ROGER MILLA PROGRAM
CHARITY FOR CHILDREN

Interview with Roger Milla



Mr Milla, why did you create the Roger Milla Program?

Football has given me so much. It has allowed me to meet people from all walks of life and understand what we can achieve when we come together. Today, I want to put that strength at the service of the most vulnerable children.

Through the Roger Milla Program, our ambition is to bring partners and individuals together around essential needs: healthcare, safe drinking water and dignity.

What are the main causes you support?

We focus on five causes: future free care for children waiting for facial surgery, the Roger Milla Hospital Centre of Excellence project, the “Red Card to Noma” campaign, access to safe drinking water in African schools and villages, and humanitarian assistance for children in Gaza.

These commitments share one purpose: helping children grow up in better conditions and look to the future with hope.

Why is the fight against noma so important to you?

Because the children affected deserve to be seen, heard and supported. The long-term effects of noma can profoundly change their daily lives and those of their families.

I want to use my voice to raise awareness, encourage prevention and bring people together in support of this cause. A child should never be defined by a disease or their appearance.

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What is the message behind “Red Card to Noma”?

In football, a red card is a symbol everyone understands. We want to turn it into a call to action.

We invite athletes, artists, institutions and the public to share the campaign, support awareness activities and sign the petition. Signing is free: everyone can take part, whether they donate or not.

What do you hope to achieve with the Roger Milla Hospital Centre of Excellence?

We are preparing a project in Yaoundé, Cameroon, dedicated to providing free maxillofacial and reconstructive surgery for children across Africa living with the long-term effects of noma or a congenital facial malformation.

Our ambition is to create a place where these children can receive appropriate care with dignity. This requires studies, authorisations, teams, equipment and funding. We must proceed carefully and build strong partnerships.

What is the difference between funding the centre and supporting the Special Fund for children?

This distinction is essential for the people supporting us.

Fundraising for the hospital project is intended to support its preparation, construction and equipment. The Special Fund aims to build resources for children’s future free care once the centre becomes operational.

Funds raised for this care are intended for a dedicated reserve within the ROGER MILLA INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY FUND. Management and disbursement arrangements will need to be formalised and explained to donors.

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Why also focus on access to safe drinking water?

Because water is one of our most fundamental needs. At school and in the community, it matters to the daily lives of children and families.

We want to support solutions suited to each situation. Installing a water point is not enough: water quality, maintenance, repairs and management responsibilities must also be addressed. We want access that lasts.

What is your commitment to children in Gaza?

Through the “Gaza Emergency Appeal - Help Children Get Through the Winter” campaign, we aim to support humanitarian assistance in partnership with DIGNITÉ Internationale.

The objective is to help provide tents, blankets, hot meals, safe drinking water and essential hygiene supplies. Activities depend on identified needs and the possibilities for access and distribution on the ground.

For me, solidarity with children goes beyond borders.

What stage have the projects and fundraising efforts reached?

We must distinguish between projects under preparation, fundraising targets and what has actually been achieved.

Preparing a document or initiating discussions is a step forward in our work. It does not mean funding has been secured. Similarly, an expression of support must be distinguished from a formal commitment and from funds actually received.

Our communication must be based on verifiable information and report progress as it becomes documented.

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What would you like to say to donors and partners?

Their trust brings responsibility. The intended use of every contribution must be clearly explained.

We want everyone to understand the cause they are supporting, how their contribution is intended to be used and how activities are progressing. We must also explain difficulties and any changes. This commitment must guide our development.

How can people get involved?

They can choose a cause and donate, but they can also share our messages, sign the petition against noma, contribute their skills or introduce us to a potential partner.

We need people willing to contribute with dedication and consistency. Businesses, healthcare professionals, associations, athletes and artists all have something to offer.

What message would you like to share with the public?

On the football pitch, nobody wins alone. For children too, we need to work as a team.

I invite you to discover our causes and choose how you would like to stand alongside us. Sharing a message, making an introduction or contributing can help a project move forward.

Together, let’s bring health, dignity and hope to children. Every action counts.

Roger Milla
Founder and President of the Roger Milla Program