



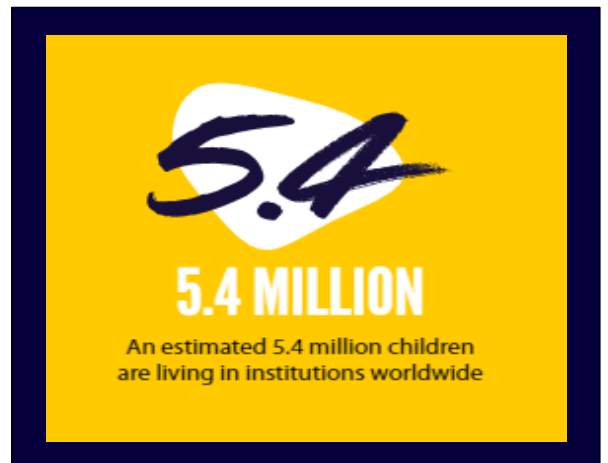
MARIO BAUER AND LUMOS: GIVING CHILDREN IN MOLDOVA THE BEST START IN LIFE



Since Lumos started working in Moldova in 2006, we have helped reduce the number of children in orphanages from **11,551** to just **750** today, and prevented around **3,700** at-risk children from ever being placed in one. We have made significant successes, but a few key barriers remain. To prevent any more children from being driven into orphanages, we need to complete the final stage of care transformation so that every child in Moldova can grow up in a loving family, but **we need your help**. Your donation could not only help fund an innovative project to support vulnerable children, but will unlock further funding to help us transform the care system in Moldova. **For good.**

THE PROBLEM

An estimated 5.4 million children around the world live in institutions – including so-called “orphanages”, residential special schools and reception centres – which cannot meet their needs and exposes them to human rights abuses and enhanced risk of violence. The majority of these children, more than 80%, are not orphans, and have families who would care for them within the home if they had the required level of support and access to services in the community. Almost a century of research has proven that institutions harm children; a lack of community-based services is one of the main drivers of the institutionalisation of children around the world.



THE SITUATION IN MOLDOVA

Despite the significant successes Lumos have already had in transforming the care system in Moldova and reuniting children currently in orphanages with their families, there are still 13,163 children living with disabilities who are at risk of separation and do not have access to adequate support services. Poverty, disability, a lack of early childhood support, insufficient education and social services, as well as extremely limited parenting support continue to increase the vulnerability of these children and their families. The few services which do exist to support vulnerable children are primarily centred in Chişinău, the capital, depriving children living in rural locations the services they need to be supported at home. Just 7% of vulnerable children aged 0-5 in Moldova get the support they need, meaning Moldova has one of the highest child mortality rates in Europe at 8.9%. Children living with a disability are 100 times more likely to die in an institution; without the right support, these children are at risk of family separation, poor health and development outcomes, and even death.

OUR SOLUTION

Building on the success of our work in Moldova, Lumos is creating an Early Child Intervention (ECI) service, which aims to identify vulnerable children at an early age and provide community-based solutions to barriers which impact their health, social and educational outcomes in the Floresti and Ialoveni districts. This ECI project will improve the health and development of children, especially of children with developmental disorders and disabilities. At the same time, this project will prevent family separation by providing Early Childhood Intervention Services at all levels, particularly in rural communities where access needs are highest. Not only will this project aim to reduce infant mortality rates and improve health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable children, but we will use the evidence gained in this project to demonstrate the success and cost-effectiveness of the model to the Government of Moldova, and support them to adopt this system at the national level so every child is given the support they need to thrive in a family. Investing in high quality early childhood interventions not only promotes healthy development, it generates significant savings by reducing the need for more expensive interventions later in a child's life. Through this project Lumos will support:

1

450 children aged 0-5 years old at risk of family separation, including children with developmental disorders to have better health, mental health and development outcomes

2

440 parents of vulnerable children, including 120 whose children have disabilities, to support them to be able to care for their children effectively and provide practical, community-based support to prevent family separation

3

Over **1,500 specialists** in primary healthcare, social work and pre-school education to provide training, advice and support to develop better systems and health outcomes for vulnerable children

4

Over **80 policy-makers** and service providers, such as NGOs, to build a better system for vulnerable children, in order to adopt and scale the ECI model into a national programme.

Maxim's story

Maxim is three years old, and lives with multiple physical and mental disabilities. He is the youngest of two, living in a very low income, vulnerable family. As it is difficult for his parents to find jobs locally, often one or both of them spend large periods of time working abroad to earn money, leaving Maxim and his sibling in the care of their grandmother.

Maxim's local district is rural, and does not have the rehabilitation or early intervention services which support children and families with disabilities or mental disorders. Without support not only was Maxim at risk of being taken from his family, but they never thought he would be able to walk, go to school or play with other children.

Lumos identified Maxim as one of the 13,000 children at risk in Moldova. As part of a wider support network to improve community services, such as inclusive education for children like Maxim at school age, we provided him with occupational therapy, physiotherapy, massage and speech therapy. His family were given training and support to be able to care for Maxim effectively and assist him at home. Now Maxim is able to walk without support and is developing well.

There are thousands of children like Maxim in Moldova and around the world. All of them deserve to have a chance at the better life that we at Lumos are doing our best to create.



THE LASTING IMPACT WE CAN CREATE TOGETHER

From our successes in Moldova to date, Lumos has proved we have the expertise, experience and solutions to help prevent family separation, and reform the care system to better support vulnerable children. We have already supported thousands of children to return home, improving their health and happiness, as well as building a better way to care for these children in their communities. Parents of children living with disabilities shouldn't be forced to choose between keeping their family together, or sending their child to an institution to access services. This project will ensure that every child is given the support they need, but we cannot do it without your help.

With your support Lumos can build a comprehensive Early Childhood Intervention model in the Floresti and Ialoveni regions, helping more than 450 children and their families, as well as countless vulnerable children who will be helped in the years to come by building a better system, both locally and nationally by using the data from this project to encourage the government to adopt the ECI model across Moldova. Not only that, but by supporting this project you could help Lumos unlock further funding. We have identified a European Foundation who have expressed an interest in this project and seek to "co-fund" projects with other funding partners. A gift from you could help leverage this additional funding to secure the projects long-term financial sustainability.

"We were lucky to start [ECI] from the beginning. He's made great progress; more independence; more socialising; writing now. We understand him so much better."
- Mother of an ECI-supported child with disabilities

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT - HOW YOU CAN HELP

Initial set up work for this project has begun, with an aim to launch the Early Childhood Intervention services in these regions in early 2022. We aim to finish this project in 2024 having demonstrated the success of the ECI programme and pass this on to the government to continue. The estimated cost of this project is £397,000 per year. A gift of between £25,000 and £100,000 a year could:

£25,000

Help Lumos support 30 families at risk of separation with social services and set up 10 Resource Centres in nurseries to promote the inclusion of children at risk of separation

£50,000

Support us to deliver all the above and create two Regional Early Childhood Intervention Centres, ten Community Early Childhood Intervention Centres and organise 12 workshops to develop the network of ECI Services, with all relevant services from social, health and educational fields

£100,000

Would cover the entire cost of creating and implementing a functioning and efficient model of ECI services in two regions, including supporting Lumos to undertake the above activities.



THANK YOU FOR HELPING LUMOS GIVE EVERY CHILD IN MOLDOVA THE CHANCE THEY NEED TO THRIVE