



FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT
2023

Foreword

In the first year since my retirement as a professional tennis player, I deliberately took a great deal of time to consider my next steps. It is a privilege to make changes in one's life and to open a new chapter.

In the context of my future work with the Foundation, I decided to continue my journey with the focus on early education, in the countries where the Foundation is already engaged and beyond. This issue doesn't get the priority it deserves on the agenda of political and economic leaders. Working together with other stakeholders in this field, my hope is to draw attention to the importance and effectiveness of early education. I am not an education expert or an advocacy specialist. What I do have is the potential to access influential decision makers and, as a father of four children combined with 20 years of experience, I can use our Foundation programmes to make a case study to persuade others to try and do more. Early childhood education is a cost-effective solution to effectively tackling poverty. High-quality early education programmes have the potential to sustainably strengthen the development of entire societies. Despite this, over 50% of children worldwide have no access to preschool and the sector is massively underfunded. At the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2023, I was given the opportunity to make the case for more funding for the first time. I hope to be able to do more public and non-public events that can inspire and motivate others to do more.

As the other operations of the Foundation are concerned, we will remain true to our thematic and geographical focus of school readiness in Southern Africa and Switzerland. Even though we have already achieved a great deal, the needs are still great and we are committed to our partners and supporters. Last year, I visited Lesotho with my whole family on a programme visit and was once again able to see for myself the valuable work that is being done. Together, we are creating measurable added value so that children can get their education off to a good start. A heartfelt thank you for another year of collaboration and solidarity.

With gratitude,



Roger Federer, President
March 2024



Roger Federer on a programme visit in Lesotho, May 2023

Our Values



Empowerment

We believe in the power and ability of people. That is why we focus on empowering those in need so that they become enabled to improve their lives.



Impact oriented

Our ultimate goal is a positive, tangible and systemic change in the lives of children. All our actions are geared towards this goal, and this is how we measure our success.



Respect

Every person concerned and every stakeholder deserve our respect and recognition. We learn from different points of view and thereby continuously improve ourselves.



Entrepreneurship

It is our responsibility to the children that we achieve the impact as cost-efficiently as possible and use our resources economically and modestly.



Partnership

We invest in long-term partnerships, built on mutual respect and transparency. Only together with local experts and partners can we find the most relevant solutions to achieve sustainable change.

Foundation Overview

'I AM TOMORROW'S FUTURE' – Nolonwabo Batini, a 15-year-old girl from Ndzondelelo High School in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, made this self-confident statement when Roger visited her school. Her conviction became the vision and central theme of the Roger Federer Foundation. The Foundation wants children affected by poverty to be able to take control and actively shape their own futures. There is ample evidence to prove that education is a prerequisite for reducing poverty, improving preventative healthcare, and creating an engaged civil society. However, access to early education is crucial as this forms the foundation of all learning. That is why we want to enable children to get their educational journey off to a good start as part of our long-term developmental strategy. This means that not only should children be ready to start school, but also that the schools should be ready for children providing a child-friendly environment, especially for the youngest. Children should be healthy and develop their skills so

they can experience a happy childhood. We believe in human potential. That is why we do everything in our power to enable people to improve their own situations. Therefore, we exclusively work in long-term partnerships with carefully selected local organisations. We strengthen existing competencies and support the affected population so they can address their challenges with their own resources. We truly believe that this reinforcement approach is the only way to achieve sustainable systemic change and achieve long-term improvements. In order to be both cost-efficient and cost-effective, we have limited our engagement to six countries in Southern Africa as well as Switzerland. As a learning institution, the Foundation seeks the advice of experts and stakeholders. Our work is founded on transparency, impact assessments and evaluations. Our success is hereby measured through the positive changes in our programmes. As an overview, we've listed six cumulative key figures to show how the Foundation has evolved since its formation 20 years ago in 2003.



7 countries where we are active with our programmes.



15,327 educational institutions that have improved in quality.



30 local partner organisations that implement our programmes on site.



55,500 teachers who have improved their abilities thanks to further training.



2,754,000 children benefited from a better education since the Foundation's establishment.



86 million Swiss francs were spent by the Roger Federer Foundation by the end of 2023.

Milestones 2023

We can look back on an eventful anniversary year. Our School Readiness Initiative in Southern Africa continues to scale up and become more systemic in nature. In each of the six countries, individual components or even the entire programme are being adopted and expanded by ministries of education, donors and non-governmental organisations. For example, our Early Learning Kiosk is now part of mentor training in Malawi thanks to funding from the World Bank. In South Africa, our partner organisation scaled the programme in an additional province with funds from the private sector. This was achieved through intensified contact with stakeholders and targeted efforts to achieve greater coordination. Before this, we held a retreat with the African partners at the beginning of the year to develop advocacy strategies, which are now bearing fruit.

Another highlight was the visit of Roger Federer and his family to Lesotho. We met the country's key decision makers, from the King and Queen, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education, to the chairpersons of parliamentary commissions and CEOs of leading companies. Our appeals were heard: 115 new preschool classes were created by the end of the year and the national private sector raised USD 3.5 million for early education. This success was brought about by many stakeholders, but it was Roger Federer's appeal that triggered the decisive momentum. We also succeeded in mobilising funds for the early education sector in Zimbabwe and Malawi, among other things by triggering the Multiplier Fund mechanism of the organisation Global Partnership for Education in three countries. In total, an additional USD 30 million flowed into early education programmes, a large sum that will substantially advance the sector. These developments will carry us through the next few years as we expand our advocacy efforts with the Foundation internationally.

Our School Readiness Initiative has been effective and we are reaping rewards. As a result, the Foundation Board has decided to extend the initiative by three years until 2028, giving a total of 3.3 million children access to quality preschool education.

Janine Händel, CEO
March 2024



Janine Händel and Roger Federer with the members of the parliamentary commissions of Lesotho, May 2023

Status

School Readiness Strategy

The Roger Federer Foundation engages in a systemic and long-term manner. To this end, in 2018, the Board of the Roger Federer Foundation adopted a geographically and content-focused 10-year funding strategy for 2019-2028 that the Foundation implements consistently and measurably. We are guided by United Nation Sustainability Goal 4.2 and concentrate fully on improving children's readiness for school, but also on making schools ready for the children. Our goal is to give more than three million children a good start to their education. Children should have access to at least one year of organised learning before starting formal basic school. We are committed to ensuring that the children develop in an age-appropriate manner and are developmentally on track. Also, that they successfully get through the first years of school without repeating the class or dropping out of school early. To achieve a system that can ensure this, we are sensitising all the child-relevant stakeholders such as parents, teachers, communities, and government officials for the needs of a healthy child development and are empowering them to take responsibility.

Thanks to their commitment, the children are given access to preschool, where they encounter an age-appropriate learning environment. Processes are established so that the transition of the children to primary school goes smoothly and they can quickly feel accommodated. Thanks to self-guided, digital-based continuing professional development, pre-primary educators and teachers are improving their skills comprehensively in learning groups and in peer-to-peer mentoring sessions. The aim is to implement the school readiness strategy in six countries in Southern Africa and in 1,000 to 3,000 institutions per country.



26,328 educators
are able to support young learners in an age-appropriate and quality manner.



8,713 preschools
offer a safe, stimulating and age-appropriate learning environment.



93% of preschools
and feeder schools have established a mentoring system among teachers to ensure quality and transition.



268 districts
or constituencies give importance to school readiness as a fundamental element of the education system.



85% of the preschools
built natural playgrounds jointly with the village communities and parents using local materials.



86% of preschools
make sure that nutritious meals for young learners are provided as a key element of child development.



91% of pre-primary children
have developed in accordance with their age in terms of health, learning and psychosocial well-being.



800,650 children
have participated in pre-primary activities for at least one year before starting school under the current strategy.



86% of educators
and teachers regularly and explicitly discuss the children's learning and development with the parents.

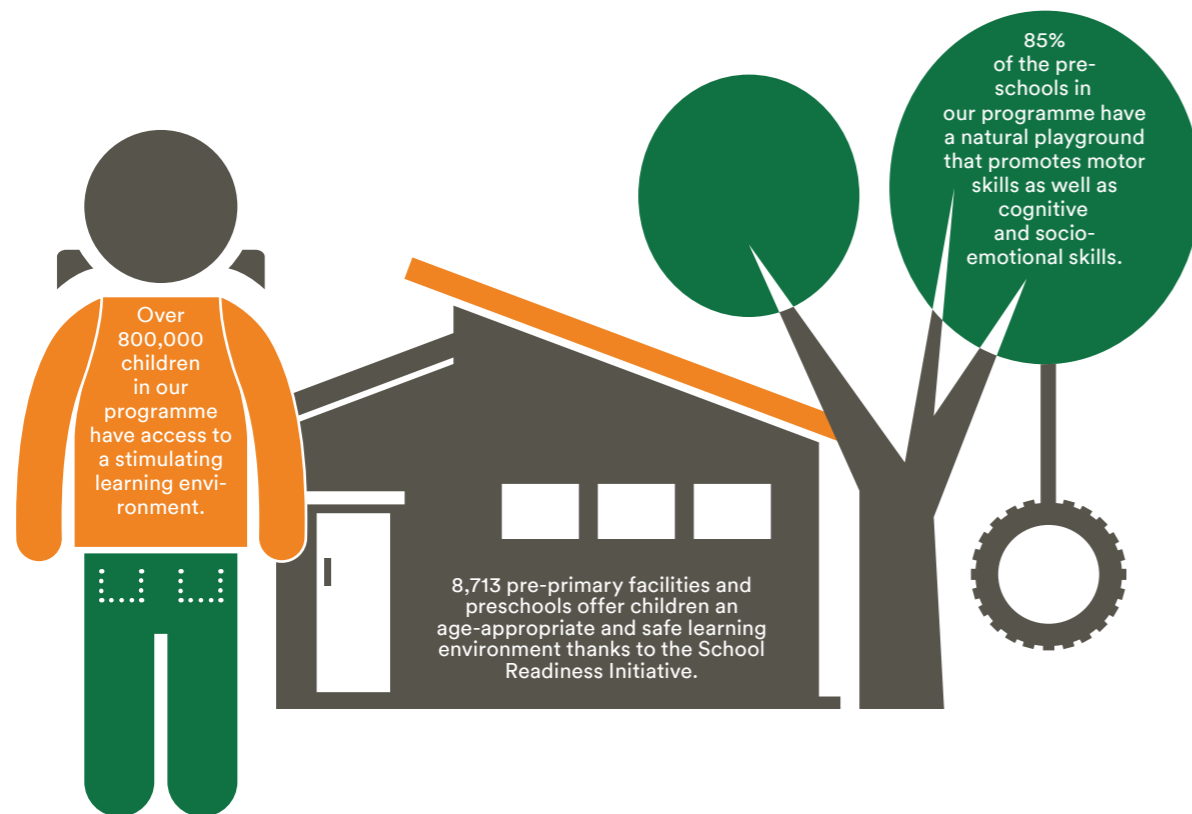


13,523 educators
and teachers are making use of the ChildSteps app to continuously assess the children's development.

Age-appropriate learning environment

A preschool should be a second home for a child, a place where they enjoy being and feel comfortable. This is vital for them to be motivated and learn effectively. In the six Southern African countries where the Roger Federer Foundation is active, only a small minority of preschools offer a child-friendly learning environment.

We discuss how such an environment can be achieved.



Studies have shown that children are more likely to attend preschool, also more regularly, if the learning environment is attractive for them. Children and parents should be able to recognise its added value.

It is possible to learn under a mango tree

Science has proven in many ways that the most important factor for quality learning is a good teacher. This is why the Roger Federer Foundation is intensively involved in the further training and education of teachers. Investing solely in educational infrastructure will not automatically yield quality education. After all, even the best educational establishment is just a building if an inspiring teacher does not impart their knowledge and experience to the children in an effective way. At its core, this is actually good news, because millions of children around the world are denied the opportunity to enjoy lessons in a stimulating learning environment. Despite this, many heroic teachers manage to prepare children for a successful future, even if they're just sitting on wooden benches under a mango tree. But first, it must be said that unfortunately not all teachers are heroes and second, their potential remains limited if lessons have to be held without teaching aids, outside exposed to the elements or in a stuffy room without furniture. An age-appropriate learning environment is particularly important for the youngest children as it acts as a drawcard, in some cases affecting whether children go to school at all. One of our baseline studies in Malawi showed that the main reason for the high drop-out rate among Grade 1 learners was that children experience school as frightening. In many areas, they remain places associated with experiences of chaos, violence and hunger.

A learning environment comprises many factors

In order for the youngest learners to receive high-quality, age-appropriate lessons, minimum conditions must be met. The classroom should be safe, clean and tidy, with sufficient light and good air quality. Ideally, benches and tables should be available from Grade 1 onwards

and, if not, at least mats, which offer some protection from the cold floor, should be provided. Decorations, play and learning materials should be plentiful. Ideally, there should be resources that cover all areas of the curriculum. And, of course, the number of children should be appropriate for the size of the classroom. Unfortunately, in rural areas, we often encounter dark, unadorned classrooms crammed with up to 200 children. The learning environment also includes the school grounds as a whole. These should offer play areas during breaks where the little ones can let off steam and try out their physical skills. Age-appropriate sanitary facilities that the youngest children can use without fear are also important. Finally, it has also been proven that providing a nutritious meal ensures that children come to school regularly. Meals provided at preschools give the children enough energy, which enables them to concentrate.

«I enrolled my child at this preschool, because, whenever we passed the playground, she said she wanted to attend that school so she could play.»

A mother from Lesotho

It is not always a question of budget

Children do not need a perfect learning environment, but a welcoming place where they feel comfortable. The majority of countries in the global South only have small education budgets that do not allow for sufficient infrastructure. Naturally, we advocate for a massively higher investment in classrooms. Taking a pragmatic approach in our programmes, however, we try to substantially improve the learning environment with locally available resources. The key is to make all relevant stakeholders aware of how important a stimulating learning environment is, especially for young learners. We are committed to ensuring that Grade 1 learners have the best classrooms instead of having to make do with out-

«The parents brought us toys that they made using the toy-making manual from the Early Learning Kiosk. This has improved our school.»

Phiwokuhle Makahamadze,
Preschool Educator, Namibia

door spaces. We show teachers and parents how they can use existing resources to decorate classrooms and make their own play and learning materials. Together with the village community, we organise the distribution of regular meals from their own food stocks. In addition, we motivate traditional leaders to provide better premises for preschools. Most of the building materials can be procured and produced locally and there is also an abundance of volunteers willing to make a contribution. We complement these efforts with minimal funds, as cement and sheet metal have to be procured externally. Using this collaborative approach, we achieve a child-friendly learning environment using the smallest of budgets.

Why we don't build our own schools

There are no Roger Federer Foundation schools or preschools, for good reason. Our budget is limited and would only be enough for a handful of schools built to Swiss standards. In addition, the need is huge. We see it as our responsibility to choose an approach that brings added value to as many children as possible using as few resources as possible. We also want to strengthen

the initiative of parents and the local population. They take responsibility and improve local education through their own efforts. This means that, later, they are willing and able to expand the infrastructure themselves if the population grows. They also see it as their duty to maintain and repair the infrastructure. After all, it is their school and not ours. Unfortunately, there are far too many examples of educational institutions that were built with a lot of money and then quickly fell into disrepair as soon as the donors moved on, because no one felt responsible for the school. Sustainable development can only be achieved if the local actors are able to maintain the impact achieved independently. Last but not least, our participatory approach has resulted in an increased appreciation of education among the population and parents becoming more involved in their children's schooling.

Leadership and investment are the keys

Leadership, ongoing commitment and investment are required to ensure that the quality of the learning environment is maintained once it has reached an optimal level. This is why school councils or governing bodies play a central role in our programmes. They organise the volunteers of the village population and are responsible for keeping the infrastructure in good shape or even expanding it. In order to be able to provide money for investments even after the end of our programme, we provide the preschools in some countries with start-up capital, which is used by teachers and members of the school governing bodies for short-term loans. We reported on this in detail in our 2021 Annual Report. The profits from the fund are invested for the benefit of the preschool. The members of school governing bodies receive training in accounting and business management in order to fulfill their role. In the long term, a rotation system in the school governing body allows knowledge transfer to be scaled up in the village community. Access to the fund is a motivator to help run the school. However, the success of our participatory process is only guaranteed if we can also win over the traditional leaders in the mission to improve the quality of education. Their influence ensures continuity and keeps the population motivated, ensuring their ongoing commitment.

→ Children learn to take risks while developing motor skills on a playground in Zambia





Classrooms should be stimulating environments filled with items that allow children to learn as they play

Facing great challenges

To date, we have succeeded in creating a qualitatively appropriate learning environment for the youngest children in 8,713 educational institutions, which meet the above-mentioned requirements. However, our participatory approach does not mean that success is guaranteed. In each village community, both traditional leaders and the population must be convinced anew of the goal of a better learning environment. We only

succeed in doing this sustainably in around 80% of villages. There are manifold reasons why the remaining 20% falter: a lack of support from traditional leaders and school management, natural disasters that completely destroy infrastructure or cause food shortages, the preschool fund generating too little income due to a lack of business opportunities, diminishing mobilisation efforts and the entrenched feeling that the job is now done without an understanding that it should be an ongoing process. Even in cases where we cannot bring

all educational institutions in our programme up to the desired standard with our approach, we deliberately refrain from donating large amounts of material. Where there's no will, there's also no sustainability. This is underscored by the fact that random sampling shows the ongoing positive developments in preschools that we have not supported for several years. The vast majority have maintained the quality achieved over the course of the programme and are still providing children with a child-friendly learning environment years later.

Interview with Carien Vorster
Education specialist and regional representative from the Roger Federer Foundation regional office, South Africa

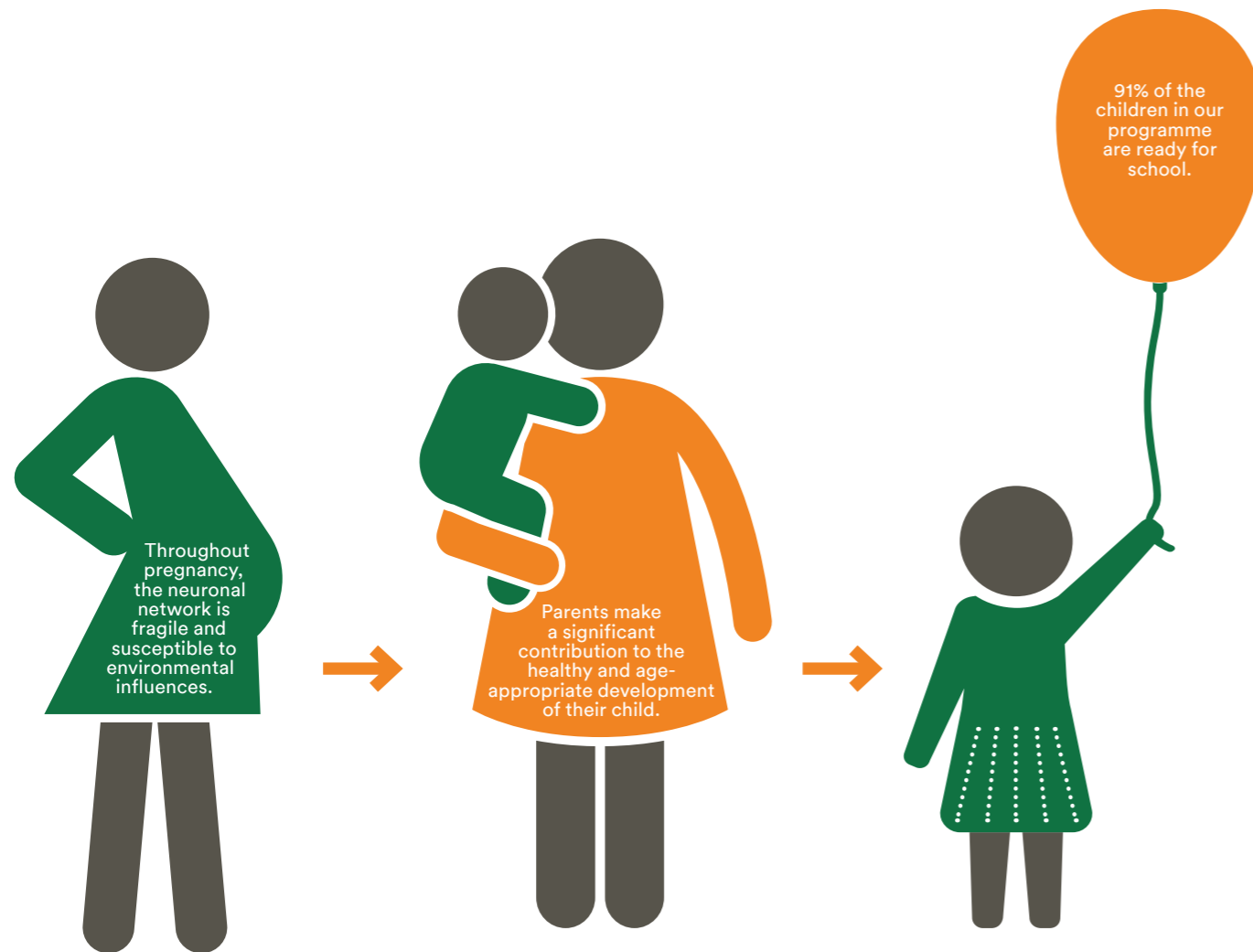
Why do we need to focus explicitly on ensuring that facilities are age-appropriate?
Age-appropriate facilities ensure that children develop the necessary skills at the right time, and it also ensures their health and safety. Furniture must be the right size for their bodies, they must be able to handle toys with their small hands, and they must not be exposed to harmful objects and materials. The objects in the environment must interest them and challenge them at just the right level so that they will be motivated to handle the objects or master the games.

How do age-appropriate facilities foster the development of young children's skills?
At every age, children have different capabilities and developmental needs. When children play and engage with the objects in their environment, they discover the world and learn new skills. Finishing a puzzle or building a castle with sand will stimulate their creativity and problem-solving skills at a suitable level, and give them a sense of success and confidence.

What are some of the things to keep in mind when it comes to providing facilities for young children?
Children must develop in different domains, including physical strength, balance and coordination, cognitive understanding of physical and mathematical concepts, an understanding of language as well as the ability to use their imagination, to play with other children, to persevere when they struggle and to manage their feelings. It is important that their environment provides opportunities for development in all these domains. Sometimes adults are over-protective of young children and do not create opportunities for them to be brave and strong by climbing high into a tree, or to discover that a cat will scratch you if you frighten it. When the environment provides interest and stimulation at the right level, it can be very rewarding for children to be left to explore and interact freely, while being supervised for their safety. Equally, specific instructions can guide learning towards targeted skills, like sorting similar shapes together.

Early childhood development

With the right support, children develop rapidly in the first few years of life. If children do not develop optimally during early childhood, it is difficult to make up for it later. This makes it all the more important to recognise developmental deficits and overcome barriers to learning. To address these issues, the Roger Federer Foundation focuses on the training of educators.



Age-appropriate development in the early years is a precondition for a child being able to reach their full potential and actively take control of their future.

Early childhood shapes one's entire life

In recent years, early childhood has been the subject of scientific research. Today, we have proof that 80% of the brain has already developed by the age of 5, which in turn forms the basis for whether a person will be able to develop their full potential by age 25. This is particularly evident in the first 14 months of an infant's life. The infant learns to lift their head, crawl and eventually walk, they learn to express their needs to the point of speaking words, learn to use their senses, perceive and understand their environment and develop their first social skills such as sharing or empathy. The more positive stimulation a child experiences, the better their development progresses. However, if a child is not sufficiently encouraged and challenged in the first five years of life, their development will fall short of their potential. Factors such as violence, other traumas or inadequate nutrition also lead to slower development, which impacts the child's entire life. External care in early childhood is of great importance for neglected children, but only if it is of the necessary quality. In light of this, the UN 2030 Agenda as well as education experts worldwide are calling for compulsory preschool education lasting at least one year. The World Bank even sees early education as a basic macroeconomic prerequisite for the economic prosperity of a nation.

Starting school without deficits

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4.2 aims to ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood education, care and preschool education by 2030 so that they are prepared for primary school. School readiness is achieved when a child has developed according to their own potential for their age. Educational experts assume that children need to develop holistically. In addition to early reading, writing and mathematical skills, the child should also have

developed normally in terms of motor, cognitive and socio-emotional skills. All four skills are fundamental for further success at school and are closely interlinked. Let's illustrate this with an example: A child with a low frustration tolerance will not have the patience to practise a reading task several times in order to improve. Instead, they will disrupt the class, resulting in social isolation. For a child to start school successfully, it is therefore crucial for them to receive a high-quality and holistic early education.

A child's development level can be measured

Unfortunately, there are no globally standardised indicators that define school readiness, even though child development can be compared worldwide. Educational goals and curricula are highly political and politicised issues. When the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted at UN level in 2015, an international consensus

«The activities that are the easiest, cheapest, and most fun to do – such as singing, playing games and reading – are also the best for child development.»

Jerome Singer, US psychologist

could not be reached. It was only possible to agree on the quantitative indicator that 100% of children should receive at least one year of preschool education. Unfortunately, however, the enrolment rate says little about the quality of teaching and therefore about children's readiness for school. Even at national level, only a few countries have a monitoring system that tracks whether children are developmentally ready to start school. Some countries have developed maturity tests that are

«Our initiative enables teachers to talk to parents about their child's development. In this way, they can understand how important early learning is.»

Velile Mngayi, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, Roger Federer Foundation

conducted before children start school. However, these are controversial, as they tempt teachers to use targeted preparation to coach children for a better result ("teaching to the test"). Early education experts therefore recommend the continuous observation of children throughout the entire preschool year, during which the children's development in all four areas of competence are documented and rated in a targeted and systematic manner. This way, deficits can be identified at an early stage. Only this approach allows the teacher to provide a child with individual, targeted support and to identify learning weaknesses, learning barriers and invisible disabilities.

Our solution is digital

In the regions where the Roger Federer Foundation is active, the vast majority of teachers are not qualified for the job. In addition, the class size is at least 35 children and can sometimes exceed the 100 mark. These two factors make it impossible to observe children individually, let alone provide targeted support for learning difficulties. In collaboration with local universities and leading educators, we have developed a digital application that allows even untrained caregivers to recognise the developmental status of children, even in large classes. The ChildSteps app provides teachers with a list of activities

that cover all the skills in the national curriculum. Each child is registered, their attendance in class is recorded using a digital attendance list and the number of activities completed is shown. The app instructs the teacher on the correct preparation and implementation of the exercise system. In particular, ChildSteps defines what the teacher should focus on and what a child should be able to do at the time of the activity according to their age. An up-to-date and individualised report can be generated at any time, showing the strengths or weaknesses in each of the child's skill areas or even that of the class. Last but not least, the application also offers recommendations on how to address learning weaknesses.

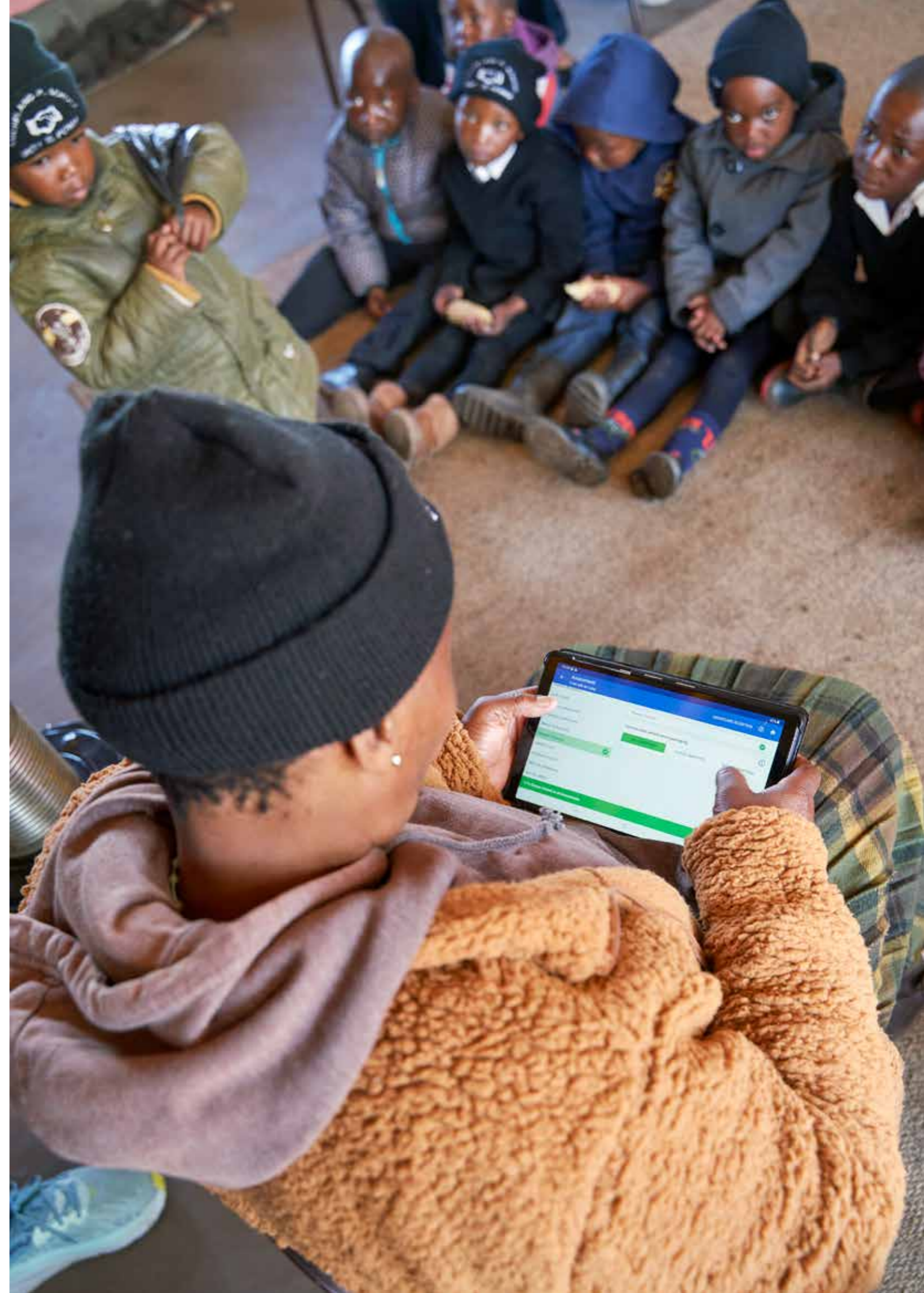
ChildSteps complements the Early Learning Kiosk

As described in detail in the 2020 Annual Report, the ChildSteps app is part of the Early Learning Kiosk. This offline tablet is made available to teachers and contains everything a non-qualified person needs to provide good preschool lessons. This includes, for example, a basic course, a manual for producing teaching materials with locally available resources and instructions for effective parent work. In addition, numerous official documents can be stored on the tablet, including the national curriculum or inclusion guidelines. The content of the Early Learning Kiosk is therefore different in each country and adapted to the national context. All tools are approved by the ministries of education and some are already recognised as accredited educational materials. Although the ChildSteps app was actually developed as a monitoring tool, its contents are a help in everyday school life in terms of lesson planning. This is because unqualified teachers often do not know how to structure their lessons. Here the app's activities, which are structured according to learning skills and also school terms, serve as a valuable guide.

An application with a growing user base

The Roger Federer Foundation is active in low-income countries in the poorest regions. The digital revolution has not yet reached these locations. The introduction of a digital tool for teachers, most of whom had never used an electronic device before, was therefore associated with risk. The introductory course had to be extended from the initial three to five days in order to ensure sustainable use. It also takes several months for teachers

→ Educators in six countries use the ChildSteps app to track each child's development



Based on an interview with Prof. Charles A. Nelson
Professor of Pediatrics and Neuroscience, Harvard Medical School and Professor of Education, Harvard University

Source: Video «Childhood experiences and brain development» by the Jacobs Foundation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DI6hU9Lua9A>

How do experiences early in life affect development?

My research is primarily focused on understanding how exposure to adversity early in life becomes embedded in brain development which in turn affects behavioral development. The first 24 months or so of life play a critical role in development and that therefore, if children are in bad environments beyond the age of two, the risk that the impairments they experience will be long lasting is much greater.

How do you gather data for your research?

About five years ago a group of us formed a research network focused on toxic stress and its effects on development. This project was designed to look at the effects of early institutional rearing on development. My role was to use electroencephalography as a way of looking at how the brain had been impacted by adversity and what we found was a very powerful correlation that the more perceived stress or, the more life events that the mother experienced that were negative, the greater the reduction in the baby's brain activity. Early in our work the focus was on how exposure to adversity and stress early in life would impact the infants in the first one or two years.

What is the link between science and policy?

Over the years, I realised how much policy-makers are dependent on good science and that really came to fruition for me this project. The World Health Organization and UNICEF and the European Union all use the work from this project as their strongest evidence to convince governments around the world to stop putting abandoned or orphaned children in institutions. We need to have experts and policymakers in the room at the same time having a conversation and we need to train policy makers in interpreting science and we need to train scientists to think about policy.



When doing handicrafts, children do not only develop fine motor skills, but also learn socio-emotionally and cognitively

to be able to use the app effortlessly. Nevertheless, in 2023 we were able to count a total of 13,523 users who regularly use ChildSteps in everyday school life. This corresponds to around 68% of the teachers in our programme. In Malawi, only one teacher per preschool carries out the assessments. In South Africa and Namibia, the user rate for the first two phases of the programme unfortunately did not reach the level we had hoped for. Improvements need to be made here. In addition, we

can only access the synchronised (as opposed to live) data, which is a challenge in countries where schools do not have access to the Internet. A total of 257,327 children have been registered on the ChildSteps app and their activities monitored. As of 2023, 91% of the children observed were ready for school. This means that they were able to carry out the specified activities in all skill areas or were able to do so well. This is a very pleasing and encouraging result.

Switzerland programme

Early Moves

In Southern Africa, the Roger Federer Foundation is implementing its School Readiness Initiative. In Switzerland, too, this topic is central to our efforts, with a focus on early motor skills development, as one third of children have deficits when they start school. Our aim is to provide a stimulating environment for children from socio-economically disadvantaged families.



Early motor skills are closely linked to other early childhood developments and have a proven influence on children's cognitive abilities and mental well-being.

Movement is the gateway to child development

Movement plays a central role in a child's development. It opens up and expands the child's opportunities to engage with themselves and their social environment. This exploration helps the child to understand the physical world and the laws of physics. The child can only learn spatial thinking by moving through space, by orientating themselves as they move around. The early stages of motor development, which encompass sitting, grasping and walking, fundamentally change an infant's relationship to their physical and social environment. This has also been shown to have an impact on the development of children's communication skills. It has been scientifically proven that children with good motor skills are more popular among their peers, are better integrated into peer groups and also display prosocial behaviour more often. Therefore, different experiences of movement do not only influence a child's motor development, but also all other areas of development, which impacts their health and well-being. In other words, movement is a gateway to the child's overall development. Children between the ages of three and eight are in a crucial phase of physical development. During this period, their motor skills are developing rapidly and therefore need to be stimulated regularly. This is why preschool children should get at least three hours of exercise a day.

Children in Switzerland do not get enough exercise

Over 530,000 children aged three to eight live in Switzerland. Today, children play outside up to 30% less compared to their parents. One reason for this could be that there is often less space in urban areas and neighbourhoods for playing, moving and meeting people. One in three children in Switzerland cannot play outside at all or can only do so under constant adult supervision. In addition, if carers at home or in external childcare facilities are inactive, this usually leads to the children

at the facilities being inactive. As many organised sports and activities in Switzerland are expensive and the residential environment is often not conducive to movement, children from socio-economically disadvantaged families in particular have a need for attractive, accessible and free play and exercise spaces. Due to this unmet need, a third of children show developmental delays in basic motor skills when they start preschool and 25% when they start school. Preschool children aged 4.5 to 5.5 scored an average of only 4.1 out of 8 points in the "Moving" and 4.2 points in the "Moving an object" categories of the test to assess basic motor skills. Around 52% of the test scores show an average competence level. In general, it was scientifically proven that schoolchildren whose parents have a lower level of education and income are less physically active. In addition, almost a third of children whose parents do not have any qualification beyond the compulsory schooling are overweight or obese.

A programme that addresses all living environments

The high number of children with motor development needs when they start school motivated the Roger Federer Foundation to launch the comprehensive Early Moves programme. A portfolio of projects covering the diverse environments in which children live is intended to fill existing gaps and test innovative approaches. The various interventions are intended to help ensure that socio-economically disadvantaged children in particular have essential movement experiences and basic motor skills when they start school as a cornerstone of a healthy, holistic development. We aim to give children between the ages of three and eight easy access to comprehensive physical activity, be it in the neighbourhood, in family centres, daycare centres, playgroups, preschools, schools, public play spaces or in settings where those responsible are not really involved with getting children to move, such as childminders who work out of

Interview with Tobias Bauer
Project Manager for Child and Youth Development, Umbrella Organisation for Child and Youth Work In Switzerland
www.doj.ch

You work with the owners of housing developments to ensure that more playgrounds are created. What has been the biggest surprise for you so far when starting this project?

We were surprised at how disinterested some of the owners are in designing the outdoor space on their sites. It should also be in the owners' interest that the residents enjoy their immediate surroundings. Upgrading the outdoor space of the neighbourhood results in clear added value for owners: It reduces resident turnover and has a positive effect on the sense of community in the neighbourhood, which in turn means less effort and costs for the owners.

What impact does a playground in the neighbourhood even if it is temporary (pop-up) have on young children?

Play areas in the immediate vicinity, which young children can reach without crossing dangerous roads, offer them a space to play, exercise and experience nature. They can access these play areas without having to depend on adults to reach them. This means that they can spend more time outside and with other children, which contributes to their holistic development.

What would you like the owners of housing developments to consider when building or renovating their properties?

When inspecting potential sites in our project, we came across many prohibition signs. You don't always need the most expensive playgrounds. A first step would be to make outdoor spaces in the immediate neighbourhood accessible. If these were then designed together with both the younger and older residents, identification with the space would increase, which would also benefit the owners.



«Children are experts in terms of their needs and spaces. We involve them in our participatory planning work.»

Luca Jenal, Project Manager, SpielRaum

their homes. Early childhood educators and preschool teachers should also be motivated and coached to enable children to enjoy exercise in the long term. Through our programme, municipalities receive free professional advice on setting up pop-up playgrounds and play areas. These measures are implemented by a consortium of non-governmental organisations. Another objective of the Early Moves programme is to enable these partner organisations to network and find synergies.

Do it yourself

As always, the Roger Federer Foundation is remaining true to its approach of helping people to help themselves. It is important to us that instructions and practical documents are developed for all projects. This allows the general public to implement and copy them on their own. Together with our partners, we have published a planning and design dossier for the construction of a natural playground, as well as an educational dossier for its use. We had 16 exercise videos produced to show parents and carers in a low-threshold way how children can be encouraged to exercise in a variety of ways and with few aids. Our project for the cost-effective upgrading of neighbourhoods that are not very child-friendly by involving youth work is also to be documented and published as a handbook for imitation. The foundational paper "Frühe Kindheit bewegt" ("Early childhood in motion"), developed by a group of experts, has already been published. This handout brings together knowledge about early childhood, developmental psychology, physical activity and health, highlighting the interaction between these areas. The aim is to bring about a common understanding around the promotion of physical activity in early childhood across all specialist areas. The document also highlights the requisite building

←
Roger Federer at the inauguration
of a natural playground in Emmen,
Switzerland, June 2022

blocks in these areas, providing practical examples on how to promote physical activity.

We're still at the beginning

The Early Moves programme started in 2022 and is a long-term initiative that may change over the planned five years depending on opportunities. Thirty-one natural playgrounds and break areas have already been completed in areas located in economically disadvantaged areas in a participatory process with teachers, children and neighbourhood associations. We want to create a total of 100 such natural playgrounds throughout Switzerland. Sixteen family centres have already received comprehensive, on-site coaching on how to make their

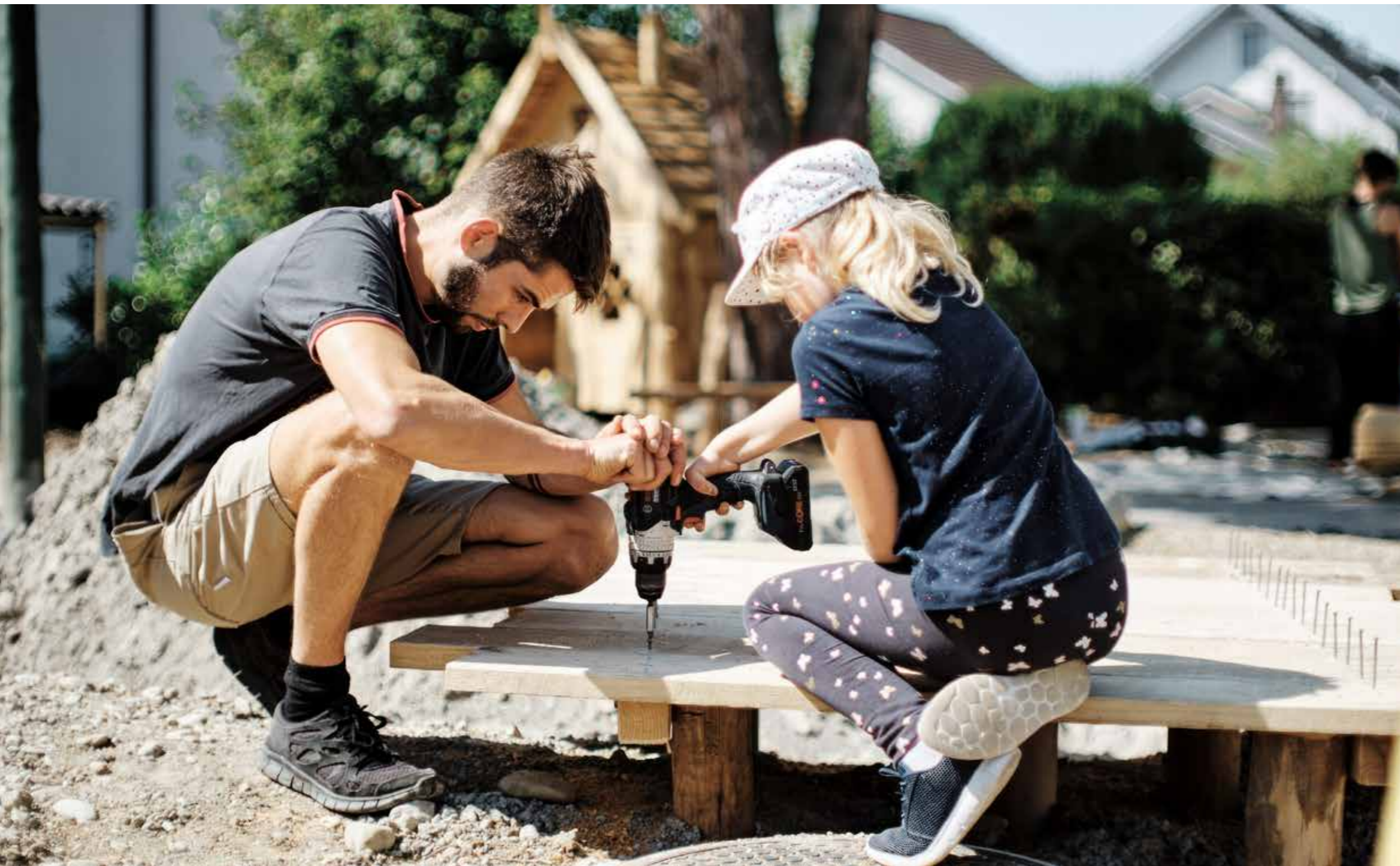
indoor and outdoor spaces more exercise-friendly and how to encourage children to get moving. In addition to practical exercise videos, posters, flyers and other materials have also been produced. We would also like to reach 100 family centres in economically disadvantaged residential areas with this offer. An online coaching tool with practical ideas, information, videos, invitations to conferences and meetings that allow participants to share ideas and experiences, and a discussion forum for the community, were developed to support professionals in daycare centres and preschools. The free advice centre for play space and pop-up playgrounds has been active for around a year and is actively being used. There have already been 124 consultations, by telephone and on site, with interested municipalities, associations, schools and cooperatives from 17 different cantons. All

these experiences and processes will be documented. Last but not least, our pilot project, in which young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods will be directly involved in the design of play spaces for the promotion of early motor skills, is also progressing well. In the first four of these locations, a special educational event will be held in the spring.

Providing easy access to information is complex

There are a vast number of players active in the field of physical activity in Switzerland, offering a wealth of programmes, best-practice documentation and materials. Precisely because physical activity and the promotion of motor skills can be categorised as cross-cutting

issues in the areas of health, social affairs, integration and sport, existing platforms are not interlinked and make it difficult for people seeking advice to obtain comprehensive and up-to-date information quickly and in a targeted manner. Together with a working group, we have the ambition to create a user-friendly platform that connects and inspires various stakeholders such as parents, associations and specialists along the various living environments of children and provides them with professional support in the implementation and use of services. We want to pool expertise and provide relevant organisations with a channel through which they can better reach their target group. The platform should be self-owned and used in the spirit of open source and open content providers. In this way, we hope to close a relevant information gap.



**«Our wish is that
society would recognise
that early motor
development is an
essential part of
children's development.»**

Cornelia Conrad,
Head, Healthy Schools at RADIX

←
A child helps with the
construction of a playground,
Thun, Switzerland
© spielraum.ch



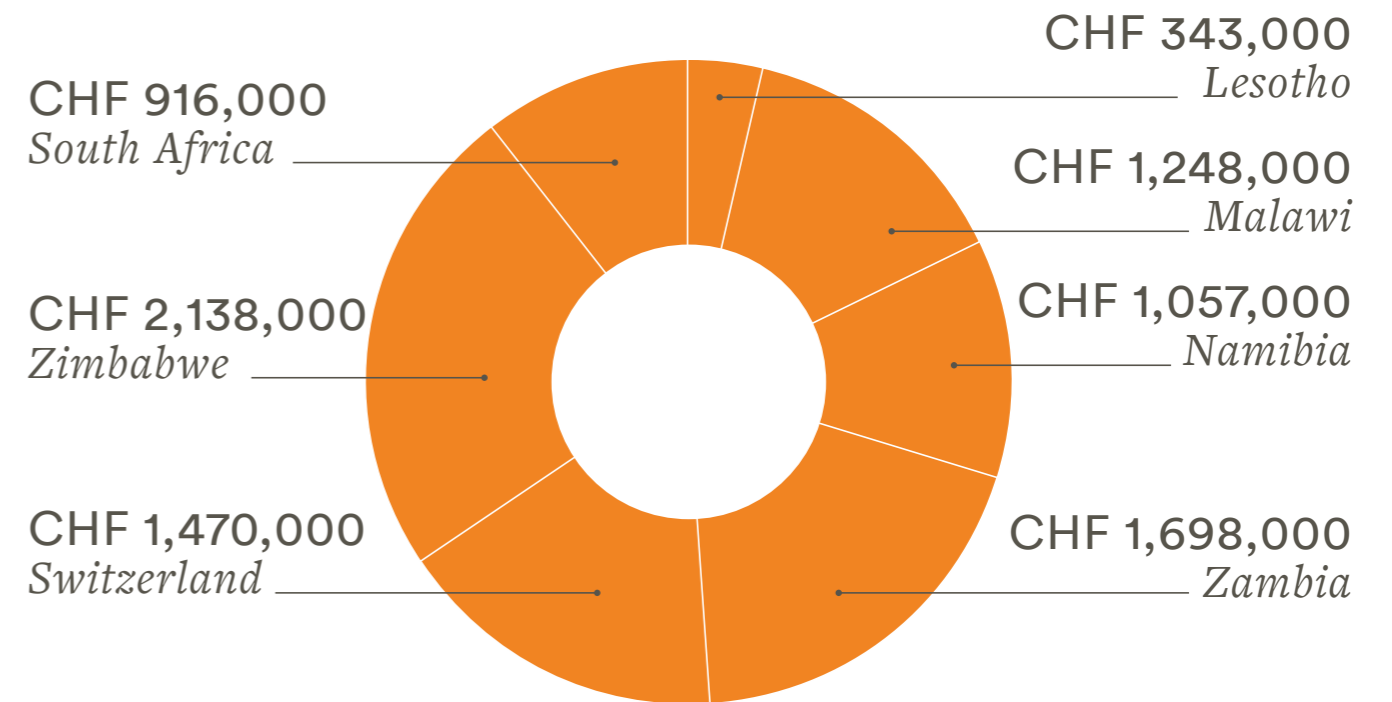
Current Grants and Partners 2023

Country	Programme	Partner	Scope	Grant duration	Grant (CHF)
Lesotho	National School Readiness Initiative	Network for Early Childhood Development of Lesotho, University of Lesotho, College for Education and Training	274 preschools and schools with preschool classes	Phase I/II: 2020-2024	955,000 (2020/2022)
				Phase III: 2023-2025	400,000 (2023)
Malawi	National School Readiness Initiative	Action Aid Malawi, AECDM, ECD Coalition, Livingstonia Synod	1,700 preschools and 800 primary schools	Phase I: 2020-2022	2,305,000 (2020)
				Phase II: 2022-2024	3,900,000 (2022)
Namibia	National School Readiness Initiative	CAFO, Lifeline/Childline, WAD	2,035 preschools and schools with preschool classes	Phase I/II: 2018-2021	1,995,000 (2018/2020/2021)
				Phase III: 2021-2024	4,090,000 (2021/2022)
Zambia	National School Readiness Initiative	ROCS, Saide, ZOCS	1,800 village schools with preschools	Phase I/II: 2019-2024	5,855,000 (2019/2020/2021)
				Phase III: 2023-2026	4,900,000 (2023)
Switzerland	School readiness project: Primokiz	RADIX	200 districts	Phase II: 2021-2026	620,000 (2021)
Switzerland	School Readiness Initiative Switzerland: Early Moves	Marie Meierhofer Institut, RADIX, Fachstelle SpielRaum, Dachverband Offene Kinder- und Jugendarbeit	Early motor development in all living environments of the children	Phase I: 2022-2026	1,250,000 (2022)
Switzerland	School Readiness Initiative: Pingpong	Aprimo	26 districts	2019-2024	235,000 (2019)
Switzerland	School readiness project Switzerland: Natural playgrounds and break areas	Naturama, RADIX, Silviva, ZHAW	100 natural playgrounds in schoolyards	Phase I: 2020-2022	1,565,000 (2020/2021)
				Phase II: 2022-2025	3,700,000 (2022)
Zimbabwe	National School Readiness Initiative	Camfed, Child Protection Society, Municipal Development Partnership, Zinecda, University of Zimbabwe	1,100 schools with preschool classes 13 national teacher seminars	Phase I/II: 2019-2023	5,655,000 (2019/2021)
				Phase III: 2023-2026	2,510,000 (2023)
South Africa	National School Readiness Initiative	Molteno, Penreach, Read, Saide	2,000 primary schools with preschools	Phase I/II: 2019-2023	4,880,000 (2018/2020)
				Phase III: 2023-2025	3,600,000 (2022)



Roger Federer greets a community member in Lesotho, May 2023

Financial Overview for 2023



Income Generation

Last year, the Foundation reduced its reserves as income was slightly lower than the increase in expenditure. However, as a statutory consumer foundation, a reduction in capital is permitted. The volume of donations increased compared to the previous year. For us, it is important to use funds from external investors immediately for our programmes, as can be seen from the low level of free capital. Without our long-standing individual and institutional donor partners, we would not be able to implement our School Readiness Initiative so comprehensively. In particular, we thank the Thomas and Doris Ammann Foundation, Fondation Botnar, Golf for Africa, the Nationale Postcode Loterij, the Roche Employee Action and Charity Trust, the Dr. Guido and Frederika Turin Stiftung, as well as Roger Federer's sponsors Credit Suisse AG, Jura, Lindt, Moët Chandon and Rolex. The income from Roger Federer's partnership with Switzerland Tourism was also donated in full to the Foundation.

Programme Expenditures

The Foundation's expenditure broke through the 10 million mark for the first time in 2023. We have reached the most intensive phase of our School Readiness Initiative, in which we are simultaneously working in a large number of learning institutions. This is reflected in the figures and will continue in the coming years. In addition, the second round of funding for the cost-intensive natural playgrounds in Switzerland has taken place, which has pushed up expenditure in the Swiss programme. Administrative costs have also risen. For the first time, we offset 100% of our carbon footprint with energy-efficient stoves for preschools in Malawi. Our team was also strengthened in the areas of digital communication and global advocacy, which had an impact on administrative expenses compared to the previous year due to higher salary, rental and IT costs. We also communicated slightly more than usual during our anniversary year. However, overheads remained at a modest 8.1%.

Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2023 (in CHF)

	2023	2022
Assets		
Liquid funds	1,387,987.36	3,056,601.94
Receivables	35,367.00	12,801.11
Other short-term receivables		
- Related parties	1,916.70	43,026.30
Prepayment	32,397.59	37,070.52
Total current assets	1,457,668.65	3,149,499.87
Financial investments	15,912,513.56	15,442,662.64
Equipment	4,912.64	6,417.28
Total non-current assets	15,917,426.20	15,449,079.92
Total assets	17,375,094.85	18,598,579.79

Liabilities and capital

Other short-term liabilities	17,842.80	13,354.33
Accrued expenses	34,532.90	33,270.00
Total short-term liabilities	52,375.70	46,624.33
Assigned funds		
- Engagement Switzerland	829,284.10	799,727.65
Total fund capital	829,284.10	799,727.65
Initial capital	50,000.00	50,000.00
Tied capital		
- School Readiness Initiative Lesotho	280,596.15	220,475.03
- School Readiness Initiative Malawi	1,815,233.30	3,059,709.12
- School Readiness Initiative Namibia	1,216,583.26	2,269,800.72
- School Readiness Initiative South Africa	3,073,096.25	3,985,915.30
- School Readiness Initiative Switzerland	3,620,021.90	4,918,903.42
- School Readiness Initiative Zambia	4,121,875.66	1,212,999.99
- School Readiness Initiative Zimbabwe	2,283,542.15	1,907,972.35
- Swiss Donation Fund	15,000.00	0.00
Total tied capital	16,425,948.67	17,575,775.93
Free capital generated	17,486.38	126,451.88
Total capital of the organization	16,493,435.05	17,752,227.81
Total liabilities and capital	17,375,094.85	18,598,579.79

PricewaterhouseCoopers AG, Zürich, has audited the financial statements 2023 of the Roger Federer Foundation in accordance with the Swiss GAAP FER 21 Standard for the attention of the Board of Trustees. We publish the key figures in our annual report.

Operating Statement January 1 to December 31, 2023 (in CHF)

	2023	2022
Income		
General free donations	2,156,951.08	2,201,396.23
Direct and indirect donations Roger Federer		
- Donations from Tenro AG incl. profit on merchandising	67,424.53	46,762.00
- Donations corporate sponsors	1,337,610.00	2,059,100.00
Dedicated donations		
- General dedicated donations	3,224,900.00	2,352,999.90
- Direct and indirect dedicated donations Roger Federer	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00
Total donation income	8,286,885.61	8,160,258.13

Expenses

Project expenses		
- School Readiness Initiative Lesotho	339,878.88	364,078.74
- School Readiness Initiative Malawi	1,244,475.82	2,069,318.26
- School Readiness Initiative Namibia	1,053,217.46	998,052.37
- School Readiness Initiative South Africa	912,819.05	1,416,649.85
- School Readiness Initiative Switzerland	1,298,881.52	580,622.35
- School Readiness Initiative Zambia	1,694,475.33	2,093,798.38
- School Readiness Initiative Zimbabwe	2,134,430.20	457,888.68
- Swiss Donations Fund	171,562.03	119,650.00
- Ukraine Response	0.00	520,000.00
- COVID Response	0.00	56,266.19
Best Practice/Advocacy/Monitoring/Coordination	362,562.95	399,690.44
Total project expenses	9,212,303.24	9,076,015.26
Total administration expenses	805,783.94	614,080.88
Total operating result	-1,731,201.57	-1,529,838.01
Financial result		
- Other financial expenses	-8,912.23	-17,631.97
- Interest income	77,153.26	57,798.68
- Dividends	23,644.95	5,175.00
- Investment gains	1,040,161.38	563,753.97
- Investment losses	-630,082.10	-2,786,632.71
Total financial result	501,965.26	-2,177,537.03
Result before allocation in fund capital	-1,229,236.31	-3,707,375.04
Allocation to/from fund capital	-29,556.45	-799,727.65
Result before allocation to organisation capital	-1,258,792.76	-4,507,102.69
Allocation to free capital	-7,884,896.53	-4,168,400.39
Withdrawal from free capital	7,993,862.03	14,694,649.87
Allocation to tied capital	-7,993,862.03	-14,694,649.87
Withdrawal from tied capital	9,143,689.29	8,675,503.08
Total result after allocation	0.00	0.00

My Story



Busisiwe Mhlongo,
accounting and economics teacher, South Africa

The first project that the Roger Federer Foundation sponsored was in partnership with the non-governmental organisation IMBEWU-Suisse, based in Port Elizabeth (now Gqeberha), South Africa. The Foundation initially supported individual school children in various schools in the city, paying their school fees and providing them with meals, school uniforms and sports coaching. In March 2023, we travelled to the city to learn what became of these children. One of those who benefited, today a friendly and bubbly teacher, shared her inspiring story.

I joined the programme when I was doing Grade 6. They also sponsored my brother. At the time, we were living in a shack as a family of four. I would not be where I am today if I had been for this programme. They brought me to Ndzondelelo High School, where I am working as a teacher today. They paid my school fees, school uniform and stationery. Some of the other learners used to tease us and laugh at us, but they didn't know how much we needed this help. Since my brother and I came from a very disadvantaged home, we received more than just school things – we also got us food to eat after school, for my whole family.



It did not end there, because after I passed my final high school year with flying colours, the people from the programme continued to support us. I become emotional when I have to talk about this, because they supported us in a way our family members could not. One day, during 2008, our house burnt down. The people from the pro-

gramme gave us blankets to keep warm, because it was during winter time. After the fire, we struggled for a long time to replace our identity documents, which I desperately needed to go and study. People from the organisation set up a radio interview for us where my brother and I shared our story. After seven days, we got our documents from Department of Home Affairs, and I was able to further my studies – that's why today you see me as a teacher. I first did my bachelor's in General Accounting and then I did my Postgraduate Certificate in Education. Now, I am on my journey to becoming a chartered accountant. What I love is that this sponsorship has changed a lot in my family. My brother and I are breadwinners at home, which is great because we support our mom who has never worked before. I so wish that we could go back to the shack that we used to live in and compare it to the house I am staying in now. All of this is thanks to the support from this programme!

Contact

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Donations

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Beneficiary:
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CH-4103 Bottmingen

CHF (Swiss francs) account:
0835-1203303-51 | BC: 4835
IBAN: CH32 0483 5120 3303 5100 0

USD (US Dollars) account:
0835-1203303-52 | Swift: CRESCHZ80A
IBAN: CH95 0483 5120 3303 5200 0



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