



Terre des hommes Valais Foundation
Activity Report **2024**



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Nurse examines a young resident in the La Maison infirmary

A long-term mission

The **Terre des hommes Valais Foundation**'s aim is to help children in distress, regardless of their political, religious or racial background. The foundation manages and runs **La Maison**, located in Massongex in the Valais region of Switzerland.

La Maison takes in seriously ill children, mainly from Africa, who are transferred to Switzerland to receive vital care that is unavailable in their home countries. Once cured, they return to their families and their daily lives, filled with new hope for the future.

Every week, new children temporarily leave their families to undertake this crucial journey. This is just the first stage of a journey that will require immense courage. When they arrive, they discover a warm and reassuring place to live, where other children and caring staff surround them. At La Maison, they benefit from an environment conducive to a peaceful convalescence.

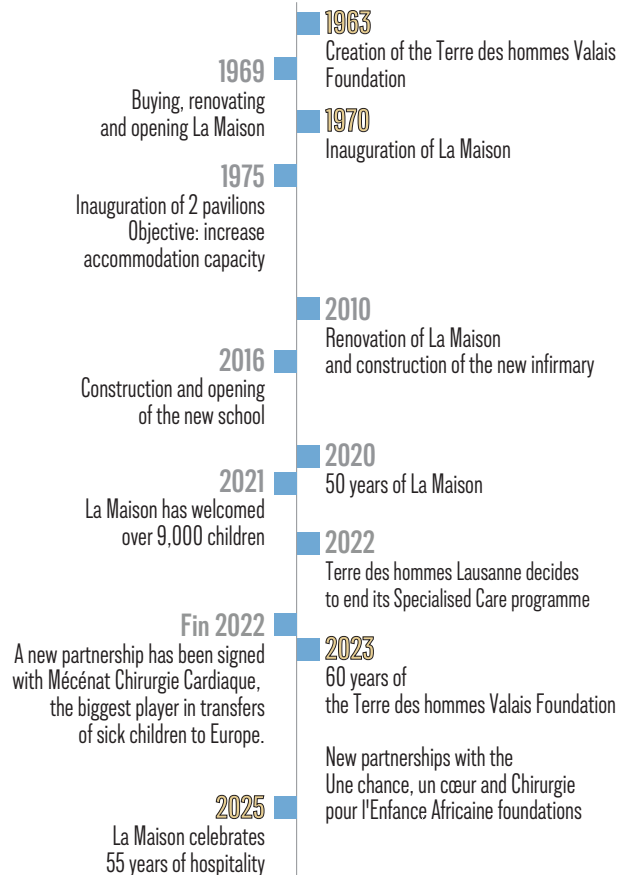
Our values

#COMMITMENT #SOLIDARITY #CARE

Did you know that childcare relies entirely on donations?

The Terre des hommes Valais Foundation manages La Maison autonomously and must finance it in full.

The Foundation is legally and financially independent of any other organisation.



Structure of the Terre des hommes Valais Foundation

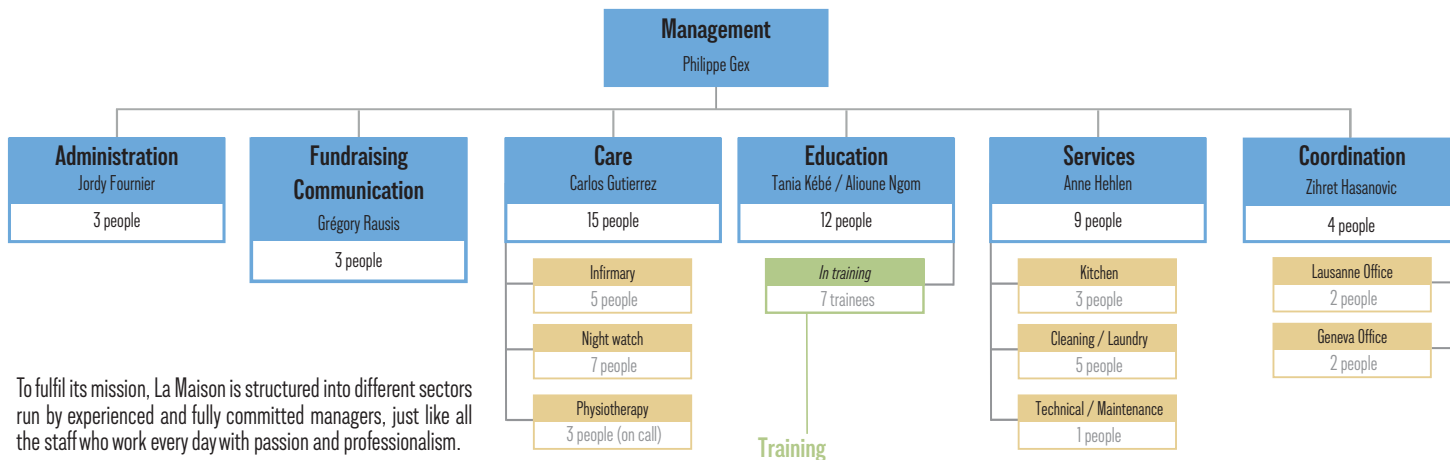
The Foundation Board is made up of seven members, plus the Director in an advisory capacity. The Board plays an essential role in guaranteeing the integrity and sustainability of the Foundation, ensuring that it remains true to its mission. The Board maintains close and regular relations with the management and executives, while cultivating a more informal link with all staff. Deeply committed, it identifies fully with the Foundation's mission and adheres to the principles of our founding charter. The members of the Foundation Board carry out their duties on an entirely voluntary basis, without receiving any remuneration. In addition to their statutory responsibilities, they regularly contribute their expertise in specific areas, playing a key role in the development and operation of the Foundation

Current composition of the Foundation Board

- Michel Mottiez *Chairman*
- André Morand *Vice-Chairman*
- Nathalie Revaz
- Olivier Derivaz
- Jean-François Beth
- Pedro Cardoso
- Philippe Gex *Consultative voice*

Departures in 2024

- Amanda Cotter *(Until May)*
- Robert Clerc *(Until May)*
- Denis Chevalley *Referring doctor for La Maison (Until December)*



To fulfil its mission, La Maison is structured into different sectors run by experienced and fully committed managers, just like all the staff who work every day with passion and professionalism.

Number of permanent employees (excluding trainees): **47 people**

Full-time equivalent: **35.9 positions**

Training

Every year, La Maison offers internship opportunities within its educational team, welcoming students from courses such as the HES in social work or the ECGG, as well as people undergoing professional retraining. Our institution guarantees supervision in line with the objectives required by the schools. Between 15 and 20 trainees a year benefit from close supervision, provided primarily by members of the educational team who have trained as training practitioners.

A word from the foundation

Serving children

In 2024, 164 children returned home, healed, relieved, their hearts brimming with hope. After weeks, sometimes months, away from their families, they returned to the loving arms of their parents and, quite simply, to the joy of living.

At the same time, 172 new children were welcomed to La Maison, bringing with them hope and courage. For many, coming to Switzerland represented their last chance of recovery. Every look of concern, every hand that clutches timidly, tells a story of struggle and determination.

We salute the strength of the families who entrust their children to us, overcoming anguish and distance with the conviction that the impossible will become reality.

Tribute

We live this trust on a daily basis, "from living to living" (Edmond Kaiser's charter), and it is with immense gratitude that we thank :

- The hospital teams, who care for children at the most critical moments, offering them not only care but also a new chance at life.
- The many volunteers, the discreet "angels" who accompany the children on the plane, on the road and throughout their hospitalisation, watching over them with infinite tenderness.
- The donors, whose generosity lights up lives. Every donation is a helping hand, a bridge to the future. We will do everything in our power to be worthy of it.
- The staff at La Maison, whose commitment goes beyond words. Day and night, they accompany, reassure, encourage and surround these children with all the warmth of a home.

Vision and evolution

For over 60 years, Terre des hommes Valais has been taking in children, mainly from Africa, transferred to Switzerland by partner organisations. As specialists in medical care, we remain a key link in a chain of solidarity, a reliable and committed partner. In 2024, we strengthened our collaboration with our institutional partners: *Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque*, *Sentinelles*, *Une Chance*, *Un Coeur* and *Chirurgie pour l'Enfance Africaine*. Every year, thanks to these collaborations, nearly 200 seriously ill children from around twenty countries are treated. Behind these figures, there are faces, stories and heartbeats that come back to life. Together, we are innovating, finding solutions and moving forward, driven by humility and humanity.

Behind every line in this report, there is a future to rebuild. Our financial rigour and the unfailing commitment of our supporters ensure the Foundation's long-term future, because the future of these children cannot depend on uncertainties.

A daily commitment

Terre des hommes Valais faces immense and ongoing challenges :

- Several operations are carried out at university hospitals every week, some of them vital
- Hundreds of children are welcomed and supported every year, each with their own story, wounds and dreams
- We respect cultural diversity, which makes La Maison a place of richness and sharing.
- A network of volunteers to build and maintain, generous people ready to offer their time and solidarity
- A budget of 4.2 million Swiss francs a year to cover without subsidies, an ongoing battle
- A long-term vision to defend, so that this chain of life never stops.

But beyond the figures and the stakes, Terre des hommes Valais is above all a human adventure. It's a story woven from encounters, hopes, victories and tears too, but always driven by three essential values: commitment, benevolence and solidarity.

We are at the service of children, determined to offer them the best chances of recovery and a future.

We go forward with the deep conviction that every child we save is a promise for the future, and that as long as there is a child to care for, we will continue our mission.

Thank you for your confidence and support.

Let's carry on together.

Terre des hommes Valais Foundation



Michel Mottiez
Président



Philippe Gex
Directeur



Children from La Maison discover the snow in Massongex

An international impact thanks to key partnerships

In 2024, La Maison welcomed **172 children from 23 countries**. Offering them a new chance at life and transforming the lives of their families remains our long-term mission. These children have been saved thanks to essential partnerships with organisations active in their countries of origin, where the infrastructure is inadequate and the cost of care inaccessible. These partnerships are essential to providing these seriously ill children with access to vital care.

At La Maison, every day is a new opportunity to hope and persevere. The smile on a child's face, the moments of joy shared and the progress made inspire us to continue our commitment, with the ambition of building a fairer, more caring world.

Our main partners



136

Number of children transferred



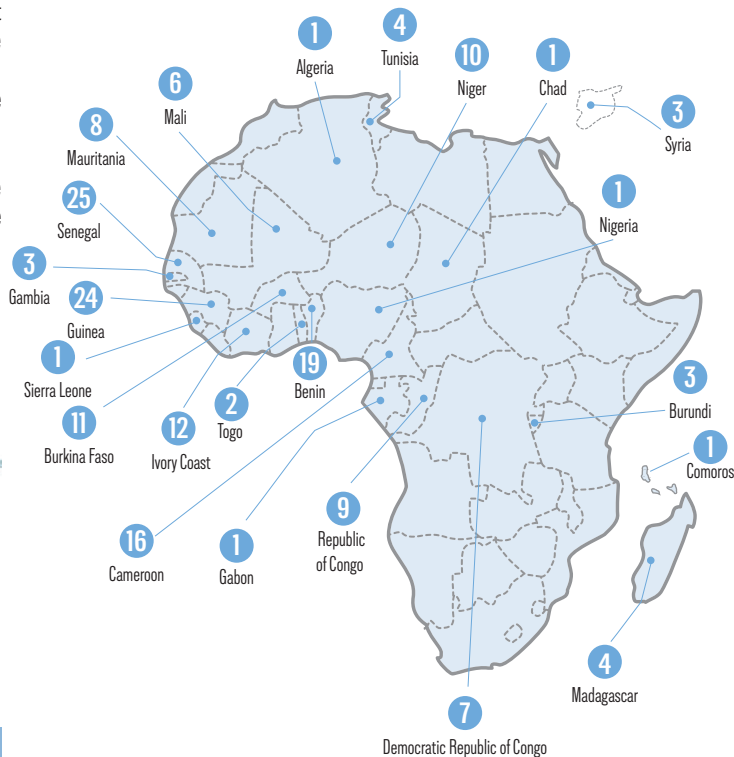
15



13



8



Number of children transferred

How do children who speak a foreign language make themselves understood?

Thanks to the linguistic diversity of our multilingual staff, the children adapt very quickly to their new environment. Curious and receptive, they pick up the basics of French very quickly, understanding and using simple everyday words with ease.



The children of La Maison de Terre des hommes Valais enjoy the beautiful autumn colours

Access to healthcare: guaranteeing a better quality of life

In 2024, the Terre des hommes Valais Foundation took in **80 girls** and **92 boys**, with an average age of 10. Health problems know no borders and can occur at any age. Unfortunately, in many countries, access to healthcare remains a rare privilege due to its high cost and the lack of adequate infrastructure. For these families, who often have no health insurance, the consequences are dramatic, compromising their future and that of their children. We firmly believe that early treatment of health problems is an essential lever for offering everyone a better quality of life. It is therefore imperative to improve access to healthcare, to give these children the hope and opportunities they deserve.

Why do the children come without their families?

Some factors preventing parents from accompanying their child to Switzerland:

- *The difficulty of obtaining a visa, making travel complicated if not impossible*
- *The high cost of travel, often beyond the reach of families*
- *The need to stay at home to look after other family members*
- *The impossibility for La Maison to welcome 40 to 50 mums or dads from around twenty different countries at the same time.*

Lively stories, names that speak for themselves...



80

Girls

Aminatou, Mariama, Amy, Abdoukarim, M'Whawa, Charlotte, Manninin, Meimouna, Dieynaba, Abigaëlle, Sophiatou, Ténin, Brenda, Samia, Fatou, Salamia, Ritta, Anta, Hillary, Riantsou, Ndeye, Heta, Khady, Gnonzi, Tioue, Khatou, Astou, Meimoune, N'Deye, Khady, Emerence, Aïcha, Davina, Inlmath, Youssoura, Tsiaro, Jade, Exaucée, Firdaus, Babe, Marcelle, Ahlem, Fatoumata, Djéné, Aïssatou, Lucie, Israëlla, Néné, Mariama, Maimouna, Enora, Néné, Jouri, Sona, Lyse, Amedée, Mercia, Onyx, Elyon, Aïcha, Saran, Aida, Rokhaya, Lora, Charlotte, Imelda, Kadiatou, Sadan, Hervine, Charifatou, Faiza, Joys, Awa Kara, Salimata, Mawaba, Rabaatou, Hannata, Segla, Jolie, Rihana.



92

Boys

Amadou, Saidou, Mohamed, Destiny, El Haj, Senater, Alpha Oumar, Nazareth, Mardocheé, Safwan, Eric, Bryan, Saturnin, Joseph, Ilontsoa, Yan, Adama, Demba, Batowou, Adiel, Lucien, Pierre, Aimé, Bubaccarr, David, Amadou, Lateef, Omar, Homar, Alpha, Ibrahima, Abdoulaye, Bright, Souleymane, Uriel, Giovanni, Mamadou, Isaac, Ideâl, Jaziz, Mamadouba, Ikiram, Mouhamed, Tobi, Oussama, Alpha, Amadou, Fortress, Ivo, Alassane, Mouhammad, Maurice, Alex, Njie, Hassane, Abdalah, Mohamed, Rojoniaina, Juste, Bouweima, Avenir, Hedi, Dalphin, Kouakou, Mouhamad, Amadou, Cheick, Hamidou, Souleymane, Ahmed, Lancinet, Souleymane, Niamara, Mohamed, Médoune, Mohamed, Ndiaye, Mohamed, Ibrahima, Sam Duda, Eloge, Jean-Paul, Omar, Ahmed, Sani, Mouctar, Ismaila, Harouna, Hadabi, Fernando, Julien.



10

Average age

Ages

2 to 5

6 to 10

11 to 15

16 to 20

+ 20

Number of children

40

62

46

17

7



Children from La Maison de Terre des hommes Valais enjoy the outside of the Kindergarten

Medical conditions of children attending La Maison in 2024

A mission

La Maison, as a medicalised children's home, welcomes between 30 and 50 children from distant countries at any one time. These young patients are preparing for life-saving operations, sometimes multiple, or are going through a demanding convalescence requiring attentive and specialised care. Every week, three to four of them undergo heart operations, which testifies to the complexity of the pathologies treated and the sustained pace of the care provided. In 2024, La Maison accomplished a crucial mission by helping to save the lives of 172 children. The medical challenges these children faced underline the unique character of La Maison as an exceptional place to live and receive care.

Challenges and emergencies

Unable to obtain the necessary care in their country of origin, these children benefited from an "emergency programme" essential to their survival.

An indispensable role

Despite the efforts of other organisations involved in prevention and local development, the rescue mission carried out by La Maison remains essential. While the long-term goal is to set up structures that will enable these operations to be carried out directly in the countries of origin, the current situation still requires emergency solutions. In the meantime, La Maison continues to play a vital role in providing these children with access to the care they so desperately need.

Childhood diseases in 2024



Caustic strictures

Treatment of 4 children

Caustic stenosis of the esophagus is caused by the accidental absorption of caustic soda in liquid form (similar to water) or solid form (similar to sweets or sugar). Ingestion causes burning of the tongue, throat, larynx, esophagus and stomach. These lesions cause intense pain, fever and, above all, prevent children from eating properly, affecting their overall health.



Sequelae of Noma

Treatment of 10 children

Noma is a devastating gangrenous infection that attacks the mouth and face, gradually destroying tissues and bones. The disease is fatal in 70% to 90% of cases.



Heart disease

Treatment of 149 children

Heart disease covers all diseases of the heart, whether congenital (present from birth) or developed during life.



Orthopedics

Treatment of 4 children

Orthopedics is a surgical specialty dedicated to the treatment of disorders of the musculoskeletal system (bones, joints, muscles, tendons and nerves).



Various pathologies

Treatment of 5 children

Tumors, malformations, etc.

La Maison at the heart of a network of committed partners

The transfer of children staying at La Maison relies on a highly complex international chain of humanity and skills. La Maison is one of the essential links in this network, linked to other equally committed and essential players. Together, they form a coordinated system serving children's health.

CHUV and HUG

Historic partners at the heart of the action.

For over 60 years, La Maison has worked closely with the university hospitals of Geneva (HUG) and Lausanne (CHUV). These institutions, committed to a humanitarian tradition, take care of children thanks to their dedicated budgets. In specific cases, care is also provided in establishments such as the Clinique Cecil, the Clinique Bois-Cerf and the Jules-Gonin ophthalmic hospital, all in Lausanne.

A committed and generous medical network

As soon as they arrive in Switzerland, children undergo an initial medical check-up at the Geneva airport infirmary. They are then admitted for a more thorough check-up at one of the university hospitals, the Hôpital de l'Enfance in Lausanne or the Hôpital Riviera-Chablais in Rennaz. In addition, many specialists (dentists, ophthalmologists, dermatologists, ENT specialists, gynecologists, etc.) offer their expertise on an outpatient basis. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to these invaluable partners, true friends of La Maison, whose commitment is a wonderful illustration of the values of solidarity and benevolence.



More than 60% of heart diseases are considered complex or even very complex



144 EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Valais Cantonal Rescue Organisation
- Ambulance Clerc SA
- Air-Glacières
- Rega

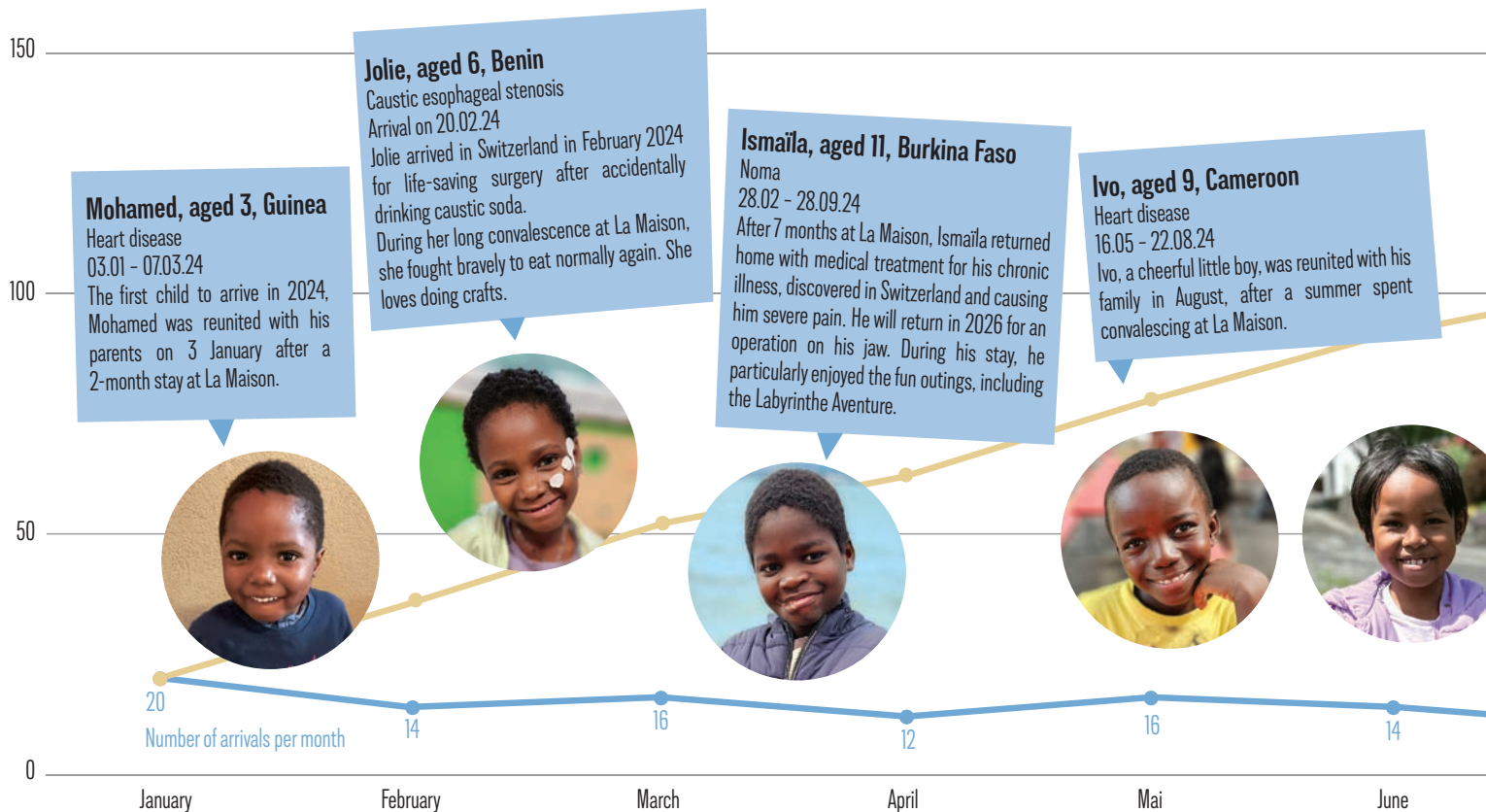
Who accompanies the children to the various treatment centres?

173 volunteer escorts give generously of their time and resources to help the children of La Maison. Using their own private vehicles and at their own expense, they accompany one or more children to medical consultations, surgery or to the airport.

In 2024, they covered an impressive 157,000 km and carried out 888 transports. Their role is essential and their unwavering commitment helps to improve children's lives every day.

We would like to thank these kind-hearted volunteers.

2024, a year dedicated to children

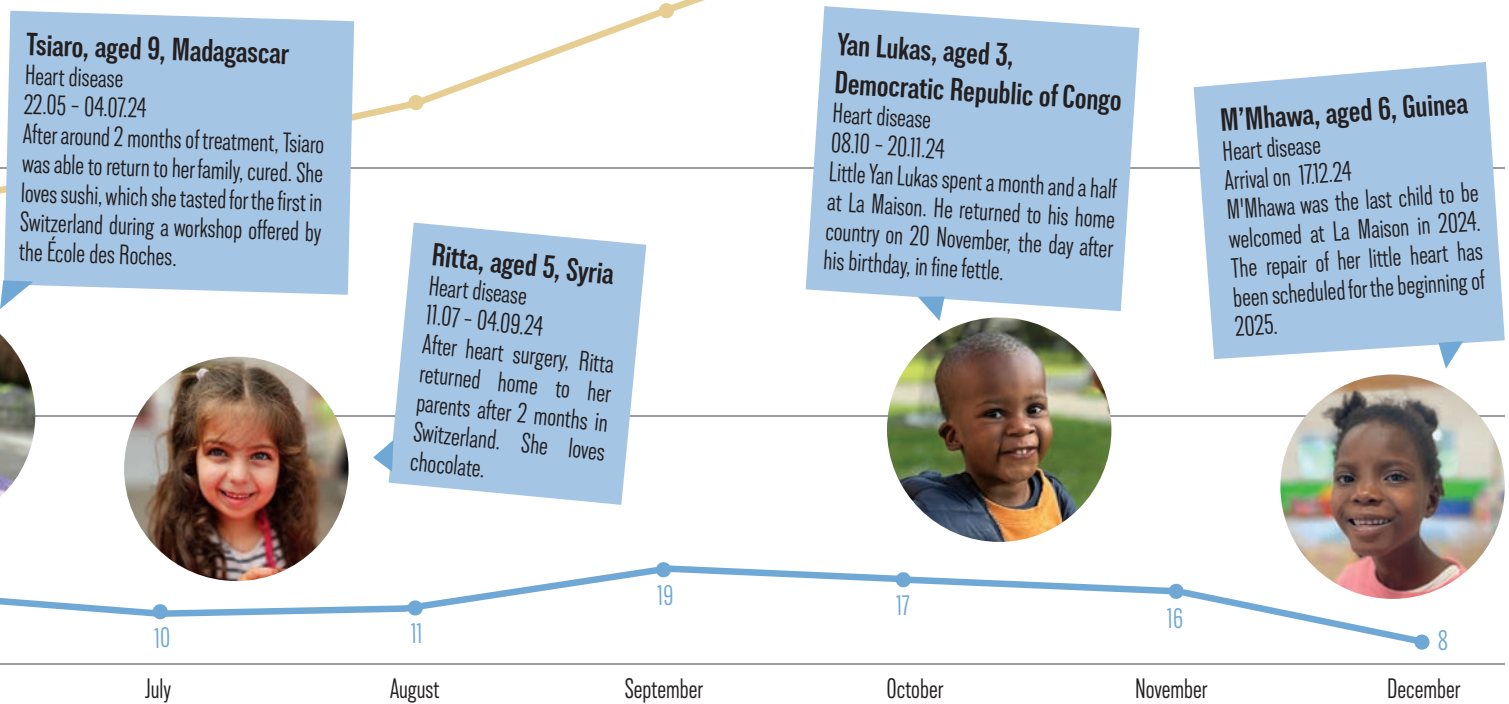


	2024	Ten-year average
Number of patient days *at La Maison	13'239	12'838
Average attendance at La Maison	29	33

*A sick day corresponds to one day spent at La Maison by a child.

172 children arrived

Change in the number of children arriving



Tsiaro, aged 9, Madagascar

Heart disease
22.05 - 04.07.24
After around 2 months of treatment, Tsiaro was able to return to her family, cured. She loves sushi, which she tasted for the first in Switzerland during a workshop offered by the École des Roches.



Ritta, aged 5, Syria

Heart disease
11.07 - 04.09.24
After heart surgery, Ritta returned home to her parents after 2 months in Switzerland. She loves chocolate.

Yan Lukas, aged 3, Democratic Republic of Congo

Heart disease
08.10 - 20.11.24
Little Yan Lukas spent a month and a half at La Maison. He returned to his home country on 20 November, the day after his birthday, in fine fettle.



M'Mhawa, aged 6, Guinea

Heart disease
Arrival on 17.12.24
M'Mhawa was the last child to be welcomed at La Maison in 2024. The repair of her little heart has been scheduled for the beginning of 2025.



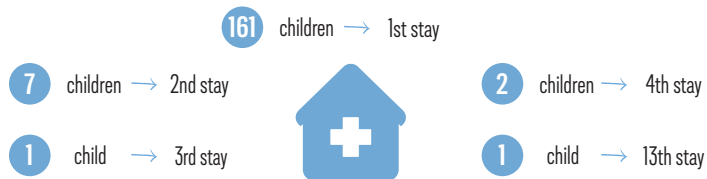


Physiotherapy to promote mouth opening after surgery for noma sequelae

Number of transfers of the 172 children arriving at La Maison in 2024

La Maison, a temporary and essential place to live

In 2024, 172 children were cared for at La Maison, 94% of whom were transferred to Switzerland for the first time, while 6% returned for further care or surgery. Parents and children who have reached adulthood can ask for help from a partner in their country of origin to organise a new transfer if necessary. A child's arrival at La Maison often marks the start of a long-term relationship, which can be extended, depending on the medical needs and follow-up required.



Who accompanies children on flights?



During commercial flights, the children are accompanied by dedicated volunteers from the Aviation sans Frontières association. Some of the children are travelling in critical condition, making these missions particularly demanding. They require personal commitment and vigilance on the part of the escorts.

Length of stay of the 164 children who left La Maison in 2024

Longest stay: **356** days.

The shortest stay: **9** days.

Average length of stay for all pathologies combined: **75** days.

The average length of stay for children undergoing heart surgery: **65** days.



Bassirou and Hadiza, who arrived at La Maison together on 28 March 2023, were originally from Niger and were suffering from the serious after-effects of noma, a devastating disease.

The complexity of the surgery and care required necessitated a stay of almost a year in Switzerland.

Thanks to the treatment they received and the reconstruction of their faces, they were able to return home on 18 March 2024, finally reunited with their respective families, their hearts filled with hope and emotion.



Alongside La Maison educators, the children enjoy free time at the La Maison school

Education and development of children at La Maison

The La Maison school

At La Maison, children's right to education and basic schooling, recognised as a fundamental human right, is fully guaranteed during their stay in Massongex. The school at La Maison plays an essential role in their development by offering educational opportunities that help to reduce the inequalities faced by disadvantaged and sick children, enabling them to have a better future.

The La Maison school, with its two multi-grade classes, provides a high-quality education tailored to the needs of each child. Although the investments made in the school are undeniably useful, they also represent a significant cost. The annual budget for operating costs is around CHF 120,000, which mainly covers the costs of the teaching staff.

La Maison Kindergarten

La Maison's Kindergarten is a place for children under the age of six to discover the world around them. Designed to encourage exploration, experimentation and self-building, it is an ideal setting for play and interaction with others. This caring environment allows young children to enjoy enriching experiences, make stimulating discoveries and engage in playful learning.



Painting workshop for a young resident at the La Maison kindergarten

Sources of funding for La Maison in 2024

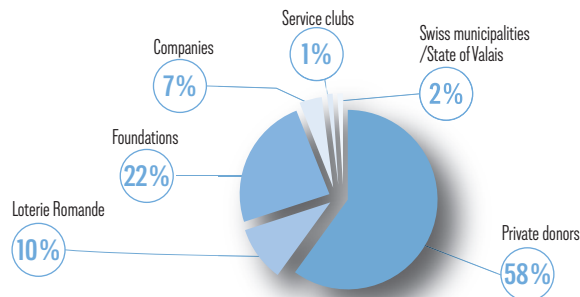
In 2024, La Maison was able to count on diversified funding, guaranteeing the sustainability of its actions. The majority of resources, 58%, come from generous **private donors**, mainly from Switzerland.

Foundations also provided substantial support, accounting for 22% of financial income. Significant support was received from the **Loterie Romande**, which contributes 10% of our resources.

Businesses have played a key role in our funding, contributing 7%, while **service clubs** have supported us through voluntary work and donations, covering 1% of our budget.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the various Swiss municipalities and **the State of Valais**, whose combined contributions amount to 2% of our funds.

Thanks to all this support, La Maison can continue its mission to bring hope and healing to children. We would like to extend our warmest thanks to every contributor, partner and donor for their commitment and precious generosity.



Vital support for La Maison

La Maison is funded entirely by donations and receives no public subsidy. Its budget for 2025 is CHF 4.2 million.

It is not yet possible to address financial issues in this first part of the report. They will be included once the accounts have been drawn up, submitted to the Foundation Board after being audited by the auditors, and then validated by the Valais State Supervisory Authority for Foundations.

Solidarity and hope

They did it for the children

A resounding success for our Summer Encounters

For the third year running, an ephemeral restaurant came to life in the gardens of La Maison, bringing together nearly 1,200 people at the end of August. Once again, the Summer Encounters demonstrated the tremendous solidarity that surrounds the children in our care. The net result of CHF 54,000 illustrates the commitment and generosity of all those who took part.

Walks that save lives

Throughout 2024, more than 2,800 schoolchildren from the Martigny and Val de Bagnes regions took part in the Walks of Hope. These actions are a remarkable show of solidarity, and give the children at La Maison the chance to regain their health. Thanks to this exceptional commitment, an impressive sum of CHF 162,200 was raised.

Ski race

This major event, held every 2 years in the Langis Glaubenberg area above Sarnen in Canton Obwalden, brings together a community committed to a deeply human cause. Supported by the Commune of Sarnen, companies and individuals, this cross-country ski race mobilises the local community and provides tangible support, touching the heart of every participant. The remarkable sum of CHF 89,832 was donated to La Maison, helping to provide sick children with appropriate and caring care.

These highlights of the year demonstrate the great solidarity that reigns in our country and highlight the many ways in which it can be expressed.

Environmental investments

In 2024, La Maison took another step towards sustainability by installing solar panels on several of the institution's roofs, including the covered terrace.

This strategic investment is aimed at strengthening its energy autonomy while actively contributing to the preservation of the environment. It also meets an urgent need for maintenance, as the original Plexiglass on the covered terrace had become brittle over time, 46 years after it was installed. Waterproofing was a problem on rainy days, even though the terrace is a favourite place for children, who spend many hours there as soon as the outside temperature permits.

Thanks to these installations, La Maison is able to produce an even greater proportion of its solar-generated electricity on site, reducing its dependence on the electricity grid and generating long-term savings on energy costs.

The implementation of these initiatives has been made possible by dedicated financial support, demonstrating the collective commitment to responsible and sustainable resource management.



The roof of the terrace at La Maison is fitted with photovoltaic panels



Children recovering on the terrace of La Maison de Terre des hommes Valais

Acknowledgements

We mention by name only those entities that have expressly requested it :

- Our generous donors in the Valais, Switzerland and abroad.
- Organisers of events in support of La Maison.
- Established companies in Valais and Switzerland.
- Numerous foundations in Switzerland and abroad.
- The "Plein Vent" Foundation Emile, Marthe and Charlotte E. Rüphi.
- The 500 or so extraordinary volunteers who are involved the various activities of La Maison.
- The 173 "convoyeurs" who transport the children to the consultation centres and the airport.
- Volunteer "godparents", who visit and support children in hospital.
- Our partners "Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque", "Une chance, un coeur", "Sentinelles" and "Chirurgie pour l'Enfance Africaine", who entrust children in need of care to us.
- With the support of Loterie Romande



- Anyone who does not recognise themselves in the above and who has contributed, with us, saving lives and changing the world.

Trust at the heart of all our actions

- That of the parents who entrust their child to us.
- That of the child we hold in our arms with kindness and respect.
- Our volunteers, who give so generously of their time and energy.
- That of our staff, who are dedicated and professional every day.
- Our donors, whose invaluable support helps save lives.
- Competent, attentive and always available medical teams.

Thank you

- **For your generosity**
- **For your confidence**
- **For your messages of encouragement**
- **For your donations in kind**
- **For the services offered**
- **For discounts**

**and, above all, to share with us
this mission that is so close to our hearts**



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