



# BAAN DOI Newsletter

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## Dear BAAN DOI Friends,

the year 2020 was different than anything we have known before. Especially different because Covid-19 not only affected our small family at BAAN DOI, our village, our province or Thailand, it also affected people in all countries around the globe. After the first lockdown, many of us thought it will go back to 'normal', but many of the securities we took for granted are gone now.

Looking back, it was a year of change but also a year of realizing what is essential. After the lockdown from March to May we decided to keep our office outside the orphanage area. We could not continue our prevention work with kids and teenagers from nearby communities. So, we decided to focus on the care of our kids at the orphanage as well as the families in our Family Outreach Program. For the future we will stick with this structure.

In this Newsletter, one of BAAN Doi's children Amy will talk about the many changes she has experienced since living at BAAN DOI with her brother Titi. We will also introduce our children caretakers, who care for our kids 24 hours, they talk about their work and what is important for them. Finally, the heads of our supporting associations will outline their activities and what motivates them.

This completes the circle, because it is only with the dedication of our staff members and the commitment of our supporting associations that we can create an environment providing a better quality of life for orphans in the Chiang Rai province.

For the new year, we believe that all the changes will have their positive aspects and let us grow further.

*We wish you*

*a Merry Christmas, good health and a fresh start in 2021!*

*Barbara and the BAAN DOI Team*





## My Story By Amy

When I was a little girl my mother taught me how to stitch; it's a traditional craft in our tribe- the Akha tribe. My parents were farmers and had five children. I always helped them with the work, while other children were going to school. I would work in the garden, taking care and harvesting oranges. Even when the basket filled up with oranges and was very heavy, I tried my best all the time. I was happy to be able to support my family. My parents always sprayed something on the trees, but I was not allowed to help because it was poisonous.

First, my mother and then my father got sick. After a long struggle, they passed away and suddenly everything was different. They left me with my younger brother, from now on, it was just me and him. My brother cannot hear and since I have always taken care of him; we developed our own way to communicate with each other.

But then, we got in serious trouble because my brother got sick. He had a high fever and it was not getting any better. Our older brother left us at the hospital and went back to his family and work. We had no home, nobody to protect us, no money and no documents to prove who we are. I still remember those long nights at the hospital and the uncertainty of whether he would survive. The only thing I could do was to be there and pray for him.

Finally, he got better. He got stronger and stronger and a loving nurse helped us to pay the hospital bill. She also found us a new place to live. Our new home, is a home to many children and is called BAAN DOI. Since we have been living here, our lives have changed so much.

Here we are safe and have friends and people who take care of us. I started to go to school and learned to read and write. I found that I love reading, especially novels. I normally help with cooking and taking care of the other children. I still love to do stitching and we can also join the handicrafts project here. So, I learned sewing too, which was quite difficult at the beginning, but it makes me happy. I can make something with these skills, and we produce little bags and key holders. I love them, they are so colorful, and we can also sell them.

We also have an organic farm, where we plant rice, vegetables and raise fish. My little brother is not little anymore, he is so strong now and can help a lot too. He takes care of the chickens by feeding them and cleaning up the chicken shed. He is now attending special classes and we learn sign language together.

Doing non-formal education allowed me to catch up to 9th grade in four years. At the beginning of next year, I am going to finish the 9th grade in school. This was always one of my dreams, which is now coming true. But I want to do more. For the following 3 high school years, I plan to go to a vocational college for Design and Textiles. My dream is to design and produce clothes and open an online shop. I am very grateful for all the blessings me and my brother receive here at BAAN DOI and for all the opportunities we have.



Top right: Amy and her little brother now and left: more than 5 years ago during their first days at BAAN DOI.

Amy and her brother Titi came to live at BAAN DOI in June 2015.

A nurse working at Mae Sai hospital brought them to us.

We are so happy to see how healthy and happy they actually are.



Bottom right: Titi is taking care lovingly of the chickens, and left: Amy is stitching a bag



## Children Caretakers at BAAN DOI - providing a home of love

### An interview

Top left: the four children caretakers together with Barbara during the weekly meeting.

In the past few years, we have tried out various ways to organize the working hours and areas of responsibility for our childcare workers, always with the aim of improving the work structure. Now, as a positive side effect of our Covid 19 prevention measures, we have found a structure that works perfectly and that we want to stay with. Our four child caretakers work in pairs on weekly shifts, they work seven days (24 hours) and then have seven days off.

Every Sunday morning, before the shift change, we have a joint meeting to review the past week and to plan for the coming week. Those appointments are very important for me personally, so that I can learn about the changes, development of the children and support the childcare workers where needed.

In general, our childcare workers are responsible for everything that has to be organized from morning to evening. In addition to the daily activities, we have divided the areas of responsibility into the following four main categories: Medical Care, Education, Development Activities and Practical Skills / Documentation. The responsible caretaker also writes the report in the relevant category, which is then summarized in the annual development report of each child.

Top right is Vee during the art class together with the children and bottom left while playing.

But let's see how our caretakers experience their work and how they deal with difficulties:



**Yasong Chaphue, or Vee for short,** is from the Akha hill tribe and grew up in various boarding schools. He has always worked with children since graduating from High School. He has been part of our team for two years. He is particularly responsible for the development enhancing activities like music, art, sports and much more.

#### Vee, what motivates you during your daily work?

Working with the children motivates me, it makes me happy to share my time and skills with them.

#### What is special for you at BAAN DOI?

The way we live together is special to me, we spend our time together and enjoy it. It is also very special to be there for one another and to forgive in an event of disagreement. This is something I want to set an example for the children, to forgive one another.

#### What are your challenges and how do you deal with them?

Working at BAAN DOI in our large team of 15 people with such different cultural backgrounds is really challenging. As so many things are new and I have never experienced this structure before. But I work on myself, practice accepting inequalities and new concepts and focus on what I can learn from them.



Pop during handicraft class.

**Pailin Luangthanan is called Pop** by everyone. After studying public administration, she felt the urge to contribute something positive to the community in order to be able to give something back. After almost three years at BAAN DOI, she is the caretaker with the longest experience in our team. Pop is responsible for developing practical skills (handicrafts and agriculture) and the children's documents.

#### Pop, what motivates you during your daily work?

Life with the children itself motivates me. BAAN DOI is like a family to me, we live together and are actively involved in the children's lives. In the time we spend together, we form close bonds with each other.

#### What is special for you at BAAN DOI?

I think the holistic, good care we provide for the children is very precious. BAAN DOI is well positioned and offers many resources and opportunities for everyone.

#### What are your challenges and how do you deal with them?

The emotions of our teenagers are often a challenge for me because they change so quickly. But I try to meet them on the same level, to understand them like a friend and to give them space and freedom if they need it. I have learned to recognize the very different needs of the children and to adjust to them.



Tom with one of the BAAN DOI children.

**Doungdee Boontha's nickname is Tom** and, like so many people in northern Thailand, she comes from the Akha hill tribe. After completing her bachelor's degree, Tom worked as a nurse for Alzheimer, cancer and bedridden patients. She has been working in our children's home for a year now and has impressed us with her outstanding management skills. She is especially responsible for medical care.

#### What motivates you?

The children are what motivates me. They are all just so lovable and with many things needing to be organized I am happy to give my best. It makes me proud to be responsible for the children and to be there for them, whenever they need me!

#### What is challenging and how do you cope with it?

When the children have problems, my work can be challenging sometimes. Also, when they argue and don't understand each other at all. In order to find a good solution, it is important to get to the root of the problem, be honest and to take things as they are.

#### What is your special strength and what do you want to teach the children?

I am very open minded and have a good heart. I can stand by the children in any situation and make them feel unconditionally loved and cared for. That's also what I want to show them, how important it is to respect yourself, have good self-esteem and goals in life.

„It motivates me to see how much passion they devote to the planning and implementation of their work and, above all, how lovingly they care for the children.

In addition to active childcare, BAAN DOI organizes further trainings on topics such as english teaching, communication, participation of children, and other soft skills. ”

- Barbara Meisl



Tom and Pop practicing reading with the children.





*Rai and Barbara are planting rice in our field together with the children.*

**Urainwan Pradupphet, also called Rai**, is the youngest member of our caretaker team and has been working for BAAN DOI for half a year, although we have known her many years and cooperated with her before. Rai has studied English and worked in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Her special focus at BAAN DOI is education.

**What is special for you at BAAN DOI?**

I like the family atmosphere at BAAN DOI, and the independence we are given at work. The structures here are very flexible and take the individual needs of the children as well as staff members into account.

**What are your challenges and how do you deal with them?**

The work with the youngest children is challenging for me and requires a lot of patience. It is important to develop constant self-awareness and to show understanding and empathy.

**What is your special strength and what do you want to teach the children?**

I have developed very good skills in terms of learning, including methods for acquiring knowledge and for self-development. I want to pass these skills on to the children.



*The birthday of one of the children at BAAN DOI is celebrated.*

Our child caretakers not only spend time with the children in the BAAN DOI home, but also on our farm.

Here the children learn about the different edible plants, how to grow them and when to harvest them.



*Rai and the children are harvesting mustard leaves and various herbs for cooking.*



## The BAAN DOI Partner Associations introduce themselves

### An Interview



Left: Susanne Reisinger tells in the interview about her work in BAAN DOI Switzerland.

On the right photo of the committee are from left to right: Elisabeth Dorta, Susanne Reisinger, Ina Good, Kristina Gramatica and Roland Hinzer.

The engagement of the people who work in the BAAN DOI partner associations in Switzerland, Austria and Germany enable us to implement our plans, to support orphans in northern Thailand. In the following interviews, the chairwoman of BAAN DOI Switzerland Susanne Reisinger, the chairwoman of BAAN DOI Austria Elisabeth Loipold and the chairwoman of BAAN DOI Germany Susanne Walzer, report on how they came to BAAN DOI, how the associations work and what motivates them.

As diverse as the clubs and approaches are, we all work together to protect the children and give them a new chance. We are particularly pleased that the preparations for the first joint event, the 3-country charity bike tour around Lake Constance, will now take place in 2021.

#### BAAN DOI Switzerland

**How did you come to BAAN DOI and how did you get the chairwoman of BAAN DOI Switzerland?**

I have known Graziella and her mother Andrea for a very long time and have indirectly followed what Graziella was setting up in Thailand. When she came to Switzerland for the birth of Naari, this contact intensified. The idea arose to visit BAAN DOI with my family for a month, which we did the following year.

After that, it was clear that I wanted to support BAAN DOI. We founded the association when Graziella visited us again, here in Engadine. I was very happy to take over the office of the Presidium, because the project is dear to my heart. Today, it is very exciting for me to have this responsibility and I am proud that we are so successful. I am honored that Graziella has been working by my side since May. Running the club as a team is an enriching experience for me.

**What distinguishes your association and what are you doing?**

Our association benefits from the acquaintances of the board members. Broadly spreading information about BAAN DOI, is

important for us and helps to widen the circle of friends.

However, our biggest event is our charity dinner, which takes place every year on the first Friday in November (except for this very special 2020). On this evening, we usually report on what's happening at BAAN DOI, provide a delicious Thai meal and sell tickets for our raffle. As a new event, we are organizing a charity classical concert with the pianist Herrmann Hess, on March 27, 2021 in the Hotel Kulm in St. Moritz. We are curious to see how it will go and hope to see many guests!

And of course, we are also part of the charity bike tour around Lake Constance. We will join in the ride to raise money for BAAN DOI. So, we have a charity event in the culinary, cultural and sporting areas!

A small part of fundraising is made up of the sale of the products that are manufactured in BAAN DOI, like the key rings, lunch bags, etc. The sale of tap water is also a good source of income. We work together with various catering establishments that sell their tap water, for the benefit of BAAN DOI. Thus, every liter of our spring water supports the children and young people in BAAN DOI.

**What motivates you and what is important to you?**

I am convinced, that the children who have been disrupted by many obstacles, must be given a new perspective. This happens through constancy, reliability, structure, a lot of love and confidence. This is the only way for them to establish themselves in life and to believe in themselves. These young adults, who already have both feet on the ground, show that this is possible in BAAN DOI.

The fact that they want to achieve even more than what they already have, speaks a lot for their personality. And it speaks for the care given at BAAN DOI, as they stand behind each child, have their back, and motivate and support them. This fact appeals to many people, knowing that children in Switzerland have much more opportunities, and so they are ready to support BAAN DOI financially.

„Sharing the vision of Barbara and Graziella motivates me a lot. The project never ends, and it is exciting to see how it is developing and how we can continue to support it.“

- Susanne Reisinger, tells about her work as a chairwoman of BAAN DOI Switzerland



Left: Elisabeth Loipold narrate her experiences as a chairwoman.

Top right on the photo of BAAN DOI Austria are from left to right: Maria Meisl, Elisabeth Loipold, Michaela Kirchberger, Monika Malter and Simone Affritsch.

**BAAN DOI Austria**

**How did you come to BAAN DOI and how did you get the chairwoman of BAAN DOI Austria?**

I have been a member of the Austrian association since 2012. At that time, I followed the development of BAAN DOI with interest, i.e. the implementation of Babsi and Graziella's plans.

But I wasn't really immersed in the world of BAAN DOI until 2019, when I came to work on site in Thailand for ten weeks. I gained deep insights into the children's home, the agricultural project, but also the Family Support Program.

Since then, BAAN DOI has become a matter of the heart for me, that is why, I was very happy to accept the position of the chairwoman of the association BAAN DOI Austria in the last elections in July 2020.

**What distinguishes your association and what are you doing?**

Our association has existed since 2012 and tries to generate funds for BAAN DOI through various activities and events.

The handicraft club, which lovingly produces handicrafts that are sold at various markets, should be emphasized. Due to the special circumstances this year, we are currently in the process of bringing new ideas and plans into being.

**What motivates you and what is important to you?**

I am motivated by the life stories of the children and families. They have faced various obstacles and difficulties.

To see that the quality of life of so many people can be significantly improved with the help of BAAN DOI makes me happy. And the children in the orphanage have a real chance of a self-determined, good life.

Regular contact and exchanges with BAAN DOI and Barbara seem important to me, in order to stay as "close" as possible to what is happening on site.



Top: Sarah Warnung, Elisabeth Rosskopf and Marcella Affritsch during the christmas market of the BAAN DOI handicraft club.

If you are interested in getting involved, or becoming a member of one of the BAAN DOI partner association please send an email to:

Elisabeth Loipold  
austria@baandoi.org

Susanne Reisinger  
Swiss@baandoi.org

Susanne Walzer  
germany@baandoi.org



**BAAN DOI Germany**

**How did you come to BAAN DOI and how did you get the chairwoman of BAAN DOI Germany?**

After studying, I did a voluntary service at BAAN DOI. I helped with childcare during the summer holidays and my expectations were far exceeded.

The BAAN DOI family welcomed me across all language and cultural barriers from the very first moment. I am very, very grateful for the valuable time and experience that I was able to gain.

Back in Germany, it was clear to me that I would become a member of the German BAAN DOI association. Before the first general meeting, however, I did not expect that I would be on the board immediately afterwards.

Two years later, I followed in the great chairman's footsteps of our founder and honorary chairman Jo van der Linde, who is the heart of the German BAAN DOI association.

**What motivates you and what is important to you?**

The experiences in Thailand motivate me tremendously. The entire BAAN DOI team is working with passion. The children can develop freely and are given unique opportunities.

I appreciate the agricultural project, which carries out the idea of sustainability. Both the self-sufficiency of BAAN DOI and the creation of training and jobs are important steps into the future.

The child's best interests have top priority at BAAN DOI and that is the most important thing for me.

I motivate myself with various "events". Preparations for the 2021 charity bike tour around Lake Constance is currently the focus. This will be the first charity event, in which all three BAAN DOI associations work at the same time and are on board.

I am particularly pleased that I was able to motivate some of my friends to work with me on the planning.

**What distinguishes your association and what are you doing?**

Being proud of our 113 members, we are the association with the largest number of members. The membership fees make up most of our income.

Every single donation counts, regardless of the individual amount. Our fundraising campaigns vary from the serving of fair-trade coffee together with Weltladen, charity runs, popcorn sales, AmazonSmile to charity bike tours. We are happy about everyone who is enthusiastic about BAAN DOI.

*Bottom: Susanne and Hannes with the BAAN DOI children during their visit 2019.*



*Left: Susanne Walzer is the chairwoman of BAAN DOI Germany*

*On the right photo of the committee are from left to right: Miriam Kirchner, Susanne Walzer, Joachim van der Linde, Nadine Giesa, Peter Altenried, Bernhard von Ammon and Andrea von Ammon.*

The charity bike tour around Lake Constance will take place from July 9th to 11th, 2021.  
 Contact  
[germany@baandoi.org](mailto:germany@baandoi.org)  
 or  
[swiss@baandoi.org](mailto:swiss@baandoi.org)  
 if you want to support the tour as a sponsor or a rider.  
 More information about the tour and our associations are at:  
<https://baandoi.org/>



# Thank you very much



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