

Beyond the Nigerian shores

My voluntary experience in Germany allowed me to see life from another perspective

I can still feel the tingling of the warm summer breeze on my skin, the rush of different emotions running through me, the beauty that my eyes beheld, I thought to myself while scribbling my journey to the remarkable. As a child, I had always wanted to see the world. I had so much aspiration for this because I knew that there was definitely somewhere beautiful beyond the Nigerian shores that I had known and where I was born. Secretly as little girl, I had prayed that someday I would have enough means to travel the world and share my experiences with all who cared to listen. So, when the opportunity to travel to Germany arrived, I knew it was a dream come through.

The five day ICYE training equipped us with what we needed to survive in Germany. Basically, after the training at Berlin, we were moved to Lutherstadt Wittenberg where our apartment was located during our stay in this remarkable journey. When we arrived at our apartment, during a juicy and interesting gist in my room, a fellow volunteer, whose name is Shin from South Korea told me that a child is a year old from when they are born and everyone gets a year older on new year day. I couldn't believe my ears, I tapped him on the back as a sign of my astonishment. Another volunteer called Tanya also told me that in India women pay groom price. This means that it can be difficult for someone from a "humble" family to get a husband since they mostly do not have the means to do this.

As an international volunteer, that worked during commemoration of the 500 years of Martin Luther's Reformation, it was part of my job to show the visitors around the anniversary museum, galleries, monuments and explaining the reformation history to international visitors in the English Language. I was overjoyed to know that I had made a difference in a person's life in the little way that I could. There are so many exciting places to visit and the ones I can't remember to forget are the Cities of Bremen and Braunschweig. The City of Bremen didn't make me feel nostalgic a bit, instead it made me reminisce on how much of a haven Germany is. It proved as a home away from home for so many people of African descents as noticeable by the large number of Africans living in this city. For the first time after I had arrived, I knew Germany was meant for me.

My ICYE volunteering experience made me see life from another perspective. It taught me acceptance and understanding of various views, cultures and beliefs, ideologies and orientation. It made me appreciate the little things of life like happiness. This is because in my country, people who identify as another gender outside their biological makeup are discriminated against. In Germany I learned that people deserve to be happy regardless of who they chose to be.