



2024 ECOSOC High-level Segment Written Statement

Hope and Homes for Children

Back to family: Turning the tide on child institutionalisation

[Hope and Homes for Children](#), an international NGO with ECOSOC special consultative status, is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the ECOSOC high-level segment. For 30 years, we have worked to end child institutionalisation, working with governments, children, families and communities, to develop institution-free care systems.

‘Leave no child behind’ is [our rallying call](#) for decision-makers to put children first. Inequality starts from birth, is exacerbated throughout life, in a circle of poverty, social exclusion and discrimination spanning generations. Inequity’s toll on human progress is huge, particularly considering the global challenges facing children. To prevail, safe and loving family environments are vital. However, millions of children grow up deprived of family care, and an estimated, and intolerable, 5.4 million grow up in harmful orphanages, when 80% have at least one living parent*. Meanwhile, families and communities need support to protect their children while facing economic pressures, health issues, natural disasters, and other hardships. Failing to build their resilience inevitably leads to rising marginalisation, social exclusion, family separation.

Decision-makers must take a stand and invest in strengthening of families and communities and preventing family separation. We recommend that States, ahead of the Summit of the Future, the World Summit for Social Development, and throughout the pursuit of the 2030 and post-2030 Agenda, bring the focus of social policies back to family by:

- **Condemning child institutionalisation and other forms of deprivation of family:** We call for the unequivocal denunciation of deprivation of family, including but not restricted to, child institutionalisation, building on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/133 on the Rights of the child.
- **Pursuing an inclusive approach to social protection to prevent family separation and build community resilience:** In many cases, family separation could be prevented if national authorities take the necessary measures to support children and their families and adequately address the drivers of separation.



- **Committing to systemic national child protection and care reform:** Several national examples of innovative approaches to reform show that elimination of orphanages and promotion of family care is achievable, in close collaboration with children, communities and all families.

We remain ready to support decision-makers and to share our expertise in ensuring that all children grow up in safe and loving families.

For any questions, please contact: Marie.Raverdeau@Hopeandhomes.Org

*Details on figures and sources can be found in our 2022 flagship publication: [‘Families. Not Institutions’](#).