

Interview with Roger Milla

International Campaign “IT’S THE GESTURE THAT COUNTS”

“I want everyone to find their own way to act for Africa’s children.”

Why did you choose the name “IT’S THE GESTURE THAT COUNTS”?

Because many people want to help but wonder whether their contribution will make a difference. Through this campaign, I want to tell them: you have a part to play.

Not everyone can contribute in the same way. Some can donate, others can sign the petition, share our appeal or offer their time and expertise. What matters is starting with something within your reach.

What is the objective of this international campaign?

To bring people together around three priorities of the Roger Milla Program: fighting noma, improving access to clean water and advancing the Roger Milla Centre of Excellence hospital project in Cameroon.

We want people to understand these commitments, choose how to participate and follow the progress their support helps make possible.

Why bring these three causes together in one campaign?

Because they all concern children’s health, dignity and living conditions.

They require different responses, but they can draw on the same spirit of solidarity. One person may feel particularly strongly about clean water; another may want to support care or champion the petition’s demands. Everyone should be able to choose the cause closest to their heart.

What role does the petition against noma play?

It allows citizens to bring a shared demand to governments, health institutions and international partners.

We call for stronger commitments to prevention, early detection, free access to care and support for affected children. We also want to uphold the dignity and inclusion of survivors.

Our ambition of one billion signatures expresses our desire to mobilise widely. We must, however, report the signatures actually collected and the steps taken to engage decision-makers.

What progress do you hope to support on access to clean water?

We want to mobilise resources for projects suited to the needs of schools and communities.

We must consider the entire lifespan of an installation: water quality, maintenance, repairs and local management. Our concern is that children should benefit from reliable access over time.

How can the campaign support the hospital project?

It can raise awareness of the project, bring together expertise and encourage contributions towards its preparation.

The Roger Milla Centre of Excellence is proposed near Yaoundé-Nsimalen in Cameroon. It aims, in particular, to strengthen access to maxillofacial and reconstructive surgery, with special attention to children living with the lasting effects of noma.

We still need to establish its feasibility, medical programme and funding with the relevant stakeholders. The campaign must explain these stages clearly as they progress.

Why appeal to the football community?

Football brings people together. A player, a club or a supporters' association can introduce a cause to people who did not know about it.

I invite this great community to share our appeal and propose solidarity initiatives. A video, a post or an activity at an event can encourage others to participate.

What would you say to someone who cannot donate?

Your participation is still valuable. You can sign the petition, share information or connect us with someone who may be able to help.

You can also offer a skill: translating a document, contributing to communications or providing technical support. Solidarity takes many forms.

What about businesses or institutions wishing to join the campaign?

I invite them to speak with our team about a specific contribution suited to their expertise and the needs of the project concerned.

A partnership should have a clear objective, defined responsibilities and follow-up. We want to build useful, lasting cooperation.

How can you maintain the trust of those taking part?

By explaining what we are doing and what remains to be accomplished. Each fundraising initiative must explain its purpose and the intended use of donations.

We must present documented achievements, activities in preparation and projects under assessment. We must also discuss difficulties. Trust grows over time through that openness.

What first step would you encourage the public to take?

Visit our website, discover the three causes and choose how you would like to participate.

Sign the petition, support an initiative or share the campaign with your community. Then follow our news to see the next steps.

What is your closing message?

On a football pitch, nobody wins alone. To move solidarity forward, we also need one another.

I want everyone to find their own way to act for Africa's children.

Every gesture counts. Thank you for joining this movement.

Discover the campaign and participate:

www.rogermilla-program.org

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