



# DEEPENING IMPACT AND EXPANDING REACH



# ONESKY STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028

Rev. August 2023

Seeing the potential in every child

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friends,

2023 marks 25 years of OneSky for all children, an organization founded to address the most pressing needs of vulnerable<sup>1</sup> young children.

In 1997, Jenny Bowen and her husband, Richard, adopted a toddler from an orphanage in southern China and, from that day, received a harsh, first-hand education about the devastating consequences of neglect on a young, developing child. Their little daughter, Maya, suffered from severe delays and was emotionally traumatized, shutdown...vacant. But within just one year of receiving nonstop loving, responsive care from her new family, Maya was transformed.



Jenny wondered if the simple, instinctive approach that had such a profound effect on one small child had the potential to do much, much more. What if there could be an intervention—a teachable approach—using nurturing, responsive care, to systematically train hundreds of caregivers to better the lives of thousands of children then languishing in China’s orphanages?

And so, in 1998, Half the Sky (now OneSky for all children) was founded and, eventually, supported the Chinese government in reimagining its child welfare practices through training orphanage caregivers across every province via the Rainbow Training program, launched in 2011.

Knowing that the needs of children living inside orphanages weren’t so different from many of those living outside of them, we believed we had developed a replicable method for training caregivers that could meet those needs and help any young child thrive, regardless of their circumstances. So we took our first steps beyond welfare institutions, expanding to provide training and support to the extended family members in rural China who were looking after the millions of young children left behind when their parents moved to distant cities for factory jobs.

As we saw the incredible impact of that program, we began to investigate the needs of children in neighboring countries that were experiencing the same phenomenon—a wave of increasing rural to urban migration as young families searched for work. And, with that, OneSky’s reach began to spread even further.

In addition to China, OneSky now benefits vulnerable young children in Vietnam, Mongolia, and Hong Kong SAR, all places where economic migration is placing enormous strains on both fragile families and the public systems meant to support them. The COVID pandemic placed additional pressure on these systems and taught all of us new ways to work and connect. At OneSky, we recognized that our caregiver training needed to be able to scale even when we couldn’t train in person. So we have prioritized enhancing and expanding our online training and support for caregivers through 1BigFamily, OneSky’s online learning platform. And, as we did in China, we continue to forge solid partnerships with governments to take our programs forward at scale through a training of trainers approach.

As we look to the future, and our ambitious goal of having reached 1 million children by our 30th anniversary, we continue to maintain our focus on the unique needs of each individual child and, whenever in doubt, ask ourselves the question Jenny taught us to continually ask, “What’s best for the children?”

Sincerely,

Morgan Lance, CEO

<sup>1</sup> OneSky uses the term “vulnerable” to describe children “whose safety, well-being, and/or development is at significant risk due to inadequate care, protection or access to essential services” or “who are orphaned or receive inadequate adult support because of death, abandonment, economic distress, or chronic illness.”(ref. [link](#))



# WE ARE ONESKY. ONESKY FOR ALL CHILDREN.

We partner with communities and governments in Asia to provide young children with responsive care and safe and nurturing learning environments by training, mentoring and supporting the adult caregivers in their lives.

We are passionately focused on meeting the needs of individual children while pursuing the broader goal of helping transform systems of care so that all young children can thrive.

- Since our founding in 1998, OneSky has trained and supported the caregivers of young children in low-resourced communities in Asia, ages 0-8, who have been orphaned, abandoned, left behind, or impacted by migration.
- During our first 20 years, we helped transform the lives of tens of thousands of children's lives in Chinese welfare institutions by training adults to provide them with nurturing care. Based on that experience, we realized we had a model for supporting vulnerable young children throughout Asia.
- While supporting institutionalized children in mainland China remains at the heart of our work, we have expanded to benefit even more children in need through partnerships with the governments of Vietnam and Mongolia and the opening of the P.C. Lee OneSky Global Centre for Early Childhood Development in Hong Kong, SAR.
- We recognize that the needs of all young children are fundamentally the same and that with consistent responsive care and loving attention, children born into even the most difficult circumstances can thrive and be changemakers in their communities and the world.

It is now widely understood that the early years, when the brain is developing at lightning speed, determine much about a person's future. Researchers like Nobel Laureate and economist, James Heckman, argue that society can make no wiser human resource investment

than in providing nurturing care and early education for disadvantaged children. Heckman says, "On productivity grounds alone, it makes sense to invest in young children from disadvantaged environments. Early interventions that partially remediate the effects of adverse environments can reverse some of the harm of disadvantage and have a high economic return. They benefit not only the children themselves, but also their children, as well as society at large. Investing in disadvantaged young children is a rare public policy with no equity-efficiency trade-off."

Innovative approaches and practical applications are needed to support marginalized communities in low and middle income countries as they strive to provide quality care and early education for all of their youngest citizens. Cycles of poverty can be broken when mothers and fathers can work, knowing their children are in safe and nurturing care, and young children can thrive once they reach public school having had access to quality early learning and development opportunities.

In Asia, especially over the past 15 years, a massive social shift from farm to factory has taken place with more young families having no choice but to migrate to large industrial parks and urban centers to find work. Once there, they find few social supports and a lack of safe care for young children while parents work long factory shifts.

Consequently, during their most formative early years, children impacted by economic migration often lack the stability and safety of a permanent home, healthy nutrition, access to health care, nurturing relationships and daily opportunities for learning. Whether left behind in rural villages or migrants to distant cities and industrial zones, these children lack access to public services like preschool or kindergarten. They may survive but are unlikely to thrive. OneSky aims to level the playing field for these children, giving them access to the quality early care and education their more privileged peers receive.

**As of our 25th anniversary, we have trained 75,400 caregivers to benefit the lives of 286,000 young children.**

**By our 30th anniversary, we intend to have impacted the lives of 1 million children.**

# THE ONESKY APPROACH

OneSky supports governments as they strive to improve the quality of early childhood care and education (ECCE)<sup>2</sup> for all young children, regardless of their circumstances. Our work always begins with an invitation from the local community to pilot a program and then moves through a demonstration and refinement stage with an ultimate goal of progressing towards government adoption.

The **OneSky Approach** is based on four essential elements that are relevant and adaptable in a variety of contexts.

## 1 GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

OneSky advocates for and supports systems-level change, first, by directly implementing our programs to showcase how our evidence-based approach is making a difference in the lives of the children and families we serve. Then by supporting NGO and government partners to take our programs forward at scale. Throughout the process, our country and global teams monitor results, refine programs as needed, and form critical partnerships with community members, NGOs and governments.

## 2 RESPONSIVE CARE

All children have an inborn drive to move, communicate, form relationships, recognize objects, and understand ideas. Through responsive care, we facilitate children's natural instincts to explore and develop by training their caregivers to form connections that support the development of their bodies and minds at the earliest ages. When children express a need or interest, they benefit when their caregiver responds promptly, consistently and appropriately. Science is clear that secure attachment is the foundation that supports every part of a child as they develop towards the independence of adulthood. There is no other single thing we can do that has such a profound impact on the quality of the rest of a child's life, and, in turn, the life of their family and community.

## 3 WELL TRAINED & SUPPORTED CAREGIVERS

OneSky trains both professional and family caregivers how to offer the consistent nurturing, responsive care that young children, from the moment of birth, need for healthy development. Professional caregivers include child welfare workers, childcare workers, social workers, teachers and other educators. Family caregivers are parents, grandparents and foster parents. We hire and train trainers from the local communities to work from our regional demonstration centers where we showcase best practices in early childhood care and education for low-resourced communities. Our training is delivered through a blended learning approach that combines classroom sessions supported by on-site mentoring and access to our online learning platform, 1BigFamily. Caregivers engage in 1BigFamily's network to continue learning from both OneSky staff as well as each other through a peer-to-peer community module for sharing best practices. Here, they can access rich content such as training videos, play activities and lessons, local songs and stories, and other interactive resources for all educational levels.

## 4 SAFE & NURTURING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

A learning environment is not just a physical space—it is everything that affects children's learning and growth, from the design of the place, noise levels, organization of activities, and interaction with peers, caregivers, and family. It is a place of safety and comfort where children can build their confidence to create, explore, discover, and engage. At OneSky, we help low-resourced communities design and create nurturing environments for children who lack safe places to learn and play. In each community, we start by gaining an understanding of the unique local context and then create child-centric spaces, making them age-appropriate, culturally relevant, and inclusive for all levels of abilities.

<sup>2</sup> Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) encompasses children up to the age of eight, and "contributes to an individual's well-being and capacity to learn, school readiness, academic achievement, lifelong learning, and meaningful employment and, within society, greater gender equality, sustainable development, and global citizenship."(UNESCO)

# WHAT GUIDES US

Our strategy is shaped by a guiding framework that includes OneSky’s vision, mission, principles and theory of change. This framework reflects our commitment to increasing our reach and impact, while also reinforcing the ideals upon which the organization was founded.

## OUR VISION

A world where all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.



## OUR MISSION

OneSky partners with governments and communities in Asia to provide responsive care and safe learning environments so that marginalized young children can thrive.



## OUR PRINCIPLES

All children have potential and deserve a chance to thrive.

Early intervention and healthy social systems can heal inequities.

Collaboration is key to positive social change.

There is always hope!

# THEORY OF CHANGE

## OUR WORK

### DEMONSTRATION

We create models of care and demonstration centers from which we launch training teams.



### EVIDENCE AND ADVOCACY

We generate evidence of program impact and advocate for government and NGO partners to join us in improving systems of care.



### PARTNERSHIPS

We provide ongoing training, mentoring, monitoring and support to communities and governments.



## INTENDED IMPACT

IMPROVED QUALITY AND CAPACITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATION



## ULTIMATE SOCIAL GOAL



# OUR 2023-2028 STRATEGIC GOALS

Over the next five years, OneSky will support our local partners to improve the lives of even more children living in underserved communities across Asia by deepening our program impact in countries where we currently work and expanding programming to at least one new country. To achieve these goals, we will also take steps to ensure a strong organizational foundation.

**GOAL 1: SECURE OUR FOUNDATION**

**GOAL 2: DEEPEN OUR IMPACT**  
in current program countries

**GOAL 3: EXPAND OUR REACH**  
to new countries



**GOAL 1: SECURE OUR FOUNDATION**

In order to achieve our intended impact for all children, OneSky must ensure a strong operational and financial foundation. To do this, we will:

BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY	CREATE FINANCIAL RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empower local leaders in decision-making aligned with organizational goals and ensure their teams are equipped and supported to implement and innovate on programs.</li> <li>Develop country-specific operational tools within the larger organizational system.</li> <li>Conduct annual internal effectiveness reviews and risk assessments to ensure our activities, policies and procedures support organizational growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure at least 2 multi-year funding partnerships for each of our program countries.</li> <li>Increase our individual donor pool of supporters interested in programs outside of China by 25%.</li> <li>Maintain a minimum 3 months of operating cash at all times.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>GENERATE EVIDENCE AND ADVOCACY</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continually monitor and evaluate program data to build evidence of the impact of our programs.</li> <li>Share that evidence at international ECCE and child welfare conferences, and in publications and policy working groups while learning from the experiences of others in these groups.</li> <li>Cultivate champions for children at all levels of government to ensure continuity of programs even in the wake of administration change.</li> </ul>	

As we reach more children by training and supporting government and NGO partners to take the OneSky program forward, we must ensure the quality of our programs in current locations is maintained at scale. To do this, we will:

STRENGTHEN DIRECT IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR PROGRAMS	TRAIN OTHERS IN ORDER TO REACH MORE CHILDREN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand and adapt our curricular structure, including more comprehensive educational content, professional development and leadership training components to meet the needs of various trainee groups.</li> <li>• Enhance and maintain child safeguarding and protective principles in each program.</li> <li>• Continue to grow our 1Big Family online learning community in order to provide ongoing support to both trainers and trainees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support local NGOs through knowledge sharing and TOT (Training of Trainers) in locations where we don't have direct implementation programs.</li> <li>• Pilot and expand TOGT (Training of Government Trainers) to vastly expand program reach.</li> <li>• Support national governments in creating standards and advocating for public investment.</li> </ul>
CONTINUALLY IMPROVE PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ENSURE QUALITY AT SCALE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to make curriculum and training adjustments to meet the needs of each partner.</li> <li>• Provide high quality training support to partners through mentoring and site visits.</li> <li>• Conduct continuous measurement, evaluation, alignment and learning (MEAL) with partners to ensure program fidelity and outcomes for children.</li> </ul>	





We aim to meet each of these goals and objectives in each of the countries and special administrative regions where we currently work. A snapshot of 5 year plans for those locations can be found here:



## MAINLAND CHINA

**Over the next five years, at the invitation of the government, we will support efforts to improve outcomes for children who are institutionalized or living at risk in the community by:**

### **Supporting the national Family First initiative**

- Train and support orphanage directors and staff to increase by 10% annually the number of children placed into adoptive or foster families, or our Family Village program.

### **Supporting China Care Homes in three major urban areas**

- Provide hundreds of children from welfare institutions across the country with nurturing care from OneSky trained nannies pre- and post- surgery at major medical facilities.

### **Supporting the continuous development of innovative programs to enrich the care and learning opportunities for children at risk**

- Include programs that enhance the social emotional development of “defacto orphans,” children who have been removed from their family homes due to abuse or neglect.







## VIETNAM

Over the next five years, we will expand our training and support for caregivers of children of low-income factory workers in Vietnam through a ground-breaking government partnership. We will also explore the potential of supporting children living in orphanages and foster homes. We intend to improve outcomes for children in Vietnam's industrial zones by:

### Maintaining quality and deepening impact of our self-implemented childcare program in 5 provinces

- Complete self- and partner NGO-implemented independent childcare (IC) training in existing provinces.
- Develop a business component to support existing IC centers (ICC) and develop new ones.
- Prepare to handover our model Early Learning Center to the Da Nang government

### Training and supporting government to scale our childcare program to 9 new provinces

- Finalize national guidance and project design of a training of government trainers (TOGT) program.
- Train government trainers to educate, support and monitor independent childcare providers.
- Support an external randomized controlled trial of the TOGT pilot with IDinsight, RTCCD, and Harvard University.

### Exploring the potential of providing training in the child welfare system

- Aim to support government in providing quality ECCE training for orphanage caregivers and existing foster parents.



## MONGOLIA

Over the next five years, we will expand our training and support for parents of children living in Mongolia's low-resourced districts where recent migrants from herding communities now live in ger (yurts) surrounding the capital, Ulaanbaatar. We will also assist the government in creating new childcare services for these low-income families and explore the potential to train caregivers of children living in orphanages, with the intention of improving outcomes for children most in need by:



### Scaling parent training and family support in the ger districts

- Maintain the quality of direct parent training at our national demonstration Family Center in the Bayanzurkh District.
- Pilot the training of kindergarten teachers to further scale our parent training in Ulaanbaatar.
- Fine-tune the quality and expand the impact of our Cooperative Play Care Groups.

### Creating a childcare model that works for the ger districts

- Design, pilot and evaluate a training program for existing childcare providers in Ulaanbaatar.
- Support the national government in creating a new flexible childcare model and standard.
- Pilot and evaluate a new childcare model in two districts in Ulaanbaatar.

### Exploring the potential of providing training in the child welfare system

- Endeavor to launch training for existing caregivers in three government run orphanages.
- Advocate for the hiring and training of additional caregivers in government run orphanages.
- Introduce our Family Village foster care program from China to these orphanages.





## HONG KONG, SAR

Over the next 5 years in Hong Kong, we will continue to provide support to young children living in marginalized communities across the city by:

### Fully developing the Community Hub model

- Expand our program to reach 2,000 families of young children living in Sham Shui Po.
- Expand parenting training through local NGO partnerships to reach children in other low-income communities across Hong Kong.
- Train women from the local community to work as Community Helpers.

### Creating a TOT model to teach others to expand our reach in Hong Kong

- Provide TOT for other NGOs working with children from marginalized communities in Hong Kong.
- Train staff at other community hubs throughout the city to provide ECCE services.
- Support the government and other NGOs in creating similar hubs to address the needs of young children across Hong Kong.

### Exploring opportunities to support caregivers of vulnerable young children in Hong Kong's welfare system

- Understand the needs and determine if there are ways to support the government and other NGOs in improving outcomes for young children in the city's welfare system.





The successful expansion of our programs from the orphanages of China to rural villages in that country, as well as to the industrial zones of Vietnam, impoverished ger districts of Mongolia and poverty-stricken urban areas of Hong Kong SAR has provided clear evidence that the needs of young children are similar everywhere and that the OneSky Approach can help communities meet those needs. Within the next five years, we intend to expand our work to one additional low-to-middle income country in Asia.

#### EXPLORE POTENTIAL NEW PROGRAM COUNTRIES

- Develop a research criteria for new countries which includes a needs and risk assessment: an understanding of existing systems and stakeholders; an evaluation of our ability to add unique value in alignment with our core competencies; and a determination of cost-effectiveness and local capacity to sustain programs.
- Complete research on five potential new program countries (Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos to be considered), collaborating with regional ECCE platforms, NGOs and government agencies to understand need.
- Assess international funding interest in selected countries.

#### DESIGN PROGRAMS FOR REPLICATION

- Create a menu of services and an adaptable tool kit for both our professional caregiver and parent training programs.
- Determine how best to both utilize and protect our curriculum and training IP as we expand to new countries.
- Develop a system to expedite translation and contextualization of our curriculum, training materials and 1BigFamily online learning platform for each new country.

#### PREPARE FOR EXPANSION

- Secure an invitation from government, supported by the local community, to launch a program in one new country with discussions underway with a second.
- Secure a funding commitment for the initial pilot project.
- Determine most appropriate local project registration type and formalize partnership agreements.



OneSky's work aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 4 Quality Education, Target 4.2: Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education. The OneSky approach also supports SDG's 1,3,5 & 8. Our work significantly impacts the health and wellbeing of families, and our training programs empower women with skills and knowledge, leading to economic growth and poverty alleviation.

*Seeing the potential in every child*

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