

WON'T STOP US

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



RIGHT TO PLAY

20th
ANNIVERSARY

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Cover Image: Children in Rwanda play on a playground they designed through the Power of Play program, funded by the Dutch Postcode Loterij.





Message From Our Leadership

2020 was a year of unprecedented challenges for children all over the world, particularly those in Right To Play's classrooms and playgrounds. With an estimated 800 million children still facing education disruption globally, the work of our organization has never been more critical.

We continued to utilize our partnerships with government agencies worldwide to deliver fantastic results. Even in the face of adversity, we kept innovating – and kept children learning. And although we couldn't gather in-person, we still honored our

incredible International Board Chair, Dag Skattum, our longtime partner Microsoft, and the incomparable Allyson Felix, albeit in a digital environment.

We will continue to do everything necessary to keep kids protected, educated and empowered. Thank you for your sustained support, I look forward to gathering with you again soon.

Mark Hantho
Chairman of the Board,
Right To Play USA



Despite the immense hurdles we faced this year, I was delighted to have joined Right To Play in 2020 as the National Director. Inspired by our incredible staff, program providers, and board, we have been able to come together as a team and deliver on our mission. We have also embarked on some exciting new initiatives that we believe will set RTP USA up for sustained growth moving forward. Despite being remote and not traveling to program countries this year, I have been so impressed with how we have been able to demonstrate how play serves as a critical foundation for learning, and by educating and empowering girls, we can change the trajectory of future generations. The resilience of the children in our programs remains endlessly inspiring, and I'm so thankful to lead our efforts in the US to support them.

Under the auspices of our new, ambitious 5-year strategic plan to build on and scale our achievements of the past 20 years. I am confident that RTP USA is poised to take the next steps in building a RTP global community. Without the continued dedication of the exemplary US Board members, staff and an amazing group of donors, none of this would have been possible.

Thank you for your continued generosity and partnership.

Rosemary Trent
National Director



Message From Our Global Board Chair

Right To Play celebrated a major milestone in 2020, marking 20 years of protecting, educating, and empowering the world's most vulnerable children using play – one of the most fundamental forces in a child's life.

We began the year with plans to bring our supporters together around this significant anniversary but, like the rest of the world, we instead spent 2020 pivoting in response to a difficult new reality ushered in by the pandemic and resulting lockdowns.

That meant bringing our 20 years of experience to bear to quickly respond to the crisis and keep children safe and healthy, learning, and mentally strong. Using the lessons we learned in other health emergencies – the Ebola epidemic in Liberia, the HIV/AIDS crisis, and malaria outbreaks, to name just a few – we focused on helping children and their families to protect themselves from COVID-19. And, thanks to the creativity and commitment of our staff, we successfully pivoted our education and child protection work to remote methods to support children locked down at home.

It was a hard year for the children and communities we work with, and for our staff. But, as you'll read, we have emerged stronger as a organization, with new innovative program approaches, impressive impact, and in a strong financial position – all evidence of what is possible when a group of committed global supporters and staff are laser-focused on a shared mission of protecting, educating, and empowering the world's most vulnerable children.

On behalf of the International Board of Directors, thank you for your unwavering support of the children we work with, and for your commitment to helping them rise above adversity to grasp a brighter future.



Dag Skattum

Chair, International Board of Directors

Dag joins a group of children playing soccer as part of their after-school club in Beirut, Lebanon.



Message From Our CEO

In my time with Right To Play, I have been enormously impressed by our powerful vision for children, our unique programmatic approach, and the incredible commitment of our many supporters. But what has impressed me most is the unfailing tenacity of the children we work with, and the commitment of our global team.

That tenacity was on full display in 2020, a year marked by many hardships and challenges. In the communities where we work, staff, teachers, and coaches used the lessons and skills they learned from Right To Play to keep children healthy and safe, learning, and mentally strong. Alongside children, they fought against an increase in children's rights violations, created equal opportunities for girls and boys, and refused to give up on education and hope.

Within our organization, teams showed a clear resolve as they rallied to pivot programs to respond to changing needs while supporting their colleagues and responding to needs at home. In a year of uncertainty, our determined staff team pulled together to create

an ambitious new Strategic Plan that charts our vision for the next five years – a vision that will see us empower more children than ever with the education, skills, and opportunities they need to rise above adversity and create a more peaceful and equitable world. I am deeply committed to this vision, and looking forward to building on the incredible work of my predecessor, Dr. Kevin Frey, to lead the organization into a period of greater growth and impact.

Of course, none of this work would be possible without you, our supporters. We have been so grateful for your generosity and commitment over the past 20 years, and look forward to working with you to protect, educate, and empower more children in the years to come.



Susan McIsaac

CEO, Right To Play International



*Susan joins students
in Beirut in a
classroom game.*

Our Mission

To protect, educate and empower children to rise above adversity using the power of play.

We play for change in five key areas:

Quality Education

In Ethiopia, **90% of children showed commitment to learning** after participating in our programs, up 28 percentage points from the start of the program.

Child Protection

In partner communities in Mali, **the incidence of early marriage decreased** from 49% at the start of the program to 35% at the end of the program.

Peaceful Communities

In Lebanon, 82% of children showed life skills like **empathy and conflict resolution**, up 26 percentage points from the start of the program.

Gender Equality

In Mozambique, 80% of children feel that **girls and boys can participate equally** in all activities, up 25 percentage points from the program start.

Health & Well-being

In Pakistan, Right To Play-supported **schools saw rates of depression fall** from 18% to 5% in girls and from 19% to 10% in boys over a two-year period.

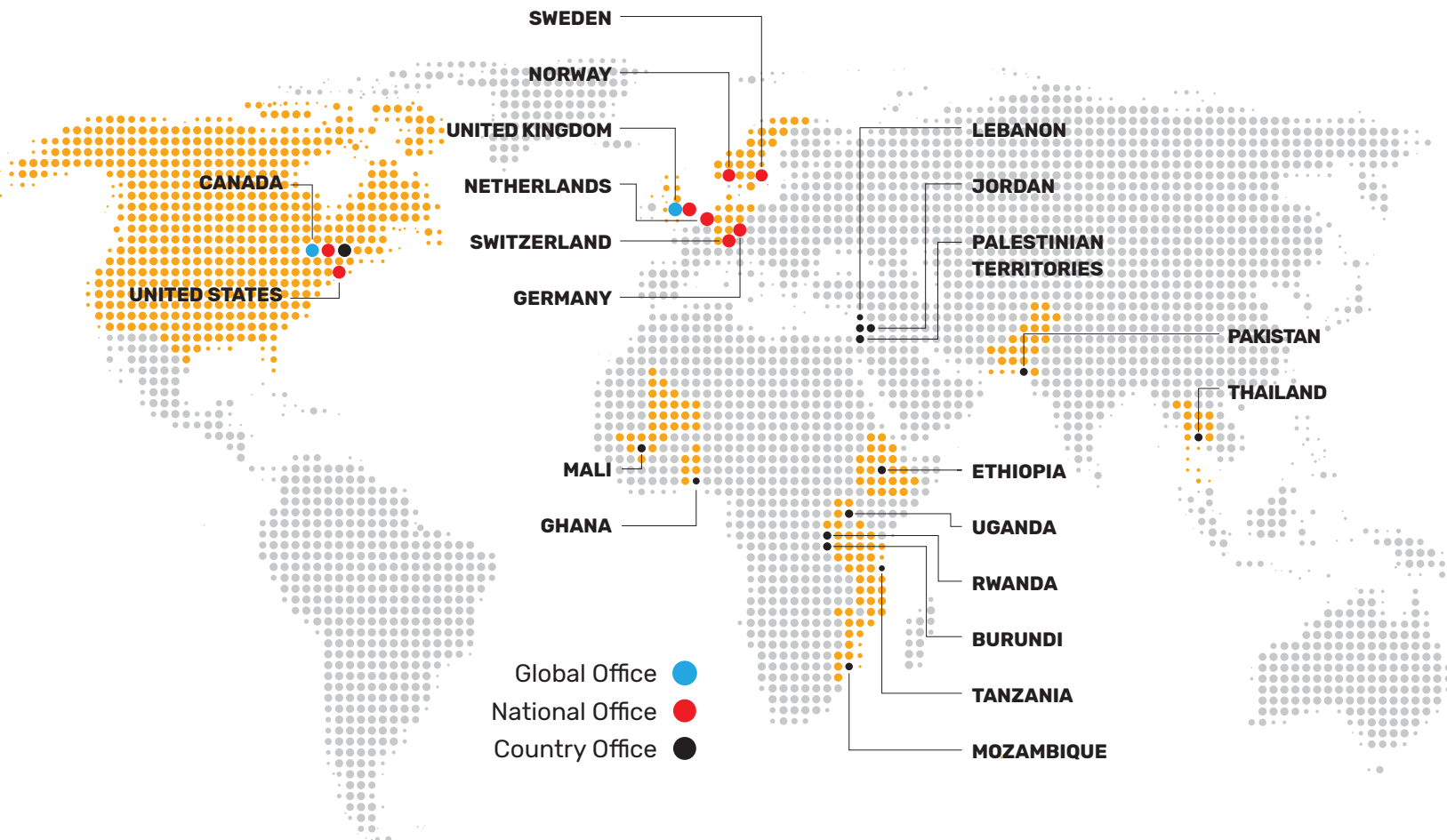
Before school closures in Mozambique, a young girl engages with her lessons.

Photography by Louise Wateridge.



2020 Reach

We reached children in 14 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and North America, supported by eight national offices across Europe and North America.



2.3 million

children participated
in safe in-person and
remote activities.
51% were girls.

2.5 million

teachers, coaches,
parents and caregivers
trained and engaged to
support children's growth.

11.2 million

children engaged
through playful,
interactive radio and
television programming.

92 refugee
communities

hosted programs that
help children heal from
displacement, overcome
prejudice, and get
an education.



Where the Money Goes

The continued support of our donors allows us to run play-based programs for quality education, gender equality, child protection, health and well-being, and peaceful communities.

Where the Money Goes

\$38,943,182

Programs

\$6,685,094

Fundraising & Administration

85.4%

14.6%

Where the Money Comes From

Governments

\$18,750,220

Individuals & Corporations

\$14,829,903

Foundations

\$13,806,673

Other

\$1,852,369

38.1%

30.1%

28%

3.8%

In Thailand, the Open Goals program creates safe, accessible spaces where girls can build their confidence through sport. Photography by Thailand Country Office.



COVID-19

WON'T STOP US

Keeping children healthy and safe, learning, and mentally strong through the pandemic.

The pandemic and resulting lockdowns were hard on the children we work with. Being out of school put their health and safety at risk, isolated them from their peers and support networks, and interrupted their education. Girls faced especially great challenges: rates of child marriage, early pregnancy, female genital mutilation, and child labour increased, and many girls were faced with the reality that they might never be able to go back to school.

Throughout all this, Right To Play was there. We worked tirelessly to ensure children had the knowledge and supplies they needed to protect themselves and their families from disease, to provide access to remote education, to maintain support networks, and to empower them to take care of their own physical and psychosocial well-being.

In Pakistan, young women learn life skills like confidence, leadership, and hygiene through the GOAL program. Photography by Pakistan Country Office.



Responding to COVID-19

Keeping Children Healthy and Safe

Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) Clubs in Uganda

In Kamwokya, a neighbourhood of Kampala, inadequate sanitation facilities and a lack of hygiene knowledge leave many community members vulnerable to infectious diseases. WASH clubs use games to teach children about good hygiene practices and disease prevention. When COVID-19 hit, youth leaders from WASH clubs sprang into action, using radio and community awareness campaigns to empower more than a thousand children and adults with information about proper handwashing technique and how to protect themselves from COVID-19 and other diseases.



A boy practices what he learned about handwashing from his WASH club.

Photography by Uganda Country Office.

Sport for Development, Peace and Leadership (S4DPL) in Thailand

The S4DPL project helps youth across the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) develop life and leadership skills. When COVID-19 started, youth leaders designed and conducted virtual and in-person workshops for children in their neighbourhoods, using sport and play to promote handwashing, COVID-19 prevention, emotional well-being, and stress management.

Through 44 workshops, 58 youth leaders worked with 400+ peers to inspire more than 4,800 community members to stay healthy and active throughout quarantine.

***Children in Thailand
sanitize their hands
before playing a game.***

*Photography by
Thailand Country Office.*



Keep Children Mentally Strong

Virtual Summer Camp in the Palestinian Territories

During the lockdown in the West Bank and Gaza, we offered a virtual summer camp that helped children overcome feelings of isolation, continue their learning, and hone their creative skills. Weekly challenges encouraged children to engage in play, reading, music, sport, art, and theater. In six weeks, more than 257,400 children and adults connected through digital activities that promoted safety, inclusion, equality, consent, and family support. The program was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Education.

Responding to COVID-19

Keep Children Learning

Supporting Learning Through Activity in Jordan

At the start of quarantine, Right To Play collaborated with the Jordanian Ministry of Education to create a series of physical activity videos to help children cope with stress and boredom, stay physically active, and develop a positive relationship with their bodies. The videos were broadcast on Jordan's academic television channels, reaching more than 1.4 million children in grades 1 to 12 each week. Since then, we've started working with a group of NGOs to create videos that support learning in subjects such as science, English, Arabic, and mathematics for children in grades 1 to 10.

A young boy plays on his balcony to stay active.

Photography by Louise Wateridge



“The Telescola program helps me to read more while I’m staying home... I like to be able to study from home and to sit and watch these lessons in the mornings.”

– Benecia, third grade student in Gaza province, Mozambique

Tele-Schooling in Mozambique

When schools closed in Mozambique, the Ministry of Education sought support from partners, including Right To Play, to contribute to curriculum for televised school lessons that could keep children engaged and learning while at home. The resulting Telescola lessons reached 1.2 million children every day with play-based activities that kept them actively engaged

in the learning process, and got parents involved in their children's education.

In a survey conducted about the impact of Telescola, more than 95% of parents said they thought the broadcast would contribute to their children's academic success when schools reopen.



20 Years of Impact

In 2020, we celebrated two decades of empowering children to rise above adversity using the power of play.

We are proud of the work we and our partners have done over the past 20 years to ignite children's potential to learn and thrive.

And we are inspired by all the children and youth we've met who are fighting for their rights, and shaping a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities.

As we look ahead, we see a future where children are free from abuse and exploitation, heard and respected, educated, and resilient and filled with hope. We are committed to working with children and communities to make this future a reality. Join us.



Meet Our Alumni

We have met and worked with thousands of incredible children, teachers, and volunteers over the past 20 years who are helping to change their communities for the better.

Here are some of their stories.



Bilkis, Mali

Participating in a sport for development program taught Bilkis that she could be a leader. Now she uses what she learned to empower other girls her community.



Gilbert, Rwanda

Growing up, Gilbert often felt alone. His mother, a genocide survivor, left him in his grandmother's care, and an illness in childhood left him deaf. Joining an after school club taught him to connect to others and gave him the confidence to pursue his dream of becoming an architect.



Fatima, Pakistan

In Fatima's home village, it can be difficult for women to break out of traditional gender roles. But Fatima didn't let that stop her. She fought against gender inequality, became a Right To Play coach, and now uses play to empower other young women to pursue their dreams.



Than, Thailand

Than's parents fled Myanmar when he was a child because of the threat of government violence. Now Than is using what he's learned as a Right To Play coach to help other displaced persons cope with the strains of poverty and separation.



Angelina, Mozambique

When she was 16, an unexpected pregnancy put Angelina's academic future in jeopardy. After attending a Right To Play session on girls' right to an education, her parents helped her return to school. Now, Angelina is studying in grade ten and dreams of becoming a nurse.



Tauseef, Pakistan

Joining a Right To Play program in his school taught Tauseef the dedication and discipline he needed to succeed in his studies. Now, as a coach in the program, he's helping youth to stay away from drugs and violence.

Meet more alumni



disaster

WON'T STOP ME

Dreaming of a Brighter Future: Daniyal's Story

On August 4, 2020, an explosion devastated Lebanon's capital city of Beirut. Daniyal, 12, and his family were injured in the explosion, and their home was severely damaged by the blast. They were able to find shelter and recover from their injuries, but the memory of the traumatic event haunted Daniyal and his sister Shatha, giving them recurring nightmares and anxiety. Separated from his friends and support systems, Daniyal began to act out, turning to violence to express his anger.

Shortly after the explosion, Daniyal and Shatha started attending a play-based mental health program that Right To Play started in response to the blast. At first, Daniyal was withdrawn and angry. But, as he began participating in the games and activities, he started to learn ways to positively express his emotions, he acquired new coping skills, and his attitude began to shift. He began opening up to the other children and playing with them, and even assisted the coaches by leading games and helping support other children as they healed from their own trauma. [READ MORE >](#)

**"Our future doesn't work without the past.
I want to help in creating a better future."
– Daniyal**

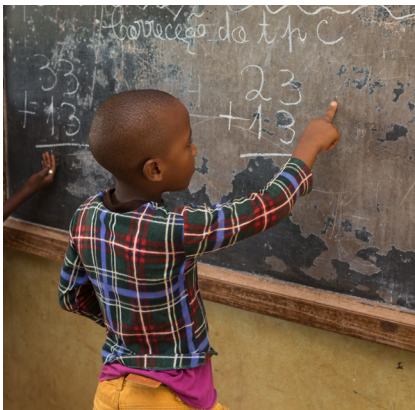
Program Highlights

Giving all children a chance at a quality education

Three new programs are bringing play-based learning into more classrooms worldwide, and giving millions of children a chance to develop a lifelong love of learning, and the holistic skills they need to succeed.

Partners in Play (P3)

In Ghana, we are using playful learning to boost the quality of primary education on a national scale. The four-year collaboration with the LEGO Foundation and Ghana's Ministry of Education will **help more than three million students succeed** by training 80,000 teachers to incorporate learning through play into their classrooms and lessons.



My Education, My Future (MEMF)

In Tanzania and Burundi, we are improving access to quality of education for girls and children with disabilities who have become refugees due to civil unrest in Burundi. Thanks to funding from Global Affairs Canada, we are helping teachers create **safe and inclusive learning environments for 48,000 primary school-aged children.**



Enhancing Quality and Inclusive Education (EQIE)

In Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories, **we are using play-based learning to help 160,000 children improve their literacy and reading skills** by 2024. Funded by NORAD, the EQIE program will empower teachers to integrate inclusive learning approaches in the classroom.



“Since I introduced playful learning into my lessons, my students are more motivated to attend and participate in class.”

– Gloriose, grade one teacher in Burundi



child labour

WON'T STOP ME

Brighter Than Gold: Balla's Story

When she was eight years old, Balla was forced to drop out of school to work in a gold mine to earn money for herself and her siblings. The work was extremely dangerous: she and other workers faced daily risks of falling, poisoning, and injuries. But she kept going because she felt she had no choice.

Sarata, a Right To Play-trained teacher, noticed Balla's absence from school and reached out to her family to see if she could help. Through the support of Global Affairs Canada, Right To Play's Jam Suka program trains and mobilizes community volunteers like Sarata by sensitizing them to the effects of child labour and other rights violations, and encourages them to stand up for children.

Sarata and Filifing, a Jam Suka volunteer, made the case for the importance of education to Balla's future. Their words held weight. Balla was able to quit the mine and return to school – one of the hundreds of children Right To Play was able to pull from child labour over the course of the program. Balla is now thriving in school, and dreams of becoming a doctor. She joined a children's club in her school, and speaks about her experiences with her peers so more children know how to resist child labour. [READ MORE>](#)

During the Jam Suka project the incidence of child labour in program communities decreased from 56% at the start of the program, to 48% at the end of the program.

A photograph of a man and a young boy sitting on a wooden bench in a shelter. The man, on the right, is wearing a yellow and red sports jersey with 'SPORT' written on it and dark shorts. He is looking towards the boy. The boy, on the left, is wearing a blue t-shirt with yellow trim and a white face mask. He is looking down. The background shows a concrete wall and some items on the bench, including a soccer ball in a basket.

displacement

WON'T STOP ME

Overcoming Hopelessness: Kyaw's Story

When Kyaw was two years old, his parents were forced to flee Myanmar to escape government persecution. Kyaw spent his childhood in Mae La, Thailand's largest shelter for displaced people, which is home to more than 50,000 Karen refugees. Poverty, family trouble, and the stress of refugee life took a toll on his mental and emotional health; by the time he was a teenager, he had almost no hope for the future. At 17, Kyaw dropped out of school, overwhelmed by feelings of despair and anger that he didn't know how to control.

A concerned friend encouraged Kyaw to return to school and, when he did, he encountered Right To Play's Achieving Change Together program (ACT). With generous funding from the IKEA Foundation, ACT helps young refugees meaningfully participate in society by helping them develop life skills, and encouraging their participation in community decision-making. It was a life-changing experience for Kyaw. Not only did he feel stronger, he regained hope for the future, and saw how he could help make it a better one for other children in the settlement. Now, Kyaw and other members of the program use the peace-building skills they've learned to resolve conflict and help neighbours in need, providing invaluable supports that make the community a better place. [READ MORE >](#)

The number of children and youth who say they appreciate their value and the value of others increased from 9% to 84% as a result of their participation in the Achieving Change Together program.



Our U.S. Lifetime Patrons

This generous group of patrons have each donated more than USD \$1 million to Right To Play. We are grateful for their ongoing partnership.

Sandy & Paul Edgerley
Lise & J. Michael Evans
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Penny & Jeff Vinik

Donor Acknowledgement

Thank you to our USA donors and following funders that contributed \$1,000 USD or more to Right To Play between January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. With you on our side, we can protect, educate and empower more children around the world.

100,000 +

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Before Covid-19 closed schools, children in Mozambique play a game to practice their counting skills. Photography by Mozambique Country Office.

Global Leadership Council

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

Johann Olav Koss (Chair)
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**We thank the following partners and donors who contributed CAD \$25,000
or more to Right To Play between January 1 and December 31, 2020.**

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Women Win
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Welcoming Our New Global Ambassador

Sadio Mané

Liverpool FC striking winger and philanthropist Sadio Mané joined the Right To Play team as Global Ambassador in 2020. In this role, Mané will build on his track record of empowering children through sport and education to inspire even more youth to rise above adversity and achieve their dreams.



Melwood

“

I'm proud to use my passion for sport and education to inspire girls and boys in Senegal and around the world to believe in themselves and develop the life skills they need to become the leaders of tomorrow.”

– Sadio Mané, Right To Play Global Ambassador

Photography by Liverpool Football Club.



Ambassadors

Thank you to all the Ambassadors who supported
and amplified our work in 2020.

Ade Adepitan, wheelchair basketball & TV personality, United Kingdom

Nathan Adrian, swimming, United States

Chemmy Alcott, alpine skiing, United Kingdom

Kayla Alexander, basketball, Canada

Bianca Andreescu, tennis, Canada

Bonnie Blair, speed skating, United States

Brittany Bowe, speed skating, United States

Pat Burgener, snowboard & music, Switzerland

Mark Cavendish, cycling, track & road, United Kingdom

Dario Cologna, cross-country skiing, Switzerland

Eva de Goede, field hockey, The Netherlands

Diggy Dex, singer-songwriter, The Netherlands

Sasha DiGiulian, rock climbing, United States

Uschi Disl, biathlon, Germany

Allyson Felix, track & field, United States

Severin Freund, ski jumping, Germany

Tanja Frieden, snowboard cross, Switzerland

Akwasi Frimpong, skeleton, The Netherlands

Roger Furrer, golf, Switzerland

Maddie Hinch, field hockey, United Kingdom

Sarah Hughes, ice skating, United States

Zach Hyman, ice hockey, Canada

Henrik Ingebrigtsen, athletics, Norway

Kjetil Jansrud, alpine skiing, Norway

Travis Jayner, speed skating, United States

Therese Johaug, cross-country, Norway

Hugo Kennis, TV chef, The Netherlands

Petra Kvitova, tennis, Canada

Kalyn Kyle, soccer, United States

Carlos Lima, handball, Switzerland

Sarah Lindsay, short-track speed skating, United Kingdom

Aksel Lund Svindal, alpine skiing, Norway

Rosie MacLennan, gymnastics, Canada

Zahra Mahmoodi, soccer, Afghanistan

Andreas Mikkelsen, motorsport, Norway

Fatima Moreira de Melo, field hockey, The Netherlands

Mirai Nagasu, figure skating, United States

Laviai Nielsen, athletics, United Kingdom

Lina Nielsen, athletics, United Kingdom

Darnell Nurse, ice hockey, Canada

Rivkah Op het Veld, sports journalist, The Netherlands

Suzann Pettersen, golf, Norway

Andrew Poje, figure skating, Canada

Heidi Range, singer, United Kingdom

Nathan Redmond, football, United Kingdom

Bernhard Russi, ski, Switzerland

Casper Ruud, tennis, Norway

Summer Sanders, swimming, United States

Jazmin Sawyers, athletics, United Kingdom

Maximilian Schachmann, cycling – road, Germany

Anna Schaffelhuber, para-alpine skiing, Germany

Manuela Schär, paralympian wheelchair racing, Switzerland

Lauritz Schoof, rowing, Germany

Alex & Maia Shibutani, ice dancing, United States

Pascal Siakam, basketball, Cameroon

Birgit Skarstein, rowing, cross-country, Norway

Fanny Smith, skicross, Switzerland

Lauren Stam, field hockey, The Netherlands

Jeroen Stekelenburg, sports journalist, The Netherlands

Johannes Thingnes Bo, biathlon, Norway

Mike Tindall, rugby, United Kingdom

Sari van Veenendaal, soccer, The Netherlands

Anouk Vetter, athletics, The Netherlands

Hayley Wickenheiser, ice hockey, Canada

Erica Wiebe, wrestling, Canada

Mats Zuccarello, ice hockey, Norway



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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.



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The LEGO Foundation



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

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Norad



Global Consolidated Financials

Consolidated statement of financial position as at December 31, 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash	35,336,286	24,434,830
Contributions receivable	3,218,883	3,435,836
Harmonized Sales Tax receivable	128,636	213,072
Prepaid and other expenses	1,229,921	715,523
	39,913,726	28,799,261
Capital assets	549,722	1,340,936
	40,463,448	30,140,197
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	4,332,554	3,067,475
Deferred contributions	22,431,841	16,735,823
Deferred lease inducement	33,133	33,133
	26,797,528	19,836,431
Long-term		
Deferred lease inducement	176,712	209,845
Deferred capital contributions	816,902	1,032,504
	27,791,142	21,078,780
Net assets		
Invested in capital assets	74,354	588,423
Internally restricted net assets	4,155,782	4,155,782
Unrestricted	8,442,170	4,317,212
	12,672,306	9,061,417
	40,463,448	30,140,197

Visit our website to see a full audited report of Right To Play International's 2020 Financials, including notes that are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

[See our full audited financials](#)

Consolidated statement of operations year ended December 31, 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue		
Restricted	32,687,934	39,923,703
Unrestricted	13,704,956	15,173,780
Government subsidies	2,846,275	-
Total Revenue	49,239,165	55,097,483
Expenses		
Program expenses		
Program implementation	37,207,734	43,560,469
Public awareness and education	1,735,448	2,209,797
Total program expenses	38,943,182	45,770,266
Non-program expenses		
Administrative	2,240,988	1,582,180
Fund raising	4,444,106	7,589,033
Total non-program expenses	6,685,094	9,171,213
Total expenses	45,628,276	54,941,479
Excess of revenue over expenses	3,610,889	156,004



Boards of Directors

International Board of Directors

Rob MacLellan, *Chair*
(term ended October 1, 2020)
Dag Skattum, *Chair*
(term began October 2, 2020)
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Karen Conway, *Vice Chair*
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Mali Friedman
Johann Olav Koss
Mark Pellerin
Rob Pulford
Summer Sanders
Jeffrey Schachter
Nancy Arnot Taussig
Lance R Taylor
Shiv Vasisht
Gary Zenkel

*In Peshawar, Pakistan,
youth participate in
games at an event
promoting gender equality.
Photography by Pakistan
Country Office.*

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