

Two months of working and living in a completely different environment are about to come to an end. I will take back home a huge variety of experiences on a personal as well as on a professional level.

Regula Peter, Voluntary, March and April 2010

It is months ago that I first started to think about joining a humanitarian project. I developed a desire to involve myself actively to help people who are less privileged. If ever possible I wanted to contribute my time on an assignment in Asia to where I have loved travelling for years. When I first learned about Child's Dream and its history, I was really impressed and therefore I also was extremely happy when I got their positive reply to my application.

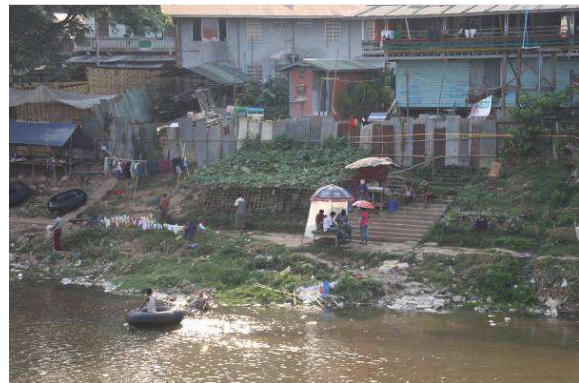
Coming from a winter tourist destination in the Swiss Alps, my arrival in Chiang Mai felt totally surreal. The span of time between my application and my arrival in Thailand was quite long and eventually I got here and my dream was about to start.

At the office I was soon given the first tasks to work on which was helpful to settle in at my new workplace and also to find my niche within the team.

One of my main tasks was to help with the development and the planning of a social entrepreneurship project in Mae Sot. This guesthouse in the border city to Burma will be opening within the next few months which offers young people and adolescents from the neighbouring state jobs and vocational training in the hospitality industry. In co-operation with the project manager I worked on the master plan, we crunched numbers for the budgets, I

worked on training concepts and designs, checklists and working descriptions were prepared, etc. Partly I was doing my work for the project from the offices in Chiang Mai but I also had the opportunity to go on site for several days and work in the very special environment of Mae Sot. My colleagues of "Youth Connect" were wonderful hosts.

I absolutely like the master plan of this social enterprise and as an insider of this industry sector I really set my heart on this hospitality project! I hope to be following the next steps of Youth Connect from Switzerland!



Mae Sot – at the Burmese boarder

Another major task during my assignment was trainings and coaching for managers and project heads of Child's Dream. Consulting within a - for me - pretty different value system was challenging but also incredibly rewarding. I would not want to have missed even one of these trustful conversations!

In May a three day team building workshop with the entire team of Child's Dream will take place. I helped the team in charge to design the workshop. Also, I joined them for a site inspection of the workshop location, which was a very nice trip to a mountain area North West of Chiang Mai and the temperatures were enjoyably cooler than in the city! With Yee I prepared some flipchart posters for the team

event, this was such a enjoyable task, I won't forget it! She would be my perfect assistant for Graphic Recording ☺.



Flipchart design with Yee

In the beginning of April I joined a boarding-house opening ceremony in Maeded Noi. Another wonderful experience! The trip itself was already amazing, the scenery was incredibly beautiful and I can only imagine how stunning it must be during the rainy season or during the winter months. Buddhist monks were present for the ceremony, there were many official speeches and the overall ambiance was very festively, thus the food which was served was absolutely delicious ☺. It was quite rewarding to have experienced this opening!



Opening ceremony in Maeded Noi

In addition to the tasks I already mentioned I also got some smaller assignments to work on. For instance, I was helping with some tasks in the HR field, or I helped with the translation of the annual report, or I supported the team members on some administrative tasks for the scholarship program and for project administration. All these are minor everyday tasks, which are important in order to have daily operations of the organisation running smoothly. These tasks also enabled me to get a deeper insight into the world of an NGO.

For my overall experience of the two months "change over" in Thailand my life during the time off from the Child's Dream working hours was of course also very important. I did many excursions with my motorbike in and around Chiang Mai. The area is very nice and there is a lot to explore. I ate well; I had good conversations with my colleagues from work and I had good laughs with them ☺. One of the social highlights was probably Songkran, the Thai new-year celebration. The water splashing was really a lot of fun ☺.

Today my on-site-engagement with Child's Dream is ending. On the one hand, I am saying good bye with a nostalgic feeling. On the other hand I am also leaving with a good and satisfied feeling because I will take back home many new impressions and experiences. Also I know that my support for the organisation can go on in a different way out of Switzerland.

I would like to thank everyone who had helped to make my stay with Child's Dream possible and who contributed to my wonderful time in Chiang Mai.

Regula(aaaa☺)