

Interview „Students4Kids“: For Zambia by Zambians

How did you hear about the Students4Kids-Initiative and what motivated you to participate?

I heard about this amazing initiative in my class of Prof. Dr. Hensel of “international Social Responsibility” in my overseas studies in Mainz, Germany. I was motivated to participate because I always wanted to do something big that can help people and as soon I heard about the contest and the purpose of it I immediately signed up. I consider myself aware of many issues like this one in our world.

Why did you decide to follow the idea of introducing a new crop in Zambia?

Because the crop, enset ventricosum, was already used in Ethiopia and I researched about if it is possible to introduce it to Zambia, use this as a base to all the system I built to attack the malnutrition problem and empower the people of Zambia with a sustainable farming system.

What did you enjoy most about the competition?

The challenge itself as an international competition to propose an innovated idea to do something real to help people and particularly the challenge of express all my work in just 20 minutes without being physically attending the finale.

Was there ever a moment when you just wanted to stop and give up?

I never had a moment of quit because I really enjoyed working on it and every new discover or idea I got more excited, but I can I say when all the information was overwhelming I thought many times “What I get myself into?” but I kept going.

How did you prepare for your pitch in front of an audience, especially since it was via Skype?

I prepared my power point presentation, then I recorded myself explaining to my dad every slide and of course timing it. Then, from there I just made a script, trim the speech, adjust timing, new words, record myself again, listen it over and over again, play it for someone else who doesn't know about the project and pay attention to all the feedback and the expression in their faces about the moments when they didn't get what I was trying to express, rewrite the script, then record me in my final presentation with the time required until I was satisfied.

What's your advice for the new teams joining the competition this year?

Do not think small! Think big, dream about it and then try to put everything in real terms, always backing up all you say, information and facts with dozens of books, papers, previous studies and scientific articles. Every trustable source that backs up your idea.

It's time to all take action and help. The best of luck and success to all of you!!

– Daniel Cardenas