

Retrained ex-racehorses

A strategic growth
opportunity for
emerging equestrian
federations in Asia

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The challenge for emerging federations

Challenges

- **Limited horse availability:** shortage of affordable sport horses across the region
- **Financial barriers:** acquisition and long-term maintenance costs restrict riding schools' growth
- **The dual mandate:** developing grassroots participation *and* elite performance at the same time



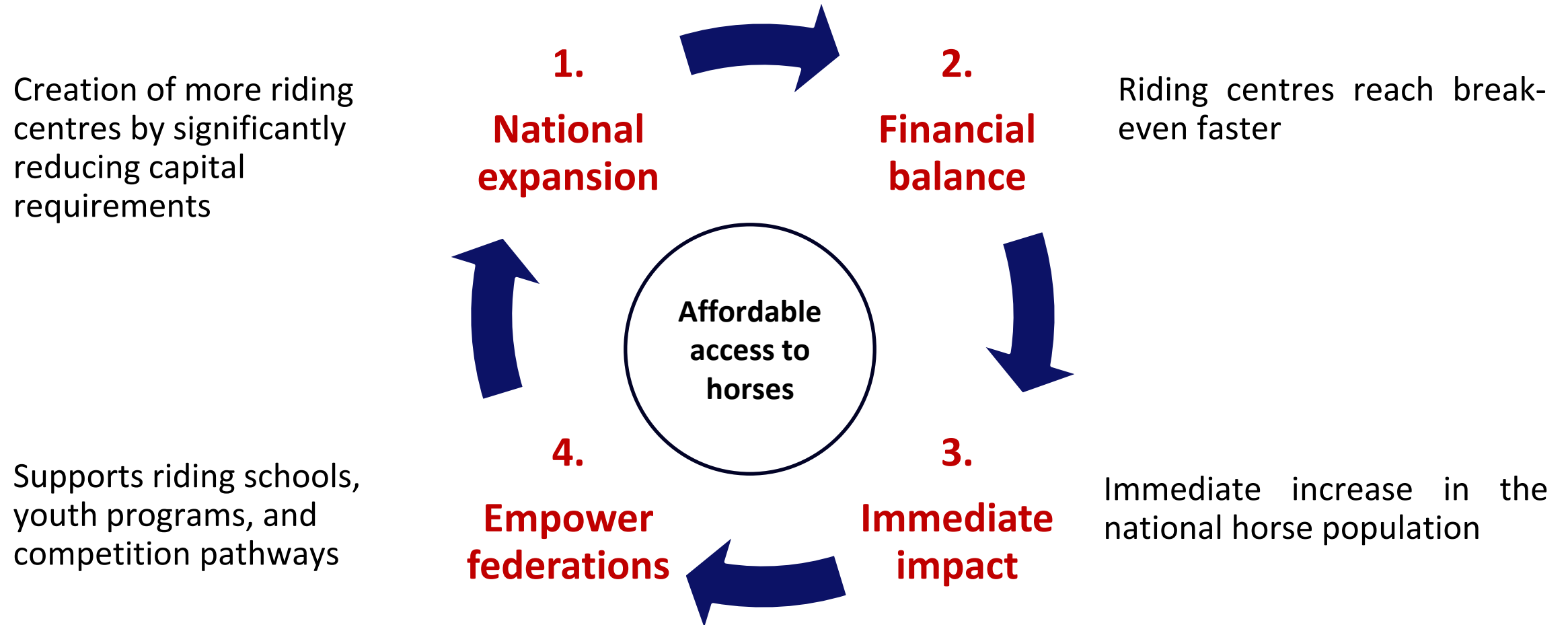
How can emerging federations grow equestrian sport sustainably under these constraints?

Addressing the challenge thanks to the RESTART program of the HKJC

- **Strategic donation model:** horses are donated to the federation
 - **Welfare-first approach:** structured retraining, transition, and lifelong welfare support
 - **Quality assurance:** horses selected for soundness, temperament, and purpose (schooling or performance).
- **Capacity building:** a long-term program backed by continuous technical support



Sustainable growth of horse riding



Faster and broader development of equestrian sport at national level. This is a *structural economic advantage*, not a short-term solution.

Capacity building

- **Local community improvement:** comply with international welfare and facility standards to receive horses from the START program
- **Coaching excellence:** national coaches gain new technical skills, building a stronger horsemanship culture
- **Upskilling professionals in:**
 - Equine health management,
 - Nutrition and feeding programs,
 - Injury prevention and rehabilitation,
 - Daily care and horsemanship.
- **Who benefits most?** Local coaches, veterinarians, grooms and stable managers

This raises national standards across the entire industry



Competition and performance

- **Increased competition frequency:** enables the region to organise a higher number of regional competitions and youth events
- **Cost-effective participation:** allows athletes to compete on borrowed horses, significantly reducing the financial barriers to entry
- **Sustainable pathways:** lowering costs ensures a more inclusive and sustainable progression for the region's future elite riders
- **High-performance potential:** thoroughbreds possess the quality to perform at the highest levels of the sport, especially in eventing



Social inclusion and access to sport

- **Inclusive development:** by reducing the need for personal horse ownership, a wider range of talent for the region's future elite can be identified
- **Merit-based allocation:** horse allocation to disadvantaged but promising riders
- **Stronger national teams in the long run**
- **Development programmes:** offering vocational programs in equestrian industry jobs (grooms, assistant vet, assistant coach)



Key takeaways

Retraining ex-racehorses is a strategic accelerator

- **Low-cost access:** quality horses for schooling and competition
- **Professional impact:** uplifts the entire equestrian workforce
- **Competitive growth:** more riders, more events, stronger performance pathways



Retraining former racehorses is not a compromise: it is a strategic accelerator for equestrian development

Thank you

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