



FOUNDATION



ANNUAL REPORT
2020



Roger Federer visits a preschool in Namibia, February 2020.

Foreword

2020 was most probably an extraordinary year for all of us, characterised by complex emotions and new experiences. In February, I was able to play the unforgettable Match in Africa 6 in Cape Town, South Africa, and celebrate an exhilarating tennis festival with a record-breaking 51,954 fans for the benefit of the Foundation. After that, I underwent knee surgery, not knowing that my break from sports would be followed by a global lockdown. For the first time in over 20 years, I was no longer travelling, my life was no longer scheduled down to the minute, and the COVID-19 pandemic restricted my freedom of movement. I enjoyed spending this intensive downtime with my family. But I looked worriedly at the development of the global infection numbers, missed the contact with my parents and friends, and observed with deep concern that people drifted into poverty or lost friends and family to the disease.

To a certain extent the foundation was able to help for the need created by the crisis. We financed a meal programme for over 100,000 children and families in southern Africa during school closings and we initiated a family emergency fund in Switzerland. But I am aware that this is only a drop in the ocean. It will take a wave of solidarity to reverse the long-term negative consequences of the pandemic. COVID-19 is not only a global health crisis but also a crisis for our economy, our education systems, and our society. Our children will suffer from it for a long time. This is particularly dramatic when it comes to access to schooling. In many countries in the Global South, children have already been excluded from classes for almost a full academic year with noticeable and irreversible negative effects on their development.

My admiration goes especially to the helpers in this crisis and our local partners, who have worked tirelessly and with a lot of creativity to keep the programmes going, thus ensuring the children continue to receive some education and nutrition. I want to express my special thanks to them for this amazing effort.

Yours,

Roger Federer, President
March 2021

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.



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.



Respect

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



Impact oriented

Our main goal is a positive, tangible and systemic change in the life of children. This is what we are accountable for, and this is how we measure our success.



Partnership

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

Foundation Overview

Nolonwabo Batini, a 15-year-old girl from Ndzonelelo High School in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, made this self-confident discovery when Roger visited her school: "I am tomorrow's future." Her conviction became the vision and central theme of the Roger Federer Foundation. The organisation enhances a world where children living in poverty are able to take control of their future and actively shape it. There is sufficient evidence proving that education is a prerequisite for reducing poverty, improving preventive healthcare and creating a committed civil society. In particular, access to quality early education is crucial as it is the foundation of all learning. Thus, we aim to give children the best start on their educational path through life by establishing and further developing existing early educational services in a sustainable way. The children should be healthy and develop their skills accordingly, enabling them to enjoy a happy childhood. This means that children should be prepared to start school and that the schools should provide a childfriend-

ly environment, especially for the youngest. Children should be healthy and develop their skills accordingly, enabling them to enjoy a happy childhood. We believe in the potential of all people and do everything possible to empower them to improve their situation on their own. Therefore, we only work with carefully selected local organisations in long-term partnerships. We support the development of skills and ensure that the community takes responsibility in solving its problems. We do not deliver equipment to people but empower them to organise resources needed on their own. In order to be both cost-efficient and cost-effective, we limit our engagement to one region in Africa and are conducting programmes in six countries in southern Africa as well as Switzerland. Transparency, measurability and evaluation of the activities are fundamental. As a learning institution, the Foundation seeks the advice of experts and stakeholders and is a member of SwissFoundations, an association of Swiss grant foundations.



7 countries where we are active with our programmes



7,570 preschools and schools have increased their quality of education



27 partner organisations are implementing our programmes



25,150 trained teachers have improved their teaching capabilities



1,750,000 children have benefited from our interventions



59 million Swiss francs have been invested since our inception

Milestones 2020

When the world went into lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, philanthropy was in demand like rarely before. The time between March and June, when the schools had to close in the countries of our programmes, was characterised by intensive conversations with our partners and hectic work to keep on going our funding projects. This was achieved thanks to the great commitment and admirable flexibility of everyone involved. Our rapid humanitarian response to provide vulnerable children with nutritious meals, while schools were locked, allowed our partners to be mobile and remain in contact and exchange with teachers and school directors. This also resulted in spontaneous learning initiatives for the children at home.

Of course, there will be delays in the implementation of our programmes. But, once more, the extraordinary ability of the people of Africa to overcome challenges of all kinds was evident. I am confident that we will ultimately achieve the goals we have set on an output level. This is unfortunately not the case with regard to the outcome or impact level. Our progress towards these goals this year is at risk. Preschools and schools were only reluctantly reopened in June and the following months. To our chagrin, the older students who were about to take their exams were given precedence. The younger ones were not allowed to go back to preschool until many months later. In Zimbabwe and Lesotho, the youngest have missed a full academic year. Also, many parents are not sending their children to class for fear of infection, as the crowded conditions do not allow for social distance. This will have dramatic consequences on the child's early development. A whole cohort of children will not be achieving school readiness, which will result in a major setback for educational progress in these countries.

Together with our local partners, the Foundation will endeavour to provide at least a minimal cushion for these negative consequences. We will help school heads protect schools from illness and support teachers in their difficult task of making up for pupils' learning deficits. Together with our partners, we will work hard to convince parents to send their children back to school. It will take tremendous additional efforts in the years to come to ensure that the children affected by this pandemic will have the same future opportunities as the previous generation. We have no time for inaction.

Janine Handel, CEO
March 2021



Addressing the community in Zambia on a visit together with Roger Federer.

Status

School Readiness Strategy

The Roger Federer Foundation engages in a systemic and long-term manner. Therefore, the board of the Roger Federer Foundation adopted a geographical-ly and content-focused funding strategy for 2019-2025 that the Foundation implements consistently and measurably. We are guided by the 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 one and a half 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 survive 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 1,500 to 3,000 institutions per country.



9,774 educators

and teachers are able to support young learners in an age-appropriate manner



3,512 institutions

have participated in the programme and offer an age-appropriate learning environment for young learners



87% of preschools

and feeder schools have established a mentoring system among teachers to ensure quality and transition



64 districts

give practical importance to school readiness as a fundamental element of the education system



3,444 playgrounds

have been built jointly by the village communities and parents using local materials



80% of institutions

ensure regularly nutritious and healthy meals for young learners



75% preprimary children

have developed in accordance with their age in terms of health, learning and psychosocial well-being



77,535 children

have participated in structured learning activities for at least one year before starting primary school



90% of the educators

and teachers regularly and explicitly discuss the children's learning and development with the parents

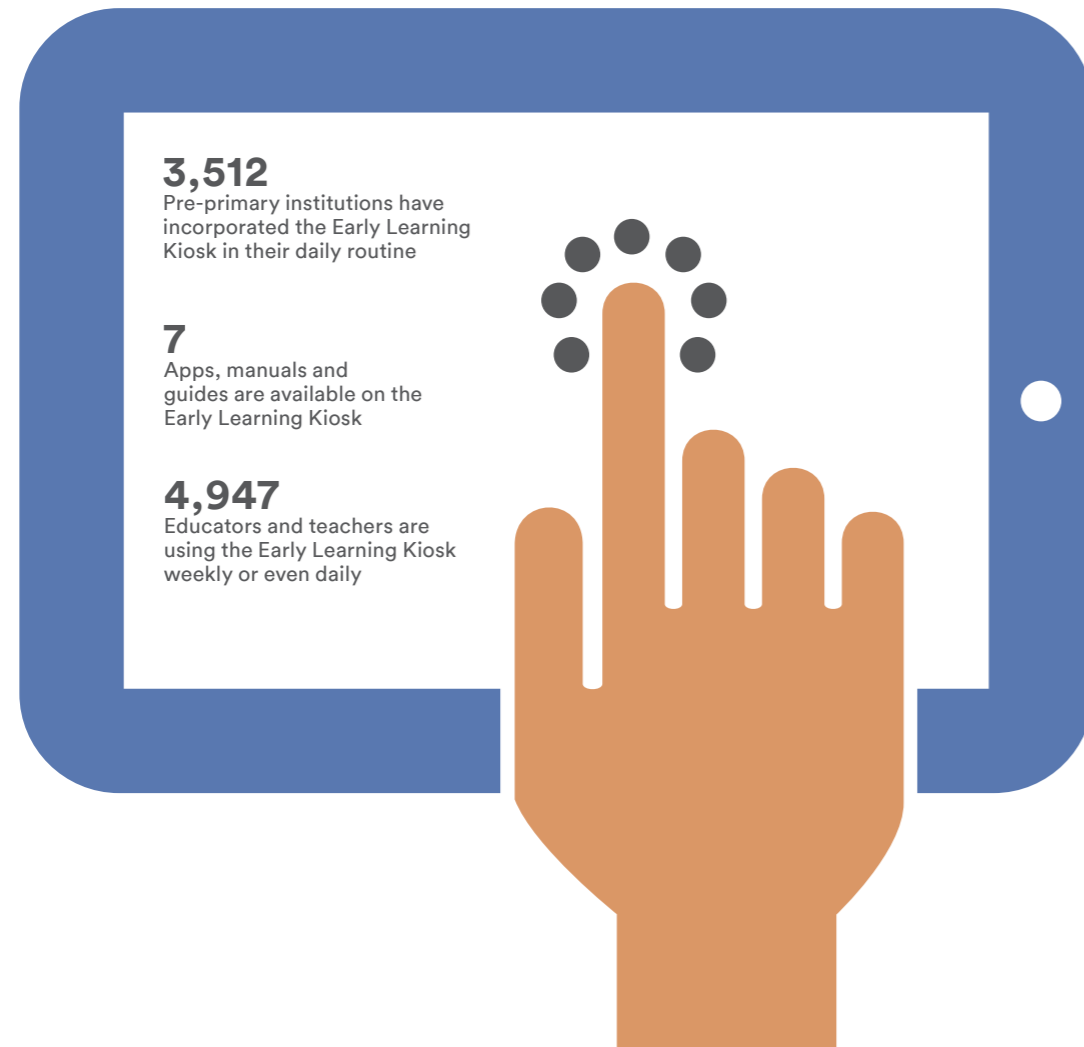


2,651 users

are making use of the «ChildSteps» app to continuously assess the children's development

Early Learning Kiosk

The teacher's competence is the key point of leverage to ensure that the children receive a quality education. However, in many countries, the educators at the pre-school level are unqualified. Continuing professional development is expensive and time-consuming. That is why the programmes of the Roger Federer Foundation rely on self-guided and digital adult education in learning groups, supported by the locally developed Early Education Kiosk.



The Early Learning Kiosk inspires teachers in the entire region of southern Africa

More qualified staff is needed

Pre-primary education has only recently become available in many southern African countries. In many places, training courses are still being developed and the number of sufficiently qualified teachers cannot keep up with the rapid growth in preschool classes. Therefore, volunteers or insufficiently trained staff are deployed in almost every school and kindergarten. Although they can be committed and loving to the children, they lack pedagogical skills that will promote the children's development in an age-appropriate manner and impart knowledge in a playful way. Most educators are unable to access qualifications and adult education. On the one hand, they lack the necessary pre-qualifications, as the courses are offered at an academic level, and, on the other hand, training to become a teacher is expensive and takes four years. Under these conditions, the shortage of skilled educators will continue for a long time.

Early Education Kiosk creates 24/7 access to knowledge

Based on these findings, a comprehensive package for practising early education educators was required, which provides them with selective training and supports them in all their daily work in class. In order to counteract the low level of literacy among volunteering educators, pictures, audio sequences and videos were beneficial. Choosing a tablet for knowledge transfer was therefore an obvious choice, provided that it works offline and can be equipped with solar panels so that it will work even in rural regions. The tablet also contains an expandable collection of easy-to-use apps, manuals, documents and forms. In use, it has been shown that handling this technology causes little or no problems for new users. Due to its offline character, the tablet is only used professionally and not for private purposes.

Once-off training programmes have only a limited effect

For many years, the Roger Federer Foundation has trained hundreds of teachers in traditional face-to-face trainings. Evaluations showed that this approach did not always lead to the desired increases in quality. This could be because the previous training of the lay teaching staff was varied and many could not absorb the knowledge imparted. In addition, a theoretical course does not automatically lead to higher competences. To achieve this, continuous training and coaching of the teachers would be required. Many trainees also used their newly acquired qualifications to change jobs, so that the institutions were again left with unqualified staff. Last but not least, providing further training and support to teachers in rural regions is expensive, which slows down the scaling of the programmes.



← The Early Learning Kiosk is a tablet with camera and offline running content

«The ‘ChildSteps’ app is easy to use because of activity guides and prompts. No more mistaken papers and no need to calculate averages manually».

Grade 0 teacher of Havana Primary School, Namibia

Practical learning content well received

The learning content of the Early Education Kiosk is mostly geared towards the target group of unqualified educators. It contains a colourful array of theoretical and practical tools and aids for empowering the teachers and their skills, supports them in improving the learning environment and working with parents and school committees. All of the content has been developed and tested in southern Africa by experts and our partners over the past ten years. Qualified teachers also benefit from the Early Learning Kiosk and some of the documents, but especially from the app for continuous monitoring of child development. Hereafter, we present a selection of the learning content included on the tablet.

The “KnowHow” app imparts pedagogical skills

Early childhood development has received adequate research attention. The central finding is that young children learn differently from older children, as their brains must first develop accordingly. The “KnowHow” app conveys age-appropriate teaching methods over ten modules and helps teachers understand the needs and potential of their young learners. The course explains the development of early childhood learning, sensitises teachers to the stumbling milestone in the transition from pre-primary level to primary school, and focuses on learning through play. The modules contain exercises and practical examples. After each module, users can test their individual knowledge. The app was developed based on a seven-week course from Namibia and then adapted for each country where it has been implemented.

The “ChildSteps” app supports the monitoring of children

Children are only ready for school and able to develop their potential if their development has been age-appropriate. The greater the number of pupils in a class, the more difficult or even impossible the task of the caregiver to understand each child and stimulate them individually. Tools would help keeping track of a child’s learning barriers and progress but are either not available or user-friendly. The “ChildSteps” app was developed by educators in southern Africa. An extensive catalogue of activities enables teachers to systematically test a child’s skills required by the curriculum and observe their behaviour. The app has practical tips ready for preschool children who are lagging behind in their development. The results of the activities they do are automatically summarised in a report that meets the required form of the local education system.

The “ToolBox” helps in almost all situations

The Early Education Kiosk includes a “ToolBox” with practical apps and manuals for the teachers and educators in their daily job. For example, a handbook explains how toys and learning materials can be made with locally available materials. All kindergartens and schools participating in the programme also use the “NaturalPlayground” app, which helps them build a playground themselves in a participatory process with material provided by the community. Also offered in the kiosk is training in working with parents. The “ToolBox” contains a guide on conducting four thematic workshops with parents, empowering them to better support their children’s education. A collection of local stories, the current curriculum and much more is also available.

New technologies allow individual learning

Africa has a long tradition of distance education at the university level. The vast majority of qualified primary school teachers in South Africa, for example, have never physically attended a teacher training college. We took advantage of this experience to develop our early education kiosk. Each teacher registers individually on a tablet. The kiosk users decide when and for how long to devote themselves to specific content. The individual modules can be repeated as often as required. With the tablet’s

→
The teacher uses the app every day in class



Interview with Jennifer Van Wyk, Programme Manager Education Department at Lifeline/Childline

Your organisation is using technology in their programmes for the first time in an environment where teachers are mostly digitally illiterate. Would you recommend the approach?

In the beginning, moving toward a digitalised approach of teaching was overwhelming because of the technology involved. First of all, we had to immerse ourselves in the digital logic. However, it was exciting to be entrusted to lead this innovative and trend setting mode of learning. As much as the teachers were apprehensive at first showing tremendous respect for the technology, with time, they became familiar and got comfortable with the Early Learning Kiosk. Today, they have developed a sound appreciation for what the kiosk can provide and are highly motivated to use it. We also received a lot of positive feedback from the authorities. They are proud that their teachers are now digitised.

What are the key factors for success?

I would clearly name two factors: persistence and consistency! We never gave up on the educators or ourselves, embraced the challenge and navigated our way to full ownership of the Early Learning Kiosk. We made it to our own tool with all the advantages and disadvantages it brings. In terms of consistency, it was important to give the same message to all stakeholders and ourselves regarding what the Kiosk is aiming for and manage expectations. Not the technology as such is the goal, but an increased school readiness of the children. We had to believe our product will achieve its purpose and fortunately we could finally prove the evidence.

What kind of obstacles did you face so far?

Initiations are always tough. We had to be very convincing and overcome distrust. On the other hand, once they were used to it, everyone used the Early Learning Kiosk apps in a much more frequent manner than we actually had planned. Everyone wanted to have a tablet, especially teachers from both grade 0 and 1. A particular challenge is updating the tablets in places with no or weak network.



Age-appropriate learning takes place at eye level and in motion

camera, they can record themselves teaching and then review their work critically, either on their own or with colleagues. The teachers' learning is checked with tests.

Study groups are a key element of success

The motivation and quality of self-guided learning for one person on their own is demonstrably limited. Therefore, the Early Education Kiosk and especially the "KnowHow" App are used in organised regular learning groups and in established peer-to-peer learning communities. The app tells the teachers which groups they should meet with and which module they should work on. Here are two examples: On the subject of "transition", the pre-school teach-

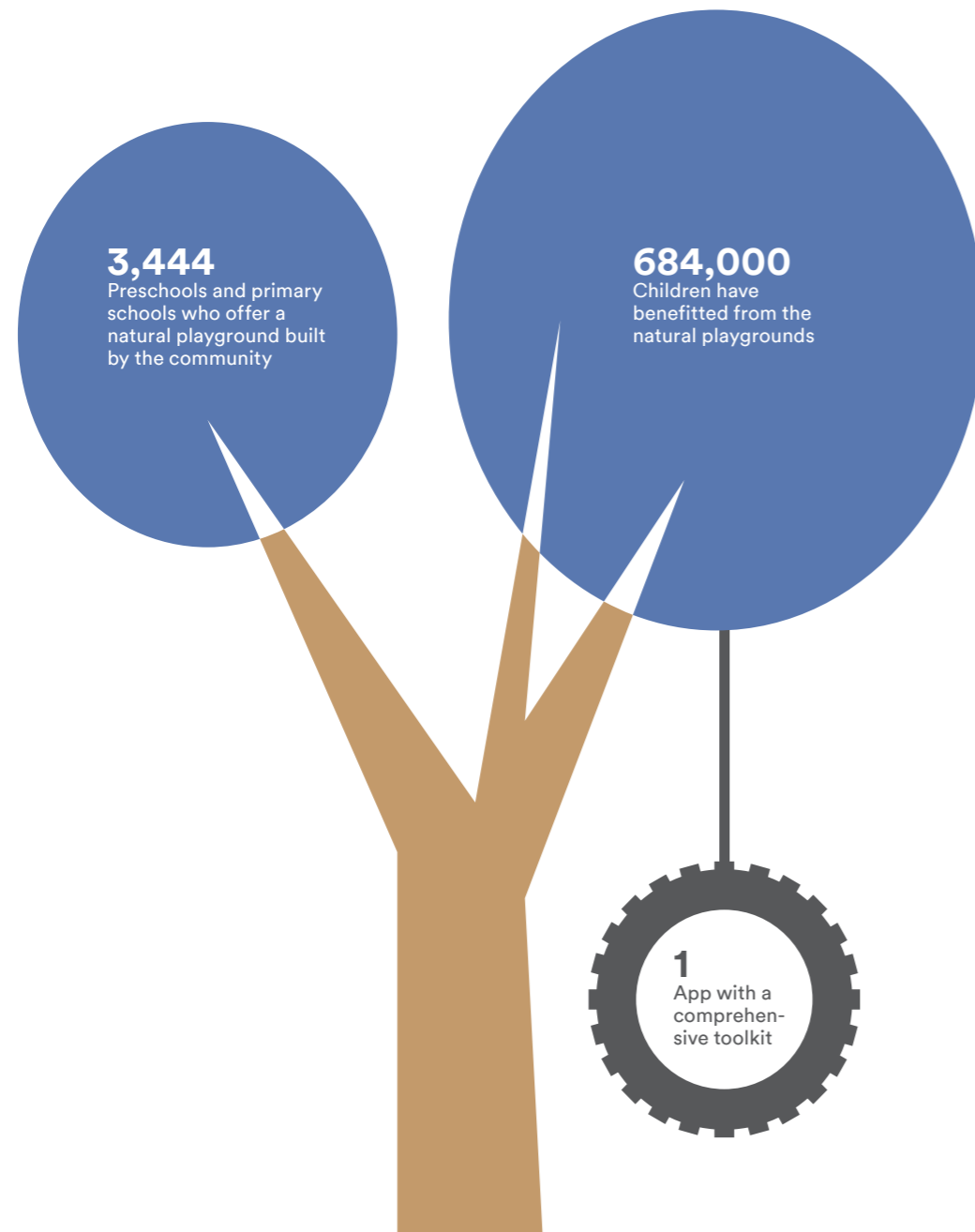
ers work together with the teachers of the first grade, who will receive the children from kindergarten. When it comes to the subject of "learning environment", pre-school educators from different kindergartens exchange ideas and establish mutual mentoring at the same level.

The Early Education Kiosk is implemented successfully

The Roger Federer Foundation has implemented its School Readiness Strategy in six countries in southern Africa. The Early Education Kiosk is the central component to increasing teachers' competence and improving the quality of early childhood education over the long term. By the end of 2020, the kiosk had been introduced

in 3512 schools and kindergartens and was widely used. A survey in South Africa and Namibia has shown that 94% of pre-primary teachers and educators use the tablets at least twice a week. Over 50% even use the Early Education Kiosk every day. The acceptance of the teaching content is above average. Over 94% of the registered teachers completed three quarters of the "KnowHow" app. 95% of the teachers stated that they highly appreciated completing the course in learning groups. As far as the "ChildSteps" app is concerned, 95% of the teachers confirmed the usefulness or even great usefulness of the app for the continuous monitoring of child development. 90% of pre-primary teachers use the app weekly or more in class. In South Africa, 69% of teachers stated that they use the "ChildSteps" app even on a daily basis.

Natural Playgrounds



Natural playgrounds have already been implemented thousands of times in southern Africa

Children need a child-friendly and stimulating learning environment for healthy development. But financial resources are limited, especially in Africa. That is why all of the Foundation’s partner preschools and schools build natural playgrounds in a participatory process with parents and the community with locally available material. Playgrounds are an integral stimulation of children’s playful learning.

Children have the right to play

Play is so important to a child’s development that it has been classified as a right of every child by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Play in early childhood has a strong and lasting impact on the health, well-being and long-term development of young people. Studies show that early play experiences affect a child’s physical growth, learning ability, chances of graduation, future employability, and even future income. Play promotes a positive attitude towards discovery and learning. Play forms the brain pathways necessary for mental development and growth.

Children learn through play

When children play, they develop skills that will last for the rest of their lives. They learn to deal with frustration, practice self-discipline, motivation and cooperation. Play strengthens their expressiveness and promotes their social and emotional skills. Furthermore, children learn best in motion, especially younger children. Exercising is essential for the development of motor skills. But most interior spaces and classrooms hardly allow active learning, especially in Africa. Therefore, the use of the outdoor areas as play, meeting and movement areas are of central importance for children to grow up healthily. The reality on the ground shows that most of the outside spaces of schools and preschools do not offer a stimulating age appropriate environment due to the lack of resources and sensitisation.

Natural playgrounds are broadly interpreted in Africa

In Switzerland, natural playgrounds are only equipped with natural elements that bring children closer to nature and stimulate interest and creativity. In addition, unsealed surfaces, rainwater management and the lack of

heat-storing materials favour local climatic conditions. In the African context, we encourage the population to use recycled and locally available building materials for the construction of the playgrounds such as tires or PET bottles. There are no limits to the imagination and the spirit of innovation concerning play elements. The only requirement for the playground builder is that different play types are available supporting the children holistically and stimulating multiple skills.

Natural playgrounds create many different types of play

The ideal natural playground covers many types of play. Any playing that involves movement helps strengthen the body and develop gross motor skills, such as climbing, balancing, crawling, or running. Small branches, bushes, nuts and other loose parts where the hands and fingers are used, promote hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills. A corner for building with sand, stones and wooden blocks can be set up anywhere. Ideally, an insect farm or a bed of plants will enrich the playground. So-called pure nature play allows children to observe what is going on in nature. Play elements should also promote children’s sensory abilities: seeing colours, smelling herbs, touching different surfaces and materials or hearing noises by shaking collected parts. Last but not least, play elements such as leaf huts or small tables and chairs made from tree trunks invite children to role-play stories, which improves their reading and writing skills.

Natural playgrounds have many advantages

On natural playgrounds, children can develop freely, independently and undisturbed, gain their own experiences and exchange ideas with playmates. In contrast to classic playgrounds, they allow greater creativity in

how the elements are used. A larger number of children can also use natural play elements simultaneously compared to classic features such as swings or a slide. The construction of a natural playground may be time-consuming, but it can be done with relatively little technical expertise and teamwork. This means that the playground can be expanded or converted at any time. The participatory process leads to the maintenance and longevity of the play area and can promote the overall exchange between teachers and parents. The most crucial argument in the African context is that the building materials are locally available or donated by the community and therefore free of charge.

The “NaturalPlayground app” supports the construction process

In cooperation with the South African partner Penreach and local specialists, a toolkit was developed which is available to all users as an app as part of the Early Education Kiosk, described in the other chapter in this annual report. The toolkit guides the leader in a school or a kindergarten step-by-step through the participatory process of building a natural playground and helps make the idea and implementation understandable for those involved. In addition to theoretical knowledge about playing and safety, the app contains practical tips, checklists and forms to download. Videos shot in South Africa explain the key elements and show inspiring examples. The six stages of the process discover-define-dream-plan-build-check are also given to project managers as printed booklets. A poster summarises the process.

«I can easily say that our playground is now the favourite space for our Grade R learners and I am sure that our learners are now better equipped in terms of motor and other skills when they start Grade 1»

Principal, Ekucathuzeni Primary School, Mpumalanga, South Africa

Playgrounds increase school enrolment rate

Enrolment rates are particularly low in southern Africa at the non-compulsory pre-school level. Many parents did not attend kindergarten themselves and lack the experience and knowledge of the beneficial effects and importance of early education on their children’s later school careers. For this reason, many do not take advantage of pre-school offerings or consider them to be dispensable. In addition, it is difficult for parents to judge from the outside whether the quality of a preschool is worth the money and effort and whether a teacher is successful. On the contrary, the expectations of parents are often in conflict with the pedagogically valuable teaching methods such as learning through play. A representative playground at the kindergarten, on the other hand, wins the attention of the community. It is a tangible expression of educational quality and can convince some sceptical parents that the child will have an enriching time in this kindergarten or preschool.

Participation is key to sustainability

Many playgrounds in Africa are built by external donors and do not align with the children’s needs or the environment, eventually abandoned to rust away. Nobody feels obliged to maintain such playgrounds, thus becoming a safety problem for the children. In a natural playground, the communal process and participation at all decision-making levels is extremely important. On the one hand, this will ensure that the playground is maintained over the long term. On the other hand, everyone involved in the construction process learns a lot about the benefits of the playground and of play itself. Last but not least, the playground can be complemented with additional element at any time.

Parental participation increases quality of education

An African proverb says: “It takes a village to raise a child.” In reality, in African context, many parents withdraw and leave education to the teachers as soon as the children start school. There is an invisible wall, the school area is not entered, and the teachers work is never questioned. This reluctance is often due to the parents’ own low level of education. At all levels of education, it is essential that parents be involved in their children’s ed-



→ Learning through play prepares young children best for school



With mentoring, playgrounds are built by the community members themselves from locally available materials.

ucation, actively participate and support their children as best they can. By getting parents to help construct the playground on the school grounds, the walls can begin to break down. Working together enables informal contacts and gives parents the opportunity to make a visible and valuable contribution to the quality of their children's education. Parents evolve from passive observers to active stakeholders and can thus better raise their interests in other matters.

Natural playgrounds are implemented many times

What started as a pilot in South Africa has been successfully scaled up as a concept in Malawi, Namibia, Zambia

and Zimbabwe. To date, natural playgrounds have been created by the community or parents in over 3444 schools and preschools as a component of the Roger Federer Foundation's School Readiness Initiatives. Some examples are particularly ambitious: at the primary school in Limpopo, South Africa, community members, under the direction of the village elders, built a playground of over 500 m² that meets every play requirement. In 2020, the Roger Federer Foundation also launched a project in Switzerland where, in a first stage, 20 schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged children will be given a natural playground. The measure is being evaluated by a university. We hope that the study will provide facts about the quality and extent of use compared to classic children's playgrounds.

Interview with Andile Ncontsa, Executive Director of Penreach

Your organisation was piloting natural playgrounds in South Africa. What were the motivating factors for this project?

In our Early Childhood Development programme we capacitate kindergarten to implement quality teaching and early learning. But 90% of them have no play equipment for children due to lack of funding. Or they have equipment that is made of steel and therefore retained heat and could burn the children when hot. As a result, the playgrounds are largely used for decoration purposes. This is where the motivation came from, to deal with the affordability problem as well as ensuring parental involvement in the design, construction and maintenance of the natural playground. With the support of the Roger Federer Foundation, we visited Switzerland to study how natural playgrounds are implemented and piloted a number of model natural playgrounds in kindergartens which led to the development of a Natural Playground Toolkit.

You scaled the concept now also at schools, what would you say are the keys for success?

The government in South Africa decided to incorporate two years of early learning into the formal schooling environment. But the reality is that schools do not have suitable age appropriate playground equipment. So we adapted the concept to the new circumstances. As key success factors we concluded that to be sustainable, the concept requires ownership and participation of school leadership, the parents and the community. It requires a participatory process with time for proper introduction, explanation, mobilisation and planning. Because the whole community is involved, they maintain and sustain the project.

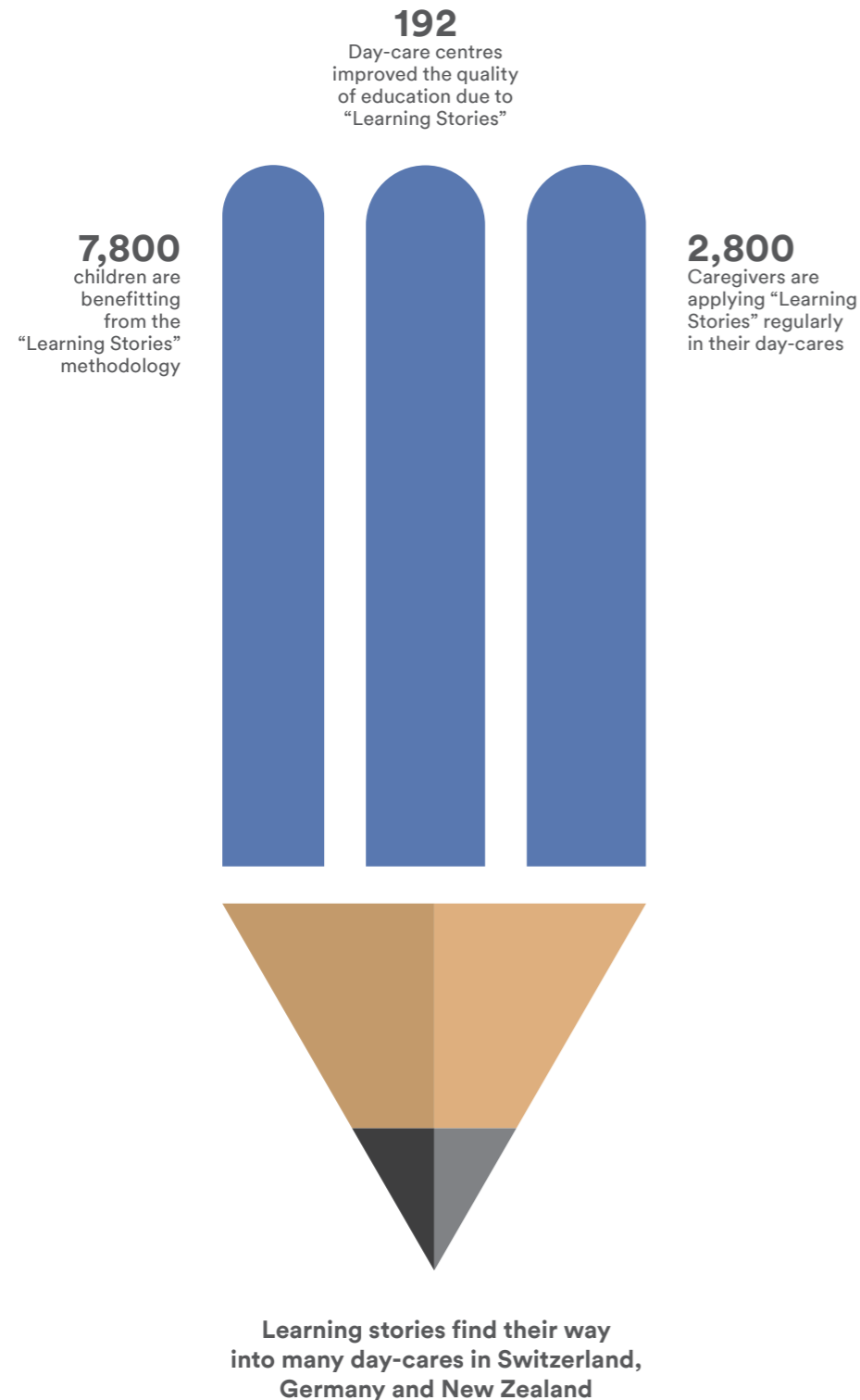
What kind of challenges and obstacles did you face so far?

Initially, we thought that communities and school leadership would look down at natural playgrounds believing they are unsafe and unsuitable for their children. But we never encountered this perceived problem. The other challenge is that some of the schools have limited space to construct a playground.



← This poster serves as an orientation aid in the construction process

Learning Stories



In Switzerland, the Roger Federer Foundation supports the Marie Meierhofer Institut's advanced training programme called "Learning Stories" focusing on school readiness. The pedagogical approach works with every child at their individual level and thus provides personal support. This is particularly beneficial to children coming from socio-economically disadvantaged families.

Quality early intervention is under pressure

Support for early childhood development from outside the family is only effective if certain conditions are met. The key here is the high quality of the support on offer. In Switzerland, however, external childcare faces major challenges. The working conditions of the caregivers are demanding. The staff is exposed to a great deal of stress with low wages, a lack of recognition and few development opportunities. There is high staff fluctuation, which affects continuity. The difficult financial situation of many day-care centres leads to fewer specialised employees and more interns. Further training is given little priority for reasons of time and money. These factors are causing the quality to dwindle in some day-care facilities.

"Learning Stories" help professionals

It is all the more important to provide caregivers with simple but effective tools. "Learning Stories" is a method to improve quality in day-care centres in a quite simple but impactful manner. The Roger Federer Foundation has financially supported the scaling of this pedagogical approach in Switzerland for the past four years. "Learning Stories" is a resource-oriented process for the systematic observation, recording and support of children's abilities and learning progress. It supports employees in day-cares and preschools in perceiving what a child is interested in, what questions they are investigating, what they are trying out, what they want to achieve, and how they solve a task or problem. The focus is less on results but rather on the children's potential, resources and motivation, and the question of what makes them strong to promote their further learning processes.

Each child is different

The method aims to perceive and support every child to develop a self-image as a competent learner. The pedagogical specialists observe the children in their everyday life, note and analyse their perceptions according to their learning dispositions and then exchange ideas with the caregiver team. Together they consider where each child might need to make progress in their learning. For the child, the observed situation and the knowledge gained from it about their abilities and interests are documented in a portfolio of learning stories and photos in the form of a letter in an appreciative and strength-oriented manner. When the learning story is read aloud, dialogues arise between the professional and the child.

"Learning Stories" improve quality of care

In many day-care centres, the observation culture and collegial exchange are now more intense after introducing the "Learning Stories" approach. Activities are increasingly being geared towards the individual interests and needs of the children. In an evaluation, 83% of the professionals stated that their pedagogical skills had improved. Over 90% feel better able to perceive the strengths and interests of the children and to promote their learning processes through the learning stories. This is confirmed by the opinion of 95% of the day-care managers, who experience their employees being more competent in their support of children's learning processes. In addition, from the perspective of over 88% of the professionals there, the exchange with the children has largely or even completely improved. Another central finding of the study is that children with family burdens in particular benefit from the more intensive care which can offset behaviour problems due to family risks.

Interview with Dr Heidi Simoni, Director of the Marie Meierhofer Institut

You brought the “Learning Stories” method to Switzerland. What fascinated you about this method from New Zealand?

I am enthusiastic about the method because it helps us get one big step closer to the goal of equal opportunities and social participation for every child. It works with every child at their individual level and thus allows custom support. In addition, the “Learning Stories” are not “only” a treasure trove for the children, but also for the teams and families. The experiences in New Zealand clearly show how the method promotes an inclusive attitude and appropriate practice in dealing with social and cultural diversity. Last but not least, the method is easy to implement for professionals as well as for interns.

It was initially introduced in day-care centres with a high proportion of socio-economically disadvantaged children. Why do these children especially benefit from it?

The method has a doubly positive effect on these children. First, they get a lot of attention. They find out how learning works, that it's fun to discover something new and that they can stick to it as they face obstacles. Second, a learning story is a great way to talk to parents about their children and their development. Parents who speak foreign languages or parents with a low level of education benefit from the fact that everyone can contribute their observations and ideas. When parents are brought on board, disadvantaged children benefit even more.

Your organisation is currently developing a blended learning package. Where do you see the opportunities and risks?

The new blended training package opens up opportunities to disseminate the method to a much wider group and at lower cost. In the future, some training will be available online and can be done anywhere at any time. This is important for new employees or low budget day-cares. On the other hand, quality assurance also requires sufficient direct exchange. I see the mix of online and in-person as critical.



“Learning Stories” strengthen children

As the evaluation has shown, the method has a positive effect on the children's learning and self-concept as a learning person, this is kind of repeating the same thing in this sentence. Children actively pursue their own learning successes and strengths and develop joy in learning. Children feel more comfortable and are noticed by the teachers for their ideas, plans and activities. This has a significant influence on their cognitive abilities and on their socio-emotional development. Resilience to stress can be built up, which reduces the risk of negative effects and strengthens the children's mental health. Improving resilience, which means the ability to adapt to challenges and changes, is an important prerequisite for school readiness.

Children experience show self-confidence

Learning stories that are attractively designed and written by the caregivers for children are suitable for strengthening their self-confidence. The children love to look at the portfolio and talk about their stories with the caregiver. All of the children interviewed for the evaluation knew their portfolio very well and looked at it with great enthusiasm during the discussions. This could be observed through frequent exclamations from the children like “That's me!”, smiling faces and focused attention to their own stories. It is remarkable that the children, based on their level of development, immersed themselves in their stories for such a long time. The children were in active dialogue with the teachers about what they saw and what they had experienced. Young children who otherwise were unable to express themselves verbally took part in the meetings with great commitment. Using gestures and facial expressions, they contributed non-verbally: with gleaming eyes, they pointed with their fingers at pictures and experiences and thus showed a new level of self-confidence.

“Learning Stories” strengthen parents

As part of the process, the professionals' observations and learning stories are shared with the parents in one-on-one discussions. In the evaluation of the project, 82% of the parents questioned reported increased interaction with the day-care centre. This is noticeable because the professionals have more to report about the children's experiences and everyday activities when parents drop them off and collect them. From the point of view of all parents, especially foreign speakers, the documentation

←
The children are observed
completing a task in order
to understand their learning
history

helps them better imagine the situations the children are experiencing. Since the introduction of the method, 94% of the parents surveyed feel better informed about the children's learning progress, activities and interests. At the same time, from the parents' point of view, this has led to a greater understanding and appreciation of the educational work of the day-care professionals.

Satisfaction and motivation of the staff increase

The majority of employees (83%) stated that satisfaction with their educational work in the day-care centres has greatly or completely improved since the introduction of the "Learning Stories" methodology and that they en-

joy the work. 74% of the surveyed day-care managers experience their team as more motivated than before the introduction of the approach. With regard to teamwork, 77% of the employees in the children's groups and 95% of management confirm that it has significantly improved. The team has seen positive change. They are exchanging more ideas, has closer cohesion and a greater mutual appreciation.

"Learning Stories" is a success

The method was developed by Margaret Carr twenty years ago in New Zealand and adapted and further developed for German-speaking Europe in 2007 by Deutsches Jugendinstitut e.V. The Marie Meierhofer Institut, which

specialises in early childhood, brought the method to Switzerland in 2009 and initially tested the method in 24 day-care centres in German-speaking Switzerland as part of its practical research project "Education and Resilience Promotion in Early Childhood". Since then, 192 early childhood facilities in German-speaking Switzerland have introduced the method, including 42 day-care centres with a high proportion of disadvantaged children funded by the Roger Federer Foundation.

Future of professional development is also digital

The previous training package consisted of prepared face-to-face teaching units and practical support on site at the

day-care centres. In addition, orientation courses for new employees are offered across the institute. Even before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and based on the experience of self-guided digital learning approach of the Roger Federer Foundation in Africa, consideration was given to how the training package could be optimised. Increasing the quality by increasing the quality of its implementation and making it more sustainable, improving added value, and thus save future training costs for day-care centres is the goal. The solution was to develop a "blended learning concept", this is to be understood as a hybrid of online and in-person training. The current project phase's long-term goal is to disseminate the pedagogical method to a significantly larger group in and outside of Switzerland while ensuring its continued quality.



«The pictures and videos you take every day give you a great basis to talk to parents who may not speak the language very well.»

Dakota Bosshard, caregiver at kidin.ch

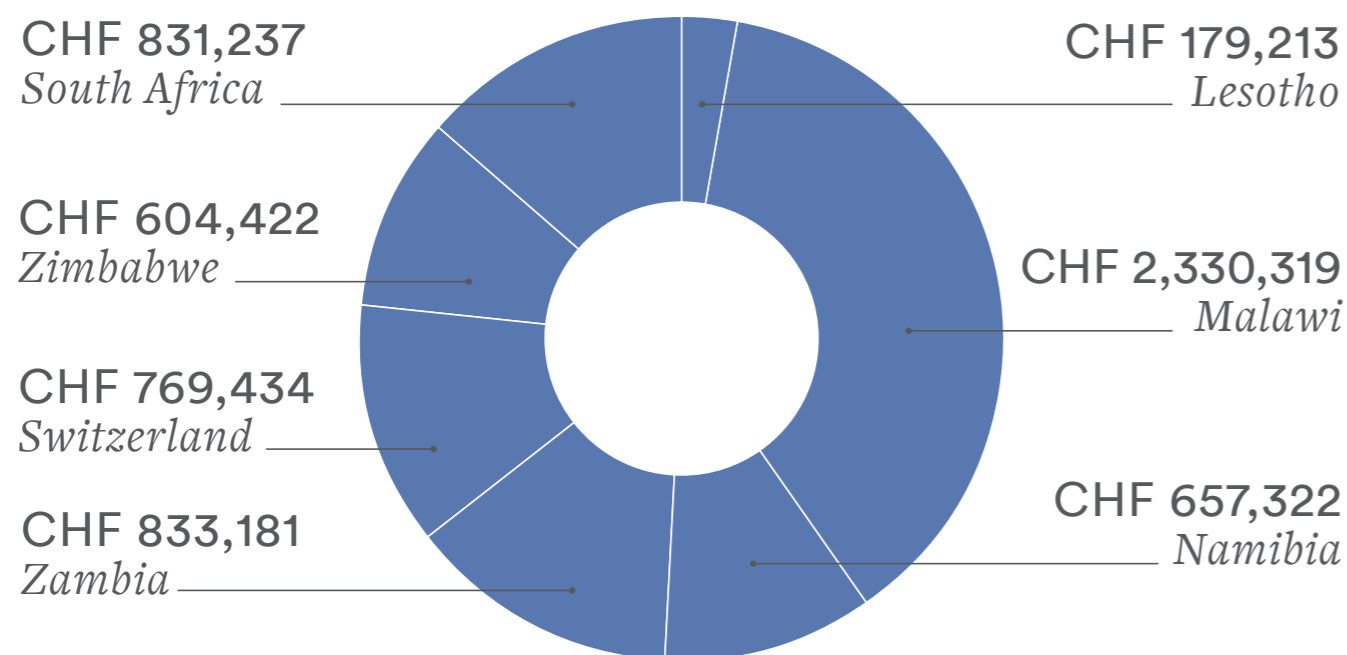
←
The portfolio summarizes all learning stories in a child-friendly way



Current Grants and Partners 2020

Country	Programme	Partner	Outreach	Grant duration	Grant (CHF)
Lesotho	National School Readiness Initiative	Network for Early Childhood Development of Lesotho, University of Lesotho, College for Education and Training	100 preschools	Phase I: 2020-2022	550,000 (2020)
Malawi	National School Readiness Initiative	Action Aid Malawi, AECDM, ECD Coalition, Livingstonia Synod	900 ECD centres and 360 primary schools	Phase I: 2020-2022	2,305,000 (2020)
Malawi	Comprehensive Early Childhood Development Initiative	Action Aid Malawi	480 ECD centres	Fourth and final phase: 2018-2021	3,500,000 (2018)
Namibia	National School Readiness Initiative	Church Alliance for Orphans, Lifeline/Childline, Saide, Women Action for Development	375 ECD centres and schools with pre-primary classes	Phase II: 2019-2020 Phase III: inception phase 6 months	965,000 (2019) 330,000 (2020)
South Africa	National School Readiness Initiative	Molteno, Penreach, Read, Saide	1048 primary schools with Grade R	Phase II: 2020-2023	3,560,000 (2020)
Switzerland	School Readiness Project Primokiz	Radix	80 municipalities	2016-2020	360,000 (2016)
Switzerland	School Readiness Project - Learning stories	Marie Meierhofer Institut	Blended Learning Package	Phase II: 2020-2022	240,000 (2020)
Switzerland	School Readiness Project - Self-regulation in schools and families	FHNW	60 primary schools	2018-2022	500,000 (2018)
Switzerland	School Readiness Project - Pingpong	a:primo	26 municipalities	2019-2023	306,000 (2019)
Switzerland	School Readiness Project - Natural playgrounds	Naturama, Radix, ZHAW	20 natural playgrounds on primary school compounds	2020-2022	1,350,000 (2020)
Zambia	National School Readiness Initiative	ROCS, Saide, ZOCS	400 community schools with ECD classes	Phase I: 2019-2021 Phase II: inception phase (6 months)	2,250,000 (2019) 405,000 (2020)
Zimbabwe	National School Readiness Initiative	Camfed, Child Protection Society, Municipal Development Partnership, Zinecda	310 primary schools with ECD classes	Start-up phase: 2019-2021	2,150,000 (2019)

Financial Overview for 2020



Income Generation

In this challenging year, the Foundation was privileged to be able to count on its loyal donors. The Board of Trustees is particularly grateful for the longstanding donation partnerships with foundations such as the Fondation Botnar, the Postcode Lottery, the Roche Employees Action and Charity Trust, the Starbucks Foundation and the Wyss Foundation. In addition, Roger Federer's sponsors such as Credit Suisse, Jura, Lindt, Moët&Chandon or Rolex are also generous and sustainable donors of the Foundation and support the philanthropic commitment of their ambassador. Fortunately, the Match in Africa took place in Cape Town in February just a few weeks before the pandemic broke out. The overwhelming solidarity of the audience and fans in South Africa and globally raised a record 3.5 million Swiss francs.

Programme Expenditures

Programme costs in 2020 were only slightly lower than budgeted at the beginning of the year. This although implementation of various activities was delayed because of the lockdowns. In the long term, this should lead to a slightly higher overall budget for the school readiness strategy. The expenditures were offset in some cases by large currency devaluations against the Swiss franc. In addition, the Foundation made almost 3 million CHF more commitments than in the previous year. The Foundation's financial situation also made it possible to react quickly to the dramatic consequences of the pandemic. As early as March, the Board of Trustees pledged an extraordinary 1 million US Dollar for immediate humanitarian intervention. The Foundation's administrative costs remain low at 6.7%.



Summary of the audit report

on the limited statutory examination to the Board of Roger Federer Foundation, Bottmingen

PricewaterhouseCoopers AG, Zürich, has examined the financial statements 2020 including the referenced balance sheet and income statement (pages 32 and 33) – prepared based on Swiss Code of Obligations – in accordance with the Swiss Standard on Limited Statutory Examination.

Based on this examination, nothing has come to their attention that causes them to believe that the financial statements do not comply with Swiss law and the foundation's deed and the internal regulations.

The complete set of financial statements including notes prepared based on Swiss Code of Obligations as well as the complete audit report can be requested from the Foundation.

The Roger Federer Foundation also prepares financial statements based on the Swiss GAAP FER 21 standard, which were also audited by PwC.

PricewaterhouseCoopers AG
Birchstrasse 160, Postfach, 8050 Zürich
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Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2020 (in CHF)

	2020	2019
Assets		
Liquid funds	7,189,331.12	6,902,786.16
Receivables	60,553.29	33,461.18
Other short-term receivables		
- Donor pledges Roger Federer/Tenro AG	42,882.57	71,291.89
Prepayment	28,306.50	17,692.00
Total current assets	7,321,073.48	7,025,231.23
Financial investments	12,397,745.78	10,764,779.48
Total property	7,405.32	0.00
Total non-current assets	12,405,151.10	10,764,779.48
Total assets	19,726,224.58	17,790,010.71
Liabilities		
Short-term liabilities	16,220.54	54,631.87
Accrued expenses	28,900.00	27,400.00
Total short-term liabilities	45,120.54	82,031.87
Assigned funds		
- School Readiness Initiative Namibia	257,172.48	0.00
Total fond capital	257,172.48	0.00
Initial capital	50,000.00	50,000.00
Tied capital		
- Action Aid, Malawi	0.00	955,858.00
- School Readiness Initiative Botswana	0.00	676,000.00
- School Readiness Initiative Lesotho	370,787.00	0.00
- School Readiness Initiative Malawi	1,518,251.57	286,652.39
- School Readiness Initiative Namibia	122,172.48	235,000.00
- School Readiness Initiative South Africa	2,722,277.89	0.00
- School Readiness Initiative Switzerland	1,252,262.90	386,000.00
- School Readiness Initiative Zambia	1,121,363.19	1,355,944.69
- School Readiness Initiative Zimbabwe	396,172.50	894,142.95
Total tied capital	7,503,287.53	4,789,598.03
Free capital	11,870,644.03	12,868,380.81
Total organization capital	19,423,931.56	17,707,978.84
Total liabilities and capital	19,726,224.58	17,790,010.71

The complete financial statements prepared in accordance with the Swiss Code of Obligations may be obtained from the Foundation.

Operating Statement January 1 to December 31, 2020 (in CHF)

	2020	2019
Donations		
General free donations	1,613,959.34	1,761,888.64
Direct and indirect donations Roger Federer		
- Donations of Tenro AG incl. profit on merchandising	307,210.89	1,702,105.31
- Donations corporate sponsors	1,226,264.00	1,326,357.50
Dedicated donations		
- General dedicated donations	1,859,301.51	2,788,297.27
- Match in Africa 6	3,552,092.55	0.00
Total donation income	8,558,828.29	7,578,648.72
Expenses		
Project expenses		
- Action Aid, Malawi	876,506.40	1,321,043.28
- School Readiness Initiative Botswana	0.00	244,290.95
- School Readiness Initiative Lesotho	179,213.00	0.00
- School Readiness Initiative Malawi	1,073,400.82	263,347.61
- School Readiness Initiative Namibia	442,827.52	1,072,348.48
- School Readiness Initiative South Africa	837,722.11	944,068.61
- School Readiness Initiative Switzerland	723,737.10	456,600.00
- School Readiness Initiative Zambia	639,581.50	1,229,323.31
- School Readiness Initiative Zimbabwe	497,970.45	1,255,857.05
- Swiss Donations Fund	107,500.00	312,834.10
- iACT, Phase II, Zambia	0.00	186,906.91
COVID 19 intervention	1,078,578.90	0.00
Coordination and knowledge sharing	75,667.14	23,018.43
Total project expenses	6,532,704.94	7,309,638.73
Total administration expenses	471,497.83	564,568.23
Total operating result	1,554,625.52	-295,558.24
Financial result		
- Other financial expenses	-15,116.53	-7,370.34
- Interest income	51,961.74	130,631.85
- Dividends	40,032.10	15,768.00
- Investment gains	803,687.59	1,159,381.85
- Investment losses	-462,065.22	-232,904.16
Total financial result	418,499.68	1,065,507.20
Result before allocation in fund capital	1,973,125.20	769,948.96
Allocation from fund capital	-257,172.48	2,303,130.00
Result before allocation to organisational capital	1,715,952.72	3,073,078.96
Allocation to free capital	-8,842,263.22	-9,136,180.93
Withdrawal from free capital	9,840,000.00	6,221,000.00
Allocation to tied capital	-9,840,000.00	-6,221,000.00
Withdrawal from tied capital	7,126,310.50	6,063,101.97
Total result after allocation	0.00	0.00

My Story



Zindawa, volunteer caregiver
Bumba Community Based Childcare Center

Part of our Early Childhood Initiative in Malawi is the establishment of a Teacher Incentive Fund. We grant a seed capital, train the Community Based Childcare Centre (CBCC) committee in financial management and business development and coach them to set-up rules for a loan system. The committee loans out funds to caregivers, committee members and community members for a short period of time with a low interest rate. The caregivers benefit on the one hand by having access to capital, and on the other hand, they get a small salary out of the gains of the loan system. Zindawa tells her story:



“I am a volunteer caregiver at the Bumba CBCC and work three mornings a week. It is important that children receive education at a young age. But my husband was not happy with my work as a caregiver as I was not receiving any salary and therefore was not contributing to the welfare of our home. It was difficult to handle both well, my time at the centre as well as the cooking and fieldwork at home. So I was about to break off my service. But then, the Teacher Incentive Fund was established at the centre, and I was one of the very first caregivers to take a loan. Immediately, I started buying and selling maize, tomatoes, beans and groundnuts flour. The profits from the business then enabled me to contribute to my son’s

school fees until he wrote the final examination. I can assure you that I am now a caring mother, as I contribute school fees for another of my older children. Additionally, I am also able to support the educational needs of my last-born child, who wrote the Primary School Leaving Certificate in 2019. I can also proudly say that I have also contributed MK 50,000.00 as capital for my husband to start a carpentry business. Because of the business I am doing now, I live a happier and better life than before. I have also earned the respect and support of my family, my husband inclusive, to continue working, as a caregiver. My husband always reminds me not to be late for my work”, said Zindawa.

Contact

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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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