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Subject: flash report - EU/Lumos conference families not institutions - 15 June 2018

Flash report - Conference "No child left behind: families not institutions - EU external action championing children's rights", 15 June 2018 - European Commission and Lumos

- High turnout and quality of debates, good participation from youth representatives, emotional speech from JK Rowling (1/10 children in institution will commit suicide, 1/5 will get engaged in criminal activities, institutions as poor man made solution to fix a problem, but change is possible).
- Variety of speakers (DEVCO and ECHO Commissioners, EEAS, rep. from Bulgaria, UNICEF, researchers, rep from Rwanda, self-advocates, MEP, EU anti-trafficking coordinator, UNHCR, OHCHR, rep from Austria)
- Overall acknowledgement about the harm (physical, psychological, early brain development) caused by institutionalisation of children and its financial cost; commitment to prioritize quality care for children and the transition from institution to community-based care
- Emphasis on EU current role both inside the EU and outside the EU, with a possibility to scale-up through external action, notably around building stronger child protection systems (priority under the EU guidelines on the promotion and protection of the rights of the child), addressing linkages with actions against trafficking of children, considering the challenge of migrant children/ unaccompanied minors, and taking into account the best interest of the child in emergency/ humanitarian situations
- EU Commissioner Mimica insisted on the need for better knowledge, statistics and data about the number of children left behind; the necessity to work with governments (to take control and oversight on care delivery), civil society, families and communities, putting children at the centre of the decisions affecting them; the importance of preventing the separation of children from families and addressing push factors; the new regulation (NDICI) and its specific emphasis on the importance of the transition from institution to community-based care.
- Presentation of the work done under the global study on children deprived of liberty. Not very children in institution is deprived of liberty but those institutions have the potential to restrict various human rights.
- Highlights on (promising) country cases (Rwanda, Jordan, Bulgaria...). EU Commissioner Stylianides focussed on EU education actions for children in emergencies.
- EU-Lumos joint communiqué "the EU prioritizes quality care for children in its external action": https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/european-union-prioritises-quality-care-children-its-external-action_en

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