



After some time now I decided to quickly let you have an update of “what’s up” in Liberia.

Ebola and Ebola -stigma are still very real.

Even if there are little or no open discussions about it, the fear of the epidermis and the discrimination of those who survived it, are felt. The recent case of an Ebola patient in March can proof that it is still dangerous.

Bong County, where I am staying and teaching was the center of Ebola epidermis in Liberia. My University led the control and fight against the spreading of the Virus in this region. So those affected and cured are well known. The way forward is still hard for many people.

Everywhere, in the schools, churches, restaurants, police stations, etc., you are still warned and asked to wash and disinfect your hands before entry. Temperatures are taken, because high temperature is the first symptom of the virus.



Though the students are socializing with others and seem to be happy, they are only trying to blend-out the thoughts of the Ebola crisis; they don’t want to talk about it. They are afraid to lose another semester because of the crisis. The senior students want to graduate in September this year and are doing all they can to see it come true.

There are not enough Professors and Instructors in the Universities in Liberia. The salaries are too small and are even not paid regularly. Combined with this, most of the foreign Instructors are still scared of the deadly epidermis. We are only 3 volunteered faculties from abroad at the moment.

Many local faculties are not motivated. Besides little salaries, they have problems with the little incentives and amenities available in the campus. I try to work with them, visit and build them up.



I have started helping and organizing small action- and activity groups. We have now 3 Leadership groups of 4 to 5 students each meeting every Friday and also the Women Small Enterprise meeting of about 20 women meeting every Tuesday.

The leadership- group is a mixture of female and male students. They meet to pray together, talk about their individual daily lives and the role as leaders and at the end they choose the leader to lead the following week.

The Women small Enterprise is attended only by female students, wanting to use the return of the farms as a support for the studies. The women are more dynamic in Liberia; they are hardworking, both young and old, especially in the farm works.

They formed this group and asked me to lead and teach them in the small farm Enterprise, which is actually one of my courses that I am teaching at the college of agriculture in the University.

At the beginning they want me to come regularly until they are more stable. Generally, I do visit them when they want me to come. They have the leadership- groups mostly in the classrooms and the women at the farm site. It is interesting to see how they are willing to learn.





One of the challenges of the lady's group is the appropriate working materials such as hoes, working boots to avoid injuries, hand gloves, etc. I tried to help them with initial start capital to buy some of the local tools and planting seeds.



Planting of the first phase with Groundnuts will start this week; the second phase will be Okra which is quick for the market, will commence immediately.



The general practical field work has started. We are on the field every weekend to cultivate and to prepare the soil for planting.

All students measuring in Plant production and Soil Science must participate in the field work. The Animal Science Students must do farm structural work.

The laboratories are not equipped and as such most of the works are done theoretically in the class rooms and partly with private and local animal farms.

There are so many challenges ranging from farm tools and working materials such as hoes, spades, boots, hand gloves, etc. Street shoes are not good for farm work.



It is nice sharing my works and activities with you. Please keep putting me in your prayers. I am planning to come to Austria in May for a short visit by the Grace of God.

Missing you all –

Festus