Deinstitutionalisation step by step: Challenges and opportunities for children

Georgette Mulheir, Chief Executive of Lumos
Brussels, 12 February 2015
The scale of the problem

- 8 million children in institutions globally
- 1 million children in institutions in Europe
- Approximately 90% of institutionalised children in Europe are not orphans
- At least 80% of institutionalised children globally are not orphans
The harm caused by institutionalisation

These images from the Bucharest study show the decreased electrical activity in an institutionalised child’s brain. The colour orange indicates high activity.

EEG level: An institutionalised child

EEG level: A never-institutionalised child
Adults who spent their childhood in institutions were

- 10 times more likely than their peers to be involved in prostitution
- 40 times more likely to have a criminal record
- 500 times more likely to commit suicide

Outcomes for children with disabilities

One study of children under 3 years of age who were discharged from institutions found that 28% of disabled children were ‘discharged’ because they had died

Children with disabilities were 100 times more likely to die in the institution than those without disabilities
Considerable progress in the European Union

Structural Fund Regulations – From 1 Jan 2014, EU Member States cannot spend money on renovating or building institutions, and must spend money on the transition to community-based services.

A number of countries across the EU are treating this as a priority.
Number of children in institutions in the Czech Republic

- 2008: 10,388
- 2009: 10,382
- 2010: 9,836
- 2011: 9,412
- 2012: 9,107
- 2013: 8,428

The number of children in institutions in the Czech Republic has been consistently decreasing from 10,388 in 2008 to 8,428 in 2013.
Numbers of children in institutions in Moldova
2007 – 2013

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>10,569</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>9,766</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>9,202</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>6,944</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>5,576</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>4,843</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>3,909</td>
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Key challenges for Structural Fund implementation

• Resistance to close institutions that have received significant investment

• Managerial capacity for major programmes of change

• Ability to ensure funding is tailored to individual needs

• Insufficient data about institutionalisation in some E.U. Member States (e.g. Greece)
Beyond the European Union

Logic of pre-accession funding

Standards for Europe’s children = standards for all children

All European Commission investment should ensure deinstitutionalisation (2015 European Year of Development is an opportunity)

Need to coordinate EC investments with other donors (e.g. World Bank, US Government).
Thank you

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