gambia?

The arrival in The Gambia went smoothly, except for a small car breakdown from the airport to the project office. The driver from Project Aid The Gambia picked me up at the airport and handed me a local SIM card and a certain amount of Gambian Dalasis straight away. As I arrived in The Gambia on a Saturday, there was not much going on in the project office compound. Michael, a friend of Matthias Ketteler, showed me around Manja Kunda and showed me shopping and eating opportunities. On Monday, I met the staff of the project office. After we had organised and bought some things, we left for Jahaly a week later.

What has impressed you most?

The openness of the people and the many lives on the streets. Especially with the Corona measures in Germany, the difference was enormous.



You have been in Jahaly for a few weeks now - how have you experienced meeting the people there?

The people in Jahaly are extremely friendly and open. As a white European, you naturally stand out here and are often approached. Especially children are very interested in you.

What does your everyday life in Jahaly look like?

From Monday to Friday, I work with the gardeners on the moringa plantation. We meet at 7:00 in the morning and first discuss what the tasks of the day are. This includes, for example, watering the trees, transplanting young plants or liming the soil. Around 2 p.m. we have lunch together with the clinic staff, and the rest of the day is free. Since I still have a lot to do for my studies, I spend most of my free time reading. Otherwise, I talk a lot with the Project Aid staff or go shopping in the next village, Brikama Ba.

What experiences will you take home with you from your internship?

I was particularly impressed by the sense of community and the focus on the family life of the people in Jahaly. Compared to Germany, many people there live together with relatives in so-called compounds and share their daily lives with each other. At the same time, I realised that although the living conditions in Jahaly are very different from those in Germany, the people are not so different after all. So I was able to settle in quickly and make friends.

Would you recommend an internship with Projekthilfe in Jahaly to other young people - and why?

Definitely. Project Aid The Gambia and the staff in Jahaly always supported me and helped me with questions. At the same time, I was able to get to know new ways of life and people through the internship, which will shape me in the long run.

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Many thanks to Project Aid The Gambia and to the people in Jahaly for the experiences and impressions I gained.