

## Annual Report 2018

This report presents a summary of the activities and achievements of **Bridges to Development** over its inaugural months. From July to December 2018, Bridges evolved from a notional concept/vision to become a viable organization, established in two locations (Bridges CH and Bridges US) and ready to open for new partnerships in January 2019. The initial inspiration and our original vision for Bridges has not altered course. The following sections describe the developmental path we followed and highlight what we've accomplished during the early start-up stages of the organization.

### 1. Setting the course (Apr-Jun 2018)

The origins of Bridges evolved from a shared desire to continue to pursue meaningful and innovative work actively contributing to a healthier and more equitable world. Co-founders Alan Brooks and Julie Jacobson seized upon the opportunity that presented itself once they had both made decisions to leave senior positions at Gavi and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Alan and Julie, soon joined by Sarah Churchill, recently with Gavi and the Global Fund, were convinced that the time was right to create something different, to take on a new and intentional career challenge as social entrepreneurs, to secure a healthier balance across work and family and design a partnership where hard work, continuous learning, good humor and trusting relationships would effect positive change and achieve lasting impact.

- **Who we are:** a small and nimble organization with like-minded colleagues, leveraging strategic presences in Geneva (Switzerland) and Seattle, Washington (USA) to efficiently deliver results globally.
- **What we want to work on:** Throughout our careers, we have come to believe and see education and health as complementary and critical bridges to sustainable development.
- **How we want to work:**
  - **Building partnerships** in the public and private sectors with others seeking innovative approaches to deliver results and contribute to sustainable development;
  - **Developing longer-term relationships** rather than work as a group of individual consultants on short-term contracts (that could generate resources more quickly);
  - **Investing in partners and communities** in developing countries rather than creating an ever-larger organization.

This led to our recognition that a small non-profit organization in Geneva and Seattle could play a pivotal role to guide and facilitate creative partnerships and approaches for education and health.

## 2. Building the platform (Jul-Oct 2018)

During the first months of Bridges, we invested considerable time looking internally. We did this very intentionally, recruiting and working with Board members to ensure the organizational structure and systems needed for success were established. We wanted sure-footing and clarity around the foundations of the organization before we began, instead of designing Bridges reactively.

- **Establishing legal presence:** Following the first convened General Assembly on 11 July, the statutes of association for **Bridges CH** were adopted and its Board members were nominated and confirmed. This was followed from 23 July by the legal registration in Washington State of **Bridges US**, with Articles of Incorporation largely mirroring those of Switzerland, establishing our US Board and the granting of tax-exempt 501 (c)3 status as a public charity. Our tax-exempt status in Switzerland was granted on 25 September.
- **Designing an operating model:** From the very start, our intention was to function as one organization, working seamlessly across the two locales:
  - **Bringing the Boards together** proved critical to ensure coordination across the two bodies, so we created space for shared discussions in joint meetings (26 Sept and 28 November) while ensuring decisions were taken independently.
  - **Defining our principles and policies** was an early task to ensure we hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards and can signal to our donors, beneficiaries, and the public that Bridges takes seriously the importance of maintaining those standards. We defined how we engage with private sector entities, how we manage conflicts of interest and protect whistleblowers and began work on a Safeguarding Policy as well as Operating Guidelines.
  - **Appointing Accountants** for both organizations brought in needed skills to support financial integrity, rigorous oversight and sound reporting from the start. An Auditor for Bridges in Switzerland was also identified and appointed.
  - **Selecting an office** in Geneva afforded us the opportunity to locate conveniently within a center of innovation and academic vitality. The University of Geneva, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Solution Space at Campus Biotech Innovation Park invited us to join their diverse and stimulating ecosystem.
  - **Signing contracts** with core staff members from October meant that we formally committed ourselves to each other and to Bridges.
- **Creating our identity:** Weighing how we effectively communicate externally about Bridges proved a valuable time for us to build our shared commitments to and narrative for Bridges. A donation allowed us to work with a small, innovative design firm, Field Studio, in the UK to create our brand and logo. It also allowed us to clearly and effectively tell the Bridges story through an informative and accessible website.

## 3. Shaping opportunities and emerging demand (Sept-Dec 2018)

As the work to shape Bridges continued, the next (and overlapping) phase of work presented our first forays into putting our new platform to use. We found a diverse group of partners aligned to the

approach of Bridges, particularly groups seeking to take innovative ideas and health interventions to scale. These early days of the start-up allowed us to test the waters by bringing to life concrete collaborations, and living the principles noted above:

- ***Building partnerships*** – Bridges worked closely with **Uniting to Combat Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)**, a partnership hosted by Sightsavers, Inc. and made up of non-governmental organizations, academia, industry, bilaterals, multilaterals, and philanthropic organizations. The partnership was launched by the London Declaration in 2012 and supports the World Health Organization NTD roadmap in its aim to reach 2020 control, elimination and eradication targets for 10 neglected tropical diseases and successfully delivers treatments to more than 1 billion people each year. In 2018, Bridges supported the Partnership’s launch of its new Impact Dashboard and Action Framework, while advancing an evaluation for the Partnership structure in 2020 and beyond.
- ***Developing longer-term relationships*** – Mundo Sano is a family foundation founded in 1993, whose mission is to transform the lives of people affected by those neglected diseases that affect the most vulnerable population. It is led by the Founder’s daughter, Dr. Silvia Gold. Mundo Sano and Bridges began exploring areas of alignment as non-profit organizations working together to help prevent neglected tropical diseases. The **Bridges and Mundo Sano collaboration** was finalized early in the new year and will begin to deliver shared results in 2019 and beyond.
- ***Investing in partners and communities*** –our first collaborations on behalf of a private foundation target school communities in Uganda and Ecuador and bring relatively better resourced schools together with nearby, less well-resourced schools. The **Twin Schools Project** is based on the rationale that students and teachers can be engaged effectively to design and implement affordable projects that provide valued and sustainable educational benefits to the students and both schools within their own communities. Once collaborators in both countries were identified, a 2.5-year partnership was launched. We are documenting the process and key learning along the way.

#### 4. Financials

Funding for Bridges in 2018 was based primarily upon donations from staff members, individual donations, and a grant from Sightsavers, Inc. Assuming the Swiss Franc and US Dollar were comparable in 2018, income and grants received totalled \$48,635.09 (12,877 CHF in Switzerland and \$35,758.09 in the US), with expenses totalling \$39,193.60 (\$37,421.37 CHF and \$1,772.23 in the US.) Liabilities at the end of 2018 equalled \$32,667.88 (30,895.65 CHF in Switzerland and \$1,772.23 in the US). Bridges financial data was reviewed independently for accuracy in Switzerland by Figest Conseil SA and a Compilation Report was provided in the US by Lake Kennedy McCulloch CPAs PS.

#### 5. Looking Ahead to 2019

With much groundwork accomplished in 2018, we are excited to devote more time to project content and put the early partnership to work. A public launch of Bridges is planned for late January 2019:

- **Getting the word out:** a top priority for the new year will be to reach out to our extensive network with details about Bridges and links to our new website.
- **Pursuing new collaborations:** shaping opportunities and submitting proposals to work with a diverse mix of foundations and partners aligned to our mission.
- **Continuing to shape the organization:** we will work to further develop Board input and define our organizational culture, with particular attention on how we take decisions on our collaborative activities and manage the work across teams.
- **Staying true to our vision** and to the impact we seek with the oversight of our Boards, our families, partner organizations and our team.

## 6. Acknowledgements

We three are grateful to the many individuals who have helped us along this journey so far. Our three **families** have been extremely patient and supportive as we create our new professional calling. Steadily present and positive from the very start, our founding **Board members** have also guided and encouraged in numerous ways. Many thanks to **John Marshall, Rita Trigo Trindade, and Myanna Gregory** on the Swiss side and to **Gretchen Meller** and **Hannah Kettler** in the US. We also thank **Francois Grey** for opening his office doors to us. **Amy Kitchener, Barb Huff** and **Gioia Garifo**, our team of accountants and bookkeepers, have each contributed to setting up our financial accounting systems. **Andy Marshall** and the team at Field Design helped create our professional ‘look’ on the website. Thanks also to **Gabrielle Fitzgerald, Dan Laster,** and **Raleigh Watts** for sharing their sound advice. And lastly, we thank the team at **Centre d’Accueil de la Genève Internationale (CAGI)**, who has proven to be a very helpful resource during the early phases of Bridges’ organizational development.

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### *Sarah Churchill*

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