
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 Brazil

1. Zero violence in the lives of young children growing up in favelas in Rio de Janeiro and Recife
 2. Safe and affordable housing for young children growing up in *cortiços* in Sao Paulo
 3. Quality home visiting programmes for rural children under 3 living in the state of the Amazon
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Why these goals in Brazil

1. Favelas: Rio de Janeiro is the city with the largest number of homicides per year in Brazil (2,333 in 2010). Recife is the city with the highest per capita homicide rate in Brazil (90/100,000). Most of the violence occurs in the 1,000 favelas, which are home to around 227,000 children 0 to 8 in Rio, and 97,000 in Recife. In addition, these children also experience high levels of violence within their homes. The combination of these two types of violence (in the community and in the home) has extraordinary impacts on children's brain development, learning potential, health and future adult behaviour.

2. Cortiços: Families that live in *cortiços* want to be close to services, escape from violence and fear in the favela, and reduce costs and time of commuting to work. Rental costs are often inflated and families endure sub-standard living. The little research available suggests that between 50,000 and 150,000 young children are growing up in *cortiços*. They get tuberculosis and respiratory illness from poor ventilation. They are abused and neglected because of the stress of overcrowded housing and constant threat of expulsion.

3. The Amazon: The Amazon has a population of 3.3 million people, of whom 136,000 are under 3. 74,000 of these children live outside of the capital Manaus, and are spread across a physical area larger than Peru. They fare substantially worse than the national average on most social indicators: 40% do not have access to piped water; 72% of pregnant women have less than 6 ante-natal visits from healthcare professionals; one in four do not have birth registration; 30% of 4 to 6 years old do not go to pre-school; and 95% of 0 to 3 year olds do not go to nursery school.



Lisa Jordan - Executive Director

Lisa joined the Foundation in July 2009, having previously worked with the Ford Foundation.



Leonardo Yanez – Programme Officer

Leonardo joined the Foundation in 2000, having previously worked in academia, NGO and government in Venezuela.

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Please visit our website for more information on the Foundation and our work in Brazil

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