

Baobab Children Foundation Ghana | Westafrika



Socially and physically challenged - hand in hand **NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022**

Dear friends of Baobab,

Das neue Jahr hat gut für uns begonnen.

The new year has started well for us.

First of all, I would like to warmly thank all the people who thought of us with donations for Christmas. They help a lot with our projects. We also received a lot of donations from the „Zukunftsstiftung“, who wrote a very nice article about our new farm project in their project review.

<https://www.zukunftsstiftung-entwicklung.de/spenderinnen/projekte/weltweit/ghana/drei-ziele-und-ein-unwiderstehliches-angebot/>

In total, about 50,000 € of special donations have been received in our two accounts in November/December, which will be used for various projects. Of course, a large part of it goes to the farm, 32,000 € to be exact.

A waste separation and management project that the volunteers have initiated will also receive some of this money but we have applied to the German Embassy in Accra for support for a waste incinerator. We plan to link this project to activities at schools and the communities in our close neighborhood.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks for the loyal support of our godmothers and godfathers over the past year. This is our regular support to cover the monthly running costs.

Tree sponsorships, a delightful success

Part of the donations also came from the tree sponsorships for our rainforest. More than 100 trees! Many thanks for that, as well. The campaign continues. Some trees have already been planted, the remaining ones will be planted as soon as the rain starts again. The Forestry Department is now officially involved and advises as well as supports us with the re-forestation of tropical trees.



Students are planting trees for the project “Adopt a tree”



Kwesi is mentally handicapped, a very hardworking boy on the farm



Empowering the disadvantaged in learning agric

20 years of Baobab

Part of the money will be used for the preparation and realization of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Baobab.

T-shirts for the students and staff will be printed for some activities in the run-up. Batik fabrics with the Baobab logo will be produced for the staff, so that the Baobab family represents a unified image. This is how it is done here in Ghana and is almost a MUST. 300 people are invited and the celebration is open to the community. Banners, posters, chairs, canopies, food, drinks..... yes, when Ghanaians celebrate, they celebrate right! Every department will present something. Last week I learnt that a workshop will be decorated like an apartment using products from our workshops. Yes, they are surely coming up with something. The Culture Troupe will perform a dance drama about the garbage problem along side traditional dances.

Baobab Children Foundation - 20 years empowering the disadvantaged

31. March 2022

at the Baobab Youth Training Center in Kissi/Kwahinkrom

You are warmly invited.

A few insights from December 2021

Fanny Koenig Furniture Workshop

Koenig & Bauer will support 15 carpenters and cane and bamboo furniture makers over the next four years. To commemorate Fanny Koenig, who was the first female manager of Koenig & Bauer in Germany 200 years ago, we have named the workshop after her. Many thanks to Koenig & Bauer for this commitment.



The new board was produced by the carpenters and painted in Arts



Carpenters with Cane & bamboo department students



Fanny Koenig Furniture Workshop

Christmas rice from the Rathenau schools in Schweinfurt

The Rathenau schools delighted us again this year for the 5th time with Christmas rice. This year we received local organic rice from the Volta Region. You have to know that Ghana has long rejected local rice as bad, and imported vast amounts of rice. Now a rethinking has begun; more and more rice is grown and well processed (i.e. without stones in it) and the Ghanaians are starting overcome their aversion and rather eat locally. Many thanks to the Rathenau schools and many thanks to Annette Rönner-Seydel, who is always active in this.



Local rice is now promoted in Ghana



Local organic Christmas rice for the staff



Levin also gets his rice

Scenes from the school



John gets a parcel from his sponsor and is very happy



Our senior catering girls



Students get awards for being very active on the farm



Sending Vera and Margarete off

Farewell to Vera and Margarete before Christmas

Vera was with us for five months and, as a creative young woman, she helped us improve a lot, especially in the presentation of the project at the Baobab House. Thank you very much dear Vera. Margarete, a primary school teacher, who was with us for two months, has done true miracles in the Special Class. They had a very emotional farewell before Christmas. I would like to let Margarete report herself.

Two months of Baobab - a small insight into an impressive project

By Margarete Reinberger

November 2021- Baobab Children Foundation can now proudly count 20 years since its foundation. From the end of October until shortly before Christmas 2021- I, a primary school teacher on sabbatical, was allowed to do a two-month voluntary service at Baobab.

When I now look back at my time in the Baobab school after returning to Germany, which is currently cold and wet, I see in my mind's eye the many shining children's eyes and think of the sincere friendliness with which the people there welcomed me. As soon as I arrived, I noticed how politely the children welcomed me and how helpful they were. This community quickly gave me a feeling of being at home.

It seemed to me that I had landed in a place where life pulsates and people go about their daily work like ants. Every day had a clear rhythm. Even early in the morning at 5:00 a.m., you could hear the palm leaf brooms sweeping the paths and hallways. There were no cleaning crews at work here, no, it was the children themselves whose first task in the morning was to mow the area around the school grounds and sweep the paths before the bell rang at around 7:00 a.m., calling everyone to the centrally located dining hall for breakfast. I had already noticed on my first day how clean the whole compound was, compared to the town of Kissi. It almost seemed as if the school center was a small oasis in an area where environmental awareness has yet to grow.

As a trained teacher, the focus of my voluntary work was in the school. Thus, my way led me daily to the school building and here especially to the special class, where children with learning difficulties as well as children with little knowledge of letters and arithmetic are taught their first basic knowledge. I found the children to be open minded and very eager to learn. They were grateful when they were offered things that were appropriate for their level of proficiency. I was able to experience that a variety of materials is not a matter of course and that you can make a lot out of a little with creativity and imagination.

It was a real gift to have the artist Bright Mensah as an assistant teacher in the class. With a great deal of artistic skill, he drew alliteration cards and story cards for us, which made the lessons more varied and vivid.

I was impressed by the creativity of the students and teachers. After the school mornings, in which English, Maths, Culture Troupe and worship were on the program, the children went to the departments in the afternoon, where they would learn sewing, carpentry, kente weaving, batik, catering, bicycle repairing, furniture making, basket weaving or painting. On Fridays, instead of school, farm work was on the agenda for everyone, a practical life lesson in the open air, so to speak. After all, what would craftsmen and academics be, without the necessary food that the farmers produce?



Margarete in the special class

Organic vegetable cultivation, rainforest conservation and the construction of a waste incinerator are just a few of the projects that the Baobab management is actively addressing in addition to its daily work. Efforts are being made to make the project more and more independent of donations by building a teaching and learning farm, which on the one hand contributes to the supply of many people and on the other hand gives children and young people the opportunity to learn the farm trade. i was thrilled to see how many good ideas are put into practice in this place.

I am convinced that the Baobab School sets a solid foundation for the children who pass through this school, which will decisively help them to stand on their own feet in their adult life. I admire the adults, first and foremost Edith des Vos as the founder, but also Mr. Alhaji as the manager and Mr. Takye as the principal and many more, to whom the school is obviously close to their hearts. May their actions continue to have a positive impact and may the Baobab School remain a place that will pave the way for many more generations to start their adult lives. And may the many valuable thoughts that arise in Baobab radiate positively outward into the Ghanaian population. That is what I wish for Baobab from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you for allowing me to be there for a short time and for giving me a small insight into this valuable work. You show the world through your actions what is possible when many, many people do many small steps... they can actually change the face of the world.

Thank you, dear Margarete, both for your unconditional way of being here and for this beautiful feedback.

The School

New students

This year in the first three months there are again new students. So far 16 boys and five girls have registered. In addition, three girls who got pregnant but now want to finish school and want to come back. One student already came back last year. Others are approaching their exams and will leave the school in September after their service. We have just registered 20 students to take their exams in March. Seven of them are taking their second proficiency exam, a purely practical exam. For them, the six months of service will follow. The others are taking their first exam.

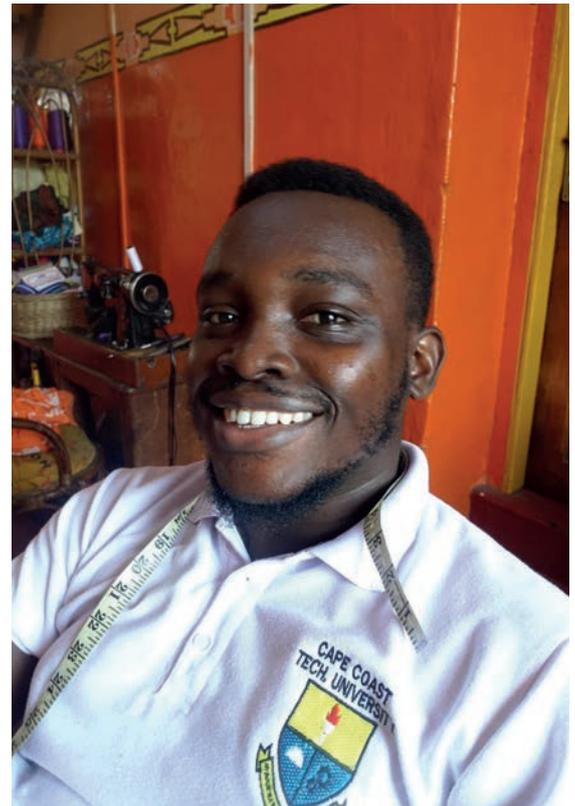
Our new dual school management

Since last year we have Mr. Takye as principal for the academic part of the school and Madame Pamela as head of the vocational part. Mr. Takye is a trained teacher and teaches Mathematics in the two higher grades and he is the housefather in the boys' dormitory. Madame Pamela is a trained teacher and fashion designer. She teaches fashion design and is a deputy housemother. They both live mostly on the school grounds. They both do full justice to their duties.



Pamela Gbafah, headmistress, and Joshua Takye, headmaster

Emmanuel Frimpon, who had the opportunity to study at the Technical University, will graduate this year. He won the award for best fashion designer at Technical University last year. He will work as a teacher for Baobab for four years.



Emmanuel has made a tremendous development since he came to us 10 years ago



Victoria Yawson took the exam at Cape Tech after continuing to study Fashion Design there for one year. Now she is waiting for her result and I would love to help her to go to Technical University as well to study Fashion Design. At the moment she is working as a paid employee in the Baobab House, both in the store and in the service in the restaurant.

Vic has become a very self-conscious staff member at the Baobab House

Nancy's surgery was a great success

Nancy is back in school after her heart surgery. She and her mother thank you very much for the financial support for the operation, which this poor family could not have financed on their own. **Many thanks to share1love who donated 4,000 € and to Dr. Massmann from the Zukunftsstiftung who generously doubled this donation. So we had the 8,000 € for an operation at the Teaching Hospital at Korle Bu in Accra. We wish Nancy a continued good recovery.**



Nancy with her mother at Corlebu hospital at Accra after her operation



Nancy, her mother and Mr Rinus who played a major role

Baobab Adepa Organic Farms

Our new farm project is running at full speed, with a lot of effort a lot has already been created. Michael Asare, the farm manager together with his staff Francis, Edem and Papa Kobinah have been working tirelessly. Alhaji Isakka, our general manager, has worked completely throughout since the beginning of the project, as he also has lots of other tasks. Many thanks to all the hard workers.



Farm day February 3, 2022

13 acres of moringa trees - about 20,000, have been planted and some have already been harvested. Sweet potatoes and beans which were planted as intercrops have been harvested. 2 acre of vegetables were planted to feed the school, restaurant and for sale. Sweet potatoes and beans have begun to be planted on four acres; the planting process is still ongoing.



This group of students was the whole day on the farm



The carrots are doing well due to regular watering



Alice and Diana are taking the cow pea seeds from the pods to be dried and sown on the farm

The house for the water pump and tools is almost finished. On top of it is a terrace, where the manager can meet his staff for meetings and the future security has an overview of the whole farm from up there.

The area is almost completely fenced in to protect the fields from cattle. There is also a fence behind the rainforest to stop hunting and cutting trees in the forest.

Now that we have arrived in the dry season, there is an endurance test for our water reserves in the large reservoir. Watering must be done daily. If we manage to get the vegetables through, we will have gained a lot. Many farmer don't have water, so during dry season, the vegetable production largely pauses in our region. The demand for vegetables in the dry season is high and the vegetable sellers have to travel far to get their vegetables. This is our opportunity.



This is the machine house for the water pumps and tools



The water is going down in our water dam due to the dry season

Moringa processing

Since we have an order from a cosmetic company (50 kg of moringa powder and 50 kg of moringa leaves every month) we had to build a new washing plant at the Baobab Center very quickly over Christmas. **Many thanks to Alhaji.**



The new washing area for Moringa at the school



Alhaji Isakka (left) and Michael Asare, 2 Baobab Managers who are not just sitting in an office

The solar dryer is located at the school and has been used tirelessly since then. 50 kg of powder has already been produced; now only the dried leaves are missing. Nelson, a former student, is now the boss in the processing and always gets help from the students. A whole group of students were also willing to stay and help Nelson during vacation time. Now school has begun and we have started a mixed group, also with girls, who help Nelson during school hours in the morning. They prepare for their second batik exam in the afternoon and are free in the morning.



First the Moringa has to be sorted out



Some students stay to help during Christmas holidays



Visitors from Germany



Nelson, a former student, leads the Moringa processing

HELP - HELP US - TO REALIZE THIS PROJECT

The next steps are:

**A van to bring moringa and vegetables
harvested from the farm to the school
or to the buyer**

ca 4,000 Euro

The solar drying system for larger quantities

ca 7.000 Euro

The organic certification this year

1.700 Euro

**Many small donations from many big and small people,
can move mountains and increase justice in the world.**

WE HELP - THANKS TO YOUR DONATION

**Warm greetings from Ghana and many thanks to all who accompany us on our
journey in their own personal way.**

Edith de Vos and the Baobab team

DONATION ACCOUNT

Good news: The Zukunftsstiftung will be doubling all collective donations this year, drawing a limit at 10.000,- € Thank you to Dr Massmann and her colleagues.

Important: The Zukunftsstiftung has to be informed about who is making the donation.

Beate.Oladeji@gls-treuhand.de

Zukunftsstiftung Entwicklung

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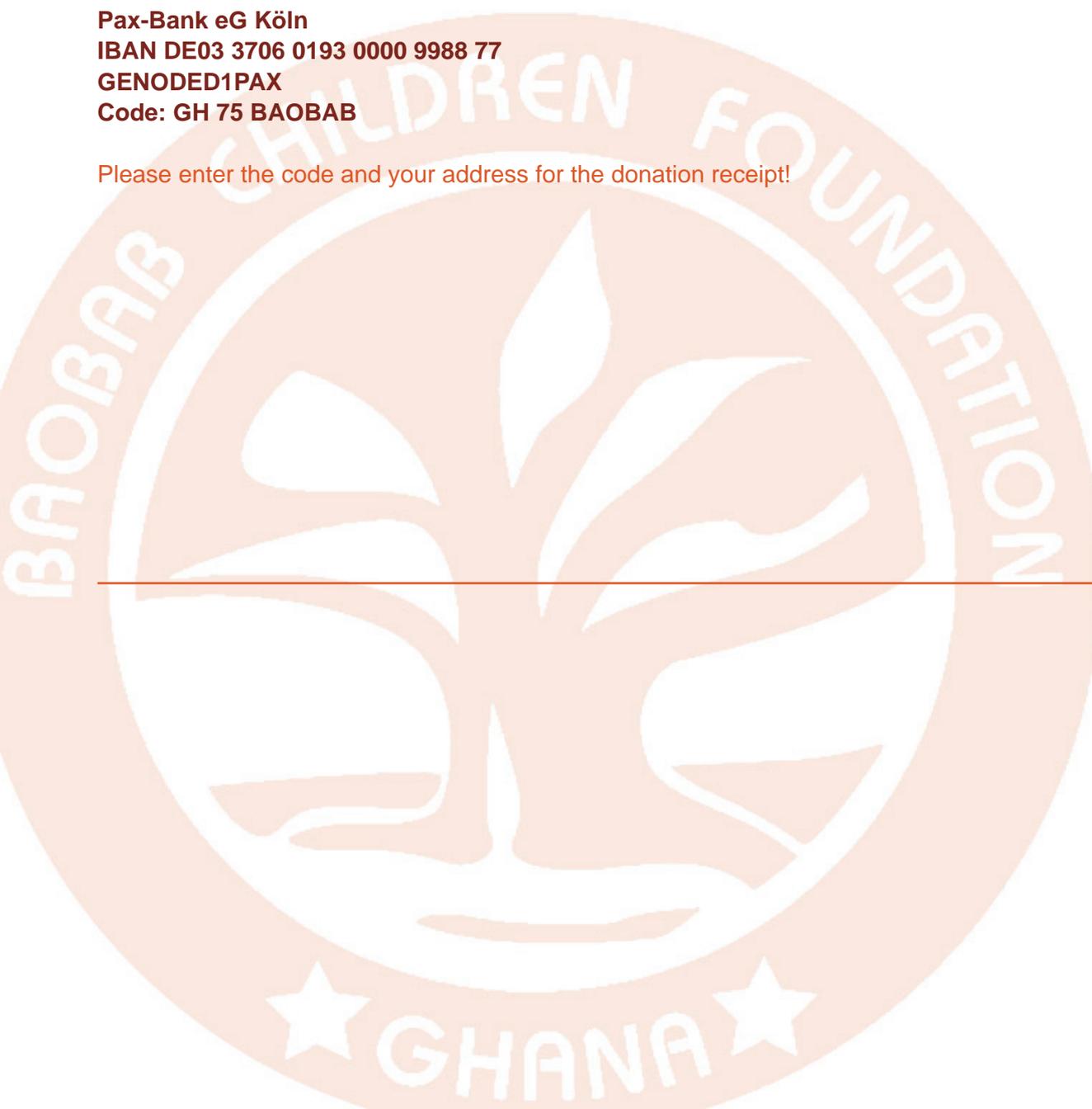
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CONTACT

Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/BaobabChildren>

<http://www.facebook.com/baobabhouse>

WhatsApp +233 244 723 241

ghana@baobab-children.de

SPONSORSHIP

Monika Lockemann

patenschaften@baobab-children.de

Tel +49-711-728 5638

EVENTS, VOLUNTEERS, GENERAL

Edith de Vos Managing director of Baobab Children Foundation

WhatsApp +49 160 1720 236

ghana@baobab-children.de

FINANCES AND DONATION CERTIFICATES

info@africa-action.de Address

africa action/Deutschland e. V.

Südweststraße 8

50126 Bergheim

Tel +49-2271-767540

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