

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

25 years
of impact
through play



RIGHT TO PLAY



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO



As I reflect on my first few months with Right To Play, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and purpose. Joining this organization at the end of 2025 has been both energizing and grounding. From my earliest days—whether meeting teams, connecting with supporters, or visiting programs—it has been clear that Right To Play is powered by passionate people who believe profoundly in children’s right to learn, grow, and thrive through play.

This has also been an extraordinary and turbulent period for the broader NGO sector. Around the world, organizations are navigating increasing geopolitical instability, shrinking humanitarian space, economic uncertainty, and rising needs among the communities we serve. These pressures are felt most acutely by children. Too many are facing disrupted education, limited protection, and environments where their voices are not heard and their rights are not upheld.

Yet, in the midst of this upheaval, my first months with Right To Play have shown me something equally powerful: resilience, innovation, and unwavering commitment. I have seen firsthand how our play-based approaches create inclusive learning environments, strengthen confidence in girls, build social and emotional skills, and unlock pathways to possibility, even in the most challenging contexts. I have met educators who speak with pride about the changes they see in their classrooms, partners who champion our methods, and children who remind us of every day why this work matters.

What strikes me most is Right To Play’s unique positioning at this moment. Our combination of deep community roots, evidence-based programming, and a proven ability to adapt in complex environments allows us to reach children in a transformational way. Our work builds long-term skills and relationships that help children shape their own futures. In a world where uncertainty is becoming the norm, this is essential.

As we look back on our reach and impact in 2025, I am inspired by what we have achieved together, and even more motivated by what lies ahead. The dedication of our staff, the trust of our partners, and the generosity of our supporters form the foundation of everything we do.

Together, we can continue to ensure that children have the opportunity—and the agency—to learn, to play, and to thrive. I am honored to be part of this journey with you.

Jessie Thomson
President & CEO
Right To Play International

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NATIONAL OFFICE



This year marks a meaningful milestone for Right To Play: 25 years of partnering with children, communities, and supporters around the world to unlock the power of play.

Over the past quarter century, we’ve seen what happens when children are given the chance to learn through play. They build confidence. They stay in school. They develop the skills to navigate adversity and shape their own futures. In a world that continues to face conflict, inequality, and uncertainty, that opportunity has never been more important.

As we reflect on this milestone, we’re also looking ahead with renewed energy and ambition.

This year ushered in deeper commitment to collaboration across North America—bringing together our communities, partners, and supporters to grow our impact and reach more children who need it most. We are energized by the opportunities this creates to strengthen our network and amplify what’s possible through play.

The strength of the Right To Play movement is clear. From long-standing donors to new partners, from dedicated volunteers to passionate ambassadors, this community continues to show what collective action can achieve. Together, you are helping children access education, build resilience, and experience the joy and safety that every child deserves.

Over the past year, your support has helped us deepen our programs in communities facing some of the greatest challenges—from conflict-affected regions to underserved classrooms—ensuring children have the tools they need not just to cope, but to thrive.

Anniversaries are a moment to reflect, but they are also a call to action.

The need has never been greater—and neither has the opportunity. With your continued partnership, we can reach even more children, strengthen even more communities, and ensure that play remains at the heart of learning and development for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of this journey—over the past 25 years, and in the years ahead.

With gratitude,



Rob Pulford
U.S. Board Chair,
Right To Play USA
Partner, Goldman Sachs
Financial and Strategic
Investors Group



Susan Vardon
National Director,
Right To Play
Canada & USA

25 YEARS OF BEING THERE FOR CHILDREN

Ahead of the 1994 Lillehammer Olympics, Johann Olav Koss visited Eritrea and witnessed a boy kicking a ball he had made from a discarded shirt. It was a small, spontaneous act—but it revealed something profound: the extraordinary power of play.

That moment stayed with Johann. It was a reminder that **every child, everywhere, deserves the chance to play**. That conviction became our foundation; in 2000, it became our mission.

Twenty-five years later, it continues to drive everything we do.



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR 25 YEARS OF IMPACT

Since 2000,

We've reached more than **18 million** children across **47 countries**.

We've empowered more than **70,000 Junior Leaders** to claim their rights.

We've trained more than **2 million educators and coaches** to support children's learning and well-being.

2000
Right To Play is founded.

2001
Launched programs across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, reaching children in 30 countries.

2004
Measles vaccination campaign in Mali exceeded targets by up to 200%.

2006
New programs in Ethiopia, Lebanon, Jordan, Ghana, China, Pakistan, and Burundi reaching 700,000+ children weekly.

2007
Transitioned to local staff in every country, strengthening our early commitment to local leadership. Recognized as the top NGO working in disability in Ethiopia.

2010
10 YEARS
Launched programs in Indigenous communities in Canada, surpassed 1 million children reached globally each week.

2011
Partnered with the government of Benin to develop a national early childhood education curriculum.

2013
Responded to the Syrian refugee crisis with programs in Lebanon and Jordan providing social and emotional support for refugee children.

2014
Helped establish the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, now celebrated annually.

2016
Integrated play-based learning into Rwanda's schools and teacher training.

2017
Trained 16,000 pre-primary teachers in Tanzania, reaching more than 800,000 children.

2018
Through a global coalition, secured a G7 pledge of C\$2.9 billion for girls' education.

2019
Partnered with Yo-Yo Ma and Silk Road Ensemble to launch Music for Development in Beirut; helped repeal a decree in Mozambique that barred pregnant girls from school.

2020
20 YEARS
Rapidly shifted to remote and online programming when COVID-19 closed schools.

2021
Made 100 games free and open-source in English, French, and Arabic; launched a girls' leadership program in Senegal with Sadio Mané.

2022
Delivered supplies and emotional support to children coping with displacement, following the floods in Pakistan.

2023
Reached 5.6 million children globally, including 87,000+ refugees and displaced children.

2024
Successfully campaigned with partners for the United Nations to declare June 11 the International Day of Play.

2025
25 YEARS
Millions of children. One enduring belief: that play changes everything.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us build what comes next.

25 years of protecting, educating & empowering children through play

Twenty-five years of impact is more than a timeline—it’s a **generation of transformed lives**. The strongest proof of our work lives in the children who have grown into leaders, advocates, and global citizens.

UGANDA

From junior leader to **community healer**

Daphine was once a shy girl who rarely spoke up in school. In her community, girls’ education was often overlooked. Through Right To Play programs, she found her voice—building confidence, leadership, and passion for helping others.

At just 10 years old, she became a Junior Leader, guiding younger children, leading health-focused games, and challenging harmful norms around girls’ rights.

“Right To Play molded me into the person I am today.”

— Daphine

Today, Daphine is a comprehensive nurse in Kampala, using the empathy and communication skills she developed as a child to support girls, adolescents, and women. She is a dedicated advocate for girls’ health and education—and she still dreams big.



“I know my worth.”

PAKISTAN

From **silence to science**

Mahnoor grew up in a low-income household in Hyderabad, navigating pressure to stay quiet, stay indoors, and abandon her dreams after her father passed away. Everything changed when she met Coach Shamim through a Right To Play program. Through play-based activities, she found her voice, her confidence, and the courage to keep pursuing her education despite fear and financial hardship.

“I wasn’t allowed to say anything because I was a girl. Now, I make my own decisions and can stand on my own.”

— Mahnoor

With new confidence, Mahnoor became a Junior Leader, helping younger girls express themselves and stay in school. Today, she is studying science and preparing for medical school, determined to become a gynecologist who supports girls and women in her community.



“Believe in yourself because you can become whatever you want.”

Right To Play protects, educates, and empowers children to rise above adversity through the power of play. We are a global leader in delivering play based-programs that promote children and young people’s learning and well-being.

Changing lives through the power of play.

4,646,101

children & young people reached

285,612

educators engaged in play-based learning

75,464

parents & caregivers supported

8,744

community leaders mobilized

2,857

coaches & mentors empowered

1,704

government stakeholders involved



Behind every figure are children, communities, and partners united by a shared vision. Together, we’re expanding access to education, creating new opportunities for empowerment, and strengthening the systems that protect children’s rights today and for generations to come.

10 years of learning through play with the LEGO Foundation



Photo credit © Right To Play / Mpumbya Rodney

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR IMPACT HERE



For a decade, Right To Play and the LEGO Foundation have partnered to ensure children around the world experience the joy, wonder, and power of learning through play.

We’ve learned a lot about why play is such a powerful tool for supporting children’s learning and well-being, and how we can fully harness that power at different stages of a child’s development. We’ve leveraged those learnings for greater impact and contributed that knowledge to the growing body of evidence that shows how play is a transformational force in a child’s life.

With the LEGO Foundation’s support, we also contributed to global learning through two policy briefs: ***Accelerating Foundational Learning Through Play*** and ***Promoting Psychosocial Well-being Through the Power of Play***.

Through this partnership, we’ve directly reached:

7 million+ children

200,000 teachers

12 countries

Play To Grow

In Uganda and Tanzania, the Play To Grow project has strengthened parent-child relationships in refugee communities by equipping caregivers to use play to support learning and socio-emotional skills. **Positive parent-child relationships increased** from 42% to 69% in Tanzania and from 79% to 84% in Uganda. Building on these successes, the initiative evolved into Play To Grow-Ready To Learn, a comprehensive program that supports children’s psychosocial well-being, strengthens relationships with parents and caregivers, and enhances school readiness as children transition from pre-primary to primary education in Uganda.

Partners in Play (P3)

The P3 project **improved education quality for girls and boys** aged four to 12 in Ghana from 2019–24. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and its agencies, NGO partners, and community-based organizations, P3 incorporated **play-based learning** approaches into the school curriculum and teaching practices. Results showed improvements in foundational literacy, increased student enrollment, and motivation to learn.

Build Back Better

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Build Back Better program supported children in Ethiopia, Lebanon, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Uganda. The program reached more than **60,000 children, 3,000 parents**, and nearly **1,000 teachers**. Its open-source P.O.W.E.R. psychosocial well-being resource has been used in several countries including Ukraine.

Thank you to the LEGO Foundation for a decade of shared commitment. The children, teachers, and communities we’ve reached together are proof of what’s possible when vision meets action, and we look forward to what comes next.



Photo credit © Right To Play / Round Designs

Plug in Play

Through the Plug in Play program, students in Rwanda gained **hands-on experience** in making, tinkering, robotics, and coding—building skills increasingly essential in today’s workforce. Teachers used applied, **play-based learning methods to engage both girls and boys in STEM learning**. The results are significant: when the project began, only 35% of students in project schools passed their SET subjects. Five years later, that number rose to 85%.

Students like Lea, a grade 5 student, are applying these skills in practical ways. Combining coding and engineering, she designed a smart refrigerator that uses sensors to detect when someone approaches and opens automatically—a solution with potential applications in homes, schools, hospitals, and hotels.

WATCH LEA’S STORY HERE





Early Childhood Care & Education



The early years shape a child's future—and caregivers play the biggest role.

We equip parents with confidence and tools to support learning through simple, playful activities that promote both development and emotional well-being. Through songs, stories, movement, and shared moments of joy, families strengthen bonds, reduce stress at home, and help children thrive.



READ HOW WE ARE ENABLING PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND WELL-BEING THROUGH **PLAY TO GROW**

Our early childhood programs help girls and boys aged three to six with high-quality and playful early learning, laying the foundation for success in school and in life.

In 2025, we reached **7,790 young children** with safe, nurturing, and developmentally rich early childhood programs and trained parent educators in child-centered approaches.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATION

IMPACT STORY

Parenting **through play**



Photo credit © Right To Play / Mpumbya Rodney



READ VASTINA'S STORY HERE

In Isingiro, Uganda, Vastina once felt overwhelmed caring for her daughter Christine, who was born with a disability. Poverty, stigma, and the stress of raising six children left little time for connection—and their home often felt tense and quiet.

That began to change when Vastina joined the **Play To Grow** program. Through the program, parent educators introduced simple, playful ways to engage with Christine and support her early development. What started as small moments—singing songs, playing outside, sharing time together—gradually built trust, confidence, and joy. Through these experiences, Vastina began to see her daughter differently.

Today, their home is filled with laughter, storytelling, and shared play. Christine is more engaged and expressive, and Vastina feels more

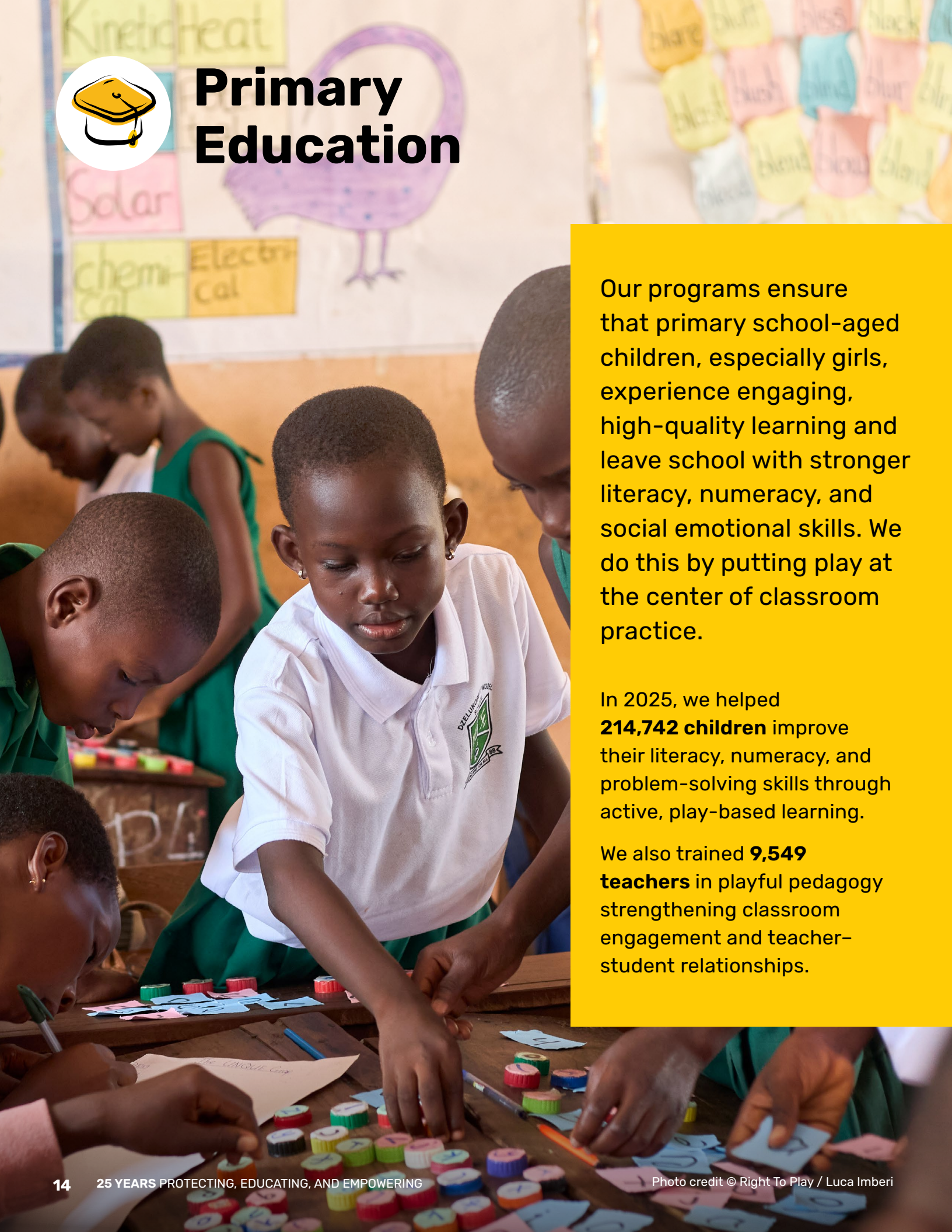
confident as a parent. Her husband has also embraced play as a better way to connect with their children. Vastina now encourages other parents in her community to choose connection over harsh discipline, especially in the early years—helping shift attitudes toward more playful, inclusive parenting.

"Showing love makes a child strong."

— Vastina, parent



Primary Education



Our programs ensure that primary school-aged children, especially girls, experience engaging, high-quality learning and leave school with stronger literacy, numeracy, and social emotional skills. We do this by putting play at the center of classroom practice.

In 2025, we helped **214,742 children** improve their literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills through active, play-based learning.

We also trained **9,549 teachers** in playful pedagogy strengthening classroom engagement and teacher-student relationships.

Photo credit © Right To Play / Luca Imberi

PRIMARY EDUCATION

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Beyond the crisis: Igniting minds in Lebanon

In 2025, amid ongoing instability in Lebanon, the **Igniting Learning Minds (ILM)** project strengthened early-grade literacy and well-being for vulnerable and refugee children in Beirut and the Bekaa. Delivered by Right To Play, in partnership with Jusoor and funded by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the project not only adapted to displacement and disrupted learning environments—but also exceeded its goals.

In total, **505 children** participated in structured literacy and play-based learning sessions. The project also trained **42 educators** in child-centered and social-emotional learning approaches, engaged **100 caregivers** in well-being and parenting support, and refurbished three education centers—creating safer, more inclusive learning environments.

Learning outcomes improved across all grade levels. Early Grade Reading Assessment results showed strong gains in letter-sound recognition, phonics, decoding, and reading fluency.

The ILM Project has done more than strengthen reading skills and resilience for 505 young learners—it has built something lasting: a stronger network of teachers, caregivers, and community spaces equipped to support children's education for years to come.

"Through the activities, I learned how a child's brain develops and discovered healthier ways to connect with my child."

— Caregiver, Jeb Jennine, Lebanon



Photo credit © Right To Play / Ralph Azar

80%

of students **achieved a passing grade** on end-of-year Arabic literacy exams

Play, protection & keeping girls in school

Save Her Seat Tanzania supports grade 5–7 learners across **40 primary schools** in the Serengeti and Tarime regions, delivered in partnership with the African Inland Church of Tanzania (AICT) and with support from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The program reaches **25,294 children**—including **12,934 girls and girls with disabilities**—helping them build essential life skills like self-confidence, communication, leadership, collaboration, decision-making, and problem-solving through gender-responsive, play-based learning.

“Having a special place just for us girls to use is such a big change. I used to worry about how to manage my menstrual period when there was no privacy, but now I can focus on my studies.”

— Merician Wambura, Head Girl, Nyamombara Primary School

In a context where girls face barriers such as limited access to quality education, child marriage, early pregnancy, low parental support, and a lack of girl-friendly bathrooms, Save Her Seat strengthens schools, teachers, and communities to keep girls learning and in school. Partners also mobilize communities to challenge harmful gender norms and champion girls’ education.



Photo credit © Right To Play / Julius Mahela

91%

of teachers now **apply gender-responsive, play-based approaches** —a 28-point increase since Year 1

97%

of girls **regularly attend girls’ clubs** across 40 schools, sustaining participation and peer support

83%

of girls report **feeling safe at school** —up 14%, with gains that **include girls with disabilities**—reflecting safer environments and protective practices

Behind every number is a girl who stayed in school, raised her voice, and took her seat.



Photo credit © Right To Play / Julius Mahela



Photo credit © Right To Play / Julius Mahela

“Games are enjoyable. People can learn a lot through play.”

— Mary, student
Save Her Seat Program, Tanzania



Gender Equality & Girls' Well-Being



Photo credit © Right To Play / Abdoulaye Faye

IMPACT STORY

In Senegal, girls face real barriers to sport, including harmful gender norms, limited access to safe facilities, and the persistent message that competition and physicality belong to boys.

At just 15, Elisabeth is rewriting what's possible for girls in her community. Learn how she found belonging and became a champion through wrestling.

"Sport gave me strength and a place to belong."

— Elisabeth, Senegal



READ ELISABETH'S
STORY HERE

Our programs support girls and young women to build confidence, leadership, and voice—while engaging young people to challenge the harmful gender norms that hold them back. Through safe spaces, mentorship, inclusive sport, and gender-responsive teaching, we help girls develop essential life skills, stay in school, and grow into the leaders they already have the potential to be.

In 2025, we equipped **292,813 girls** and **74,233 young women** with the skills, support, and safe spaces they need to stay in school, build confidence, and assert their rights.

GENDER EQUALITY & THE WELL-BEING OF GIRLS

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Empowering youth through reproductive health education

In many communities across Ghana, Mozambique, and Uganda, stigma and deeply held beliefs around sexual and reproductive health leave young people without the information they need to protect themselves, avoid early pregnancy, and plan their futures. **SHARE (Sexual Health and Reproductive Education)** is working to change that.

Funded by Global Affairs Canada and delivered in partnership with FAWA, FHI 360, and WaterAid, SHARE advances gender equality by improving access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and gender-responsive health care—especially for girls and young women. In Ghana, **over 1,500 youth** completed the mentorship program, with confidence in accessing reproductive health services rising from 63% to 78%. The Ghana Education Service is now taking steps to sustain and scale the program. In Uganda, teachers report



Photo credit © Right To Play / Flash Studio Moz

a stronger understanding of national CSE standards and feel better equipped to support their students.

In Mozambique, trained teachers passed their knowledge on through a cascade model, ultimately reaching **1,622 teachers** in Play-Based Learning approaches and benefiting **86,284 adolescents and youth**.

"I no longer think about getting married so soon, much less about men as a solution to my needs, because I have the power to choose, to say 'no.'"

— Female participant, SHARE Project Mozambique

88%

of these adolescents and youth now report feeling **empowered to seek sexual and reproductive health information** and services when needed

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Play for the prevention of violence against women and girls



Photo credit © Right To Play / Num Films

Pakistan ranked last out of 148 countries in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report 2025, with women and girls continuing to face barriers to education, healthcare, and employment.

When we launched **What Works I** in 2015, the results were remarkable: reductions in bullying, lower rates of depression among children, improved gender attitudes, and a decline in corporal punishment at school and at home. Building on this progress, **What Works II**—funded by the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and delivered in partnership with Aahung and the Aga Khan University—continues to develop safer, more equitable school environments.

The program is mainstreaming a play-based, life-skills curriculum across **112 public and private schools** in Sindh. Through a whole-school model—mentoring Junior Leaders, strengthening school management, and training teachers in prevention-focused lessons—it is shifting classroom dynamics for the better. In 2025 alone, we reached **5,972 children**, over half of them girls, building their confidence, life skills, and ability to make safe decisions. A major milestone this year was the approval of the Play-Based Life Skills Education Manual by the Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority (STEDA), opening the door to widespread adoption across public schools.

“Instead of scolding students, I involve them in movement-based or discussion activities to redirect their energy positively.”

— Teacher, *Pakistan*

The program’s impact has drawn regional attention—our Pakistan team was invited to share their learnings in Ethiopia, where education specialist Maham presented the curriculum adaptation journey.

From Sindh’s classrooms to regional stages, What Work’s II is proving the power of play-based learning to protect as well as educate.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE **WHAT WORKS** PROGRAM



Photo credit © Right To Play / Abdoulaye Faye

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Leveling the field for girls in Senegal

Through **RECAF-Jeu**, funded by Global Affairs Canada and implemented in partnership with the Liverpool Football Club Foundation, over **10,000 young people**—especially girls—in Sédhiou and Ziguinchor are building confidence, leadership, and life skills through sport and play.

By creating safe spaces, providing sports gear and period products, and coaching youth on goal setting and resilience, the project is shifting attitudes across communities.

One of those young people is Fatou. At nine years old, she sat glued to the TV watching women wrestlers crowned as champions—and decided she would follow in their footsteps.

44%

more boys in the program now confidently **speak out against gender-based violence**, female genital mutilation, and early marriage

68%

of girls and young women report a **decrease in gender-based violence**, compared with 50% at the start of the project

When Fatou first joined the wrestling team, she was brave but technically raw—unsure how to position her body, defend, or read her opponent. Community support was scarce. But as her coaching improved, so did everything else.

“I faced a lot of challenges. My friends told me that girls who do sports wouldn’t be able to have children.”

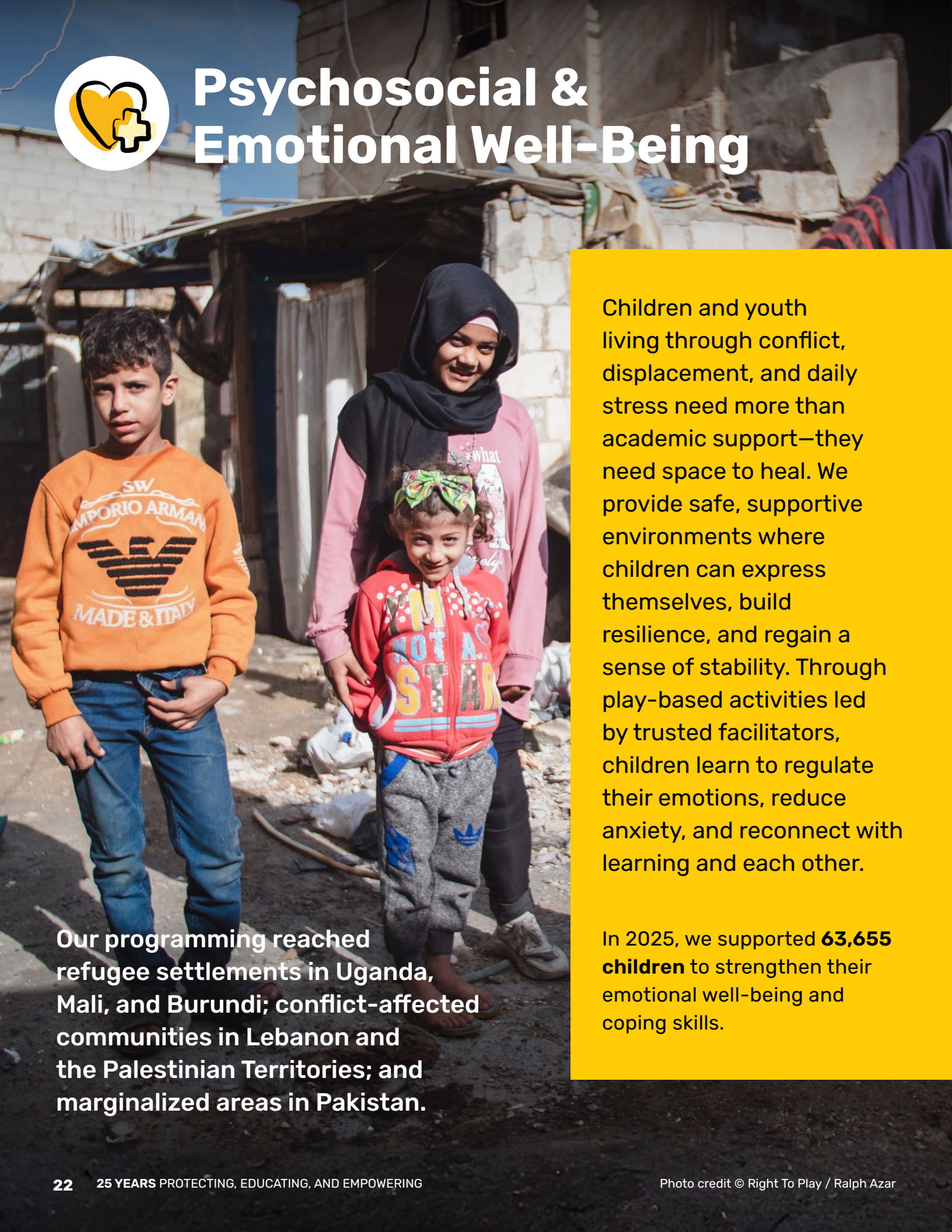
— Fatou, *Senegal*



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE **RECAF-JEU** PROJECT



Psychosocial & Emotional Well-Being



Our programming reached refugee settlements in Uganda, Mali, and Burundi; conflict-affected communities in Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories; and marginalized areas in Pakistan.

Children and youth living through conflict, displacement, and daily stress need more than academic support—they need space to heal. We provide safe, supportive environments where children can express themselves, build resilience, and regain a sense of stability. Through play-based activities led by trusted facilitators, children learn to regulate their emotions, reduce anxiety, and reconnect with learning and each other.

In 2025, we supported **63,655 children** to strengthen their emotional well-being and coping skills.

PSYCHOSOCIAL & EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Where **healing and hope** take the field

In 2025, the **Kukivi Project** continued to transform the lives of young people in Burundi by harnessing the power of sport to create safer, more supportive communities for children and youth affected by displacement. “KuKivi”—meaning “busy at work” in Kirundi—is funded by the Olympic Refugee Foundation in collaboration with the Burundi National Olympic and Paralympic Committees, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the Ministry of Gender and Solidarity.

2025 results at a glance:

9,002
young people
reached

4,900
community
members reached

80
junior leaders
trained

561
refugees
supported

4
government
authorities
involved

46
youth with
disabilities
engaged

“What happened to me does not define who I am. Through sport, I regained my self-worth and my place in the community.”

– Girl, 17, Burundi



Photo credit © Right To Play / Wide Communications

The project’s work is grounded in three key outcomes:

1. **Stronger support systems** among parents, coaches, and youth leaders to meet the psychosocial needs of young people
2. **Improved life skills** for returnee and host-community youth through structured sport activities
3. **Greater government leadership** in advancing sport for protection

Education in Emergencies

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Learning against the odds

For more than a decade, conflict and insecurity have forced families in Mopti, Gao, and Bandiagara, Mali to flee their homes, disrupting children’s education and leaving lasting marks on their lives. Today, both formal schools and temporary learning centers (TLCs) are essential to keeping children connected to learning.

EMPOWER—implemented by Right To Play and funded by the Government of Canada—responds to this reality by strengthening literacy and life skills for children affected by conflict, with a particular focus on girls and children with disabilities. The project also strenghtens the capacity of community organizations supporting children’s learning, protection, and psychosocial well-being.

“It is these tragedies we have experienced that make me want to learn in order to overcome the challenges to one day put an end to the war.”

— Boy, Mali

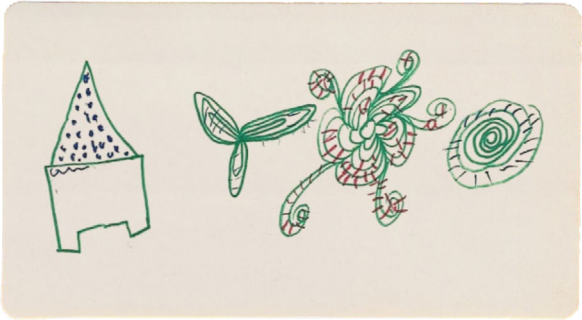
As part of EMPOWER, girls and boys aged 6 to 12 from displaced families in these regions were invited to express their understanding of learning, their motivations for attending school, and the barriers they face through a participatory visual research process. Their drawings—featured throughout this report—offer a rare and powerful window into the experiences, needs, and aspirations of displaced children.



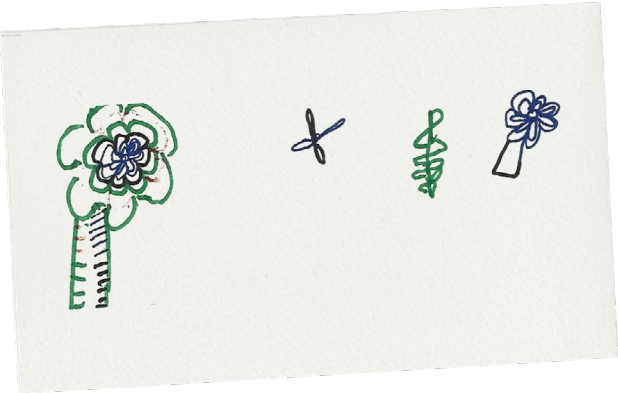
“I made this drawing to show that despite the insecurity we have experienced, despite our parents being killed, despite our birth certificates being burned, we need support to learn.”
— Girl, 11, Mopti, Mali



“I would like to study to become a doctor and help people in need.”
— Young girl, Bandiagara, Mali



“I go to school to help my parents buy a house and a game.”
— Girl, 11, Mopti, Mali



“The love of writing.”
— Girl, 10, Mali

Key achievements and impact

This year, EMPOWER contributed to improving the quality, accessibility, and continuity of education for displaced children in Mali:



2,000 birth certificates provided to displaced children missing legal documentation – enabling school enrollment for the first time



6,666 learning booklets supplied to partner schools to strengthen literacy and foundational skills



1,050 school kits distributed to support children’s return to learning



Eight Temporary Learning Centers (TLCs) established in internally displaced persons (IDP) sites



Psychosocial support games and activities integrated into learning, helping children manage stress, build resilience, and reduce anxiety – changes observed and documented by community facilitators

Behind every statistic is a child who picked up a pencil—to draw, to write, and to **imagine a future beyond conflict**. We are grateful to Global Affairs Canada for its support, and to the Ministry of National Education of Mali and the education academies of Gao, Mopti, and Bandiagara for their partnership. The drawings featured here are the work of the young artists themselves.

Restoring childhood amid conflict



Photo credit © Right To Play / Palm Media

The situation in Gaza remains critical, with conflict, repeated displacement, and prolonged school closures profoundly affecting children’s safety, learning, and emotional well-being. Many no longer have access to secure, structured environments where they can play, learn, and reconnect with peers—conditions essential to their healthy development.

Circle of Hope responds to this urgent need by supporting approximately **1,100 conflict-affected children** aged 5–12 living in shelters and displacement settings. Funded by the **AFAS Foundation** and implemented in partnership with the **Tamer Institute for Community Education**, the program offers safe, predictable learning and psychosocial support activities that help restore children’s sense of stability and connection to education. Caregivers are also engaged to better support their children’s coping and resilience in this highly stressful environment.

“You give them a small toy, and they hold it as if it were their homeland, as if it were a cloud lifting them away from the war, a cloud that rains dreams. You offer them a smile, and they return it with a laugh louder than the bombs.”

— Ahmad Mortaja, Psychosocial Specialist, *Gaza*



Photo credits © Right To Play / Palm Media



Impact and reach

 **1,108 children reached**

 **12 structured Arabic literacy and numeracy sessions**, helping counter significant learning loss due to school closures

 **5 Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) established** in collaboration with the Tamer Institute, providing safe access to learning and social interaction for displaced children

 **28 facilitators trained** in Play-Based Learning (PBL) methodologies, safeguarding, child protection, gender inclusion, and strategies for creating supportive classroom environments

Where play becomes power

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities across Canada continue to face inequitable access to safe housing, culturally grounded education, healthcare, clean water, and healthy food. These inequities place significant pressure on individuals, families and communities—and the effects are felt across generations.

Right To Play worked with **80 Community Partners** and **93 Community Mentors** to run the **PLAY Program**, making fun, supportive, safe spaces for children and youth.

“It was really like an outlet for me when I was growing up, I really looked forward to going every day.”

— Sam, former Community Mentor & PLAY Program Participant

In 2025, **4,914 children and youth** had regular supervised spaces to build essential socio-emotional skills—confidence, communication, leadership, and connection. All across Canada, we used the power of play to nurture resilience and belonging.

Key results

92%
of youth reported **feeling confident in themselves**, up from 66% at the start of the program

86%
of youth **felt confident in their own leadership**—nearly doubling from 56% at the start of the program

94%
practiced healthy relationships by helping and collaborating with others, up from 78%



Photo credit © Right To Play / Kaylee Smoke & Tyler Shaw

Growing up, giving back

For youth in Aamjiwnaang First Nation, the PLAY program comes with myriad activities, including games, movie nights, and learning to make fry bread with Cody, the third Community Mentor to hold the role in a decade of partnership with Right To Play.

The “close-knit community” is why Cody and many other members of the First Nation want to move back to the reserve. The PLAY program, as one of many services offered across every stage of life, certainly exemplifies that kind of community-based and community-oriented connection.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM’S IMPACT

How we scaled up learning in 2025

Play-based learning is no longer a philosophy—it’s gaining ground in classrooms worldwide. In 2025, Right To Play’s sustained advocacy delivered concrete policy influence, system adoption, and scaled implementation.



Thought leadership at the ADEA Triennale

Right To Play presented at the **2025 Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Triennale**, in support of the Ghana Ministry of Education. Alongside our Technical Assistance partners—Sabre Education, Lively Minds, and Innovations for Poverty Action—we shared evidence-based and scalable approaches to early learning and teacher development.



Advocacy at the International Education Conference in Paris

At the **4th International Education Conference** in Paris, Right To Play Mali highlighted how play-based pedagogy supports inclusive education for displaced children—advancing the case for investment in fragile contexts.



Photo credit © Right To Play / Luca Imberti



Influencing policy in Ghana

Right To Play and partners secured the inclusion of Kindergarten In-service Teacher Training on Play-based Learning within Ghana’s Global Partnerships for Education Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes project. This delivers play-based training to approximately 29,000 public kindergarten teachers across 14,700 schools. We are also supporting the development of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curricula and early childhood stimulation modules spanning ages 0–3 through Primary 4.



Supporting future teachers in Mozambique

In Mozambique, Right To Play partnered with the Ministry of Education to train pre-service teachers in play-based learning methodologies—strengthening the next generation of educators.

Featured impact & partnerships

25th Anniversary Event

On October 21, we gathered to celebrate 25 years of Right To Play at the 'Quin House in Boston—honoring our founder Johann Olav Koss and the incredible champions who have fueled our mission to protect, educate, and empower children through play. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we surpassed our fundraising goal—ensuring that the next 25 years of impact will reach even more children around the world. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us, supported us, PLAYED with us, and continues to believe in the transformative power of play. Here's to the next chapter of changing lives through play!



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Photo credit © Right To Play / Luca Imberi

Felix Family

For more than 15 years, Allyson Felix and her brother Wes have been passionate champions for Right To Play. As longtime partners, advocates, and leaders within our community, the Felix Family has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to advancing girls' empowerment, well-being, and equity through the power of play. Their leadership has resulted in transformational funding being directed to Right To Play over the past two years and this has helped expand safe and inclusive learning environments where girls can build confidence, develop leadership skills, and realize their full potential.

Through their support, Right To Play has strengthened mentorship and life-skills programming for adolescent girls, equipped educators and coaches with tools to challenge harmful gender norms, and created opportunities for girls to stay in school, access quality education, and grow into leaders in their communities.

McCance Foundation

At a time of growing global uncertainty and increasing challenges across the international development sector, the steadfast support of The McCance Foundation has been more important than ever. Through a generous \$200,000 grant over 2 years, the Foundation helped Right To Play strengthen teacher training partnerships with Ghana's Ministry of Education, respond to urgent needs in Gaza and the West Bank, and advance critical Education in Emergencies programming. Their support also contributed to the launch of Circle of Hope in Gaza, providing psychosocial support and learning opportunities for children living through crisis. We are deeply grateful for the McCance Foundation's partnership, leadership, and unwavering belief in the power of education and play to help children heal, learn, and thrive.



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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Charities - Quality Education Program in Ghana

Since 2016, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been a valued partner in advancing quality education and child wellbeing through play-based learning. In 2024–2025, the Church supported Right To Play's Quality Education Program in Ghana, helping reach more than 14,000 children and 389 teachers across 40 schools in the Volta Region. Their support strengthened teacher training, expanded inclusive and gender-responsive play-based learning, rehabilitated classrooms, and funded a new WASH facility with a dedicated changing room for girls. Together, this partnership is helping create safer, more engaging learning environments where children—especially girls—can learn, grow, and excel, both in and beyond the classroom.



Photo credit © Right To Play / Palm Media



Our Ambassadors

Thank you to all the Ambassadors who supported and amplified our work in 2025.

Aleksander Aamodt Kilde, Alpine Skiing, Norway

Paul Accola, Alpine Skiing, Switzerland

Chemmy Alcott, Alpine Skiing, United Kingdom

Abdi Salam Ali, Track & Field, Switzerland

Kayla Alexander, Basketball, Canada

Bianca Andreescu, Tennis, Canada

Nora Angehrn, Golf, Switzerland

Duan Asemota, Track & Field, Canada

Miranda Ayim, Basketball, Canada

Billy Bridges, Sledge Hockey, Canada

Marco Büchel, Board Member, Alpine Skiing, Liechtenstein

Matthijs Büchli, Cycling, The Netherlands

Dario Cologna, Cross-Country Skiing, Switzerland

Thijs van Dam, Field Hockey, The Netherlands

Thomas Dekker, Cycling, The Netherlands

Diggy Dex, Singer/Songwriter, The Netherlands

Sasha DiGiulian, Rock Climbing, United States

Uschi Disl, Biathlon, Germany

Eva Drummond-de Goede, Field Hockey, The Netherlands

Sam Effah, Track & Field, Canada

Halvor Egner Granerud, Ski Jumping, Norway

Allyson Felix, Track & Field, United States

Nouchka Fontijn, Boxing, Coach, Speaker, The Netherlands

Severin Freund, Ski Jumping, Germany

Akwasi Frimpong, Skeleton, The Netherlands

Roger Furrer, Golf, Switzerland

Moritz and Stephanie Fürste, Field Hockey & Co-Founder of Hyrox, Germany

Sasha Gollish, Track & Field, Canada

Marco Hagemann, Commentator & Moderator, Germany

Michelle Heimberg, Springboard Diving, Switzerland

Alison Jackson, Cycling, Canada

Hugo Kennis, TV Chef, The Netherlands

Simone van de Kraats, Waterpolo, The Netherlands

Rutger Letschert, Fitness & Lifestyle, The Netherlands

Carlos Lima, Handball, Switzerland

Aksel Lund Svindal, Alpine Skiing, Norway

Rosie MacLennan, Gymnastics, Canada

Lucas Malcotti, Fencing, Switzerland

Sadio Mané, Football, Senegal

Alexander Martinez, Track & Field, Switzerland

Diana Matheson, Soccer, Canada

Brolin Mawejje, Snowboarding, Uganda, United States

Sade McCreath, Track & Field, Canada

Anders Mol, Beach Volleyball, Norway

Ragnhild Mowinckel, Alpine Skiing, Norway

Tanguy Nef, Slalom, Switzerland

Marissa Papaconstantinou, Para Athletics, Canada

Pat Perry, Mental Magician and Conjuror, Switzerland

Suzann Pettersen, Golf, Norway

Andrew Poje, Ice Dancing, Canada

Grace Prendergast, Rowing, United Kingdom

Nathan Redmond, Football, United Kingdom

Laurine van Riessen, Cycling, The Netherlands

Laurence Rochat, Cross-Country Skiing, Switzerland

Bernhard Russi, Honorary Board Member, Alpine Skiing, Switzerland

Pien Sanders, Field Hockey, The Netherlands

Maximilian Schachmann, Cycling, Germany

Anna Schaffelhuber, Para Alpine Skiing, Germany

Lauritz Schoof, Rowing, Germany

Myrthe Schoot, Volleyball, The Netherlands

Alex & Maia Shibutani, Ice Dancing, United States

Birgit Skarstein, Rowing, Cross-Country, Norway

Arvin Slagter, 3x3 Basketball, The Netherlands

Sami Jo Small, Ice Hockey, Canada

Ben Sonnemans, Judo, Entrepreneur, The Netherlands

Christian Sørum, Beach Volleyball, Norway

Lauren Stam, Field Hockey, The Netherlands

Jeroen Stekelenburg, Sports Journalist, The Netherlands

Amelie Stiefvatter, Moviemaker & Moderator, Germany

Johannes Thingnes Bo, Biathlon, Norway

Eva van Timmeren, Content Creator, The Netherlands

Maarten Tjallingii, Cycling, The Netherlands

Tessa Veldhuis, Rugby, TV Host, The Netherlands

Rivkah op het Veld, Sports Journalist, The Netherlands

Anouk Vergé-Dépré, Beach Volleyball, Switzerland

Anouk Vetter, Track & Field, The Netherlands

Marijn de Vries, Cycling, Journalist, Host, The Netherlands

Andreas Wenzel, Alpine Skiing, Switzerland

Hayley Wickenheiser, Ice Hockey, Canada

Raphael Wicky, Football, Switzerland

Erica Wiebe, Wrestling, Canada

Markus Zberg, Cycling, Switzerland

Mats Zuccarello, Ice Hockey, Norway



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SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

Safeguarding means ensuring that every person who encounters our work—children, community members, and colleagues alike—is protected from harm. It is a commitment rooted in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and aligned with the Core Humanitarian Standard. Our Safeguarding Policy, reviewed and strengthened in 2025, embeds this commitment into everything we do—from project design and partnership agreements to the resourcing of survivor-centered support.

Reporting & response

In 2025, we received 12 concerns. All were acknowledged within 48 hours, fully investigated, and closed. Of the 6 substantiated cases—involving bullying and online harassment—psychosocial support was offered to every survivor, and staff received follow-up training in safeguarding, positive masculinity, gender communication, and DEIA.

Every concern raised is a sign that our systems are working—that people feel safe enough to speak, and trust that they will be heard. That trust is something we work to earn every day.

Building a safeguarding culture

86%
of staff **received safeguarding training** in 2025

100%
of safeguarding focal points, partners, and community representatives **completed safeguarding induction**

Safeguarding every person, without exception



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

Global Leadership Council

This network of international leaders is committed to supporting our work. We thank our founding members for their leadership.

Johann Koss	Barbara Keller	Dr. Michael Siefke
Martin Bidermann	Greg Lai	Dag Skattum
Rainer-Marc Frey	Robert MacLellan	Larry Tanenbaum
Tatjana Frey	Meridee Moore	Florian Wendelstadt
Ragnar Horn	Merhdad Noorani	Urs & Simone Wietlisbach
Adrian Keller	Rob Pulford	

Global Donors & Supporters

We thank the following funders who contributed CAD \$25,000 or more to Right To Play between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025.

# 60 Million Girls Foundation	C Canadian Postcode Lottery Foundation The Carson Family Charitable Trust Capgemini Invent CD&R Foundation (made possible through the Foundation’s Employee Giving Campaign) The Charles H. Ivey Foundation The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints CIBC Jim and Penny Coulter	F Felix Family Foundation Flutter International Dr. Christoph Franz & Isabelle Schaal French Embassy in Lebanon Frey Charitable Foundation Luisa & Georg Fritzmeier
A Mireille Abujawdeh & John Lunn AFAS Foundation AltaGas Ltd. Anonymous Anton Sport ASICS	D Däster-Schild Stiftung Thomas Dekker Dentons Canada LLP Dentsu Norge Dutch Postcode Lottery	G Trevor and Cindy Gardner Goldbach Neo GoodLife Fitness Government of Canada Government of Ontario Green Leaves Education Foundation
B Bain Capital Children’s Charity Barry Callebaut’s Cocoa Horizons Foundation Baur Immobilien AG Hans & Brigitte Bidermann Martin & Barbara Bidermann Patrik & Claudia Jeuch-Bidermann Bernhard & Christine Blum Etienne Boitel & Susann Frölicher Boitel Brødrene Jensen AS	E The Edgerley Family Foundation EFG Bank AG Embassy of Finland Robert & Dana Emery Family Foundation European Union	H Dr. Thomas & Béatrice Hammer HandSpark Charitable Trust Hasenacher Stiftung The William and Nona Heaslip Foundation The Henry White Kinnear Foundation Simon Holden Ragnar & Joey Horn Halvor Horten Jörg Hössl Karin & Lonnie Howell
		I IDRC Ingeborg Dénes-Muhr Stiftung Infront Sports & Media AG

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L Jake & Charity Lawrence The Lawson Foundation The LEGO Foundation The Light Foundation LFC Foundation – the official charity of Liverpool Football Club

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N Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation National Bank of Canada Ness, Risan & Partners The Netherlands Enterprise Agency New Balance Foundation Nike N7 Fund Nixon Charitable Foundation Merilee & Mehrdad Noorani Norad
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O Olympic Refuge Foundation

P PepsiCo Canada Foundation Andrew Pickersgill & Stephanie Bloomfield Leo Plank Kirsten and Dwight Poler Postcode Lotterie in Germany Postcode Lottery (UK) Power Corporation of Canada Principality of Liechtenstein, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Education and Sport Promedica Stiftung Elizabeth Moore Pulford & Rob Pulford

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T The Lawrence and Judith Tanenbaum Family Foundation Timeless Foundation Garrick Tiplady Tom Wilhelmsen’s Foundation Tripp/Smith Family Foundation

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Z ZSC Lions Eishockey AG

Select 2025 Partners

We are deeply thankful to the following global partners who have shown significant commitment to Right To Play over the last year by generously providing funding, supporting program implementation, and amplifying awareness of the organization at a global level.

















Photo credit © Right To Play Mali

All children, even those born into war and poverty, have the right to hope and dignity and the chance to live a life characterized by more than survival.

— Johann Olav Koss
Founder, Right To Play International



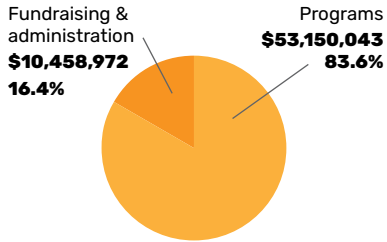
Consolidated Financial Statements

We are grateful for the trust that donors have placed in us to protect, educate, and empower children. We are proud to share annual reports and consolidated financial statements as part of our commitment to openness and accountability.

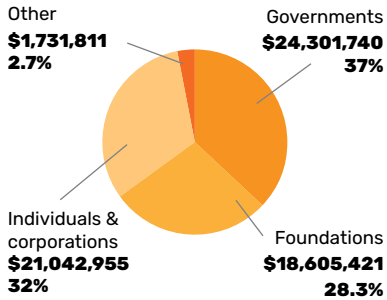
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2025	2025	2024
	CAD \$	CAD \$
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash	20,137,867	26,444,589
Investments	8,683,549	5,834,342
Contributions receivable	5,875,556	5,404,326
Harmonized Sales Tax receivable	118,044	196,889
Prepaid and other expenses	1,205,547	1,553,414
	36,020,563	39,433,560
Capital assets	353,670	486,419
	36,374,233	39,919,979
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	3,819,153	2,191,883
Deferred contributions	10,862,550	17,780,265
Deferred lease inducement	45,074	45,074
Employee post-retirement benefits	115,525	588,462
	14,842,302	20,605,684
Long-term		
Employee post-retirement benefits	574,097	310,986
Deferred lease inducement	122,241	160,325
Deferred capital contributions	149,707	230,010
	15,688,347	21,307,005
Net assets		
Invested in capital assets	203,963	256,409
Internally restricted net assets	4,155,782	4,155,782
Unrestricted	16,326,141	14,200,783
	20,685,886	18,612,974
	36,374,233	39,919,979
For the year ended December 31, 2025		
Revenue		
Government	24,301,740	25,387,538
Individuals	9,998,399	7,220,248
Corporations	11,044,556	11,152,413
Foundations and charities	18,605,421	20,761,979
Other income	1,731,811	2,154,838
Total revenue	65,681,927	66,677,016
Expenses		
Program expenses		
Program implementation	50,431,347	54,177,335
Public awareness and education	2,718,696	2,290,445
Total program expenses	53,150,043	56,467,780
Non-program expenses		
Administrative	4,369,892	4,074,815
Fundraising	6,089,080	6,112,871
Total non-program expenses	10,458,972	10,187,686
Total expenses	63,609,015	66,655,466
Excess of revenue over expenses	2,072,912	21,550

Where the Money Goes



Where the Money Comes From



Visit our website to see the full set of Right To Play International's consolidated financial statements, including notes and the auditor's report.

LEARN MORE



Financial Statements for Right To Play USA

Statement of Financial Position Right To Play USA

	2025	2024
	USD \$	USD \$
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	974,585	312,917
Contributions receivable	97,186	190,569
Advanced deposits	12,079	662,734
Prepaid expenses	33,822	19,585
Total current assets	1,117,672	1,185,805
Other assets		
Security deposits	7,500	7,500
Total other assets	7,500	7,500
Total assets	1,125,172	1,193,305
Liabilities and net assets		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	41,449	26,421
Refundable advances	278,985	524,922
Total current liabilities/ total liabilities	320,434	551,343
Net assets		
Net assets without donor restrictions	789,276	503,328
Net assets with donor restrictions	15,462	137,914
Total net assets	804,738	641,242
Total liabilities and net assets	1,125,172	1,192,585

Statement of Activities for the Year Ended 2025

Revenue (funds raised in the USA)		
Government grants	85,939	-
Foundation grants	891,832	121,233
Individuals	1,990,997	1,010,539
Corporate	17,797	162,980
Other income	949	217,062
Special Events	730,867	-
Total revenue	3,718,381	1,511,814
Expenses		
Program services, worldwide	2,773,046	1,738,332
Management and general	224,223	359,886
Fundraising and events	557,616	715,411
Total expenses	3,554,885	2,813,629
Change in net assets	163,496	1,301,815
Net assets beginning of the year	641,242	1,943,057
Net assets end of the year	804,738	641,242

Visit our website to see the full set of Right To Play USA's financial statements, including notes and the auditor's report.

LEARN MORE



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*"Sport and play are
the soil from which
possibility sprouts."*

— Johann Olav Koss
Founder, Right To Play International



protecting,
educating,
& empowering
children
through
play.



RIGHT TO PLAY

Right To Play USA

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www.righttoplayusa.org

@righttoplayusa

EIN: 13-4045245



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