



A family for all children

IMPACT REPORT

2021

OUR VISION

All children grow up in safe and loving families.

OUR MISSION

To fight for every child's right to a family by transforming care systems around the world.

OUR VALUES

Children are at the heart of everything we do.

They drive us forward in our vision and underpin every aspect of our work and strategy, helping us bring about the very best outcomes for the children we serve.



"The issues of deinstitutionalisation and inclusion are extremely important. As a conscious Ukrainian who cares about the future of my country and the fate of its children, I have the desire and opportunity to help – together with like-minded people, other youth ambassadors and Lumos – to try to influence the situation. I believe we'll see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Perhaps the deepest way to understand someone is to walk in their shoes. I believe that it's our sacred duty to help others. No residential institution, even the best, can replace a child's family, or their love and care. And I was convinced of this by my own experience. That's why I find Lumos' mission in tune with my own.

Together with the Board of Youth Ambassadors, I plan to work on reducing the number of residential institutions throughout Ukraine and support children with disabilities."

MARK
YOUNG ADVOCATE, UKRAINE

Please note: this interview took place in December 2021.

A FAMILY FOR ALL CHILDREN

WHAT WE DO FOR CHILDREN

Lumos is fighting for every child's right to a family by transforming care systems around the world. We are an international charity striving for a future where every child is raised in a safe, loving home, supported by family to help them thrive.

On average more than 80% of children in orphanages have a living parent, and research proves that these institutions can harm a child's growth and development. Yet there are still an estimated 5.4 million children trapped in institutions globally.

Lumos sheds light on the root causes of family separation – poverty, conflict and discrimination – and demonstrates that children can safely be united with families. By pressing governments to reform care systems, and by building global expertise and capacity with partners, we ensure no child is forgotten.

Founded by author J.K. Rowling, we are lighting a path to a brighter future where all children can grow up in a safe and loving family. We believe in a family for all children.

CHANGING THE SYSTEM FOR CHILDREN

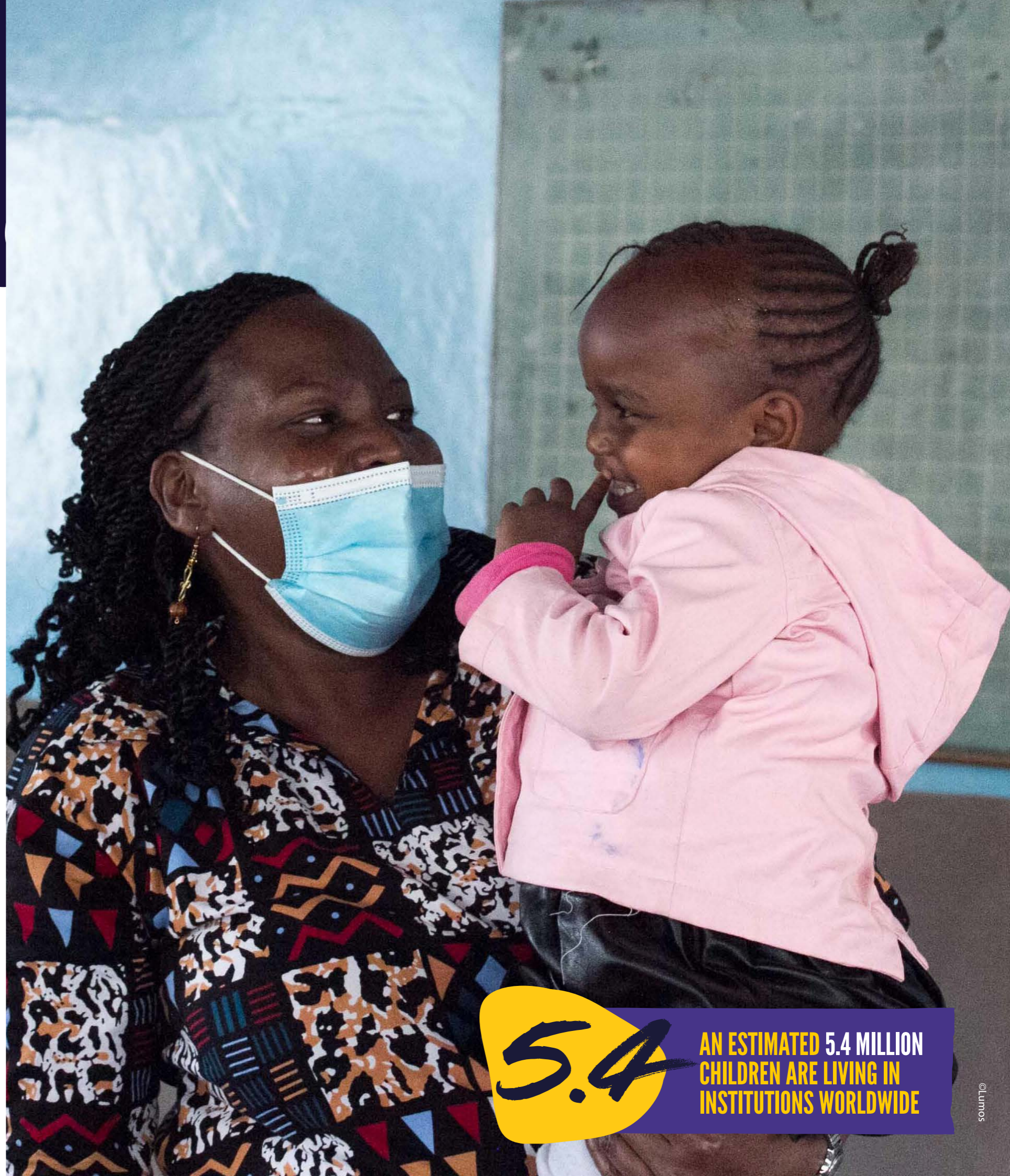
Thanks to the efforts of Lumos and our partners, the harms of institutionalisation are now more widely understood. Backed by better evidence, there's growing consensus that no child belongs in an institution. Separated from their families and communities, children living in institutions are deprived of the love, attention and opportunities they need to thrive.

In diverse countries and contexts, we've worked hard to prove change is possible. With careful planning and management, child protection systems can be transformed to ensure all children enjoy their right to grow up in a safe and loving family. Our strategy builds on our rich heritage to ensure thousands more children and families can benefit from our work and that we achieve an impact greater than the sum of our parts.

The children trapped in institutions are deprived of their basic rights, their liberty and the chance to reach their full potential. Every child taken away from their family and consigned to an institution tears the very fabric of a happy and healthy society.

We cannot afford to lose another generation of children to institutionalisation.

wearelumos.org



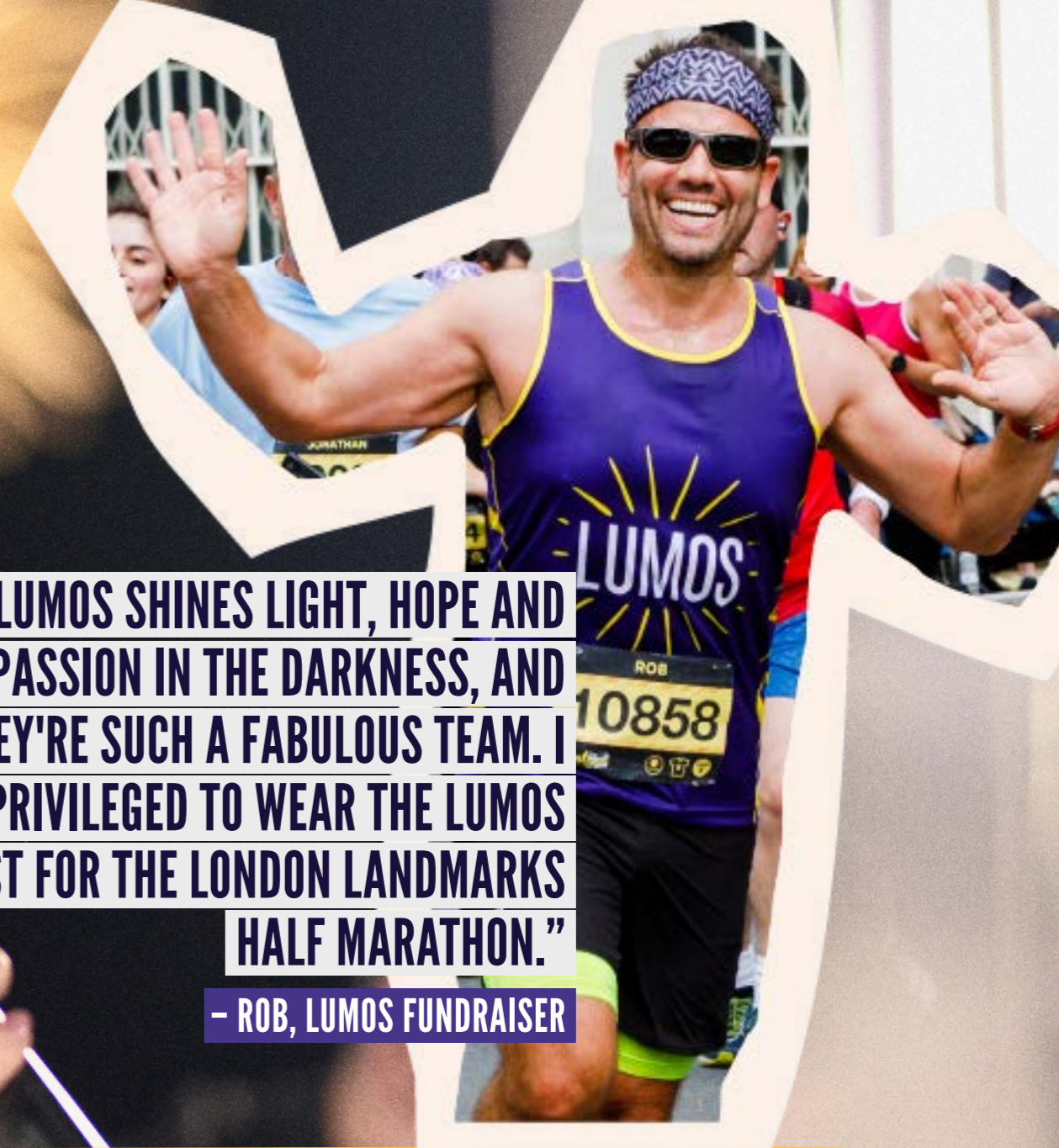
5.4 AN ESTIMATED 5.4 MILLION CHILDREN ARE LIVING IN INSTITUTIONS WORLDWIDE

A YEAR OF INCREDIBLE SUPPORT



“LUMOS SHINES LIGHT, HOPE AND COMPASSION IN THE DARKNESS, AND THEY'RE SUCH A FABULOUS TEAM. I FELT PRIVILEGED TO WEAR THE LUMOS VEST FOR THE LONDON LANDMARKS HALF MARATHON.”

– ROB, LUMOS FUNDRAISER



GLOBAL GALA SUCCESS

In October, we held our first ever virtual Gala. Guests tuned in from 38 different countries to watch spellbinding musical performances from Sophie Ellis-Bextor and Peter Bence, and to hear about some of the children you've helped us support. Our founder J.K. Rowling treated us to a world-exclusive reading from *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* before answering questions from an inspiring group of young self-advocates. Other magical guests who took part in this special event included Evanna Lynch, Bonnie Wright, Noma Dumezweni and Jason Isaacs. Thanks to the generosity of everyone who attended the Gala, we were able to raise an amazing \$631,170 to support our work.

RUNNING FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

12 dedicated Lumos fundraisers were put through their paces at the London Landmarks Half Marathon in August. They ran for 13.1 miles while taking in some of the city's iconic sights including Big Ben, the Tower of London and the London Eye. Cheered on by our team, they raised £8,949, which was generously matched by one of our supporters, bringing the total to a fantastic £18,949.

GIVING TO FAMILIES IN NEED

Every ticket purchased for our virtual gala helped our teams around the world distribute essential supplies and much-needed support packages to families in need. In Bulgaria we worked with a local NGO to deliver gifts and school supplies to refugee children from across five towns, in Ukraine we delivered support kits to 39 children, and in Colombia we worked with the

Michín Foundation to distribute food packages to reunited families experiencing financial hardship.

SPEAKING UP FOR CHILDREN

Our incredible youth advocates have been making their voices heard this year. Nicoleta, a self-advocate from our Youth Advisory Board in Moldova, spoke at the the United Nations Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and Alternative Care, which was attended by over 1,000 participants from across 120 countries.

“I participated because I wanted to be heard by a lot more people, from different countries, to give hope to children who are in institutions.” says Nicoleta.

FANTASTIC FUNDRAISING

Some of our brilliant ambassadors including Evanna Lynch, Bonnie Wright and Sophie Ellis-Bextor helped us to launch our magical T-shirt range with Represent to raise vital funds for our work. Everyone who bought a t-shirt is helping to shine a light on our mission to keep families together.

WORKING HARD FOR CHANGE

Even in the most challenging of circumstances, our amazing staff have continued to work tirelessly to improve the lives of children and families across the globe, staff like Grace Mwangi, our senior technical advisor in Kenya. It's thanks to the hard work of people like Grace that we can effect real change in communities.

Find out more at wearelumos.org/grace

CHILD AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION



Children and young people don't just have a right to be included in decisions that affect their lives – they are the experts on their own lives, and care reform is more successful with their involvement. Through 2021, we continued to work with 'self-advocates' and youth networks – and guide governments and other partners to ensure children's voices are heard.

Because of the pandemic, we had to adapt many of our activities, and often couldn't visit schools, homes and institutions. It's hard to create the same sense of community online, and virtual meetings are far less inclusive for people with disabilities and those without access to devices and a reliable internet connection.

But our staff and young people were amazingly resilient and creative. We took the opportunity to meet in person wherever possible, and managed to safely deliver a hybrid online/offline model for our youth forums in Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria and Czechia. We also supported youth advocates to participate in advisory groups for the UN Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and Alternative Care, and to speak at two international advocacy events.

As well as posing practical challenges, Covid has affected the young people we support personally. Many have experienced financial hardship and mental health challenges. Throughout the pandemic, we've kept in close contact with members of our youth advisory boards, offering emotional and practical support.

LEADING UN DISCUSSIONS

September brought the UN Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and Alternative Care – and we made sure children and young people were at the heart of it. We helped to establish a child and youth advisory team, involving 30 children and young people from 22 countries. They worked with us over 18 months to help shape the content of the day. We also supported a global consultation that enabled over 1,200 children and young people from around the world to share their experiences of alternative care. The findings were a central feature of the discussions and will inform recommendations to improve care for children.

INCLUSION THROUGH SPORT IN BULGARIA

In Bulgaria, young people from our youth advisory board shared the lessons we've learned about child and youth participation over the last 10 years through training sessions and webinars. They were also involved in our "inclusion through sport" project, which delivered sports equipment and accessible information on exercising safely to 100 children and young adults living in small group homes. Movement, sports and exercise are important for young people's physical and mental health, and our aim is to make this part of the routine in small group homes.

INFLUENCING FAMILY COURTS IN CZECHIA

Court decisions on divorce and family conflict can have a huge impact on children, and they should be able to participate in the process. After co-leading focus groups with children and young people about their experiences, our youth advisory board (YAB) in Czechia shared their findings with judges and other professionals working in family courts. The YAB recommended ways to ensure the participation of vulnerable children in court proceedings and presented what they learned – to family court judges at the Czech Judicial Academy Family Law Symposium and at a meeting of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. Their presentations provoked positive discussions about making family courts more inclusive, child-friendly and child-centred.

YOUNG PEOPLE AS TRAINERS

Also in Czechia, we worked with young people to develop training, based on their own experiences, on how to communicate with children in the care system. The idea was to help professionals see things from children's perspective by experiencing the role of a vulnerable child during an interactive workshop. Young people themselves delivered the training to social workers and other professionals, including through a workshop for 30 judges. The training was well received. It's been requested by several organisations, and we're now making a film so we can share it more widely.





LUMOS YOUTH FORUM 2021

Covid restrictions meant we couldn't hold our youth forum wholly in person, but we worked closely with young people to organise a hybrid event. Youth advisory board members met in person in Czechia, Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine, where they took part in training, team-building activities and meetings with national policymakers. The other half of the programme took place online, and included consultations on Lumos policies, research into the impact of our work in Central and Eastern Europe, and a filmed meeting with Lumos founder J.K. Rowling.

ADVOCATING FOR REFORM IN UKRAINE

In Ukraine, our self-advocates have been actively involved in shaping public policy on reforming the country's institutional care system. We supported the 60 members of the National Council of Children and Youth, including 12 self-advocates, to take part in national-level working groups, sharing their experience of living in residential institutions and advocating for children's right to a family. Members of Lumos' youth advisory board also ran various awareness-raising activities, including sharing stories of children and young people with disabilities who have overcome obstacles, and an Instagram campaign to encourage young people in Ukraine to share their ideas on the theme of inclusion.

GIVING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE A VOICE

To promote the importance of family-based care, we supported children and young people in Moldova to share their stories. They highlight a broad range of experiences, including those with disabilities, those who were reunited with their biological families or prevented from going through family separation, and those who moved from residential institutions into families, communities, and independent life – and show how we've supported children's educational and community inclusion. Young self-advocates were involved throughout the process: they helped develop the concept, received training from a journalist and a photographer, shared their own stories, and accompanied Lumos staff to participate in interviews.

TRANSFORMING CARE IN COLOMBIA

Building on the success of our self-advocates in Central and Eastern Europe, we're creating a similar team in Colombia as part of our new youth participation strategy. In June, 62 young people from the residential care system and care leavers took part in a range of workshops and interviews with us to share their experiences and opinions of residential care and the child protection system. As a result, a group of 20 motivated young people are receiving support and training to become self-advocates for children's rights and play an active role in transforming the care system in Colombia.

YOUTH-LED RESEARCH IN MOLDOVA

Our youth advisory board (YAB) in Moldova carried out a study into people's attitudes towards the country's care reform and to children and young people who have grown up in institutions. The project began back in 2019, but the pandemic made it impossible to continue interviews in person. In 2021, the project continued online, and the YAB collected responses from 230 people from four Lumos demonstration regions. The report has now been published, and our young advocates will be using it to promote children's right to grow up in families in our work with government and local authorities.

PROMOTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN HAITI

Despite the pandemic and the security situation in Haiti, we managed to reach 398 girls and 285 boys through our child and youth participation groups. These provide safe spaces for discussions around the rights of children and young people, as well as activities such as educational games, theatre and dance. Our country team also created a podcast to communicate the importance of the rights of children and young people, producing programmes on the safety of children, violence against girls and women, and children's rights.

POWERFUL EVIDENCE



There's a compelling case to end institutional care of children, with over 300 research studies showing the long-term harm it causes. But gaps remain in the global evidence base. Capturing and deploying new evidence is an essential part of our work to drive change and fulfil our ultimate ambition for all children to grow up in happy, healthy, loving families.

Ending institutionalisation benefits children and society. The more evidence we can collect to fill knowledge gaps, and identify the drivers of institutionalisation, the more we can do to press governments to reform childcare systems and enable children to grow up in loving families.

As part of the global movement for care reform, we co-chaired an "Evidence for Impact" working group of over 80 practitioners and experts with the Global Collaborative Platform on Transforming Children's Care. This aims to build a shared research agenda and improve global monitoring of progress in care reform. It will also focus on the drivers of institutionalisation so we can prevent family separation in the first place.

Showing evidence of the links with global challenges like poverty and violence will help strengthen collaboration with those working in other sectors, and ensure institutionalisation and care reform are on their agenda too. As part of this, we launched a global review in 2021 exploring issues around education and institutionalisation, with findings published this year.

Another important area of our work is sharing evidence and lessons learnt from our demonstration projects to influence care reform in other countries and regions. Last year, for example, we carried out an evaluation of our work in Bulgaria, Czechia and Moldova, to identify transferable principles, methods and learning that can be used to inform care reform in other countries.

BETTER CARE FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

Between 2018 and 2020, Lumos worked with partners in Tigray refugee camps in Ethiopia to increase foster care for one of the world's largest populations of unaccompanied and separated refugee children. In 2021 we distilled what we learned into a report, *Protecting Unaccompanied Children in a Changing World*. The report aims to help those working in child protection and with refugees to provide better services for unaccompanied children. We highlighted three principles that can be applied around the world in other refugee settings: making family-based care the first option, creating strong processes and systems, and investing in people not institutions.

UNDERSTANDING CARE REFORM IN EUROPE

We've been supporting care reform in Central and Eastern Europe for a number of years – and think this will provide valuable learning to inform similar efforts in other countries. In 2021, we began a rigorous evaluation of care reform programmes in Bulgaria, Czechia and Moldova, aiming to identify shared elements and unique innovations in each country. Through interviews and focus groups with public officials, NGOs, Lumos staff and self-advocates, we're examining how, why, to what extent and under what conditions care reform has been achieved in each country. We'll pull our findings into a report that identifies a clear and evidence-based path to effective care reform.

LIFTING THE LID ON FUNDING IN CHILDREN'S INSTITUTIONS IN KENYA

Globally, overwhelming evidence shows that family and community-based care offers better value for money than institutions – and our latest research suggests that Kenya is no exception. With our partners at Changing the Way We Care, we carried out research into how children's institutions in Kenya are funded. It revealed a complex mix of domestic and foreign funding, including governmental, bilateral, charitable, faith-based and corporate sources, as well as individual giving and volunteering. We'll use these findings to press the case for care reform and better targeted funding in Kenya.

EVIDENCE-BASED CARE REFORM IN COLOMBIA

This year, our team in Colombia began a strategic review of the system of care for vulnerable children, in collaboration with the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare. The project will help gather information to guide the transformation of the care system in Bogotá and neighbouring Cundinamarca. It will look at the scale and drivers of institutionalisation and family separation, existing resources that can be built on, and gaps that need to be filled. From this, we'll work with the government and local stakeholders to develop a shared vision, strategy and plans for reform.



CYCLES OF EXPLOITATION: GLOBAL THEMATIC REVIEW ON CHILDREN'S INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In December 2020, we launched a ground-breaking report, *Cycles of Exploitation: The Links Between Children's Institutions and Human Trafficking*. Drawing together research and case studies from all over the world, the report reveals how orphanages and other institutions play an instrumental role in perpetuating cycles of child trafficking and exploitation. Better understanding of the links between institutions and trafficking will help drive action to address the issue. Discussions at our launch event explored how the report's recommendations can be embedded in policy and practice. Experts and organisations from 45 countries contributed to the report.

Ruth Wacuka has worked with us to promote our Helping Not Helping campaign, to help us tackle the problem of orphanage volunteering and protect the rights of vulnerable children.

CYCLES OF EXPLOITATION

Ruth Wacuka is founder of Reroot Africa, an organisation working to raise awareness of orphanage trafficking, and contributing author to our *Cycles of Exploitation* report.

“Human trafficking has no dignity: traffickers prey on families weighed down by the deepest poverty and burdened by the toughest of problems. And unfortunately, voluntourism plays a part in completing the orphanage trafficking equation.

In the orphanage in Kenya where I lived, the day before visitors arrived was like a festival. Everyone tried to guess who was coming. But we knew what they would do when they arrived and what gifts they would bring.

If you looked closer, you could see children in tattered clothes. The children’s conditions remained poor, but while our needs were not met, the orphanage kept taking in new children and collecting more funds.

Tourists usually believe they’re doing good; that by visiting and donating to orphanages, they’re helping children. But many orphanages are less concerned with caring for children than they are with the revenue they can generate. Children are often seen not as human beings with rights, but as vehicles of charity: money-making machines.

Most people with care experience continue to struggle with a lack of social contacts, mentors, friendships, identity and a sense of belonging. This lack is not due to an absence of people while growing up, but instead due to the impermanence of the thousand footprints passing through their lives. The skill of making social bonds is one you learn in a community, not in an orphanage.

The resources ploughed into orphanage tourism are fuelling child abuse and exploitation. Imagine what could be achieved if they were redirected to family-based care instead.”

“HUMAN TRAFFICKING HAS NO DIGNITY: TRAFFICKERS PREY ON FAMILIES WEIGHED DOWN BY THE DEEPEST POVERTY AND BURDENED BY THE TOUGHEST OF PROBLEMS.”

FIND OUT MORE

Explore our ground-breaking new report: *Cycles of Exploitation: The Links Between Children's Institutions and Human Trafficking*, which reveals how orphanages and other institutions play an instrumental role in perpetuating cycles of child exploitation: cyclesofexploitation.wearelumos.org

ADVOCACY & CAMPAIGNS



Lumos Helping Not Helping Campaign

A global movement for care reform is building. There's growing recognition of the harm that institutions do to children, and the benefits of family and community-based care. Many countries have committed to reforming their care systems and closing down institutions. But there's still a long way to go. Through our advocacy and campaigning, we aim to create the changes needed in policies, practices and priorities so that every child can grow up with the love and support of a family.

We're not a lone voice: we collaborate with many others to shape the global agenda on care reform and to drive change in individual countries. This includes taking part in international events like this year's UN Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and Alternative Care, which was a fantastic opportunity to raise awareness and catalyse change.

Through our advocacy work, we seek to influence legislation and policies – notably at EU level, where we've had significant success in driving funding away from harmful institutions and towards family-based care. We also run public campaigns on specific issues – like our Helping Not Helping campaign, which seeks to tackle voluntourism, showing how orphanage tourism and volunteering fuels an industry where children are used as tourist attractions and, in some cases, trafficked and exploited.



UN RIGHTS OF THE CHILD EVENT

Every two years, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child holds a Day of General Discussion to foster deeper understanding of a particular topic. Originally scheduled for 2020 but rearranged as an online event because of the pandemic, this year's discussions focused on alternative care, following a successful proposal from Lumos and partners. We played a big role in shaping the agenda, and ensuring children and young people were at its heart. Lumos speakers included Nicoleta, a self-advocate from Moldova; Bulgaria country director Bisser Spirov; and CEO Peter McDermott.

INFLUENCING EU FUNDING AND POLICIES

Years of advocacy in the EU paid off when new funding instruments for 2021-2027 included incentives to promote the shift away from institutional to community-based care. Care reform is referenced in both internal and external funding instruments. Newly adopted European strategies on the rights of children and people with disabilities also contained strong references to children in institutions, care reform, inclusive education and child protection. These included amendments tabled by MEPs as a result of direct engagement with Lumos. The funding instruments and strategies will help accelerate care reform in the EU and worldwide.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLANS

We've been working hard to make sure that EU efforts to "build back better" after the pandemic include transitioning away from institutional to family and community-based care. As part of the European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-Based Care (EEG), Lumos led a taskforce to develop country-specific recommendations for the national recovery and resilience plans of 12 EU Member States, funded by the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility. The final plans, adopted in 2021, include several EEG recommendations, from developing foster care systems to advancing inclusive education.

PROMOTING DEINSTITUTIONALISATION IN EU ACCESSION COUNTRIES

The process of becoming an EU Member State is an arduous one. It's also an opportunity to advance the deinstitutionalisation process in EU accession countries. We've been advocating that the transition from institutional to family and community-based care should be looked at as one of the criteria for joining the EU. The European Commission has been listening – its 2021 report on North Macedonia highlighted that "the deinstitutionalisation process made real progress and almost all of the children were resettled to community-based care" in the country.

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE SPEAKS OUT AGAINST VOLUNTOURISM

This year brought progress in our campaign against voluntourism, when we were invited to speak in a panel on modern trends in volunteering during a European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) hearing. This led to the EESC setting out a strong position against voluntourism, calling for volunteering to be prohibited where it "could do more harm than good, eg in institutional settings with children or other vulnerable people (such as orphanages)". It's the first time an EU body has taken such a strong stance on this topic, providing an important example for future advocacy.

A TALE OF TWO MARIAS

We first shared the story of Maria and her foster mother Mama Maria in 2019. In 2021 we visited them again at their home in Moldova to see how the family are getting on.

Maria says the best thing about her life with her mother is that she lives "in a family". In a family, she says, she has warmth, love and joy. "Here, everyone understands you, hears you. You learn here things you haven't known before. Family is the best."

Sadly, family is not something all children can take for granted. Maria, who has cerebral palsy, was placed in an orphanage by her biological family. The orphanage was a lonely place where Maria felt sad and angry. At age eight, she couldn't read, and she struggled to walk.

Then Mama Maria found her. Lumos helped both Marias prepare for life together as a family. We also gave training to her new school so that they could support the family.

Maria is growing more independent every day and finds walking easier. She likes to read, and enjoys playing with her friends. It makes her happy, Maria says, to help her mother by preparing food, and feeding their dog, rabbits and ducks.

As for many families around the world, the isolation brought by the pandemic has been difficult. Lumos worked with the local Social Assistance Department to provide the family with counselling and support from a psychologist.

Maria wishes for all institutions to be closed. "Children deserve good families", she says, "Children need to be loved, to be understood, to be taken care of." She is optimistic about the future, she adds, "because I believe, and we all believe, that it should be better".

For Mama Maria, life with her daughter exceeds all expectation. "This is my child and I wish, as Maria said, for all children to find their happiness, their home, parents."

FIND OUT MORE

In Moldova, we've helped to develop inclusive education and social services and we also provide psychological, social and financial support to families like the two Marias. Find out more about their incredible story in our film:

wearelumos.org/marias

We've been working with the Moldovan government since 2006, helping them redirect funds from institutions into family-based services. Since then, we've helped them develop inclusive education and social services, and the number of children in institutions has fallen by 90%.



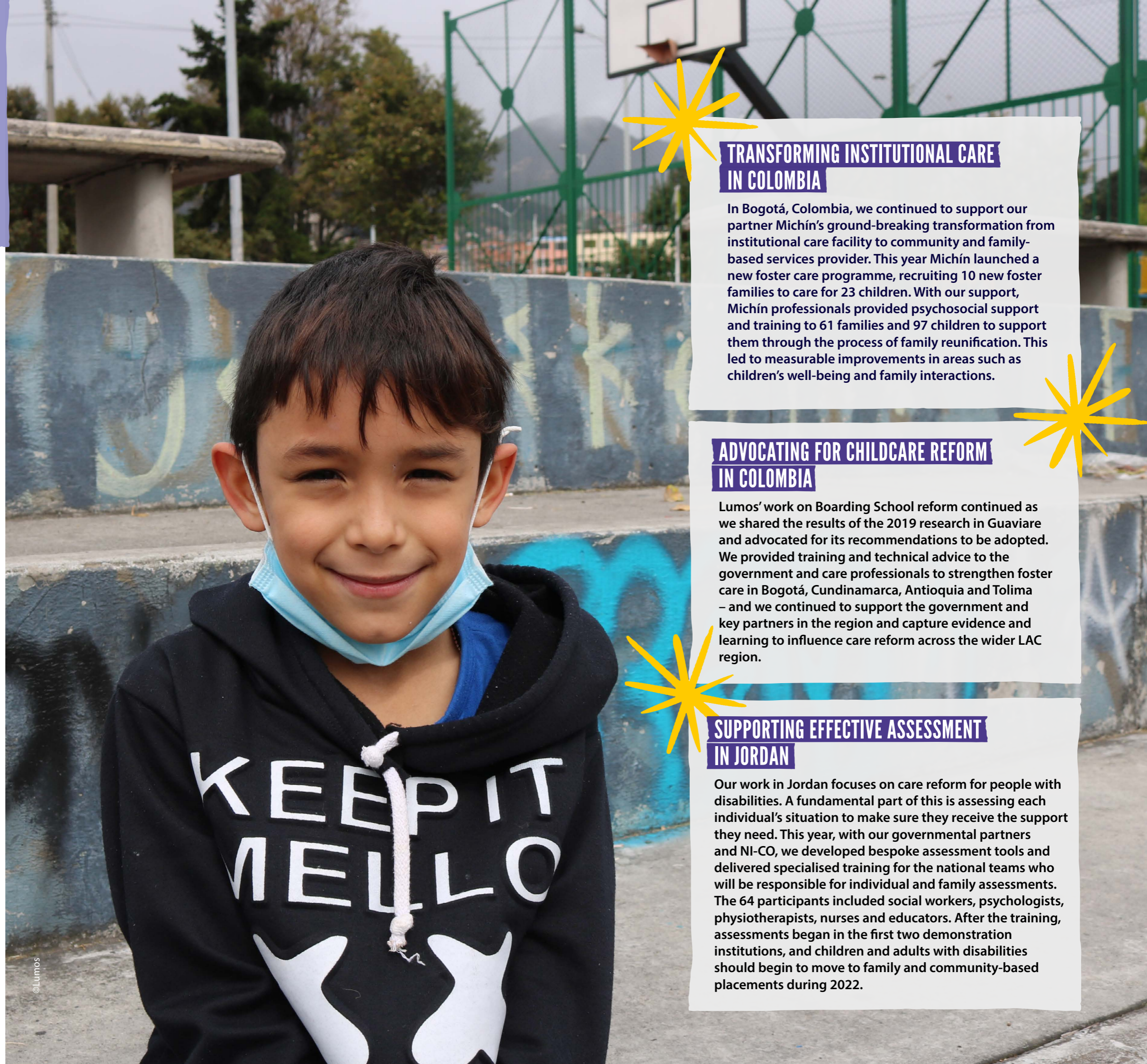
**“CHILDREN DESERVE
GOOD FAMILIES. CHILDREN
NEED TO BE LOVED,
TO BE UNDERSTOOD, TO BE
TAKEN CARE OF.”**

INNOVATIVE INTERVENTIONS

Last year, we continued to demonstrate how to keep children and their families together in a wide variety of contexts all over the world. Through our demonstration programmes in Moldova, Haiti and Colombia, and projects we support in Kenya, Ukraine and Jordan, we're identifying and documenting innovative ways to transform care systems. By showing and sharing what we learn, we can make change happen on a larger scale, and transfer knowledge, experience and evidence to other countries and contexts.

In 2021, we had to keep adapting our work through the shifting nature of the pandemic – whether that was switching to online training, providing remote psychological support and counselling to children and young people in Moldova, or responding to the practical needs of vulnerable families during lockdown in Colombia.

After more than a decade of work to transform childcare systems in Eastern Europe, we closed our demonstration programmes in Czechia and Bulgaria. We've supported children and families and worked closely with governments and NGO key partners in both countries to improve national legislation and practices, and promote family and community-based care. The number of children in institutions in Bulgaria has decreased by 97%. In Czechia, we've seen a huge improvement in social service provision. Around 65% of the children under state care are now in foster care, with only 35% in institutions. We will use the learning and evidence from these countries to improve reform around the world and we will continue to work with the State Agency for Child Protection to ensure care system reform continues in Bulgaria.



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TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONAL CARE IN COLOMBIA

In Bogotá, Colombia, we continued to support our partner Michín's ground-breaking transformation from institutional care facility to community and family-based services provider. This year Michín launched a new foster care programme, recruiting 10 new foster families to care for 23 children. With our support, Michín professionals provided psychosocial support and training to 61 families and 97 children to support them through the process of family reunification. This led to measurable improvements in areas such as children's well-being and family interactions.

ADVOCATING FOR CHILDCARE REFORM IN COLOMBIA

Lumos' work on Boarding School reform continued as we shared the results of the 2019 research in Guaviare and advocated for its recommendations to be adopted. We provided training and technical advice to the government and care professionals to strengthen foster care in Bogotá, Cundinamarca, Antioquia and Tolima – and we continued to support the government and key partners in the region and capture evidence and learning to influence care reform across the wider LAC region.

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT IN JORDAN

Our work in Jordan focuses on care reform for people with disabilities. A fundamental part of this is assessing each individual's situation to make sure they receive the support they need. This year, with our governmental partners and NI-CO, we developed bespoke assessment tools and delivered specialised training for the national teams who will be responsible for individual and family assessments. The 64 participants included social workers, psychologists, physiotherapists, nurses and educators. After the training, assessments began in the first two demonstration institutions, and children and adults with disabilities should begin to move to family and community-based placements during 2022.

IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN IN BULGARIA

In Bulgaria, we've been working on a project to connect unaccompanied refugee and migrant children with alternative care systems like foster care, and supported independent living. Targeting young people aged 15-18, the project provides tools and training for professionals and aims to raise awareness of what needs to happen to make national alternative care systems accessible and suitable for unaccompanied children and young people. Our work in 2021 included two online Training the Trainers sessions for 39 professionals and government officials and a virtual roundtable discussion sharing experiences with partners from the Netherlands, Italy and Spain.

TRANSFORMING KENYA'S CARE STRATEGY

Kenya finalised the development of its National Care Reform Strategy for Children for 2021-2031. The strategy aims to transform away from an institutional model of care to community and family-based care and will impact an estimated 60,000 children living in institutions or on the streets. We played a major role in developing the strategy and will be supporting the government to implement it. We also supported the governmental review of related policies and legal frameworks, and in preparation of the strategy's launch, we worked with UNICEF under the leadership of the National Council for Children's Services to deliver two regional workshops to over 70 participants across 27 counties.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN MOLDOVA

By demonstrating how care systems can be reformed, and sharing what we've learned, we can have an impact far beyond our own programmes. This year, we took part in five international events to share our achievements, challenges and experiences of childcare reform in Moldova. We also carried out around 80 capacity-building activities for over 1,900 specialists in the fields of social protection, education and healthcare, as well as skills training for parents. Specialists who we've trained and supported are now increasingly taking on responsibility for running activities and services.

STRENGTHENING EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

A Lumos-supported Early Intervention Centre in Moldova, opened in 2020, enjoyed its first full year of operation. A first-of-its-kind service for children under five with disabilities and developmental disorders, it provides much-needed support to families and carers. Over 170 children have been enrolled in programmes at the centre, with specialists carrying out more than 5,350 individual rehabilitation sessions. We also reached an agreement with the National Medical Insurance Company to cover the centre's operational costs, assuring its long-term sustainability. In total, our early intervention services supported more than 650 children in 2021. Through our work, in partnership with local authorities and professionals, we identified and prevented around 700 children from being separated from their families.

FROM INSTITUTION TO INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT

Despite the pandemic and political instability, work continued on transforming the Ceadâr-Lunga Residential Institution in the autonomous region of Gagauzia, Moldova. We helped develop individual placement plans for 22 children to prepare them for leaving the institution and to be reintegrated into families or transferred into family-type settings. By the end of the school year, 11 children had left the institution – five having been reintegrated into families, one being placed in kinship care and five in foster care.

ENDING "BABY HOMES" IN CZECHIA

No more "baby homes" – that's one legacy of our work in Czechia, which came to an end this year. We've been working in the country since 2008, but we weren't going to leave until we knew we'd brought about lasting change. In December 2021, a last milestone was reached when the law was amended to prevent children under the age of three from being placed in institutions and to close all residential institutions for babies. As well as lobbying for legislative changes, we've supported the government officials to monitor data on infants placed in baby homes.

MEETING CHILDREN'S COMPLEX NEEDS IN MOLDOVA

Providing inclusive education for children with disabilities and special educational needs is a vital part of ending institutionalisation. In 2021 we organised training for more than 200 professionals across Moldova to promote the Lumos Model for Inclusive Education. We also worked with educational specialists to support 142 children with complex needs, providing speech, physical and occupational therapy, and psychological assistance. We paid special attention to children graduating from kindergarten to ease their transition into primary school. We also organised workshops on developing inclusive education programmes and monitoring children's progress.





ANTI-TRAFFICKING RESEARCH IN HAITI

Changing social attitudes is vital to ending orphanage trafficking in Haiti. This year, we published a study looking at attitudes and social norms that enable trafficking and hinder efforts to stop it. The study's findings have been endorsed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the National Counter-Trafficking Committee, and are already being used to develop an action plan for raising awareness and changing behaviour. We also helped develop national standard operating procedures for identifying and supporting trafficking victims, and developed a web tool mapping services for trafficking victims and those at risk.

TRANSFORMING CARE IN RUSSIA

Drawing on support from Lumos, a coalition of NGOs came together in Russia in 2021 to work for the deinstitutionalisation of children. They set an ambitious goal of making sure that by 2027, no child under the age of four in Russia is placed in an institution. We've been working with partners in the country to promote the transformation of the residential childcare system, working directly with public authorities, NGOs and professionals from the Republic of Karelia to continue supporting the implementation of a deinstitutionalisation plan.

TRAINING IN UKRAINE TO CREATE CARE REFORM

Capacity building is key for quality care reform, and each year we expand our training programmes to include new themes and new target groups. In Ukraine in 2021, we worked with national and regional authorities to run training programmes for 1,512 professionals and decision-makers. In partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science we delivered a comprehensive 130-hour Training of Trainers programme on developing inclusive education for 26 experts from all regions of Ukraine. Along with training, we ran numerous specialist workshops, consultancy sessions and technical assistance meetings. Before the Russian invasion, this expertise was being disseminated in the education system throughout the country.

BOOSTING COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES IN UKRAINE

Deinstitutionalisation can only happen if communities have services in place to support children and families. In Zhytomyr last year, we supported 20 new communities to develop local plans for transforming care systems – and in 2021, 54 communities in the region (81%) had local plans. The number of social workers (167) had doubled, and 62% of mainstream schools included children with special educational needs. Before the Russian invasion, around 6,300 children and 3,000 families at risk were benefiting from newly created community services in the region.

Ukraine Update: since the invasion of Ukraine in March 2022, our work has pivoted to emergency response to support children in institutions and displaced families. For latest updates on this, please visit www.wearelumos.org

REUNITING CHILDREN WITH FAMILIES IN HAITI

Tracing the family of children living in institutions is a complicated endeavour in Haiti, amid a pandemic and highly challenging security situation. And when the family tracing is successful, there's no guarantee of reunification. We're grateful to have been able to reunify 19 children with their biological families during 2021. Even though the conditions are often far from ideal, family care is invaluable for these children – and we make sure we're on hand to provide children and families with the support they need in the long term.

IMPROVING COMMUNITY CARE PROVISION IN BULGARIA AND CZECHIA

After over a decade of work transforming childcare systems in Eastern Europe, in 2021 Lumos formally closed its demonstration programmes in Czechia and Bulgaria. During this time the number of children in institutions in Bulgaria has reduced by 97%, while in Czechia, 65% of the children under state supervision are now in foster care and only 35% remain in institutions – 10 years ago these figures were reversed.

HELPING CHILDREN IN UKRAINE REGAIN THEIR RIGHT TO A FAMILY

Despite Covid restrictions, in 2021 we continued our efforts to transform residential institutions in Zhytomyr region, Ukraine. In 2021, three institutions began the transformation process, and we completed complex assessments of 330 children and 238 families. So far, 81 children have been reintegrated into their biological families and 23 placed in alternative family-type care. From 2019 to 2021, the number of children in residential care halved, and four institutions closed. Prior to the war in Ukraine, we intended to use evidence of learning from Zhytomyr to influence other regions, such as Mykolaiv, where four institutions had been closed and 220 children deinstitutionalised.

BUILDING BONDS IN COLOMBIA

We've been working with the Michín Foundation to transition away from institutional care and provide support for children within families. Together we helped bring Camilo home.

"When I was in the institution, I used to miss my family. I'd cry, I'd wish I was with them," says Camilo. He was seven when he was taken into the care of Michín Foundation, as his mum was no longer able to look after him.

We partnered with Michín to transform the way they work – providing care and support for children in families instead of in institutions. Together, we helped bring Camilo home to live with his father Carlos and his family.

"Now I've returned home, I live with my great-grandma, my dad, my little siblings, and I enjoy being with them, I feel better," says Camilo. He enjoys crafts and likes making things to decorate his bedroom now that he has one of his own. "I have a good place to sleep. I eat well. What I like most is that my grandma, when she has errands to do, always calls me: 'Cami, let's go!', and that makes me happy."

With our support, this family has been able to create a loving and supportive home. Social worker Nathaly explains that the new bond between father and son has "changed the history of this family."

"What I want the most is for my family to be well, to be economically stable," says Carlos. "I want to bring them what they need. Even, sooner or later, buy a modest house."

Camilo has hopes for the future too. "When I grow up, I want to be a firefighter," he says. "I want to make some friends so I can put out fires with them, because I want to rescue people who are in danger."

FIND OUT MORE

In Colombia, we've been working with the Michín Foundation to provide support for children within families. Thanks to your support, we helped bring Camilo home to live with his father Carlos, great-grandmother Isabel, stepmother Miriam, and younger half-siblings. Watch Camilo's story at:

wearelumos.org/camilo

In Bogotá, we're supporting our partner Michín's ground-breaking transformation from institutional facility to community care provider. They now have a licence to run a foster care programme, and professionals are able to provide psychosocial support to families and children through the process of family reunification.



**"NOW I'VE RETURNED HOME,
I LIVE WITH MY GREAT-
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PARTNERSHIPS AND LEARNING

Over the years, Lumos and partners have built up a wealth of knowledge and experience in care reform in a wide variety of contexts. We're committed to sharing what we've learned with others. This includes providing technical support, evidence and guidance to help design and run better care systems, and organising learning exchanges to share experiences and challenges.

With various partners, we're building a community for people working in care reform, providing online tools, training resources, and organising peer-to-peer opportunities to learn from each other. We're part of several global and regional networks focusing on different aspects of child protection, children's rights and alternative care.

In 2021, the pandemic continued to have an impact on our ways of working, and we had to be flexible and creative. Although the lack of face-to-face contact was challenging, a shift to remote and virtual events also brought opportunities. For instance, the fourth Biennial International Conference on Alternative Care for Children in Asia (BICON), which we played a key role in organising, had to be rearranged as an online event – which ultimately enabled more people from different countries to participate.

Similarly, as part of a course we co-developed on transforming care in Latin America and the Caribbean, we hosted an online event that was recorded and edited into a training video. This enabled care leavers from several countries to share their perspectives with learners.



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BUILDING EXPERTISE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Momentum is building to transform care systems in Latin America and the Caribbean, but progress has been hindered by a lack of knowhow and training. With our partners at the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN-OAS), we developed an online training course specially tailored to the region. The new eight-week course features articles, video lectures, case studies, and quizzes, developed together with regional experts and young people with lived experience of care. The course is presented by members of the Latin American Care Leavers Network, and emphasises the importance of children and young people's participation for effective reform.

ADVANCING COLLABORATION IN AFRICA

As care reform begins to gather pace in Africa, we've been involved in various networks seeking to share knowhow and build capacity at national, regional and continental level. We joined the newly established Working Group on Children Without Parental Care in Africa, the first of its kind on the continent, where we're co-leading a workstream on transforming care. We also took a lead role in preparing a report on alternative care in Africa – the first continent-wide submission – in preparation for the UN Day of General Discussion, and contributed to a continental study on children without parental care.

RAISING YOUNG VOICES IN LATIN AMERICA

In Latin America and the Caribbean, Lumos continues to fight for the right of children to grow up in loving families – including through the Global Movement for Children (MMI-LAC), a coalition dedicated to children's rights. This year, we helped establish a Latin American Hub, including MMI-LAC members and other strategic organisations in the region. Its work this year included collaborating with young people from the Latin American Care Leavers Network to develop recommendations for the UN Day of General Discussion, via a virtual event that brought together more than 250 participants.

STRENGTHENING BEST PRACTICE AND PARTICIPATION ACROSS ASIA

We played a key role in organising BICON, the leading conference on the rights of children and young people without parental care in Asia. Held as a virtual event in December 2021, it brought together practitioners, policymakers, academics and young people in an effort to catalyse care reform at the highest levels. Over two days, 390 attendees and 179 organisations from across the globe participated in 23 interactive workshops, plenaries and panel discussions, and 48 expert speakers and panellists joined from 19 countries to share experiences, challenges and promising practices.

SUPPORTING UNACCOMPANIED AND SEPARATED CHILDREN

Children need love and care in every situation – which is why we're an active member of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, which facilitates collaboration between agencies working on child protection in humanitarian contexts. This has provided opportunities to support the care reform agenda in humanitarian work and contribute to the design of family and community-based care solutions for unaccompanied migrant and refugee children. We've also contributed to the Alliance's revised technical guidance and training on subjects including alternative care, unaccompanied and separated children, and family tracing and reunification.

BRIDGING EVIDENCE GAPS IN LATIN AMERICA

In May, Lumos and partners released a report highlighting the key factors leading to the institutionalisation of children in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the need for reliable, up-to-date data on the issue. At the launch, we hosted a panel discussion with regional experts to share their perspectives on challenges and opportunities for care reform. The event brought together more than 130 participants. It was a great opportunity to highlight the importance of transforming care and establishing strategic partnerships in the region, where at least 187,000 children live in institutions.

In Ukraine's Zhytomyr region last year, we supported 20 communities to develop local plans for transforming care services – that means 81% of communities in the region now have local plans in place to support families like Viktor and Veronika's.



“I'M VERY HAPPY THAT MY CHILDREN ARE WITH ME AND I CAN SEE THEM EVERY DAY.”

REUNITING FAMILIES

May 2022 update: After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Viktor and Veronika are accessing distance learning, having received tablets during the Covid-19 pandemic. The family is included in Lumos' plans for providing emergency humanitarian aid, and our staff members are in constant communication with the local authority and the family's social worker, who are keeping us informed of the family's situation and needs.

We've been working with Ukrainian authorities to ensure that families like Viktor and Veronika's have the support they need to thrive together at home.

When Lumos met Viktor and Veronika, the siblings had been in a boarding school for several years. Their family was struggling financially and didn't have access to the vital support services they needed to take care of them at home.

The children were miserable at the boarding school and wanted to return home to their parents. Lumos worked with the local authority to help the family and to bring Viktor and Veronika safely home. Their father now has a full-time job and can support the family.

Their mother is delighted that the family can now enjoy life together. "I'm very happy that my children are with me and I can see them every day," she says.

Viktor now has access to a special needs teacher and the support he needs to thrive at his community school. Both children have friends and enjoy several hobbies. In the boarding school, Viktor could not speak in full sentences – now he talks joyfully about playing football and spending time with the family's horse, Masha.

Veronika is already thinking about what profession she wants to have when she grows up. Together at home, the family can now look towards the future.

"I hardly saw my parents before," Veronika says. "Now, I see them very often!"

Lumos is supporting Ukrainian authorities to implement holistic care reform, providing training to over 3,000 decision-makers and professionals. Since 2013, the number of institutionalised children in the demonstration region has reduced by 48%.

FIND OUT MORE

In countries like Ukraine, with a high number of children in institutions and an institutional system often viewed as the only solution, change can only happen if communities have services in place to support children and families in need. But we're helping to prove that it's possible. Watch Viktor and Veronika's story at: wearelumos.org/ukraine



A family for all children

For more information visit our website wearelumos.org



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