
The Bernard van Leer Foundation was established in 1949 and is based in the Netherlands. Our income is derived from the sale of Royal Packaging Industries Van Leer N.V., bequeathed to the foundation by Dutch industrialist and philanthropist Bernard van Leer (1883 - 1958).

Our mission is to improve opportunities for children up to age 8 who are growing up in socially and economically difficult circumstances. We see this both as a valuable end in itself and as a long-term means to promoting more cohesive, considerate and creative societies with equal opportunities and rights for all.

Our grantmaking works primarily through **supporting programmes** implemented by local partners in selected countries. Through our **publications and advocacy**, we aim to inform and influence policy and practice, globally and in the countries where we operate.

Strategic goals (2010- 2015)

- Taking quality early learning to scale
 - Reducing violence in young children's lives
 - Improving young children's health by improving their physical environments
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The countries where we operate

- Brazil
 - India
 - Israel
 - The Netherlands
 - Peru
 - Tanzania
 - Turkey
 - Uganda
 - European Union
(regional approach)
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Our goals in Tanzania

1. National scale-up of quality services for early learning for children from 0 to 8 years old in poor rural communities
2. A reduction in violence in rural families with children 0 to 8 years of age



Why these goals in Tanzania

1. Early learning: Three basic obstacles stand in the way of realising the potential of young children in Tanzania to learn: i) malnutrition – 42% of five year olds show signs of stunting and 5% shows signs of wasting ; ii) poor preparation for formal learning – 63% of children do not attend preschool, and among those that do student-teacher ratios are as high as 74 to 1; and iii) poor quality of primary schools, where despite net enrolment rates of 95%, the ratio of qualified teachers to students is 54 to 1. As a result, only 50% of primary school leavers are able to pass their final examinations. These statistics are worse in rural areas, where half of all children live below the basic needs poverty line and 15% of the adult population (20% women, 10% men) have never had any formal education. However, there are very positive signs of improvement, notably a new national integrated early childhood development policy which provides the basis for the effort to scale up.

2. Violence: In a nationwide study endorsed by the Tanzanian government, 75% of children and youth aged 13-24 reported experiencing physical violence (punching, kicking, or whipping) by a relative, teacher or intimate partner before the age of 18. The most common aggressors were children's family members. This suggests levels of prevalence for the 0-8 age group reaching into the millions of young children. Research by the World Health Organization in Tanzania further suggests that as many as 42% of ever-partnered urban women and 56% of ever-partnered rural women have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Extrapolating from these statistics, we can assume that the number of young children who are witness to domestic violence against their mothers is also likely to be in the millions.



Lisa Jordan - Executive Director

Lisa joined the foundation in July 2009, having previously worked with the Ford Foundation. She is a senior executive in the field of philanthropy with over twenty years of experience in NGOs, foundations and governments.