



RF
FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT
2024



Roger Federer on a programme visit in Lesotho, May 2023

Foreword

I'm delighted to share the progress made in 2024, a year marked by significant achievements and transitions. After 14 years, Janine Händel has stepped down as CEO. I am deeply grateful for Janine's outstanding leadership and wish to express my sincere appreciation for all she has done. We welcome Maya Ziswiler as our new CEO. Her experience and her dedication to helping children reach their full potential align perfectly with our mission. With Maya's leadership, we're energised to build even stronger partnerships and explore more innovative approaches, ensuring that every child in our programme receives the holistic support they deserve.

My visit to Lesotho in 2023 continues to bear fruit. It has truly demonstrated the impact of our work. Our initiative has been integrated into formal teacher training, an achievement the Minister of Education highlighted recently. This reflects Lesotho's strong commitment to quality education, supported by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). By focusing on building a sustainable school readiness programme, with a solid curriculum and ongoing teacher support, our Foundation will make an even greater difference in children's lives and set them up for success.

Our approach remains innovative and effective. By regularly updating our data system, we get real-time insights regarding the preschools. This data helps us to work with governments and our partners, adjusting our approach as needed. The data enables us to allocate resources effectively while continuously learning and improving.

Looking ahead, we're committed to expanding our impact and strengthening our partnerships to reach more children. The stories of growth and transformation we see every day inspire us and reaffirm the importance of this work. We're grateful for our team, partners, and supporters – your belief in our mission drives us forward. Thank you for your continued support. We're eager to see what more we can accomplish together!

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Federer'.

Roger Federer, President
March 2025

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.



Efficiency

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

The Roger Federer 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 situa-

tions. 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 in 2003.



7 countries where we are active with our programmes.



17,531 educational institutions that have improved in quality.



30 local partner organisations that implement our programmes on site.



59,431 teachers who have improved their abilities thanks to further training.



3,111,558 children benefited from a better education since the Foundation's establishment.



95 million Swiss francs were spent by the Roger Federer Foundation by the end of 2024.

Milestones 2024

As we close another impactful year at the Roger Federer Foundation, we are delighted to share the achievements of 2024, a year defined by innovation, collaboration, and our commitment to early childhood education and school readiness. In light of the significant change in leadership in September, we are grateful to the Board for allowing us to exchange vital information during a two-month handover period. We are excited to highlight the key milestones upon which we will continue to build in 2025. One standout achievement this year has been the incorporation of our School Readiness Initiative into the pre-service training programmes for educators in Zimbabwe and Lesotho. This strategic milestone ensures that new teachers are equipped with the skills and knowledge to support children's development and readiness for school, transforming the educational landscape in these nations.

Additionally, we are proud to announce our new partnership with the Get It Done Foundation in South Africa. This collaboration empowers grassroots organisations focused on early childhood education. By pooling resources and expertise, we are enhancing the quality of education for young learners and fostering sustainable approaches to support their holistic development. We are also pleased to report that our engagement with the Ministry of Education in Malawi has led to the successful piloting of preschool classes, funded by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). Our role in unlocking this funding has been crucial. By supporting the government in implementing these new preschool classes alongside our existing support for early childhood centres, we are ensuring that children receive the foundational skills they need.

Finally, we continue to improve our technology-based tool to track the progress of children in our School Readiness Initiative. This system provides real-time insights, allowing for immediate improvements and empowering governments and partners to work together to give every child the best possible start in life. As we celebrate these milestones, we recognise that our work is only possible through the dedication of our partners, stakeholders, and supporters. Together, we have made significant strides in ensuring school readiness in resource-limited contexts. We are inspired to continue this momentum and thank you for your ongoing support.

Warm regards,

Janine Händel
Former CEO, March 2025

Maya Ziswiler
CEO, March 2025



Outgoing CEO Janine Händel (l) with incoming CEO Maya Ziswiler and community members during a site visit in Malawi, September 2024

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 was to give more than three million children a good start to their education. We are immensely proud to have reached this phenomenal target, but there is much left to do. More 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 to bring about a systemic change.



72% of pre-primary children

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



1,100,046 children

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

Note: The decrease shown in some of the previous year's indicators is the result of a quality refinement. The drop in schools providing meals reflects the impact of a severe drought.



30,115 educators

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



4,189 preschools

offer a safe, stimulating and age appropriate learning environment.



68% of preschools

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



276 districts

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



60% of the preschools

built natural playgrounds jointly with the village communities and parents using local materials.



68% of preschools

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



90% of educators

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



3,461 educators

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

The Roger Federer Foundation has distributed 19'000 tablets since the beginning of the School Readiness Initiative in 2019.



The DCIS displays different types of data that can be filtered as desired. Field workers can also take pictures of locations, showing e.g. building in progress or the condition of playgrounds or classrooms, and upload them to the system.

Data Capturing and Information System

The Foundation monitors data generated by the Early Learning Kiosk tablets, which are in the hands of the teachers, and data collected by our partner organisations' field officers. These insights into the Foundation's School Readiness Initiative are vital for record-keeping and, more importantly, decision-making.

Collecting data in remote rural areas: Anything but a cakewalk

Imagine trying to collect data from dozens of far-flung preschools in a region where internet connectivity, electricity, and even tarred roads are rare. You need to cover hundreds of kilometres of dusty, bumpy dirt roads to reach the schools. Rain, while welcomed by the rural farming communities, can make roads impassable, which further slows down the data collection process. While navigating all these obstacles, you need to transport and keep track of reams of paper survey forms. Of course, you also need to ensure that you collect all the information accurately. Due to time and financial constraints, you simply can't reach all that many preschools in the allotted time. Once you've brought this precious, hard-won raw data to your offices, it's all captured – again manually – by a person who, being human, could misinterpret, mistype, or accidentally skip sections. Then, the captured data needs to be processed so it can be turned into attractive visuals that appeal to the user. By the time all these steps are complete, the data could already be outdated. Surely, there must be a better way!

Technology to the rescue

This was indeed one of our thoughts when we first started developing our Data Capturing and Information System (DCIS) in early 2021. We wanted to improve reporting on facts while ensuring that the data was as current as possible. We wanted to see data in real-time, or as close to it as possible, without distortions. We also wanted to store this data securely to prevent it from being lost, which is always a risk when working with paper-based surveys. Another issue we faced was the high turnover rate among staff involved in data collection, capturing, and analysis. An important factor we considered when conceptualising the DCIS was to ensure that data is collected in a consistent manner, instead of each survey worker or partner organisation using their own approach. This inconsistency led to a lack of shared

learnings and no standardised way of interpreting data. Another advantage of the DCIS is that the data collected can be presented in different ways, depending on who is accessing it. For example, the heads of our partner organisations will need to look at the data differently than government officials or even ourselves when evaluating the success of our initiative. Today, the data exists in a single system that performs a range of tasks: it collects, stores, processes, analyses, and visualises data from various services, turning these figures into easy-to-interpret graphs.

«Using the DCIS, we can make targeted interventions, only visiting schools that really need support. This saves a lot of time and is very efficient.»

Ma-Lord Mefane, Programs Manager, Network of Early Childhood Development of Lesotho (NECDOL)

Insight into an array of data

As part of our School Readiness Initiative, teachers are provided with a tablet, called the Early Learning Kiosk, which gives them the information and resources they need to improve their teaching and inspire parents to contribute more to their children's preschool education. For example, they have access to a course on learn-

«The analysis and visualisation of the data are done automatically. This has greatly reduced the efforts in collating our reports. What used to take days now occurs with the click of a button. It's become very easy to extract the needed information.»

Genius Makarudze, Impact and Programs Coordinator, Child Protection Society, Zimbabwe

ing through play and an app called ChildSteps, which allows them to monitor how well every child performs on a range of activities throughout the preschool year. Another function of the tablet is to gather a range of data. Some of it – for example, data on each child's development, as well as enrolment and attendance – is collected automatically as the teachers use the tablet. Other data – like the condition of the classroom or playground, and information on nutrition programmes – is collected by our partner organisations' field workers during school visits. All this information can be collated and visualised according to a user's exact specifications. The data can be filtered by location, according to which partner organisation that collected it, and by preschool, among others.

Ensuring that the data in the system is current

For the DCIS data to be as up-to-date as possible, all the tablets need to be synchronised (synced), meaning that the data saved on the tablet when it is offline gets transferred to the system once the tablet is connected to the internet. This relatively current data, which is continuously being updated in the DCIS, allows the partner organisations and relevant government officials to keep an eye on the situation in a region, down to the school level, if desired. If a tablet has not been synced for a specific time, our partners can contact or visit the preschool to assist the teacher with the process. In areas where internet connectivity is a problem, several strategies have been developed to ensure frequent syncing. Depending on the location of the preschool and its

proximity to a town with internet access, field workers may bring Wi-Fi dongles to the site or even collect the tablets and sync them at their offices.

Teachers get competitive

In South Africa, monitoring data through the DCIS had an unexpected but welcome effect. Quick-thinking field workers started mentioning to teachers they visited that their peers from a neighbouring district were completing the KnowHow course faster than the teachers being visited. This sparked friendly competition among the districts, with teachers vying to finish the course first, resulting in their district «winning».

Keeping an eye on children's development

ChildSteps is an app on the Early Learning Kiosk that allows teachers to track children's developmental progress over the course of the school year. This is done by rating how well children perform certain activities. These activities are arranged according to the teaching schedules in each country, organised by developmental domain and linked to relevant subject areas. The app clearly explains how to prepare for a classroom activity so that the teacher can plan in advance. During play-based activities in the classroom or outside in the play area, the teacher has the tablet at hand to digitally record their observational assessment against the name of each child, in a way that is non-threatening. There is practically no typing involved, which prevents typos, just the selection of a rating based on simple criteria for each skill: «Does well», «Attempted» or «Cannot do» (wording varies by country). If ChildSteps indicates that a specific child is not developmentally on track, the teacher has the option of doing supplementary activities with them to bring them up to speed.

Using data to pinpoint preschools that need support

Since our School Readiness Initiative was rolled out in over 2,291 new preschools in 2024 alone, it is important to assign resources to schools that truly need support without having to guess. Using the DCIS, our partner organisations and even education officials at various levels of government can use the data to make informed decisions. In one of our countries of implementation, for example, our data was used to support findings by the government that preschools without nutrition schemes

→ Roger Federer attends a meeting of a peer learning group of preschool teachers as they discuss the KnowHow course in Namibia, 2020





Patrick Maele, Early Childhood Development Project Officer for Action Aid Malawi, captures monitoring data, September 2024

had lower enrolment numbers than those that provided meals consistently. This aligned with data from the World Food Programme and allowed it to make interventions. In Zimbabwe, the partner organisation noted that a preschool had not provided regular meals to its children for half a year. They reached out to a private company, which sponsored plates, cutlery, and food, including cooking oil, beans, and maize meal. Our partner organisations can also use the data captured by the

DCIS to assist in making a preschool more child-friendly, for example, if the DCIS shows that a certain location lacks a playground or suitable sanitation facilities long after the initial consultation phase.

DCIS data heads to government

With the end goal of ensuring the sustainability of the School Readiness Initiative in mind, our aim has always

been to have it integrated into existing governmental systems – especially since the ChildSteps app is valuable for tracking children’s readiness for school. We have started the identification and implementation of joint learning projects as well as the strategy development and negotiation process with the ministries of all our countries of implementation, to ensure that our data will be gradually integrated into their systems in the coming years.

Interview with York Lunau Executive Director of the Roger Federer Foundation, Switzerland

How can implementing organisations and governments benefit from monitoring data?

The immediate benefit is that implementation and reporting are no longer separate activities. There is no need to collect data using paper-based survey forms, which tended to change frequently. With a system for digitally collecting, aggregating, and presenting data, the frequency of human error has decreased, as fewer people are involved in the process. There is now also less room for misinterpretation of data. Before, the report writers often had incorrect assumptions about the realities on the ground and the perceptions of the data collectors. Now, the rules for data collection, aggregation, and presentation stay the same over time and can be improved jointly by all involved. On this basis, data is reflected in well-defined charts as soon as it is collected and allows for quick reactions at all levels if a problem is identified.

Some critics might say that launching a digital system is unfeasible in very remote rural areas. How would you respond?

Our own data shows that this strategy is successful. Using the solar chargers we provide, teachers in areas without electricity can charge their tablets. In some cases, our partners need to assist with syncing by getting the tablets to a location with internet connectivity. However, with the speed technological development is advancing, the number of places that are too difficult to reach to allow for proper information gathering through regular visits is decreasing, relative to those without internet connectivity, with each passing year.

What has surprised you positively since the roll-out of the system?

As the Early Learning Kiosk barely requires users to type, its «what you tap is what you get» nature is proving advantageous for teachers in rural areas, many of whom have no experience using computers or smartphones. These untrained teachers seem to benefit most from the apps and tools provided on the Early Learning Kiosk. Another advantage is that analysts can review historical data going back months or even years, identifying trends.

Bridge to School

45,177 sets of Bridge to School booklets have been distributed to date. Parents and children get access to a total of 153 activities to do together over the course of the preschool year.



Each of the 9 different Bridge to School booklets in the set focuses on a different topic. The booklets give parents the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to their children's early education.

This initiative consists of a range of hardback booklets containing educational and toymaking activities designed for parents to do with their children. Interacting in this meaningful way deepens the bond between the two and allows the parents to share the responsibility for their little one's education with the teacher, among other advantages.

The universal joy of a new toy

You, like many of us, probably have fond memories of anticipating the arrival of a specific toy when you were little. Maybe you'd seen it in a store or noticed that many of your friends suddenly all had one. Then it was a matter of asking your parents to get you your very own. Maybe you'd have to nag or beg, but, if you were lucky, they'd give in eventually. Then, it was an agonising wait of weeks or even months until your birthday, Christmas, or perhaps another religious holiday. Finally, that moment is here! That feeling of sheer joy when you tear away the gift wrap, revealing the item you've been waiting for! In some parts of the world, where people don't have the means to buy them, toys don't just appear on one fateful day. They're created by the child with the help of their parents. Anticipation takes on a different form – the children look forward to spending quality time with their parents and are eager to learn what they'll make next. Much like you experienced, they also enjoy sharing a new toy with their friends. Some things stay the same, no matter where you are in the world!

A simple but impactful intervention

The concept of Bridge to School was born during the coronavirus pandemic. As the rising number of coronavirus infections forced governments to take drastic action, children were stuck at home, missing out on vital weeks or even months of education. In areas where access to toys and books – not to mention libraries – is limited, there was an urgent need for a solution that could get children learning through play once more. So how do you get important knowledge, in the form of short activities, to people who have no access to the internet and often no electricity? The answer is a low-tech approach: booklets, each covering a different topic, that are exchanged regularly. Today, in post-pandemic times, the teacher is in charge of a small library of Bridge to School booklets. There are nine booklets per set. Each booklet contains five educational activities, which are

repeated three times in slightly different ways, and two toy-making activities. These activities are designed for parents to do with their children. The content is drawn in an easy-to-understand comic book style. At the end of each month, the children exchange booklets with their classmates, ensuring that each child and their parents have access to a range of activities over the course of the preschool year.

Why «Bridge to School»?

The name was chosen to represent the way the initiative forms a connection between the parents and the school, allowing the parents to understand the curriculum better. The activities in the booklets correspond to the assessments done by the teacher at school. In many cases, the children bring the toys they made at home to school, proudly showing them off to their friends. In some cases, they even become part of the school's toy stash, shared among many. In another positive develop-

«Bridge to School helps me bond with my child as we learn and play together, this was difficult in the past, as we had little to do together.»

Parent from Lesotho

ment, some parents also started interacting with teachers more often, promoting the flow of information and knowledge. This resulted in parents valuing the teachers' contribution to their children's education, even at this early stage. Lastly, the «bridge» also refers to the preschool year itself, which represents a transition year between home and formal primary schooling.

«Since Bridge to School was introduced, parents come to school more often than in the past. They want to know how their children are performing and come to ask for clarity when they don't understand something. Participation has improved.»

Preschool teacher from Malawi

Aligning Bridge to School with the rest of the School Readiness Initiative

The activities in Bridge to School are based on those in ChildSteps. This is the offline, tablet-based tool that makes use of activities to help the teacher track each child's development over the course of the preschool year. This is done according to various domains, including social & emotional wellbeing, physical development & wellbeing, and cognitive development. Bridge to School allows parents to gain an insight into what their children are learning at school. For some parents, doing activities using Bridge to School is eye-opening because they realise what their children are capable of learning at such a young age, going beyond simple counting or reciting the alphabet. For example, parents report that their children started helping with chores and had improved their hygiene habits based on the activities in the booklets.

Tackling the language question

When designing the content of the booklet, we had to take language and literacy levels into consideration. In our Southern African countries of implementation, over 100 languages are spoken. As English is an offi-

cial language in all these countries, it seemed like the most practical option. A list of translated key words and phrases was also included when we distributed the first version of the booklets. However, based on feedback from our partner organisations, we recently reduced the quantity of text in the booklets even more for the second edition of Bridge to School. In some cases, where another widely spoken language was determined to be a suitable alternative, our partner organisations supported us in translating the content.

Strengthening the bond between parents and their children

The booklets help parents to support their children's development practically and learning at home while strengthening their relationship with the school. Examples of activities include arranging household objects according to shape or colour, advising parents on how to explain traffic rules to children or name various animals. Toymaking activities were carefully designed, keeping the children's circumstances at home in mind. Readily accessible items, like scraps of fabric, twigs, bottle caps and leaves, are used as craft materials for the various toys. These shared creative movements result in stronger bonds between parents and children. This deeper connection makes children feel more valued, which has a deep impact on their self-confidence and emotional well-being.

What do the users have to say?

In 2024, we conducted an evaluation of the initiative. Overall, parents and teachers reported positive experiences with the booklets. Many parents reported being overwhelmed by the concepts introduced in the booklets, but after a short period, and with the teachers' support, they began to appreciate being able to spend more time with their children, with siblings often also getting involved. This increase in family time had a positive impact on many households. «When we made a toy drum, we ended up having a musical concert at home, all the children loved it,» reported one parent. Another added: «It is important to give my child good memories. My child will always remember making a specific toy with me.»

→ Each booklet's cover has a different colour so that the children and parents can easily keep track of which ones they've already used



Interview with Velile Mnyayi Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Specialist from the Roger Federer Foundation regional office in South Africa

How do children benefit when their parents use Bridge to School?

Parents' involvement in their children's learning reinforces what they learn at school, helping them grasp concepts more deeply and retain knowledge better. The toymaking activities make learning fun and interactive, promoting creativity and motor skill development in children. Ultimately, the children develop positive attitudes towards school and learning, which are needed for a smooth transition to the formal education environment.

How does Bridge to School complement the rest of the School Readiness Initiative?

The Bridge to School booklets are the only printed resource of the School Readiness Initiative, making them more accessible at home, where digital tools may be less practical. This supports the School Readiness Initiative's goal of enhancing parent and community involvement. The booklets help parents understand what their children learn at school and how they develop. This is done by giving parents practical examples of how to play and learn with their children while they develop across the domains. By creating a home-school bridge/connection, Bridge to School helps to create a holistic support system around each child, which helps them to become confident enough to make the move to primary school.

You did an evaluation of Bridge to School among teachers and parents. In a nutshell, how is it being received?

The evaluation showed that Bridge to School was warmly received by both teachers and parents. Parents felt more empowered and enjoyed being part of their children's educational journey through Bridge to School activities. This strengthened their bond with their children, relationships with teachers, and made a positive impact on children's learning and behaviour both at home and school. In a nutshell, the evaluation demonstrated that Bridge to School was highly effective in boosting parental involvement, strengthening parent-teacher relationships, and positively impacting children's learning and behaviour.



Parents make toy kites together with preschool children during a toymaking session in South Africa, February 2025

Recommendations for an even greater impact

The evaluation indicated that some of the toys should be simplified even further because some households had very limited access to resources. In cases like this, educational activities that did not require excess physical items to carry them out were favoured. It was also recommended that all children should be given the same booklets simultaneously to avoid conflict, as sometimes children tended to be envious of another's different

toys. This can be avoided if all children make the same toys at the same time. Another recommendation was to involve child service workers, for example, to monitor that the initiative is being implemented and ensure that goals are met. Village leaders and school governing bodies can also play an important role in ensuring that booklets are returned (on time). An information poster, displayed in the classroom with instructions in the local language, would also be beneficial to teachers in explaining the concept to parents. It would also be helpful

to a new teacher in cases where their predecessor leaves the school without a thorough handover process.

An initiative with great potential

As usual, we are keen to share our knowledge and experiences regarding Bridge to School, which is an impactful tool that is relatively easy to replicate anywhere in the world. We invite readers to look out for our upcoming paper on Bridge to School.

Purzelbaum^{family} 1

The initiative provides families from different socio-economic backgrounds and children aged 0 to 6 with easy access to movement-related offerings.



An accessible space, in which children from all socio-economic backgrounds can play is important, because it promotes physical, cognitive and social development.

About a quarter of preschool children in Switzerland are lagging behind in terms of basic motor skills ². Since 2022, the Roger Federer Foundation has been supporting a comprehensive programme to promote movement in family centres ³ across Switzerland. This initiative provides guidance and resources to integrate movement into the centres' everyday offerings.

Blankets aren't just for the bed

Clutching the thick fabric, a little girl squeals in delight as she is dragged along the smooth wooden floor on a blanket by a volunteer. Nearby in the large open room, several other children are standing in pairs of shoeboxes, sliding around almost like ice skaters. It's exciting to glide along the floor and to balance, and it doesn't take much effort at all. They eagerly await their turn on the blanket. Today is 'Movement Day' at the family centre and the focus of today's activities is sliding. Since the introduction of Purzelbaum^{family} at the centre, children and their parents have been able to explore different types of movement in new and engaging ways.

A successful initiative with a long history

The Purzelbaum project was developed and introduced in kindergartens in the canton of Basel-Stadt. Since 2009, our partner organisation RADIX Schweizerische Gesundheitsstiftung has been building Purzelbaum^{Schweiz} on this foundation, also anchoring it firmly in other institutions, including primary schools, daycare centres, playgroups, and family centres. Purzelbaum^{family} complements the existing programmes by focusing specifically on the entire family unit, offering activities that can also be integrated into playtime at home.

Providing support to get the whole family moving

Family centres across the country are popular spots for children and parents to meet peers from their community and socialise, taking part in a range of activities. In some cases, the centres fail to fully capitalise on the

benefits of movement, not integrating it sufficiently into their offerings. Being active is vital and doesn't just promote motor skills – active play with others also supports social and cognitive development – the children who benefit become more creative and adventurous, trying out new things. Many family centres are run by volunteers, who value support in the form of ideas, resources, and expert guidance in how to integrate more movement into their centres' offerings. Purzelbaum^{family} provides each participating centre with a tailored solution suited to their specific circumstances. For example, if the venue needs to be vacated at the end of every day, they ensure that the various implements are easy to set up and clear away.

Getting in touch takes a little effort

Since there generally isn't a database or directory of family centres, our partner organisation has to contact each family centre directly. In addition, since the centres aren't all structured the same way and staffed by individuals from different backgrounds and levels of training, each centre requires tailored support. But the effort has certainly been worth it: it is proven that this approach is accessible and that it improves the lives of both the children and parents. Many centres report that they are proud of their work, stating that Purzelbaum^{family} ensures a quality offering for all their visitors, young and old.

Simple but impactful solutions

Sometimes, employees at the family centres think that providing their youngest visitors with more opportunities for movement is complicated. However, with guid-

¹ «Purzelbaum» is the German word for somersault.

² Gallego, I., Butters, A., Kammerer, C., Gnägi, N. Simoni, H. & Lannen, P. (2022). *Motorische Entwicklung bei Kindern in der Schweiz. Scoping Study. Marie Meierhofer Institut für das Kind.*

³ A family centre is a special type of community centre in Switzerland, often staffed by volunteers, that offers free services to young children and their caregivers.

Interview with Michaela Sciuk Head of Purzelbaum^{Schweiz}, RADIX Schweizerische Gesundheitsstiftung in Switzerland

How is the initiative generally received by the family centres?

The tailored support we provide and that fact that we consider the points of departure of the individual centres are very much appreciated. Each family centre has its own challenges, needs and strengths. By providing personalised advice, we can ensure that these differences are taken into account. Working together with them, we find ideas and solutions for increasing the level of activity in their offerings. The participating family centres also appreciate the extensive support we provide in the form of advice, practical ideas, and knowledge – and all of this free of charge.

Please describe a particular space that has become part of the initiative.

The various family centres each have very different premises at their disposal: multi-purpose or catering rooms rented by the hour, a converted plant nursery, former factory halls, and old sports halls. Libraries also provide spaces that convert into places for parent-child events once a week. Some family centres even have their own outdoor area or are able to use public fields and playgrounds for movement-related activities. Through Purzelbaum^{family}, we show participants how they can promote movement in their spaces, regardless of how big or small these may be and what materials are available.

What is the idea behind giving participating family centres a small lump sum when they join the initiative?

With the lump sum of CHF 500, we want to value the work of the family centres, which often only have a small budget. Many of their employees also work on a voluntary basis. These funds should be invested in promoting physical activity. The family centres can use these funds as they wish, so this varies a lot: they might purchase everyday/movement materials or a small thank-you gift for those volunteers who're responsible for the topic of movement and take part in the Purzelbaum^{family} meetings. They might even invest it in the Purzelbaum^{family} Festival, among many other possibilities.



«The initiative has resulted in more active and cheerful play behaviour at our centre. Families often come to us asking: ‘When is Movement Day?’»

Jessica Lachnit, Head of Integration and Early Intervention, Familientreffpunkt Bassersdorf, Switzerland

ance from our partner, they quickly realise that this isn't the case. A simple solution, for example, is to reduce clutter in the space, which gives the children more room in which to be active.

Getting parents and local businesses involved

When it comes to upgrading the spaces in the family centres, the parents are often keen to assist, which helps them to identify strongly with the initiative. Guided by our partner, the family centre uses a checklist to identify needed items. This includes a hook to hang a blanket swing, for example, or versatile everyday household items like sponges and rags. Often, parents jump in to construct a climbing frame or sew cushions. Other parties in and around the family centre also contribute: the facilities manager may install ceiling hooks for swings, while foresters donate logs for seating or large branches for climbing frames. Businesses, once approached, often provide surplus materials for play: electricians might donate sections of piping, while carpet suppliers might provide off-cuts. At one family centre, one of the most popular items amongst the little ones is an old firehose that was donated by the local fire department.

Providing support every step of the way

Then, drawing on their years of experience, our partner continuously offers new ideas to promote movement. These take the form of easy-to-understand themed videos, parent brochures, checklists, and ideas for im-

←
The initiative allows children to explore different types of movement in structured and varied ways

plementation as well as online resources grouped by theme. If anyone needs additional support or ideas, there is also a WhatsApp group as well as monthly virtual coaching sessions, which are optional. In no time, staff members integrate these ideas and materials into their daily routines.

Striking the balance between optimal movement and safety

For anyone who interact with children, safety is obviously an important consideration in connection with movement. The automatic response may be to place restrictions on children in order to prevent injury, which isn't necessarily wrong. However, our partner organisation encourages staff at family centres and the children's care-

«Since the introduction of Purzelbaum^{family}, my daughter is noticeably trying out more new things.»

Lena Palma, Mother, Switzerland

givers to have more confidence in their little ones. They also teach strategies on how to make these activities as safe as possible. Staff are also guided to discuss and encourage parental collaboration in this regard.

Types of movement are best enjoyed in moderation

Drawing on years of experience, our partner organisation guides the family centres on how many types of movement they should focus on at a time. It's also important not to be repetitive and to resist the temptation of doing too much at once. The aim is to provide simple but effective ideas for all elementary movement needs and for different age groups. Elementary movement needs include activities such as climbing, jumping, swinging,

and throwing. The centre staff should select one to two elementary movement needs, but offer these in different variations and difficulty levels. Purzelbaum^{family} recommends focusing on two new elementary movement needs every month.

Spreading the joy of movement throughout the neighbourhood

In order to be part of the initiative, participating family centres must host at least one Purzelbaum^{family} Festival. The centres are encouraged to host one each year, although this is not mandatory. These festivals are widely advertised in the neighbourhood to attract families who don't yet regularly visit the family centre. This event specifically invites parents to take part in the games with their children. This serves to raise awareness amongst parents regarding the importance of movement. Each festival, organised by industrious volunteers, is as unique as the family centres themselves. Many participating centres have reported great turn-outs and have even made the festival a fixture in their yearly calendar.

A special plaque

Once the family centres have completed the consultation with our partner, they receive a Purzelbaum plaque with the slogan «We are committed to getting children moving». The idea behind this plaque is to motivate the family centres to continue to implement the project content and make these activity-based offerings available in the long term. Some workers at the centres indicate that the initiative has impacted the way children play: they're more active and playing in more varied ways. By end 2024, 94 family centres were part of the Purzelbaum^{family} initiative. The goal is to reach 120 family centres by 2026, and we wish our partner ongoing success as it continues to implement this initiative across the country!



← Children and their parents enjoy a game at a Purzelbaum^{family} Festival



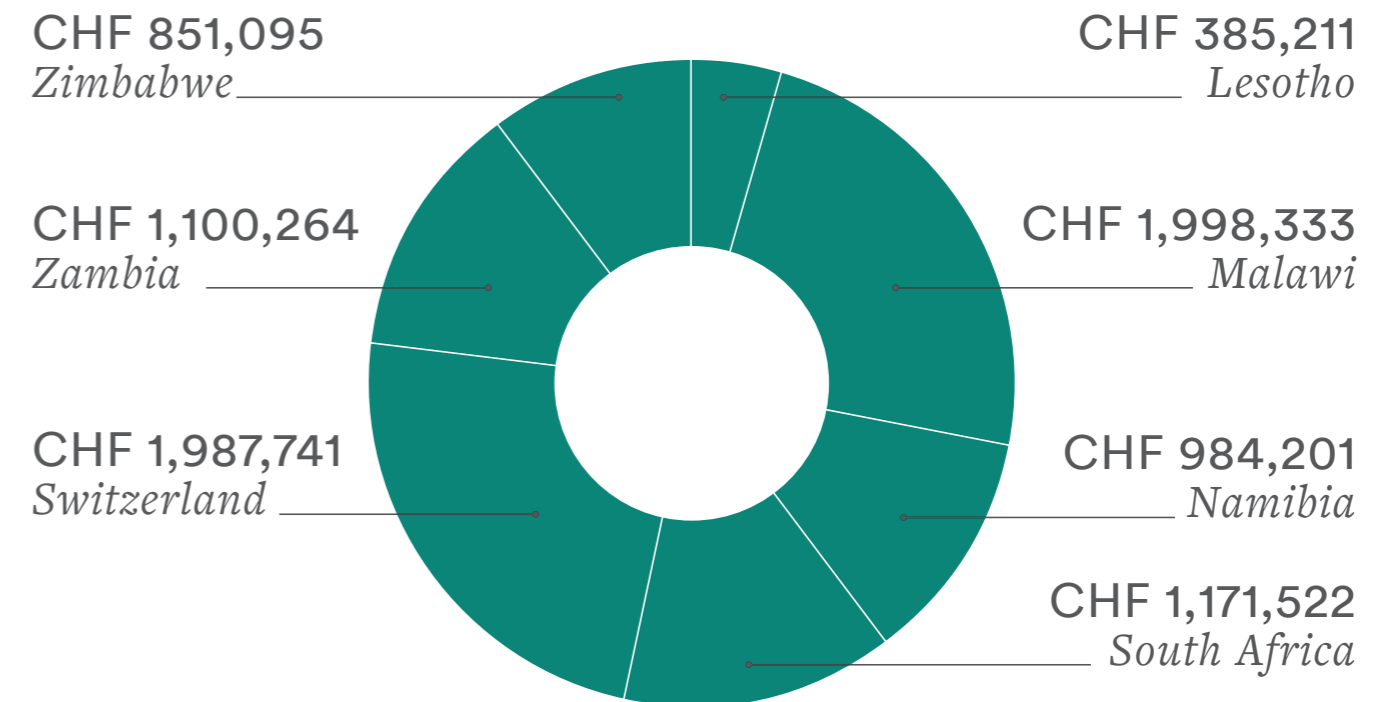
Current Grants and Partners 2024

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 pre-school classes	Phase I/II: 2020–2024	955,000 (2020/2022)
				Phase III: 2023–2025	400,000 (2023)
				Phase IV: 2024–2027	400,000 (2024)
Malawi	National School Readiness Initiative	Action Aid Malawi, AECDM, ECD Coalition, Livingstonia Synod	2,500 preschools and 894 primary schools	Phase I: 2020–2022	2,305,000 (2020)
				Phase II: 2022–2024	3,900,000 (2022)
				Phase III: 2024–2026	3,710,000 (2024)
Namibia	National School Readiness Initiative	Lifeline/Childline (LLCL), Women's Action for Development (WAD), Christian Alliance for Orphans (CAFO)	2,534 preschools and schools with pre-primary classes	Phase I/II: 2018–2021	1,995,000 (2018/2020/2021)
				Phase III: 2021–2024	4,090,000 (2021/2022)
				Phase IV: 2024–2026	870,000 (2024)
Zambia	National School Readiness Initiative	ROCS, 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)
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) 125,000 (2024)
South Africa	National School Readiness Initiative	Penreach, Read	2,000 primary schools with pre-schools	Phase I/II: 2019–2023	4,880,000 (2018/2020)
				Phase III: 2023–2026 (March)	3,600,000 (2022)
Switzerland	School readiness project: Primokiz	RADIX	174 localities (municipalities, cities, and cantons)	Phase I: 2018–2021	620,000 (2021)
				Phase II: 2021–2026	
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) 105,000 (2024)
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	101 natural playgrounds in schoolyards	Phase I: 2020–2022	1,565,000 (2020/2021)
				Phase II: 2022–2027	3,700,000 (2022) 30,000 (2024)



Children play on a community-built playground in Lesotho, May 2023

Financial Overview for 2024



Income Generation

2024 was a very successful year in terms of fundraising, we raised almost 12.5 million from a larger array of donors while maintaining our strong existing donor base. 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 as our largest anchor donor, the Nationale Postcode Loterij, the Roche Employee Action and Charity Trust, the Fondation Botnar, the Dr. Guido and Frederika Turin Stiftung, as well as Roger Federer's sponsors UBS, 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 remains at about 10 million in line with the expenditures from last year. We continue to implement the core phase of our School Readiness Initiative in Southern Africa, in which we are reaching a large number of pre-primary schools and centres across all our geographies. We have also started implement several large-scale multi-donor initiatives. In Switzerland, we have also implemented the most intense phase of our Swiss programmes, which include the building of natural playgrounds as well as support for community and family centres. Administrative costs have also risen, as we have strengthened our team's regional presence with a new digital learning officer to help strengthen and document our digital system for scale.

Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2024 (in CHF)

	2024	2023
Assets		
Liquid funds	1,130,565.86	1,387,987.36
Receivables	60,549.80	35,367.00
Other short-term receivables		
- Related parties	2,476.85	1,916.70
Prepayment	38,357.30	32,397.59
Total current assets	1,231,949.81	1,457,668.65
Financial investments	20,169,984.28	15,912,513.56
Equipment	3,684.49	4,912.64
Total non-current assets	20,173,668.77	15,917,426.20
Total assets	21,405,618.58	17,375,094.85
Liabilities and capital		
Other short-term liabilities	37,352.13	17,842.80
Accrued expenses	83,692.15	34,532.90
Total short-term liabilities	121,044.28	52,375.70
Assigned funds		
- Engagement Switzerland	370,543.26	829,284.10
- School Readiness Initiatives Africa	1,648,291.28	0.00
Total fund capital	2,018,834.54	829,284.10
Initial capital	50,000.00	50,000.00
Tied capital		
- School Readiness Initiative Lesotho	295,384.68	280,596.15
- School Readiness Initiative Malawi	3,526,900.46	1,815,233.30
- School Readiness Initiative Namibia	1,102,382.42	1,216,583.26
- School Readiness Initiative South Africa	1,901,574.09	3,073,096.25
- School Readiness Initiative Switzerland	1,942,383.24	3,620,021.90
- School Readiness Initiative Zambia	3,021,611.57	4,121,875.66
- School Readiness Initiative Zimbabwe	1,557,446.83	2,283,542.15
- Swiss Donation Fund	0.00	15,000.00
Total tied capital	13,347,683.29	16,425,948.67
Free capital generated	5,868,056.47	17,486.38
Total capital of the organization	19,265,739.76	16,493,435.05
Total liabilities and capital	21,405,618.58	17,375,094.85

PricewaterhouseCoopers AG, Zürich, has audited the financial statements 2024 of the Roger Federer Foundation in accordance with the Swiss GAAP FER 21 Standard for the attention of the Foundation Board. We publish the key figures in our annual report.

Operating Statement January 1 to December 31, 2024 (in CHF)

	2024	2023
Income		
General free donations	1,438,848.45	2,156,951.08
Direct and indirect donations Roger Federer		
- Donations from Tenro AG incl. profit on merchandising	3,659.05	67,424.53
- Donations corporate sponsors	1,360,335.00	1,337,610.00
Dedicated donations		
- General dedicated donations	8,158,918.00	3,224,900.00
- Direct and indirect dedicated donations Roger Federer	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00
Total donation income	12,461,760.50	8,286,885.61
Expenses		
Project expenses		
- School Readiness Initiative Lesotho	385,211.47	339,878.88
- School Readiness Initiative Malawi	1,998,332.84	1,244,475.82
- School Readiness Initiative Namibia	984,200.84	1,053,217.46
- School Readiness Initiative South Africa	1,171,522.16	912,819.05
- School Readiness Initiative Switzerland	1,812,638.66	1,298,881.52
- School Readiness Initiative Zambia	1,100,264.09	1,694,475.33
- School Readiness Initiative Zimbabwe	851,095.32	2,134,430.20
- Swiss Donations Fund	166,102.18	171,562.03
Best Practice/Advocacy/Monitoring/Coordination	484,460.77	362,562.95
Total project expenses	8,953,828.33	9,212,303.24
Total administration expenses	923,273.46	805,783.94
Total operating result	2,584,658.71	-1,731,201.57
Financial result		
- Other financial expenses	-30,028.24	-8,912.23
- Interest income	139,486.83	77,153.26
- Dividends	47,062.71	23,644.95
- Investment gains	1,577,395.38	1,040,161.38
- Investment losses	-356,720.24	-630,082.10
Total financial result	1,377,196.44	501,965.26
Result before allocation in fund capital	3,961,855.15	-1,229,236.31
Allocation to/from fund capital	-1,189,550.44	-29,556.45
Result before allocation to organisation capital	2,772,304.71	-1,258,792.76
Allocation to free capital	-11,241,672.27	-7,884,896.53
Withdrawal from free capital	5,391,102.18	7,993,862.03
Allocation to tied capital	-5,391,102.18	-7,993,862.03
Withdrawal from tied capital	8,469,367.56	9,143,689.29
Total result after allocation	0.00	0.00

My Story



Gertrude Batwell
Primary school teacher, Malawi

Gertrude Batwell taught Grade 1 (or Standard 1, as it's called in Malawi) for two years at Jalo Model Primary School, located northwest of Nkhotakota district, 200km from the capital, Lilongwe. She enthusiastically relates how she worked together with preschool teachers to make children's transition into formal education easier.

For nine months, I met with caregivers from the Community-Based Childcare Centres (CBCC), or preschools, that would send children to Jalo Model Primary School. Together, our learning group did the self-guided Know-How course. Every two weeks, we would gather to discuss the children's transition from the CBCCs to Grade 1. We have even included caregivers from preschools that are not part of the School Readiness Initiative in the group. Our learning group planned things like graduations for the preschool children and exchange visits for both the members of the learning group and preschool children. We arranged for the preschool children to visit the primary school at least once a year. This has helped them to become used to the environment before they even start school. The KnowHow course has helped us a lot. Even as a Grade 1 teacher, some modules in the course have improved my teaching. For example, the module «Making a classroom work well» has helped me to understand good ways of how to discipline children without intimidating them or hurting their feelings. The videos on the tablet are also easy

to understand and have helped me to improve my teaching. It's easy for me to manage a class of 70 children because of some concepts in the self-guided course. I usually put children into groups of 10 to 15 to ensure they all participate and understand the lesson. I've noticed a big difference between children who attended a CBCC and those who didn't. Those who have attended a CBCC can easily understand the things we teach them. I will introduce a lesson and even before I finish, they already know what we are going to do. They are also familiar with some of the topics we are teaching. One of the challenges we still face is that parents enrol their children in Grade 1 before they're ready, when they are not even six years old. These children need much attention and struggle to understand the lessons. Sometimes they even sleep in class. Even though there have been community meetings to discuss school enrolment, some parents don't understand that sending their children to Grade 1 early is a bad idea. There is a need to raise even more awareness in the community so that children are only sent to school once they're well developed.

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 Roger Federer Foundation

Donations

Credit Suisse – Part of the UBS Group
Paradeplatz 8
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Beneficiary:
Roger Federer Foundation
Zehntenfreistrasse 22
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
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