



Protecting Children. Providing Solutions.

November 2017

## Lumos' contribution to the *Comprehensive evaluation of EU Humanitarian Aid 2012-2016* consultation

### 1. About Lumos

Lumos is an international NGO<sup>1</sup>, founded by the author J.K. Rowling, working to end the institutionalisation of children around the world by transforming education, health and social care systems for children and their families; helping children move from institutions to family-based care. Lumos sits on the EU Civil Society Platform against trafficking in human beings and is a founding member of the European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care.

### 2. Institutionalisation of children

Across the world an estimated eight million children live in large residential institutions that cannot meet their needs.<sup>2</sup> At least 80% of these children are not 'orphans' and have at least one living parent;<sup>3</sup> many are placed in institutions because they are poor, have a disability, or belong to a marginalised group.<sup>4</sup>

The Common European Guidelines on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care define institutions for children "as residential settings that are not built around the needs of the child nor close to a family situation, and display the characteristics typical of institutional culture (depersonalisation, rigidity of routine, block treatment, social distance, dependence, lack of accountability, etc.)".<sup>5</sup>

Despite good intentions, over 80 years of research from across the world has demonstrated the harm caused to children by institutionalisation.<sup>6</sup> Studies highlight how, due to the lack of emotional and physical contact, stimulation and interaction, institutions damage children's ability to form the secure attachments they need to develop to their potential. The institutional environment's inability to meet individual needs can lead to developmental delays and behaviours that challenge.<sup>7</sup> Research into early brain development demonstrates that institutionalisation has a severe impact on brain development

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<sup>1</sup> Lumos Foundation (Lumos) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales number: 5611912 | Registered charity number: 1112575

<sup>2</sup> Pinheiro, P.S. (2006). *World Report on Violence against Children*. UNICEF: New York.

<sup>3</sup> Csáky, C. (2009). *Keeping Children Out of Harmful Institutions: Why we should be investing in family-based care*. Save the Children, London, 2009, p7. Better Care Network (2009) *Global facts about orphanages*. [http://handstohearts.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Global-Fact-Sheet-on-Orphanages\\_BetterCareNetwork.pdf](http://handstohearts.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Global-Fact-Sheet-on-Orphanages_BetterCareNetwork.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Pinheiro, P.S. (2006). *World Report on Violence against Children*. UNICEF: New York.

<sup>5</sup> European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care (2012), *Common European Guidelines on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care* <http://www.deinstitutionalisationguide.eu/> [accessed 20/11/2017]

<sup>6</sup> Berens, A. & Nelson, C. (2015) *The science of early adversity: is there a role for large institutions in the care of vulnerable children?* *The Lancet*. 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Mulheir, G. (2012). *Deinstitutionalisation – A Human Rights Priority for Children with Disabilities*. *The Equal Rights Review*, p119–121.

and that this impact is even greater than the impact of child abuse.<sup>8</sup> For more information, please see Lumos' factsheets: '[Children in Institutions: The Risks](#)'<sup>9</sup> and '[Children in Institutions. The Global Picture](#)'<sup>10</sup>.

### 3. International policy and legislative framework

Evidence demonstrates that a caring and protective family, immediate and extended, is central to a child's health, development, and protection. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) affirms that, as far as possible, all children have a right to live with their families and that parents or other legal guardians have the primary responsibility to protect and care for the child.<sup>11</sup> The CRC and the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children<sup>12</sup> also call on States to ensure that families have access to services which support them in their caregiving role. The Guidelines state that, "[e]very child and young person should live in a supportive, protective and caring environment that promotes his/her full potential. Children with inadequate or no parental care are at special risk of being denied such a nurturing environment."

The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, which were published in 2012, call to establish systems to monitor the situation of girls and boys who may be at risk of violence, including neglect. This may include, for example, children in residential care; children with disabilities; separated children; children on the streets; or children formerly associated with armed forces or armed groups.<sup>13</sup> The goals call for preserving family unity, and highlight that residential care facilities are often a pull factor that lead to family separation. The Standards also state that in emergencies, institutions or residential care services "should only be considered as an alternative care option for the shortest possible time".<sup>14</sup> The UN Guidelines on the Alternative Care of Children also "prohibit the establishment of new residential facilities structured to provide simultaneous care to large groups of children on a permanent or long-term basis" in emergency situations.<sup>15</sup>

The EU has recognised the harm that institutionalisation causes to children and has played an instrumental role in the efforts to end this practice inside the EU. By introducing an ex-ante conditionality on social inclusion (9: 9.1.) with an investment priority on the "transition from institutional to community based services"<sup>16</sup> in the **Regulation 1303/2013 on the European Structural**

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<sup>8</sup> Nelson, C. and Koga, S. (2004). Effects of institutionalisation on brain and behavioural development in young children. Findings from the Bucharest early intervention project, paper presented at the International Conference on 'Mapping the number and characteristics of children under three in institutions across Europe at risk of harm', 19 March 2004, EU Daphne Programme 2002/3 and WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark.

<sup>9</sup>Lumos (2014) Children in Institutions: the Risks [http://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/2.Risks\\_.pdf](http://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/2.Risks_.pdf) [accessed 10/05/2017]

<sup>10</sup> Lumos (2015) Children in Institutions: the Global Picture [http://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/1.Global%20Numbers\\_2\\_0.pdf](http://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/1.Global%20Numbers_2_0.pdf) [accessed 10/05/2017]

<sup>11</sup> United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child (Adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990) Vol.1577, p.3.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations (2009) Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (2009) A/RES/64/142 [http://www.unicef.org/protection/alternative\\_care\\_Guidelines-English.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/protection/alternative_care_Guidelines-English.pdf) [accessed 27 Jul 2017].

<sup>13</sup> Child Protection Working Group. (2012). *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action*. [http://www.unicef.org/iran/Minimum\\_standards\\_for\\_child\\_protection\\_in\\_humanitarian\\_action.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/iran/Minimum_standards_for_child_protection_in_humanitarian_action.pdf), p. 125.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>15</sup> UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (2009) *op. cit.* paragraph 154(d)

<sup>16</sup> European Union (2013) Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 320–469, Article 9: 9.1

**and Investment Funds (ESIF)**, the EU has prohibited ESIF to be used for the maintenance or renovation of existing, and the construction of new, large residential institutional settings.<sup>17</sup>

The importance of protecting the rights of children outside the EU has been highlighted by the recently adopted “EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (2017)”, which include institutionalisation as one of the key risk factors for children in vulnerable situations.<sup>18</sup> The document highlights the importance of appropriate alternative care for children that allows them to participate in community life, and preventing family and child separation (see section 5.A)<sup>19</sup> and states that the primary consideration for expenditure should be the best interests of the child (see section 5.D).<sup>20</sup> It further recommends the need for greater coherence in the EU’s external action on children, including that carried out by Member States.<sup>21</sup>

#### 4. Emergency response and the proliferation of institutions for children

During natural disasters, conflict and other crises, many children end up being separated from their families. In response, humanitarian aid efforts often focus on providing what is perceived as the simplest service to take care of these children: institutional care or so-called ‘orphanages’. Children may remain in institutions long after the crisis, with insufficient efforts made to reunite them with their family, resulting in long-term institutionalisation and serious harm to children.<sup>22</sup>

While the construction of an orphanage is a common and well-intended response to natural disaster, research has demonstrated that it is not the best approach to protect children and their rights.<sup>23</sup>

##### 4.1 Responding to conflict

Spending humanitarian aid on institutions can slow countries’ long-term progress in making the necessary reforms to their care systems to protect children. Before the crisis in Ukraine, there were 104,000 children living in more than 900 institutions across the country.<sup>24</sup> Conditions in many were appalling and it was not uncommon to find institutions where children with disabilities were dying from malnutrition-related illnesses.<sup>25</sup> Large sums of bailout funding have been provided to Ukraine by the international community,<sup>26</sup> and there are concerns that significant amounts are being spent on maintaining these institutions, which continue to harm children. Based on Lumos’ understanding of the issue, there are considerable concerns that reconstruction funds might be used to rebuild

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> European Union (2017), Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu\\_guidelines\\_rights\\_of\\_child\\_0.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_guidelines_rights_of_child_0.pdf), p. 4

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p.19

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 21

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, e.g. p. 13

<sup>22</sup> Save the Children UK. (2010). Misguided Kindness: Making the Right Decisions for Children in Emergencies. <http://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Misguided%20Kindness%20-%20Making%20the%20Right%20Decisions%20for%20Children%20in%20Emergencies.pdf> [accessed 2 November 2017]

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Dobrova-Krol, N.A. & Van Ijzendoorn, M.H. (2017). Institutional Care in Ukraine: Organizational Structure, Abuse and Structural Neglect. p 226. In: Rus, A.V., Parris, S.R., & Stativa, E. (Eds.). Child Maltreatment in Residential Care: History, Research and Current Practice. Springer International Publishing.

<sup>25</sup> See Bilson, A (2010) The Development of Gate-Keeping functions in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS: Lessons from Bulgaria, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, University of Central Lancashire, 2010.

<sup>26</sup> Reuters (12 February 2015) Ukraine to get \$40 billion, including \$17.5 billion from IMF – Lagarde. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-ukraine-crisis-imf/ukraine-to-get-40-billion-including-17-5-billion-from-imf-lagarde-idUKKBN0LG0Q420150212> [accessed 2 November 2017]

institutions or build new ones to respond to the needs of children separated or orphaned because of war.

## 4.2 Responding to natural disasters

Following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, a massive international movement to bring aid to Haitian children, while understandable, was based on the belief that the number of orphaned children had skyrocketed.<sup>27</sup> Though children did suffer immensely – 1.5 million children under age 18 were directly or indirectly affected by the earthquake,<sup>28</sup> many were separated from or lost their primary caregivers, and some were abandoned following the earthquake – many were taken in by extended family.<sup>29</sup> For others, time was needed to conduct family tracing and reunification, and some children required temporary alternative care. Yet, over seven years after the January 2010 earthquake, orphanages have proliferated in Haiti. Between 2010 and 2013, the country saw at least a 150 percent increase in their number<sup>30</sup> – whereas the Haitian government estimates that over 80% of the children in them have at least one living parent.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, 85% of these institutions are unregulated, which places the children in them at great risk of further harm and exploitation.<sup>32</sup>

This phenomenon is not unique and has also been documented in post-conflict Nepal. Orphanages in the country continue to operate and expand, even though its 10-year civil war ended in 2006.<sup>33</sup> In Aceh, the Indonesian region struck by the 2004 Tsunami, one study found that more than 85% of child victims of the Tsunami in the Children's Homes still have at least one parent alive and that 97.54% of child victims of the Tsunami were placed in the Children's Home by their immediate family.<sup>34</sup> In Aceh, and Indonesia as a whole, education has been found to be a key driver of institutionalisation of children.<sup>35</sup>

## 4.3 Humanitarian action in the EU refugee crisis

Children are particularly vulnerable in the ongoing refugee crisis in the EU, and are at high risk of abuse, trafficking and institutionalisation. While both migrant and refugee children arriving on European soil should have their rights protected in the same way as European children, the reality has been very different. It is estimated that over 40,000 migrant children are detained in Europe every

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<sup>27</sup> Van Doore, K. (5 May 2014). Earthquake orphans: what Nepal can learn from Haiti. The Conversation.

<http://theconversation.com/earthquake-orphans-what-nepal-can-learn-from-haiti-41165> [accessed 1 March 2017].

<sup>28</sup> Office of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Community-Based Medicine & Lessons from Haiti. (n.d.). Key Statistics.

<http://www.lessonsfromhaiti.org/lessons-from-haiti/key-statistics/> [accessed 21 February 2017].

<sup>29</sup> UNICEF. (2010). Children of Haiti: Milestones and looking forward at six months.

[https://www.unicef.org/lac/UNICEF\\_Haiti\\_-\\_Six\\_Months\\_Report\\_Final\\_final\\_eng\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/lac/UNICEF_Haiti_-_Six_Months_Report_Final_final_eng(1).pdf) [accessed 1 March 2017], p13.

<sup>30</sup> Lumos (2017) Funding Haitian Orphanages at the Cost of Children's Rights <https://wearelumos.org/content/funding-haitian-orphanages-cost-childrens-rights> [accessed 8 November 2017]

<sup>31</sup> L'institut du Bien Etre Social et de Recherches (2013). Annuaire des Maisons d'Enfants en Haïti.

<http://www.ibesr.com/fichier/Annuaire%20Corrige%202012-2014%20version%20juillet.pdf> [Accessed 16 September 2016].

<sup>32</sup> Lumos (2016) Orphanage Entrepreneurs: The Trafficking of Haiti's Invisible Children [https://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/Haiti%20Trafficking%20Report\\_ENG\\_WEB\\_NOV16.pdf](https://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/Haiti%20Trafficking%20Report_ENG_WEB_NOV16.pdf) [accessed 20/11/17]

<sup>33</sup> Over 15,000 children are believed to be living in orphanages in Nepal, and the data suggest that two out of three children are not in fact orphans. For more information, see Next Generation Nepal. (2014). The Paradox of Orphanage Volunteering. <http://www.nextgenerationnepal.org/File/The-Paradox-of-Orphanage-Volunteering.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> DEPSOS and Save the Children (2006) A Rapid Assessment of Children's Homes in post-Tsunami Aceh. p. xi

[http://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/A%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20Children%27s%20Homes%20in%20Post-Tsunami%20Aceh\\_0.pdf](http://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/A%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20Children%27s%20Homes%20in%20Post-Tsunami%20Aceh_0.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. See also Florence, M. & Sudrajat, T. (2007). "Someone that matters". The quality of care in childcare institutions in Indonesia. Save the Children. Jakarta, Indonesia. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/2988/pdf/2988.pdf> [accessed 2 November 2017]

year, with 16,250 of those under 14.<sup>36</sup> Children in migration have reported being arrested at the border, assigned to an adult at random and held in detention with them.<sup>37</sup>

It is reported that in Greece, for example, the system in place to care for unaccompanied and other migrant children is heavily under-resourced and not able to respond to the high demand.<sup>38</sup> Many children are placed in detention facilities on arrival. Often children are kept in custody for a considerable amount of time before being referred to hostels or residential care facilities.<sup>39</sup> Recent research points towards unaccompanied children who go missing after having been placed in institutions before they have been registered by authorities, making them easy prey for traffickers.<sup>40</sup>

Given that many of these children are particularly vulnerable, having experienced trauma in their country of origin and/or on the journey, Lumos notes an **urgent need for child protection reform in this area** to protect children from further harm and ensure that each child's placement is in their best interest, prioritising family-based care.

#### 4.4 The impact of volunteering in orphanages

Whilst volunteering can be a key element of humanitarian intervention, if it is not well planned, there is a risk that it does more harm than good. Recent evidence highlights that orphanage volunteering is a growing industry and is exacerbating the problems linked to institutionalisation of children globally.<sup>41</sup> The failure to properly vet and train volunteers has in many cases led to serious child protection issues, sexual and other forms of abuse.<sup>42</sup> Even where this is not the case, a constant turnover of different adults in the life of children in institutions results in attachment disorders.<sup>43</sup> The demand for volunteer placements in orphanages is yet another factor increasing the demand for so-called orphans and leading to children being trafficked to fill institutions.<sup>44</sup> In Cambodia, the voluntourism industry has been largely responsible for a massive increase (75% in 5 years) in the numbers of children taken from their families and placed in institutions.<sup>45</sup>

Only qualified and vetted specialists such as social workers and medical professionals, as part of a coordinated response with thorough child protection procedures and checks, should be working in

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<sup>36</sup> <http://endchilddetention.org/data/>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bulgaria-evades-ban-on-detaining-child-refugees-03-08-2016>

<sup>38</sup> Smith, H. (29 September 2017) "Surge in migration to Greece fuels misery in refugee camps" *The Guardian* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/29/surge-in-migration-to-greece-fuels-misery-in-refugee-camps>

<sup>39</sup> Human Rights Watch. (2 August 2017) "Greece: Huge Rise in Detention of Migrant Children". <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/08/02/greece-huge-rise-detention-migrant-children> [accessed 20/11/2017]

<sup>40</sup> Missing Children Europe (n.d.) "Missing unaccompanied migrant children" <http://missingchildreurope.eu/Missingunaccompaniedchildren> [accessed 27 Jun 2017]

<sup>41</sup> Punaks, M & Feit, K (2014) *The Paradox of Orphanage Volunteering: Combatting Child Trafficking Through Ethical Voluntourism*, Next Generation Nepal

<sup>42</sup> Van Doore, K, Martin, F & McKeon, A (2016) *Expert Paper: International Volunteering and Child Sexual Abuse*, Better Care Network; Better Volunteering Better Care (2014) *Collected Viewpoints on International Volunteering in Residential Care Centres*

<sup>43</sup> Better Care Network (2016) *Orphanage Volunteering – Why to say no*. [http://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Orphanage%20Volunteering%20\\_%20Why%20to%20say%20no.pdf](http://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Orphanage%20Volunteering%20_%20Why%20to%20say%20no.pdf) [accessed 5 July 2017]. See also Lumos (2016) *Orphanage Entrepreneurs: The Trafficking of Haiti's Invisible Children* [https://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/Haiti%20Trafficking%20Report\\_ENG\\_WEB\\_NOV16.pdf](https://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/Haiti%20Trafficking%20Report_ENG_WEB_NOV16.pdf) [accessed 31/03/17]

<sup>44</sup> Punaks, M & Feit, K (2014) *The Paradox of Orphanage Volunteering: Combatting Child Trafficking Through Ethical Voluntourism*, Next Generation Nepal

<sup>45</sup> Cambodian Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (2011). *With the best intentions: a study of attitudes towards residential care in Cambodia 2011*. Phnom Penh. Available from: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/6445/pdf/6445.pdf> p8.

residential care units for children in a crisis situation. The EU has a role to play in raising awareness and discouraging volunteering in orphanages, both at political level and among partners in the field.

#### 4.5 The financial incentive

The proliferation of orphanages has been fuelled in part by the huge sums of money donated to orphanages, creating a demand for institutions and for children to fill them. Lumos documented financial support to just over one-third of known Haitian orphanages and found that at least US\$100 million dollars was donated to them annually. This means that funding to the orphanage sector in Haiti is one of the most significant forms of any kind of international aid to Haiti.<sup>46</sup> As a result, establishing institutions has become a lucrative ‘business’ in a number of countries, and a worrying trend has emerged of children being trafficked into orphanages. Orphanage ‘entrepreneurs’ recruit children by misleading parents about the care to be provided or even paying them to give their children away, and use the children to solicit donations from well-meaning donors. Little of the funding received is spent on care for the children, who are in turn placed at risk of serious abuse and neglect<sup>47</sup>.

#### 5. When does a ‘chronic emergency’ in institutions become a humanitarian crisis?

Lumos frequently comes across high levels of serious harm to children in institutions – both in emergency and non-emergency situations. In Bulgaria, we assisted the government with an intervention in institutions for children with disabilities. Three children were dying every month from malnutrition-related illnesses – not because of a lack of available food, rather a lack of time taken to feed children. We reduced the mortality rate to near zero within months.<sup>48</sup> In Haiti, the government has identified approximately 140 institutions where the conditions are so poor that children are at severe risk. Malnutrition and lack of potable water are common. In a number of cases, children are being trafficked through the institutions.<sup>49</sup> Yet these situations are not regarded as humanitarian emergencies and it is difficult to find funding streams that can respond.

When institutions are in crisis, it is difficult for government to focus on long-term development of systems, as all their capacity is taken up with responding to the worst cases. Emergency aid such as food and water can help to save lives in the short run, as part of a strategy for more comprehensive system reform away from institutions and towards family- and community-based care.

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<sup>46</sup> Lumos (2017) Funding Haitian Orphanages at the Cost of Children's Rights <https://wearelumos.org/content/funding-haitian-orphanages-cost-childrens-rights> [accessed 8 November 2017]

<sup>47</sup> Lumos (2016) Orphanage Entrepreneurs: The Trafficking of Haiti's Invisible Children [https://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/Haiti%20Trafficking%20Report\\_ENG\\_WEB\\_NOV16.pdf](https://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/Haiti%20Trafficking%20Report_ENG_WEB_NOV16.pdf) [accessed 31/03/17]

<sup>48</sup> Lumos (2016) Ending institutionalisation: An assessment of the outcomes for children and young people in Bulgaria who moved from institutions to the community. p. 10

<sup>49</sup> See Lumos (2016) Orphanage Entrepreneurs: The Trafficking of Haiti's Invisible Children [https://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/Haiti%20Trafficking%20Report\\_ENG\\_WEB\\_NOV16.pdf](https://wearelumos.org/sites/default/files/Haiti%20Trafficking%20Report_ENG_WEB_NOV16.pdf) [accessed 31/03/17], pp. 28 ff

## 6. Recommendations for EU Humanitarian Aid

Lumos wholeheartedly supports Commissioner Stylianides' assertion that "long-lasting crises need a long-term approach," that "the lack of this approach has created a dependency on humanitarian aid" and that therefore "it is vital that humanitarian and development actors work together from the outset of a crisis."<sup>50</sup> It is crucial to take a long-term approach, have effective and sustainable child protection measures in place, and look for family- and community-based care solutions for orphaned and separated children instead of relying on institutions. It is also extremely important to ensure that child protection in emergencies is adequately funded.

### **Recommendation 1: Policy coherence to protect children worldwide**

As highlighted previously, through the introduction of an ex-ante conditionality on social inclusion (9: 9.1.), the European Union has recognised that institutions are harmful to children and as a consequence has significantly altered its funding and policy priorities for children inside the European Union. It follows that wherever the EU has policy and funding influence, the same logic should apply. This is also reflected in the recommendations for improving coherence in the EU's external action on children, including that carried out by Member States<sup>51</sup>, in the EU's recently published Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child.

**Lumos recommends that the regulations governing EU humanitarian aid prohibit its use for the renovation or construction of institutions, and prioritise family and community based care in humanitarian aid programmes.** The same evidence-based logic and fundamental principles should be applied to all children, irrespective of where they are born and whatever emergency situations they find themselves in.

**The EU should revisit the principles enshrined in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, and make sure that they contain the transition from institutional to community based care and a clear prioritisation of child protection in emergencies.**

### **Recommendation 2: The link between short-term humanitarian aid and long-term planning for child protection**

**It is crucial to take a long-term approach to child protection and care in emergencies. In the early stages of planning a response to an emergency, the needs of children separated from their families should be considered in light of the best evidence.** Non-institutional, community based solutions should be developed to minimize the risk of entrenching or increasing the use of institutions to support children post-emergency.

**The EU should ensure that child protection, family support and prevention of separation is prioritised during conflict and emergency situations. Any residential care required during**

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<sup>50</sup> Stylianides, C. (24 March 2015). Keynote speech at DIHAD 2015 "Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability: The Humanitarian Aid and Development Perspectives" [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2014-2019/stylianides/announcements/keynote-speech-dihad-2015-opportunity-mobility-and-sustainability-humanitarian-aid-and-development\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2014-2019/stylianides/announcements/keynote-speech-dihad-2015-opportunity-mobility-and-sustainability-humanitarian-aid-and-development_en) [accessed 31 October 2017]

<sup>51</sup> European Union (2017), *Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child* [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu\\_guidelines\\_rights\\_of\\_child\\_0.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_guidelines_rights_of_child_0.pdf)

**emergency situations must be a last resort and temporary in nature.** This applies both to emergencies that happen in third countries and the refugee crisis on Europe's soil.

**Disaster preparedness should also be a key part of a long-term strategy for emergency child protection** in areas that are particularly prone to natural disasters, for example in places likely to be strongly affected by climate change in the future. **EU Humanitarian Aid should be used to put in place preventative measures, such as training families to provide emergency foster care, developing tracking systems to identify displaced children and setting aside emergency financial support for families at risk of separation.**

### **Recommendation 3: Donor coordination for child protection in emergencies**

**Lumos recommends that the European Union forge links with other major humanitarian aid donors,** such as the World Bank, UN Agencies, international NGOs, bilateral government and philanthropic donors, to plan, coordinate and implement child protection support in emergencies. In partnership, this group can reinvesting funds previously earmarked for institutions into early childhood development, inclusive education and services that protect children from violence, abuse and neglect. Donors must ensure that child protection activities in emergencies are a funding priority.

Where possible, the EU should also use its influence to raise awareness among private donors of the risks associated with funding orphanages during and post-crisis, and to encourage them to instead invest in family- and community-based responses.

### **Recommendation 4: Dealing with humanitarian crises *in* institutions**

Consider the specific issue of **when extremely poor conditions in institutions constitute an emergency requiring a humanitarian response,** particularly in countries that have experienced war, disaster or other emergencies.

Funding could be provided for emergency aid such as food, water and medical supplies, in order to enable governments to act more quickly on the systemic reforms needed to end institutionalisation and protect children in the long run. Any such action must be taken with the bigger picture in mind, must complement the transition from institutions to family- and community-based care, and must not contribute to further entrenching the use of institutions. Emergency aid should be used to prevent loss of life or imminent serious risk to health, but must not be used to build or renovate institutions.

### **Recommendation 5: Discourage orphanage volunteering**

All personnel of multilateral and bilateral partners should be **made aware of the risks associated with orphanage volunteering, and the trafficking of children into institutions.** Any voluntary work by personnel should be in line with best practice and the stated foreign assistance policy of their governments.

**Volunteers should not volunteer in residential institutions for children, unless they can contribute specific skills and expertise that are not available in the country.** More generally, volunteers must



not have direct contact with children unless they have completed adequate child protection training and vetting procedures, and should not have direct contact with children unless they have relevant qualifications and skills.

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