



# ALL CHILDREN GROW UP IN SAFE AND LOVING FAMILIES

STRATEGY 2024-2027



## OUR VISION

ALL CHILDREN GROW UP IN SAFE AND LOVING FAMILIES WITHIN SUPPORTED COMMUNITIES.

## OUR MISSION

TO REALISE EVERY CHILD'S RIGHT TO A FAMILY BY TRANSFORMING CARE SYSTEMS AROUND THE WORLD.

## WHO WE ARE

Lumos exists to light a path to a brighter future for children.

We're committed to ending the institutionalisation of children, so every child enjoys the right to grow up in a loving family where they can thrive.

Named after the light-giving spell in Harry Potter, Lumos was founded by author J.K. Rowling in 2005.



80%

ON AVERAGE, 80% OF CHILDREN IN ORPHANAGES HAVE A LIVING PARENT



5.4 MILLION

AN ESTIMATED 5.4 MILLION CHILDREN ARE LIVING IN INSTITUTIONS WORLDWIDE



300

300 GLOBAL RESEARCH STUDIES SHOW THE LONG-TERM HARM OF INSTITUTIONS TO CHILDREN

# WHY WE ARE WORKING FOR EVERY CHILD'S RIGHT TO A FAMILY.

## WHEN CHILDREN GET THE CARE THEY NEED AND ARE ENTITLED TO, THEY CAN THRIVE.

That's the simple truth that drives all of our work at Lumos. We all have a responsibility to do what it takes to help every child reach their full potential and create a better future for all of us.

All children need and deserve the same things to thrive: to grow up in the love and protection of their own families, or whenever that is not possible, a safe and stable home with loving relationships. Institutions like orphanages do not – and cannot – meet these essential needs.

Family settings can provide the consistent, loving relationships that nourish healthy development. Not only are institutions incapable of providing this, but they can also cause harm at a crucial stage of life. When a child experiences the severe and ongoing stress that is so common in institutions, this toxic stress can derail a child's development and can lead to lifelong problems in physical and mental health.

Yet around the world millions of children continue to live in institutions – separated from their families and the communities which could help them flourish now and in the future.

Most children in institutions like so-called 'orphanages' have a living parent. But many have been separated from their families by poverty or conflict, or because they have a disability and their families or local services lack the resources to look after them.

It doesn't have to be this way. Overwhelming evidence shows us a better way forward, and at Lumos, we are working with partners, children, and families to change the story.

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

**NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT.**

Find out more at [wearelumos.org](http://wearelumos.org)



# OUR NEW STRATEGY HAS **SIX** OBJECTIVES

**DELIVERING REAL SUCCESS IN THESE AREAS WILL REQUIRE A GREATER EMPHASIS ON MULTISECTORAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, ON THE MEASUREMENT AND COMMUNICATION OF IMPACT, GREATER COUNTRY AND REGIONAL FOCUS AND GREATER FOCUS ON ENSURING THE MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT OF THOSE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE.**



## **INCREASING CARE REFORM COMMITMENTS**

We'll prioritise preventing children being separated from their families and family strengthening, advocating for the redirecting of funding towards family-based care, addressing the fragmentation of child welfare and child protection systems, shedding light on challenges faced by marginalised groups and engaging young people and families affected.



## **AMPLIFYING ENGAGEMENT OF IMPACTED YOUNG PEOPLE**

We will support systematic, quality and ethical participation of children, young people and families affected to ensure they are more meaningfully engaged in the development of policies, practice, and implementation of programme that are undertaken on their behalf and impact them. This will be mainstreamed across each other strategic objective.

## **PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES**



### **PREVENTION & REINTEGRATION**

We'll ensure families have the support they need to care for their children as this plays a pivotal role in preventing the separation of children from their families and supports the reintegration of children following family separation.



### **STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION & WELFARE SYSTEMS**

We will partner with governments to achieve impact at scale in strengthening national child protection and child welfare systems, especially when seeking multi-sectoral, systems-level change.

## **ORGANISATIONAL ENABLERS**



### **THRIVING ORGANISATION**

Through a supportive infrastructure, clear communications and effective leadership we will embed a thriving work culture and environment.



### **SUSTAINABLE INCOME**

We will develop income sustainability through diversification and robust pipelines, increased efficiency and effectiveness, communicating our work and improving engagement.

# WHAT WE DO

## 1. PREVENTION & REINTEGRATION

- Drivers identified and addressed
- Gatekeeping mechanisms and case management processes
- Increased alternative family-based care and family support services
- Training frontline professionals

### KEY PRIORITIES

- Inclusive Early Childhood Interventions (Moldova)
- Family Based Care (Kenya, Colombia, Ukraine)

### OUTCOMES

#### LONG TERM

- Increased family resilience, reduction in family separation and increased reintegration of children.

#### SHORT TERM

- Increased number of families accessing community-based services that provide resources and support needed to care for their children at home.
- Increased number of families advocating to and holding duty bearers to account for the delivery of services and support.

## 2. STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION & WELFARE SYSTEMS

- Legal, policy and regulatory frameworks
- Funding and human resources (re)allocated and work force strengthened to enable care reform

### KEY PRIORITIES

- National roll-out of multi-sectoral inclusive early childhood interventions (Moldova)
- National Care Reform Policy Development (Ukraine)
- National Care Reform Implementation (Colombia, Kenya)

### OUTCOMES

#### LONG-TERM

- Governments and key stakeholders apply their expertise to create meaningful change within care systems, enabling the provision of family and community-based care.

#### SHORT-TERM

- Governments and other key stakeholders have improved expertise regarding the design and implementation of meaningful care reform.

## 3. INCREASING CARE REFORM COMMITMENTS

- Policies, programmes and funding
- Key partnerships
- Targeted advocacy
- Commitments to redirect funding
- Demonstrate impact of successful (demo) country-level care reform
- Evidence on related policy areas (eg education and VAC)

### KEY PRIORITIES

- Redirect Funding Campaign (Funding)
- Global Thematic Education Review follow up (Education)
- Disability (e.g. Early Childhood Inclusion prevention-based models)
- Impacted communities at the centre of care reform (Lived Experience)
- Integrated Care Agenda
- Violence Against Children

### OUTCOMES

#### LONG-TERM

- International and national policies and programmes are created and strengthened, and funding is allocated to enable and promote high quality care reform focused on prevention and family strengthening.

#### SHORT-TERM

- Key stakeholders in target sectors have improved knowledge and attitudes toward the importance of prevention and family strengthening.
- Key stakeholders understand that care reform requires multi-sectoral co-ordination to ensure that it is holistic and sustainable.

## 4. AMPLIFYING ENGAGEMENT OF IMPACTED YOUNG PEOPLE (CROSS-CUTTING)

- Children, young people and families with lived experience are meaningfully involved to enable their participation in care reform initiatives

### OUTCOMES

#### LONG-TERM

- Impacted children, youth, and parents exercise their rights to have an active voice and role on care transformation and its implementation.

#### SHORT-TERM

- Children, youth, and parents are more meaningfully and systematically engaged in policy practice and implementation of programmes that are undertaken on their behalf and impact them.

## CHANGE STRATEGIES

Technical support, capacity development, behaviour change communication, strategic multisectoral partnerships, evidence-based advocacy, policy & legislation

# OUR IMPACT FOR CHILDREN

Today, thanks to the efforts of Lumos and our partners, the harms of institutionalisation are more widely understood. Backed by better data and increasing evidence from the fields of neuroscience and early childhood development, there's growing consensus that **no child belongs in an institution.**

In diverse countries and contexts, we've proven 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.

**Children and families will always be at the heart of everything we do.**

## TRANSFORMING LIVES

We're driven by the vision of a world in which all children grow up in safe and loving families. We've worked alongside governments, partners and communities to demonstrate how, together, we make this a reality.

Through our locally-led country demonstration programmes, we've helped develop services to strengthen families and address the drivers of separation, enabling thousands of children in institutions to safely return home and preventing more from entering care. We've supported governments and civil society partners in at least 50 countries with training and technical support to lead reform initiatives.

Importantly, we've put children and young people with lived experience of institutions at the heart of our work. From helping to secure high-level commitments from policymakers to training social workers, including and empowering these young people has been integral to many of our milestones.

## OUR STORY SO FAR

**Since Lumos was founded, we've achieved a lot for children – and we have much more to do.**

### 2006 TRANSFORMING CARE IN MOLDOVA

As the poorest country in Europe, Moldova had high rates of institutionalisation when we began working there, with over 11,500 children living in 67 institutions. Today, thanks to our work with government and civil society partners, the number of children in institutions has fallen by 90%.

### 2008 TRAINING CZECH PROFESSIONALS

Since we began working in Czechia, the number of children in institutions has fallen by a quarter from 10,400 in 2008 to 7,900 in 2019. The biggest reductions have come in residential care homes for people with disabilities. We've helped to train more than 9,400 social workers and professionals in the Czech care system.

### 2010 REINTEGRATION IN BULGARIA

We created innovative demonstration programmes in Dobrich and Varna to reintegrate babies and children with complex disabilities into family-based care. We supported and challenged the Bulgarian government to develop and implement a national action plan for reforming children's services.

### 2013 REDIRECTING EU FUNDS

Our advocacy helped change regulations governing European Structural and Investment Funds, preventing them being spent on institutions and ensuring funds were allocated towards reforming care systems. The new conditions galvanised the transition away from institutions to family and community-based living, offering new opportunities to some of Europe's most marginalised children.

### 2015 SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON HAITI'S ORPHANAGES

We assessed all orphanages in Haiti, revealing that only one in four was licensed to operate and finding evidence of abusive practices in 93%. The government stopped the establishment of new orphanages and urged donors to direct their funds towards family and community-based care.

### 2015 HIV CARE IN COLOMBIA

We worked with Fundamor, a Colombian NGO caring for children living with HIV, to transition from operating an institution to supporting family-based care. Thanks to training, guidance and funding from Lumos, all 52 children were supported to safely leave the institution to live with their biological families, foster families or in specialist arrangements.

### 2017 LAUNCHING YOUTH ADVISORY BOARDS IN EUROPE

In 2017, we launched national youth advisory boards in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Moldova to provide opportunities for young people to contribute directly to our governance and strategic direction, and engage and influence national government.

**40,815**

**BY 2018, WE HAD TRAINED 40,815 PROFESSIONALS IN THE SKILLS NEEDED TO TRANSFORM CARE.**

### 2018 DISABILITY RIGHTS IN JORDAN

We worked with the government in Jordan to shape national legislation on the rights of people with disabilities, jointly developing a pioneering 10-year strategy on deinstitutionalisation for people with disabilities – the first of its kind in the Middle East. The strategy will transform the lives of the 1,471 people with disabilities in institutions and many others who have entered institutional care.

### 2019 A LANDMARK IN CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The UN General Assembly adopted the landmark Resolution on the Rights of Children, focused on children without parental care. Reflecting years of advocacy and recommendations made by Lumos and our partners, it emphasises the importance of growing up in a family environment, stresses the rights of all children to a family life, and opposes unnecessary separation.

### 2020 GROUND-BREAKING RESEARCH IN THE LANCET

Three major papers shedding light on the situation of children living in institutions were published in The Lancet – the world's leading independent medical journal. We played a key role in co-authoring the reports and convening experts to support the research and the commission, which presents authoritative and comprehensive evidence of the scale of institutionalisation worldwide, and the harm it causes.

### 2022 NATIONAL CARE REFORM STRATEGY, KENYA

Thanks to Lumos's advocacy, technical expertise and guidance, together with UNICEF and other partners, we developed the National Care Reform Strategy in Kenya which was approved.

### 2022 HUMANITARIAN AID, UKRAINE

Responded to the basic needs of the most affected children and families in the war, by providing humanitarian aid, mental health and psychological support

### 2023 ECD/ECI SERVICES, MOLDOVA

As a result of our advocacy, a national plan to develop ECI/ECD services was developed and approved. This will decrease the number of children separated from their families and will improve child developmental outcomes and integration, especially for children with disabilities and developmental delays



## HOW WE WORK

We work to make sure families have the support they need to stay together, reunite, and help children thrive. When it's not possible for a child to stay with or return to their family, we make sure they are cared for in an alternative family setting like fostering or kinship care – not an institution.

To achieve lasting change for children, we need to look at the big picture. That's why we work with governments and civil society to exchange evidence and expertise to transform child protection and care systems at a national level and global level. So that these systems provide family-based solutions for children to thrive, not institutions.

We work together with children and young activists and other partners to ensure that commitments made at the global level result in action and lasting change to children's lives. By working together globally we can advocate for every child, everywhere, to get the care and support they need and deserve to thrive.

We are committed to work alongside children, young people and families with lived experience of family separation and institutional care, to ensure they engage with, influence and participate in the movement to transform child protection and care systems.

We've already come so far – shining a light on why change is needed, and improving thousands of children's lives, now and for years to come. Together, we can make sure all children grow up with the families and care they need to thrive.

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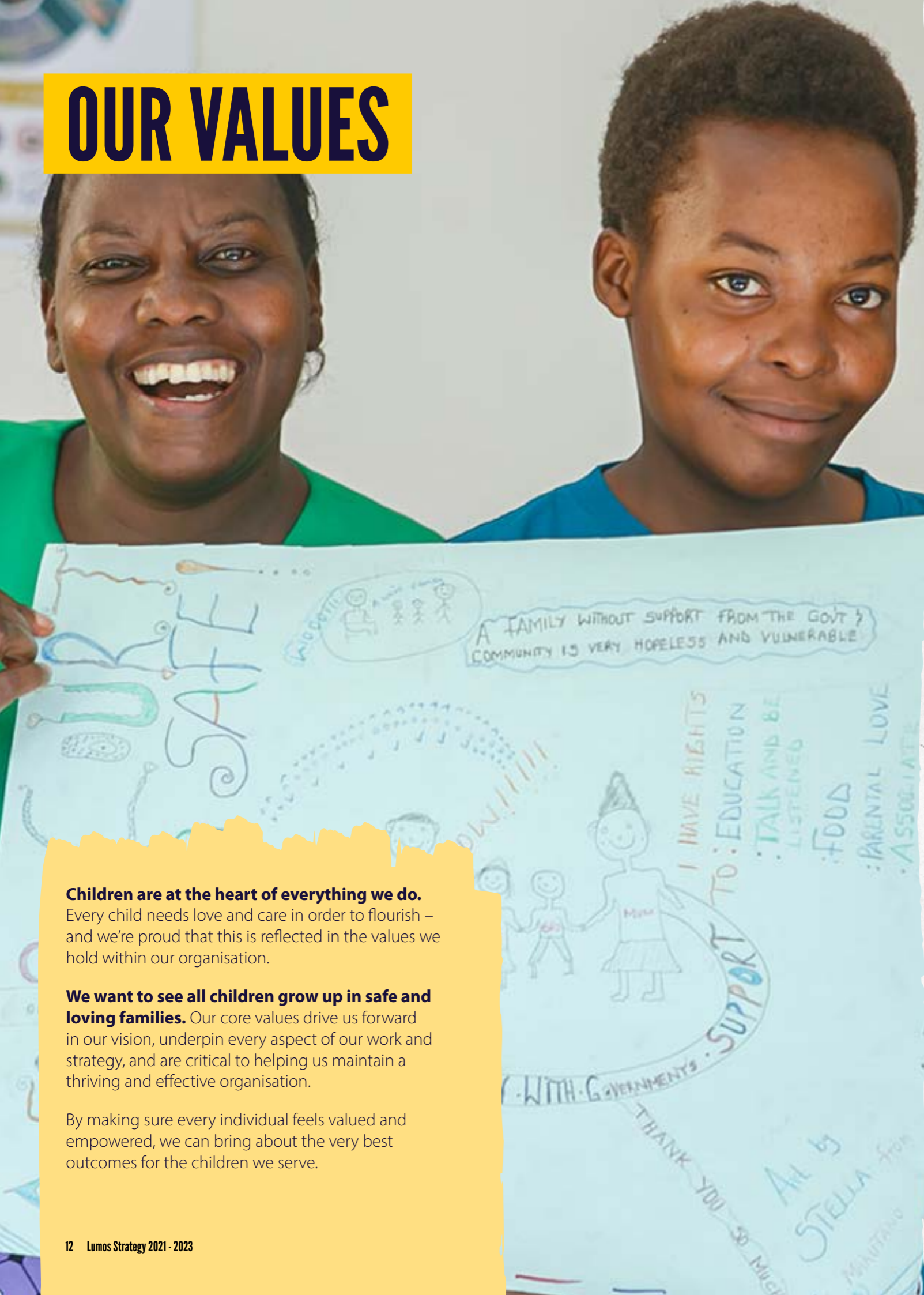
**AUTHENTIC PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN IN CARE REFORM CAN DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT INTO INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSIBLE ADULTS AND TO GOOD QUALITY SERVICES, POLICIES AND LAWS THAT PROTECT AND SUPPORT CHILDREN**

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**EUGENIA GODOROJA,  
LUMOS CHILD AND YOUTH  
PARTICIPATION ADVISOR.**



# OUR VALUES



**Children are at the heart of everything we do.** Every child needs love and care in order to flourish – and we're proud that this is reflected in the values we hold within our organisation.

**We want to see all children grow up in safe and loving families.** Our core values drive us forward in our vision, underpin every aspect of our work and strategy, and are critical to helping us maintain a thriving and effective organisation.

By making sure every individual feels valued and empowered, we can bring about the very best outcomes for the children we serve.



## WE EMBRACE COLLABORATION

**We believe collaboration with partners around the world leads to positive outcomes for everyone.** We thrive on trying out new ways of working together, because we seek to continuously learn and improve.

We nurture a spirit of curiosity and openness, always seeking out new ideas and diverse views and perspectives. **We are stronger together.**



## WE STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE

**We believe children and families deserve the very best we can give them.** We take pride in our professionalism – we set the bar high, push ourselves to be better, and expect the same of others.

We want to make a big impact as a global centre of excellence. This means investing in our people, resources and processes. **We are quality champions.**



## WE SHOW RESPECT

**We believe in respect, equality and inclusion for all.** We value the experience and knowledge of others, seek to understand alternative opinions and celebrate our differences.

We want to do more to fight injustice and discrimination, because we want to give equal access to all. We will always try harder. **We are one Lumos family.**



## WE ALWAYS CARE

**We believe caring deeply about the children and families we help** means imagining walking in their shoes. We empathise with their experiences, we care about people's wellbeing, and we support each other.

We want to make a positive difference to people's lives and have a lasting impact on the communities we work with. **We are more effective, because we care.**



## WE ARE PASSIONATE

**We believe in being passionate about everything we do.** We are motivated and determined to fight for every child's right to grow up in a safe and loving family.

We want to inspire others every day by working with fire in our hearts. We all feel part of a global movement. **We are restless to make change happen.**



“  
IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE **EVERY CHILD**  
**IS RAISED IN A LOVING FAMILY** WITH THE  
RESOURCES THEY NEED TO THRIVE. ”

*Lumos founder J.K. Rowling*



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