

FACT SHEET

Bernard van Leer Foundation

The Bernard van Leer Foundation is a private trust established in 1949 and based in the Netherlands. Our mandate is to improve opportunities for children between the ages of 0 and 8 who live in circumstances of social and economic disadvantage. We do this in two ways:

- funding and supporting early childhood development projects across the world
- sharing knowledge with the aim of informing and influencing practice and policy

We take a holistic view of children's development. Addressing emotional and psychological needs is important alongside health and education. Engaging with families and communities, while respecting culture and promoting ownership, is crucial in creating a safe and supportive environment.

Our vision is of a world that respects the rights, dignity and equality of children, their families and communities. We believe that contextually appropriate interventions in early childhood can be especially effective in helping children to develop their potential, bringing lasting benefits to society.

About the work we fund:

To help ensure that the projects we fund are socially and culturally appropriate, we work by supporting local partner organisations. Our partners are a range of public, private and community-based organisations. They include small organisations for whom we are the main source of funds and large organisations for whom we are one donor among many.

We are aware of the risk of spreading our resources too thinly. To try to maximise our effectiveness we focus on a limited number of countries in which we have built up expertise over the years, together with some regional projects.

We work in three issue areas:

- strengthening the care environment (including parenting issues and children affected by HIV/AIDS),
- successful transitions (dealing with transitions to daycare, preschools and primary education), and
- social inclusion and respect for diversity.

Common features of the projects we fund are that they take a holistic approach to early childhood development, they concentrate on building the capacity of caregivers and communities, and they seek to foster a sense of local ownership. They may also include elements of public education and advocacy on behalf of vulnerable children.

We aim to fund projects that will not only have lasting and tangible direct impacts but that will also add to our knowledge and understanding. By informing our future funding priorities, our publications and our own advocacy work, the projects we fund can ultimately have an influence that extends well beyond their local communities.

Mississippi Delta Children's Partnership – Community Partners and Program Directors

Sharkey/Issaquena County Improvement Association	Emma C. Harris, Program Director
Cary Christian Center	Dorsey Johnson, Program Director
Mayersville Youth Development Committee	Fannie White, Program Director
Quitman County Development Organization	Robert Jackson, Program Director
Tallahatchie County Ministerial Alliance	Andrew Hawkins, Program Director