Dear readers,

My best wishes for the New Year 2020 to all of you, to your families and friends! We here in our DAAD Office Jakarta hope that, as during the last years, we will stay in contact and exchange with you and generate new ideas and projects together!

In our first newsletter for 2020, you will find a short review of the many activities we conducted in 2019. Alumni meetings, information events on studies and research in Germany, Science Talks, and other events brought us together with our Indonesian and German friends and partners, including many of you. You will also find a short update on the activities of our ASEAN-wide SHARE project, in which, maybe, some of you were already involved.

In the current edition, you will also find two compelling reports. The first one is from our “Falling Walls Lab Jakarta 2019” winner, Mr James Zulfan. He shared his experience participating in the final Falling Walls competition in Berlin. Alex, who spent half a year as an intern at our DAAD office, also shared his story during his time in Indonesia. Do not miss their story.

Did you ever hear of the “Research Ambassador Programme”? Maybe not, because this program started in 2019 only. Please read the exciting information about who our Research Ambassadors are and what activities they conducted.

As always, I wish you a pleasant reading of our newsletter in the name of our whole DAAD team! Please feel free to contact us anytime in case you would like to get more information or address questions and suggestions to us. Information on many topics, e.g., programs and consultation hours, can also be found on our webpage, www.daad.id.

Thomas Zettler
Director of DAAD Regional Office Jakarta
The team at DAAD Regional Office Jakarta wishes you a good start into the New Year. Although those of you who live in Jabodetabek have experienced unexpected flooding, hopefully, all of you are as excited as us in welcoming the new year and new decade.

Before moving forward in 2020, let’s take a moment to look back at the previous year. 2019 has been a busy year for DAAD Regional Office Jakarta. There have been many memorable moments and events organized by our team as well as in cooperation with partner institutions across the country and region.

To tighten up our relations with our dearest alumni, in 2019, we managed to hold six (6) Alumni Meetings:

- In March 2019, we held an Alumni Meeting in Surabaya which was attended by more than 100 alumni who are domiciled in Surabaya and other cities nearby.
- The next Alumni Meeting was held in Bandung in April 2019. We were happy to meet more than 90 alumni in Bandung, including the head of Perhimpunan Alumni Jerman (PAJ) Bandung, Bapak Dr. -Ing. Yuliadi Edani.
- The Alumni meeting in Makassar was held in July 2019 and was attended by 90 alumni.
- In September, we went to Medan to visit several higher education institutions and met the alumni there. The event was attended by more than 70 alumni and partners in Medan. It was a wonderful event and was completed by a traditional dance performance by the German Literature Students from Universitas Negeri Medan.
- We also held an Alumni Meeting in Jakarta on the occasion of DAAD’s annual scholarship selection meeting in December. At this occasion, DAAD also invited the representatives of the German Embassy, partner universities, and DAAD alumni to a dinner reception in gratitude for their sincere support throughout 2019. In total around 100 alumni and partners joined this lovely event.
- In December, we also held an Alumni Meeting in Aceh in conjunction with the Aceh Scholarships of Excellence selection programme. More than 80 Alumni and stakeholders joined the event.

During the last quarter of 2019, we also updated our alumni database, this is done every 5 years so that we can keep in touch with our dearest alumni. If you have not updated your database entry, please contact Ms. Olivia Deskarina (Karina) via deskarina@daadjkt.org. We would love to hear from you and give you information about our events and news.
In 2019, we also successfully held DAAD Science Talks on May 2nd, 2019, at Atmajaya Catholic University of Indonesia. This year’s discussion was based on “Freedom of Religion and Tolerance in Pluralistic Society – The Example of Germany” as the topic with Prof. Dr. Thomas Schmitz (DAAD Long Term Lecturer in Law at Universitas Gajah Mada, Yogyakarta) as the main speaker. During the event, we also invited the newly-selected scholarship holders of the DAAD Annual Scholarship to receive their awards.

Last year, one scientific seminar was carried out by our alumni and supported by DAAD. Organized by our Alumnus, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hugeng from Universitas Tarumanegara, Jakarta, Indonesia, we supported a DAAD Alumni Seminar with the topic “Tarumanagara International Conference on The Applications of Social Sciences and Humanities (TICASH) 2019.”

The DAAD Regional Office in Jakarta has participated in more than 45 events (such as education fairs and information events which were carried out by universities, schools, or other institutions) in 2019. In November 2019, we also took part in the biggest European Education Fair in Indonesia (EHEF), in which more than 13 German Higher Education Institutions participated in the event. Throughout 2019, we have reached our friends in Jabodetabek Area, Java, Sumatera, Sulawesi, as well as Maluku.
Looking at the success of the Falling Walls Lab Jakarta 2018, this year, we held the fourth Falling Walls Lab Jakarta together with the Faculty of Economics and Business at Universitas Indonesia. During the final, 20 candidates from a total of 69 applicants had to present their innovative ideas in front of a panel who came from different areas of expertise in only 3 minutes. Mr. James Zulfan from the Research Centre for Water Resources under the Ministry of Public Works and Housing was named the winner of Falling Walls Lab Jakarta 2019 with his idea “Breaking the Walls of Dam Construction.”

In the current newsletter edition, Mr. James also shared his story during Falling Walls Lab Finals in Berlin. Do not miss his story.

To give relevant information related to study, research, and living in Germany, The DAAD Regional Office Jakarta frequently held Web-Based Seminars (or Webinar). To join our webinars, participants only needed a gadget (such as PC, laptop, tablet, or smartphone) and a stable internet connection. Due to the limited schedule, in 2019, we only held 29 webinars in total. In 2020, we have planned more webinars with exciting topics for DAAD Alumni and friends throughout Indonesia. For the webinar schedule and registration, please visit our website and social media. We usually inform of our webinar topics and schedule 2 weeks in advance.

This year, we also conducted a survey to improve our webinar. From the survey, we got feedback that can help us to improve the flow of our webinar session. We thank everyone who participated in the survey and hope to see you soon in our webinar sessions.

Our Newsletters and alumni magazine - NADI (Nachrichten für Alumni über Deutschland und Indonesien) - covers many of our events. The title of the most recent NADI issued in December 2019 is “Ernährung” or “Food.” NADI is available in a print version and also online, you can download the latest edition of NADI HERE or please send us an email if you would like to receive the hard copy. In 2019, we also published 3 newsletters that are available in a digital version. Click HERE to see our Newsletter Archive.

It is undoubtedly true that Social Media such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook are essential instruments to keep in touch with DAAD Alumni and friends nowadays. That is why we always update our social media to give relevant information for Alumni and friends. If you have not followed our Social Media, do not hesitate to follow our Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook to get the latest information.

If you are looking for more information related to study or research in Germany, our doors are open every Thursday from 13.30 – 16.00. You can come directly without making an appointment in advance. Should you wish for direct consultation outside the designated hours, please make your appointment first via phone or email.

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The European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (or in short: 'SHARE') supports ASEAN’s ambition to build a regional higher education space in the region. Since 2015, we have been working on increasing and enhancing mobility for university students across ASEAN through improved qualification frameworks, quality assurance, an ASEAN-wide credit transfer system and a regional scholarship scheme. We have also tried to improve equal access in opportunities for exchange, as students benefit from SHARE’s technical assistance across ASEAN member states (AMS), thereby improving connectivity across higher education in ASEAN.

DAAD, as part of the consortium, leads the implementation of Result Areas 2a and 2b – Qualifications Frameworks (QF) and Quality Assurance (QA). The 2019 work plan for our implementation was dominated by two threads - strategic support for the ASEAN Quality Assurance Network both via policy consulting and capacity development at staff level and an increasing cooperation with the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework Committee (AQRFC) in the field of both QF referencing and recognition. Training, seminars and workshops were simultaneously held to support the development of both the AQRF and the ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF).

In June 2019, a SHARE Consultancy Visit to Europe was organised for AQAN. The journey included two stops, Vienna and Brussels. The Consultancy Visit offered unique insights for the delegation to gain more knowledge and exchange their experience with their European counterparts (AQ Austria, WU Vienna, EU Delegation, DAAD Brussels and The British Council). Furthermore, within the same month, in cooperation with the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education (RISTEKDIKTI) of Indonesia, SHARE launched its first-ever seminar on the topic of recognition in ASEAN and beyond, linking it to discussions on digitisation in Europe and other areas worldwide. Indonesia was chosen as the host country as it serves as current chair of the AQRFC. The agenda of the seminar was structured in a way that it allowed the host to showcase good-practice initiatives like the Indonesian QF and the newly launched KNKI (Komite Nasional Kualifikasi Indonesia or Indonesian National Qualifications Committee) but also to consider other examples of successful recognition systems across Europe, Asia and the Pacific.

SHARE also supported the development of AQRF by providing an international reviewer from Ireland for the recent Indonesia QF Referencing Report. The report was conditionally endorsed at the Seventh AQRFC Meeting and Workshop held in Yogyakarta from 28–30 October 2019. Lastly, ending the year 2019, SHARE participated in the first ever ASEAN-QA Forum held at the Foreign Trade University (Hanoi) in November. SHARE arranged two parallel workshop sessions with the topic ‘Turning Regional QA Principles into Practice – the AQAF’ with the purpose of disseminating awareness on the AQAF.

With the incoming SHARE Extension phase, negotiated to commence in 2020, we are glad that we will be able to continue our cooperation with ASEAN in the field of Higher Education and continue to build a zone of trust as well as providing more opportunities for ASEAN students to compete not only nationally, but in the region and beyond.
Germany is well known as a country which allocates a high budget for the research and development sector. According to the data from Destatis (2019), in 2017, 100 billion Euros were invested in the field of research and development. It is just one of the reasons why the research atmosphere in Germany is engaging for researchers from Germany and other countries.

High budgets for research and development in Germany are also supported by 1,000 public and publicly funded institutions for science as well as research & development in which you can join. You also get the chance to meet more than 420,000 researchers from different fields and research institutions in Germany. This has made the research climate in Germany grow further.

A little more information about research in Germany; since May 2019, DAAD Regional Office Jakarta has had 3 Research Ambassadors. But what is a Research Ambassador? Research Ambassadors are senior academics and scientists who have a long-standing relationship with Germany. As DAAD alumni, they have studied or carried out research in Germany and know the German higher education system through their own experience.

We have selected 3 academics and scientists to be our research ambassadors. They are:

- **Prof. Dr. Faizal Arya Samman** from Universitas Hasanuddin, Makassar
- **Dr. Edwin Setiawan** from Institut Teknologi Sepuluh November, Surabaya
- **Dr. Muksin Umar** from Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh.

We interviewed our Research Ambassadors to know more about their expertise, research, as well as activities. Let’s take a look at our interview with the research Ambassadors.
Can you introduce yourself and give a little bit of information about your background? For example: what are your current activities, current research topics, what research have you done?

I am currently working at Universitas Syiah Kuala. I got my Master’s degree in the field of Earth Sciences from Australian National University and my Doctoral Degree from Geoforschungszentrum GFZ-Potsdam and Universität Potsdam. I have been working at different departments, including the Department of Physics, Geophysics, as well as at the Tsunami and Disaster Mitigation Research Center of Universitas Syiah Kuala.

My research focus is related to disaster risk reduction, especially in understanding the tectonic setting of Sumatra, mapping earthquake hazards, and analyzing losses caused by earthquakes. In conducting my research, I also involve students and work closely with the government.

What are your activities as a DAAD Research Ambassador?

The main activities I partake in as a DAAD Research Ambassador are:

- Conducting info sessions on study and research in Germany in Banda Aceh
- Group consultation on how to prepare yourself to apply for scholarships and to study in Germany
- I also work closely with the German Alumni Association in Aceh.

Why do you recommend doing research in Germany?

There are several reasons why one should do research in Germany:

- The quality of the research is at a top-level.
- The research atmosphere in Germany is one of the best in the world.
- Research is conducted by a research team that can help and contribute to ideas within the team.

The most unforgettable experience when doing research in Germany?

I joined a very professional research group at GFZ-Potsdam. As a group, we helped each other professionally and had a good relationship with the members of the research group. As a team, we also published several research papers. At the end of my stay in Germany, my supervisors made a special event called "Indonesien Abend" (Indonesian Night).

Until now, I still maintain a good relationship with my former supervisors.

Do you have any tips on how to find a supervisor or research partners in Germany?

Here are some tips on how to find a supervisor or research partners. Firstly, one should prepare his/her research topic in detail. They can look for professors who have similar research interests with the help of a search engine.

He/she should contact the supervisor candidates by email to express their interest and explain to the supervisor why his/her research interest fits well with the supervisor’s interest. Since the researchers are very busy, use an appealing email subject to catch the attention of the professors. It can be related to the Professors’ current research, for example: “Applying for a Research Ph.D. on Flood Risk Analysis”. Do not forget to attach the research proposal for better responses from the professor.

Those are my tricks in getting a supervisor. I got all of my emails replied to immediately in a very encouraging way. I suggested the methods of contacting supervisors to one of the German graduates; all of the emails got positive feedback.

Finally, do you have any tips for those who want to do their research in Germany?

To do research in Germany, we need to show an excellent track record of research that we have done for a postdoc or above position.

For a Doctoral candidate, one should show their interest in the research and contribute to the science and community. The applicants should describe their previous research very well in the research proposal. They also need to show good knowledge and skills related to the proposed research methods and ensure that they can undertake the research properly and as planned.
Can you introduce yourself and give a little bit of information about your background? For example: what are your current activities, current research topics, what research have you done?

My name is Faizal Arya Samman, I am a faculty member at the Department of Electrical Engineering at the University of Hasanuddin, Makassar, Indonesia. I got my Doctorate Degree at Technische Universität Darmstadt in 2010, supported by a DAAD Scholarship. My research focus is in the area of integrated electronics, digital systems, and power electronics. Since February 2019, I have been assigned as a Full Professor in the field of electronics and digital systems at the University of Hasanuddin.

After finishing my Doctoral Degree, I kept in contact with my supervisor and my colleagues. Currently, I am working on a research project, which is also a continuation of my dissertation. Together with Thomas Hollstein, my former colleague and full-time Professor at Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, we are researching and developing a novel low power high-performance computer architecture for many-core processor systems that will be interconnected in a network-on-chip called “XHiNoC.”

Meanwhile, I am also researching the field of power electronics for renewable energy-based electric power supply systems. This research topic plays a vital role in sustainable development in Indonesia. For this topic, I am partnering with Professor Volker Staudt from the Institute of Power Systems Technology and Power Mechatronics at Ruhr-Universität Bochum. I plan to visit him in Germany, sometime around March and May 2020.

Last but not least, I also plan to visit Professor Klaus Hofmann at the Institute of Integrated Electronic Systems, TU Darmstadt, to discuss the implementation possibility of an integrated electronic control unit that can be used in renewable energy-based electric power supply systems in a system-on-chip.

What are your activities as a DAAD Research Ambassador?

In October 2019, I organized a workshop to promote Research in Germany in Makassar. More than 100 participants attended the workshop. Next year, we are planning to host a workshop related to research proposal writing and applying for DAAD Scholarships through The DAAD Portal. I also use LinkedIn Social Media to post some topics related to research in Germany including introducing DAAD Scholarships which always gets responses from my connections.

As a research ambassador, I am also active in bridging research and education cooperation between Germany and Indonesia. In the near future, I am planning to meet Professor Manfred Glesner, my Doctoral Supervisor and Advisory Board Member (Hochschulrat) at Fachhochschule Dortmund, University of Applied Sciences and Arts. Together, we plan to meet the Vice President of Fachhochschule Dortmund to discuss the opportunity for a double-degree program in the field of Electrical Engineering for Master’s students who enrol in the University of Hasanuddin.

From March until May 2020, I have been invited to visit Professor Volker Staudt in Ruhr-Universität Bochum. Together we will be working on a research proposal in the field of power electronics applications for renewable energy utilization. I also hope that the visit will result in research networking and educational cooperation, such as the sandwich-like Doctoral Program or other programs in the future. an excellent research proposal.
Interview with Prof. Dr. Faizal Arya Samman

Why do you recommend research in Germany?

Germany is a land of ideas and has a very long history of scientific tradition and innovation. Iconic German products from the pharmaceutical, chemical, electronic, and automotive industries are reasons for doing research in Germany.

Another interesting point from the German research landscape is excellent funding support for science and innovation, not only from the Government but also from industries. Although it is not directly related, the free tuition fee is also an excellent reason to do research in Germany.

What was your most unforgettable experience when doing research in Germany?

Almost all my research experiences in Germany were unforgettable.

Do you have any tips on how to find supervisors or research partners in Germany?

Before finding a supervisor or a research partner, one must be sure that they have outstanding qualifications, good experience in the field, and have provided a plan for the research project. It would also be helpful if you have already prepared an excellent research proposal.

Finding or approaching German research partners is not easy. But it is a reflection on the qualifications that one should have. However, please be optimistic and always try. As long as we have a research interest that complies with a German professor’s interest, then there will be room for discussion to establish a research connection.

Finally, do you have any tips for those who want to do their research in Germany?

One must prepare an excellent research proposal. A good proposal means that the research objective is clear and challenging. Research goals that will find a novel idea or breakthrough in science, technology, and applications are recommendable.

Strong commitment to accomplish goals according to the schedule is needed when you start your research. One must be active, observe a good schedule, and be disciplined. Do not forget to improve your qualifications and learn something new during the research period. If you have a new idea, do not hesitate to discuss it, because you might get a better overview after the discussion.

Interview with Dr. Edwin Setiawan

Can you introduce yourself and give a little bit of information about your background? For example: what are your current activities, current research topics, what research have you done?

I am an assistant professor at the Biology Department at the Institute Teknologi Sepuluh November Surabaya. My research interest is in the taxonomy and systematics of Indonesian sponges.

Why am I interested in the field and why sponge is relevant? The sponge is an animal that claims to be the most primitive since it evolves from unicellularity. Besides, the sponge is also frequently researched as a source of drug discovery from marine sponges, and sponges hold essential factors in marine ecology.
Indonesia is also considered a hotspot of sponge diversity. However, identifying sponges needs comprehensive skills. That is why I benefited from being trained in Germany since my former Doctoral Supervisor and fellow laboratory researchers have much experience in the field. The research group that I joined is also recognized worldwide as a reputable research group in the area of sponges. Furthermore, the lab also has a good connection with Naturalis Biodiversity Centre Leiden in the Netherlands, this Museum stores many sponge collections from Indonesia dating back to the colonial era. Therefore, plenty of research collaborations have been done so far.

Currently, I am researching the diversity of sponges in East Java, particularly in the conservation areas like mangroves and seagrass.

I also did research collaboration with the oceanographic research unit at LIPI, supervised Bachelor’s students from the University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD), and am currently trying to make future research collaborations with other national or international institutes whose interests are in sponge biodiversity. In addition, I also assisted at the China-ASEAN Smart Ocean Center based in Tianjin University as Deputy member, representing ITS Surabaya from 2018-2021.

What are your activities as a DAAD Research Ambassador?

I promote research opportunities in Germany to all of my colleagues and partner institutions in Surabaya. Likewise, I also help those who are interested in continuing their studies (at Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctoral level) in Germany by giving free consultations. Moreover, I actively join German alumni networking events and activities to promote German Higher Education Institutions.

Why do you recommend doing research in Germany?

Germany has been known as the “Land der Ideen” for a long time. Therefore, the German research system has been developed very well and possesses an outstanding reputation in the world. The research system involves innovation, novelties, impact, quality, and funding opportunities.

What is the most unforgettable experience you had while doing research in Germany?

My former supervisor was very disciplined. At the same time, he was also very open-minded and direct and straight to the point with suggestions if we made mistakes.

Do you have any tips on how to find supervisors or research partners in Germany?

Be persuasive; express your complete idea and research commitment. However, please do not overestimate yourself and be short and direct to the point with the aim of your research.

Finally, do you have any tips for those who want to do their research in Germany?

Be persistent, make sure that you commit to your research partner and finish your projects, whether you get good or bad results.

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Having the chance to represent Indonesia at the Falling Walls Lab Finale in Berlin, Germany, is a great honour for me. I presented my research project on hydraulic structure construction (weir, dam) titled “Breaking the Wall of Dam Construction” at the event which was held on 8th November 2019.

On the first day I arrived in Berlin, 100 participants from over 70 countries were welcomed by the Falling Walls Committee with several activities, including games, motivational talks, and workshops with distinguished journal publishers (Springer, Nature). This workshop is beneficial for researchers who wish to publish their research in reputable journals. Our first day in Berlin was completed by a welcome dinner in one of the oldest bars in Berlin with German cuisine.

On the second day in Berlin, together with all Falling Walls Lab participants, I visited the Freie Universität Berlin. There we got the chance to know more about German research institutions and research development in Germany. Afterward, I had the opportunity to meet the Indonesian Ambassador for Germany, Mr. Arif Havas Oegroseno, at the Indonesian Embassy in Berlin. He is a warm person and appreciates Indonesian researchers who present their research on an international stage. On this friendly occasion, we discussed the Falling Walls Lab and the opportunity for research collaboration in Germany.

Friday, 8th November 2019, was the day all participants gave their best at the Falling Walls Lab Final. All participants presented their innovative idea or project in front of remarkable judges and guests one by one. I gave my best to deliver my innovative idea on the stage, and I did not forget any sentences that I had prepared. In my opinion, the ideas or projects that the participants delivered were engaging and widened my knowledge.

Finally, the result of the competition was announced. Unfortunately, I did not win the trophy this time. Although it was a little bit disappointing, I was delighted and honoured, knowing that I had given my best in the competition. Throughout this competition, I got the chance to show the world that Indonesia could develop innovative hydraulic structure construction methods. For me, this competition was an unforgettable experience.

The next day, I was involved in a seminar. The seminar was filled with presentations by international scientists from different backgrounds and expertise. I also used this event to network with other participants.
After the Falling Walls Lab event, I continued my trip by visiting several research institutions sponsored by Euraxess. I had a chance to visit three Top Universities in Europe: Technische Universität Dresden (TU Dresden), Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (ETH Zurich), and Technische Universität Delft (TU Delft). The first research institution that I visited was TU Dresden in Germany on 11th November. I visited Hubert Engels Laboratory on the TU Dresden Campus to see the hydraulic research project that was being carried out by the researchers. On 13th November, I visited ETH Zurich in Switzerland. There I got the chance to visit the VAW Laboratory, where advanced equipment and instruments were used for data collection. It was a short yet memorable visit in Zurich, sadly, the next day, I had to fly to the Netherlands for another laboratory visit.

In the Netherlands, I visited the Hydraulic Laboratory at the TU Delft. I used this opportunity to learn about the implementation of modern technology for research, especially for research related to hydraulic structures. During the visit, I met the professors and researchers and shared our experience related to hydraulic structure research. We also talked about the possibility of a research partnership in the future.

After completing my visit to three laboratories in different countries, I gained more knowledge and experience to understand how research is conducted in Europe. I will gladly share this experience with my colleagues at my institution in Indonesia.

During the Europe trip, I made time to have a warm reunion with my professors and colleagues in IHE Delft, where I got my Master’s Degree three years ago. I also got the chance to give a seminar at TU Delft and to be a guest lecturer at my former university, the IHE Delft. During this opportunity, I shared my experience of my research projects in Indonesia in front of lecturers, students, and colleagues. I also had a chance to visit the Indonesian Embassy for the Netherlands in Den Haag and met the Vice Ambassador and his team. We discussed the opportunity of research collaboration in the future.

Finally, I thank DAAD and Euraxess for supporting my memorable journey in Europe. I will share this inspiring experience with my colleagues in my institution. I hope there will be more research collaborations between Indonesia and Germany in the future, especially in water resource construction, to improve the infrastructure in Indonesia.

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Alex Dickmann: My Experience as an Intern in DAAD Regional Office Jakarta

In the beginning I did not speak any Bahasa and unfortunately a lot of Indonesians do not speak any English. I realized early that this would be a problem. While walking through Jakarta on my first day I felt hungry. So, with all my confidence I walked into one of the warungs. Ordering the food was not a big problem. Pictures made it clear that ayam is chicken and nasi, rice. Answering the question: “Pedas?” with just an insecure and short “yes” proved to be my first wrong decision in Indonesia. Never in my life had I eaten anything that spicy and I needed at least four glasses of juice to soften the spiciness. But this was not the only bad experience I had with Indonesian food. I enjoyed the dishes like Gado-Gado and Nasi Goreng and will try to cook them back in Europe.

Over the next weeks I started learning Bahasa Indonesia. This helped me a lot in my daily life. Not only was I able to order the right food, but I started conversations with the Ibu at the warungs and the GoJek drivers.

At DAAD I got the opportunity to explore many different fields. For the alumni magazine NADI I interviewed a biology professor and wrote an article about KKN. For this article I got in contact with many Indonesian students and was able to visit some Universities in Jakarta. I even held a class at the Universitas Indonesia where I talked about German traditions. Other than that, I had the most interesting experiences with the SHARE project. During my time working for this project, I met a lot of experts in higher education from all over Southeast Asia and I was able to visit some international conferences.

Besides the work I also had some time to travel and explore the different islands of Indonesia. While I was disappointed by the dirty and crowded Bali, I fell in love with other islands. Swimming through waterfalls on Lombok, living on a houseboat on Kalimantan and attending a funeral on Sulawesi are just some of the adventures I lived through and will remember for the rest of my life.

Not only on these journeys but also in Jakarta I met so many friendly, interesting and cheerful people. Some of them I call my friends now. I am very happy that I met these people and I am thankful to everyone who made these six months so special to me.

My last days in Indonesia felt surreal. I could not really think about going home. Of course, I was happy to see my family and friends again, but was Jakarta not my new home? Before I left, I did not know a lot about Indonesia: it is an island country, multi-ethnic and multi-religious. My friends knew even less. Many have heard about Bali but are not able to find it on a map or say which country the island belongs to. And then there was Jakarta. One of the biggest metropolitan areas in the world. As a boy I grew up in a small village with 300 inhabitants. Now I wanted to move into a city with 30 million.

The first thing that struck me in Indonesia was the hot weather. From the moment I left the airport, I started sweating; sweat would become my loyal companion for the next six months. Moreover, I was surprised by the sheer number of people on the streets and the traffic.

People say, one eye cries while the other laughs. And that is true. I had this experience at the airport in Amsterdam when I was about to leave for Indonesia. On the one hand I was excited for the next months to come, for the work I would do and the people I would meet, but on the other hand, I had to leave my friends and my family. When I left Indonesia six months later, neither of my eyes were laughing, but I had tears in both. About a year ago, I was lucky enough to get an Internship at DAAD. From March to August, I had the opportunity to work and live in Jakarta. This was going to be the biggest adventure of my life. For the first time I would live in a different country and a completely unknown environment.

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Besides the work I also had some time to travel and explore the different islands of Indonesia. While I was disappointed by the dirty and crowded Bali, I fell in love with other islands. Swimming through waterfalls on Lombok, living on a houseboat on Kalimantan and attending a funeral on Sulawesi are just some of the adventures I lived through and will remember for the rest of my life.

Not only on these journeys but also in Jakarta I met so many friendly, interesting and cheerful people. Some of them I call my friends now. I am very happy that I met these people and I am thankful to everyone who made these six months so special to me.

My last days in Indonesia felt surreal. I could not really think about going home. Of course, I was happy to see my family and friends again, but was Jakarta not my new home? Before I left, I did not know a lot about Indonesia: it is an island country, multi-ethnic and multi-religious. My friends knew even less. Many have heard about Bali but are not able to find it on a map or say which country the island belongs to. And then there was Jakarta. One of the biggest metropolitan areas in the world. As a boy I grew up in a small village with 300 inhabitants. Now I wanted to move into a city with 30 million.

The first thing that struck me in Indonesia was the hot weather. From the moment I left the airport, I started sweating; sweat would become my loyal companion for the next six months. Moreover, I was surprised by the sheer number of people on the streets and the traffic.

In the beginning I did not speak any Bahasa and unfortunately a lot of Indonesians do not speak any English. I realized early that this would be a problem. While walking through Jakarta on my first day I felt hungry. So, with all my confidence I walked into one of the warungs. Ordering the food was not a big problem. Pictures made it clear that ayam is chicken and nasi, rice. Answering the question: “Pedas?” with just an insecure and short “yes” proved to be my first wrong decision in Indonesia. Never in my life had I eaten anything that spicy and I needed at least four glasses of juice to soften the spiciness. But this was not the only bad experience I had with Indonesian food. I enjoyed the dishes like Gado-Gado and Nasi Goreng and will try to cook them back in Europe.
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