



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Special Olympics



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 7, 2012

Hal Lipper, +381-65 504-6308

E-mail: hlipper@usaid.gov

Jelena Popovic, +381-65 306-6750

E-mail: jpopovic@usaid.gov

USAID AWARDS GRANT TO SPECIAL OLYMPICS TO PROMOTE EQUALITY OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded the Special Olympics an 18-month grant to launch a series of capacity-building seminars in Serbia and Montenegro. The seminars will promote equality for people with intellectual disabilities as well as highlight the importance of democratic principles, endorse gender diversity, and encourage active citizenship.

The programs will educate Serbians and Montenegrins about the capacities of people with intellectual disabilities, particularly youth, and discuss strategies to encourage their inclusion in society. USAID made these funds available to increase the participation of people with disabilities in USAID's activities and strengthen the capacities of Disabled Peoples Organizations.

"The Special Olympics is privileged to receive USAID funding to enhance our local programs in Serbia and Montenegro so our message of dignity and respect for all people is embraced," said Dr. John Dow, Chief of Regional Growth at Special Olympics.

Twelve Serbian and five Montenegrin communities will participate in the seminars which will include classroom and practical sessions. The program will involve 340 people from local governments, schools, and youth activities, as well as people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

Two Special Olympics Unified Sports teams will be formed during each seminar. The teams, comprised of people with and without intellectual disabilities playing as equals, will compete in local, regional and national competitions. In all, 34 Unified Sports teams will be formed involving 170 youths with intellectual disabilities and 170 of their non-disabled peers.

###

About the Special Olympics:

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives through sports lives through sports by empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. Founded in 1968, the Special Olympics movement today involves more than 4 million athletes in 170 countries worldwide.

About the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID):

USAID works in more than 100 countries around the world to expand democracy and free markets while extending a helping hand to people struggling to make a better life, recovering from a disaster, or striving to live in a free and democratic country. USAID promotes broadly shared economic prosperity, democracy and good governance, human rights, global health, food security and agriculture, environmental sustainability, and education.