**BAOBAB CHILDREN FOUNDATION**

***Socially and physically challenged- hand in hand***

**Newsletter March 2019**

Dear friends, dear supporters,

The Baobab staff, the children, for whom we work, and I would like to thank you again for your active support in 2018. Also, I would like to thank all the people who helped me last year in Germany with the trade fairs and with other ongoing activities. Thank you very much.

Some of the important donors I would like to mention personally:

The **Firma Formesse** based in Löffingen, which has given us great support for many years, the longstanding support by the **Zukunftsstiftung Entwicklung** and the head Mrs Dr Massmann, **Share1love e.V.**, who collect money for us through lots of small projects again and again, the **Kirchnerschule**, a primary school in Frankfurt, where children have done sponsored runs for many years, **Walther Mann** who, when he got to know about Baobab in Ghana in 2017, has convinced so many companies in and around Würzburg to sponsor projects for Baobab, the company **Enteria**, who brought us solar energy, film producer **Hans W. Geißendörder**, who has also supported us regularly for years and there are many more who I am not able to mention here.

Thank you so much for your help and support.
My appeal for donations during the Christmas time was heard by several faithful donors. Thank you very much.

**The expansion of the bee-project can be realized now.**

**Thanks a lot, to all the donors**

**WE HELP – WITH YOUR DONATION!**

**The Baobab School**

This year we admitted 22 new students. Since we provide the opportunity to do both the proficiency exam (practical only) and the foundation exam (practical and theory), we now also admit students who finished Junior High School. This means that we also admit students who are a bit older.

In total we have six classes now: Special Class, two Fundamental Classes, Lower Class, Middle Class, Upper Class in which 102 students in total are educated. The student of the Middle and the Upper Classes are prepared for the Foundation Exam. Victoria from Kwahinkrom passed the Foundation Exam in December we will prepare her for the first and second exam of the Trade Test. This is a new way we want to go in the future because more students are going to come. In the Middle and the Upper Classes, we have 27 students now who will all do the Foundation Exam and, if they want to, also Trade Test 1 and 2.

 **The first student at the Technical University in Cape Coast**

Emmanuel Frimpong, who passed all his tests and who now studies at the Technical University is going to work as a theory teacher in fashion design. He also works as a tailor in Baobab House to earn a living.

Emmanuel will work at Baobab for 5 years on a quid pro quo basis for his 10 years of sponsorship! It has paid off. He has already developed into a very responsible young man.

**Graduation**

In March, 15 students will get their certificates. Only 8 of them worked through their 6-month-service at the school. The service is firstly to give something back to Baobab and secondly to train and improve their practical skills. The seven students who are not in school will get their certificate, but not a starter-kit. The graduation will be on April 18th during a PTA Meeting on the last day of school.

**PTSA Meeting** (Parents, teachers, students assembly)

Twice a term we invite the parents/guardians to the school. The last meeting concentrated on the health of our students. Since we employed a nurse, who comes twice a week and does a thorough consultation, we have noticed that many of our students have typhus. We also have two cases of hepatitis, which were noticed during an official checkup. All students were checked. So we invited the representative of Health in Kissi to talk to the parents and students. After this, the first hepatitis vaccination followed. Two more will be done. A complete vaccination costs 60 Cedis (around 10€) per student. The parents promised to pay half but… we know from experiencing the difficulties in collecting the 30 Cedis Commitment Fee per term, that it is going to be hard to get the money. It costs around 1000,-€ for 100 students. We will start a hand-washing initiative because many problems come from

**Monika Lockemann visits Baobab**

This is a letter from a sponsor from Baobab

“I got the idea to write it during a visit in February 2019, when I left the center after a busy day during a Workshop Week with Edith de Vos, being proud and happy to be a part of this amazing work as a longstanding sponsor and wishing you all could have been with me to share this experience. I am sure that it does something to the sponsors when they experience at close quarters what is done there, how neglected children grow up to be proud adolescents who look healthy because they get food three times a day – healthy food, who have a chance not to work on a field or sell food on the street the whole day because they can learn and have a perspective instead. All this I noticed so clearly throughout the whole day at the center and I really enjoyed the atmosphere.

During this last day of the workshop week (it was a Friday), all students presented what they produced during the week: batik, sewing, drawing, weaving and much more. This time they prepared a fashion show together with Adjei – I attach some photos. How artfully they draped the fabrics they produced around head and body and how proudly they also showed the picture they drew or the bag the sewed, accompanied by the loud applause of their fellow students. It was a wonderful atmosphere at the dining hall on this Friday afternoon.

After this the awards were given out: iPhones (yes, you read correctly), collected by the incredible Walther Mann from Würzburg, who is in touch with companies which regularly swap older models with newer ones for their employees. What unexpected and endless astonishment from all those who were honored with these awards. And it was great for me to feel that here I did not feel what constantly arises in the envious environment we are living in. I had the feeling that nobody begrudged the “old” workers for their new mobile phone! And then the students were honoured with a “food parcel” (a bag with Gari and all snacks for in-between), for those who arrived on the first day of school after the holidays at the center! In our culture students come to school on the first day after the holidays like a duck takes to water? In Ghana, at least in the countryside, one must learn this first!

And then, as every Friday, the training of the Culture Troupe starts! What a spectacle for the next two hours! First, all children practice together in a big circle, then spread out into smaller groups in the big yard. The whole courtyard filled with the drums and Ghanaian dances!

And all this, dear sponsors, I wanted to share with you. At least this way, and on behalf of Baobab, I would like to thank you all. Only because of your regular donations is the work of Baobab posdible – and of course only because of the engagement of Edith de Vos, Mr. Alhaji, Mr. Divine and all the others who care about the children so much with blood, sweat and tears on a daily basis.

The next day, Saturday, Edith introduced me to a young man who works at the Baobab House only at the weekend, because the rest of the week he goes to the university! Yes, you read correctly. He came to Baobab from Ivory Coast, where he lived with his parents for many years. He did not speak a single English word when he came to Baobab. He received the educational training and after this, thanks to his sponsor, he attended the vocational school in Biriwa and works as a proud student at the Baobab House every Saturday – those are stories which get under the skin?
Maybe you would also like to visit Baobab? At [www.baobab-children-foundation.de](http://www.baobab-children-foundation.de) there is a brochure about a possible trip to Ghana.

You are also very welcome to call me or send me an Email to paten@baobab-children.de if you have any further questions.

Monika Lockemann, Tel. 0711 7285638

**Special Needs**

**Joshua and Steven**

In addition to the school, we look after Augustina, the sisters little Edith and Jessica and as of late their two small brothers, Steven and Joshua. Now we have sent them to a kindergarten which is situated next to the center. They get special food from us, as they are malnourished. Already look better because we have given them nourishing food for the past four weeks. The mother was one of our first students and back in the day she was pregnant with little Edith. Therefore, we are emotionally highly bound to the fate of these children. Sadly, she still cannot care enough for her children. The young boys’ father is in prison after we reported abuse to the police.

**Little Edith**

Because we were not able to keep little Edith with us, we sent her to her grandmother in a small village. A sister of her’s also lives there. She visits a village school now, where the teachers are very open minded and attentive and the responsible headmistress takes an active interest in the fate of Edith. She helps us to care for her, because her grandmother cares for everyone with our money and it then is not enough for Edith any more. So, now she is in good hands at the school. When we visited her three weeks ago my heart broke seeing her so sad and hungry. Now she gets food at the school which we have paid for in advance. She is not doing well, but at the moment we do not see any other option. She would be the ideal student at Baobab because she is very creative, if there would not be the problem that she constantly runs away, and we have to search her in the middle of the night.

After a long time of toing and froing, **Augustina** returned to her family and obviously feels very happy . “I am a woman, not a student any more, I want to sell goods”, those were her words before the Christmas holidays. Now we are working to organise a business which we want to give to them, so that the family can care for themselves. Until then we give them money to care for Augustina, which nourishes the whole family, of course. Augustina and her sister Cecilia want to open a small store for schoolchildren who pass their house on their way to school. We also want to help the mother that she can have her own business and we can remove ourselves slowly but surely. Concerning the medication, we will carry on caring for Augustina and Baobab workers regularly visit Augustina.

**Seybowie und Etuaful**

Both boys are developing amazingly well. They always run around the center, participate in the Cane and Bamboo Workshop and have already learned a lot. They are friendly, small, bustling boys, interested in everything and by now they have also learned how to ride the bikes.

**Bright, Collins and Linda with muscular dystrophy**

Bright paints and does workshops with the students. They produce paper bags for the Baobab Store, bind books beautifully which are sold in the shop and to other artful things. Bright makes a happy impression in contrast to Collins who feels worse and worse. He never accepted his fate and suffers a lot. Linda beams with joy in her wheelchair and progresses with sewing.

**Our Volunteers**

This year we have two volunteers coming from Weltwärts again, Paula and Nathan.

In addition we have had short-term-volunteers this February: Joana and Gosia from Poland, Ine from Emmendingen and Klaus from Frankfurt.

Joana and Gosia want to start a project in Senegal and wanted to get some experience at Baobab. Gosia is an architect who is helping to build a small shop were a group of girls will sell things that the students need in their daily life. This way they learn how to run a shop. The store is partly built with plastic bottles, a recycling-dream which we have had for a long time. Though, by now I notice that these bottles get reused and it is not as easy as I thought to get enough of them.

Ine is an organic farmer and came with many suggestions for the farm. At the same time she produced ointments: Moringa seed balm, Moringa root balm and Moringa leaf oil, all with a base of baobab oil and beeswax (partly from our bees).

Klaus is skilled with the repairing of bikes. His task was to build a bike-trailer with staff from the bicycle workshop and the bamboo department. After only three weeks it was done.

**Many thanks to all the volunteers who are always a great enrichment for us, even if they can only come for a short time.**

**Update on our construction projects**

1. The Baobab clinic gets its roof this week.
2. The alteration of the teachers’ quarters is done: now there are 5 rooms, a shower, toilets and a kitchen.
3. Two Polytank-stands are built, each with a room underneath for the farm tools, and the polytanks are already connected.
4. The well is done but we still wait for the Waterworks people to install the filter.

Thanks again to Walther Mann, who organised the donations, to Christoph Müller, the board at Koenig & Bauer in Würzburg, who sponsored the water filter and the company Fehrer-Aunde in Kitzingen, which funded all costs for the poly-tanks and the other tanks. For the clinic we thank share1love e.V. and Hans W. Geißendörfer.

**You help – we build for the future!**

*All the best to you from Ghana, Edith de Vos and the entire team*

**Donation accounts**

**Good news: The Zukunftsstiftung doubles all donations, collected by groups of people, up to 10.000,-€ again. Thank you very much, Mrs Dr Massmann and colleagues.**

Important: It must be shared with the Zukunftsstiftung as to which group of people collected the donation. Beate.Oladeji@gls-treuhand.de

**Zukunftsstiftung Entwicklung**

DE05 43060967 0012330010

BIC: GENODEM1GLS

**Code word: Baobab Sammelspende**

**Do not forget the address for the donation receipt!**

**Please send single donations and sponsorship contributions to our account at the aaD**

Please do not forget the exact specification of the project: **GH75 Babobab!** The aaD has many projects, if the specification is missing they cannot assign the donations.

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**Many thanks to all donators and sponsors.**

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If you have facebook, you can get news about Baobab there:
<http://www.facebook.com/BaobabChildren> <http://www.facebook.com/baobabhouse>

**Contact:**

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**Events, Volunteers, General Information**

**Edith de Vos, founder of Baobab Children Foundation**
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Normally, Edith the Vos is in Germany for 4 months from May each year and can be invited to talks, markets and events.

**General Information about Baobab**

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