

TEMPLATE FOR REPORTING ON RECENT INITIATIVES ON SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Special Olympics ‘Young Athletes’ programme

Provide a summary of the initiative, including a brief overview, proposed/actual outcomes and an assessment of any lessons learned and the way forward.

Please provide more details on the initiative below:		
Objective(s):	<i>Please indicate which, if any, of the following fell among the main objectives of the initiative:</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that no one is left behind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research development, data collection and/or data dissemination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing and fighting corruption in sport
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict prevention/peace building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened global framework on sport for development and peace
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy development for mainstreaming and integrating sport for development and peace in development programmes and policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource mobilization, programming and implementation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, monitoring and evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other (please specify)
Implementation mechanisms:	<p><i>What are the means/processes of implementation of the initiative?</i></p> <p>Special Olympics Young Athletes is a sport and play program for children with and without intellectual disabilities (ID), ages 2 to 8 years. Young Athletes introduces basic sport skills, like running, kicking and throwing and it offers families, teachers, caregivers and people from the community the chance to share the joy of sports with all children. Children learn how to play with others and develop important skills for learning. In addition to this, the program also contributes to the capacity development of the teachers and kindergarten professionals, so that they can adequately respond to the needs of children with disabilities. In Montenegro, the program is being implemented since 2017 in preschool institutions across the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Young Athletes program processes of implementation include the following: ○ Training of preschool teachers in line with the internationally recognized YA program, conducted by Special Olympics experts ○ Implementation of the program in preschools across Montenegro ○ Monitoring and evaluation <p>More on: Equal opportunities for all children Sports and friendship for every child</p>	

	<p><i>What are the main deliverables/activities involved?</i></p> <p>The main activities and results achieved so far are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme has been implemented in 12 preschool institutions in Montenegro; • 145 new preschool teachers, preschool professionals and parents trained to implement the program; • 325 children with intellectual disabilities and 550 children without intellectual disabilities have participated in the programme; • 10 preschool teachers received license to train other preschool teachers. <p><i>What is the time frame of implementation?</i> <u>The Young Athletes program is being implemented since 2017.</u></p>
Target Audience(s):	<p><i>Who are the beneficiaries of the proposed/implemented initiative?</i> <u>Target audience of the programme are children with and without disabilities, ages 2 to 8 years.</u></p>
Partners/Funding:	<p><i>Who are the main organizations/entities involved in the initiative and what are their roles in development and/or implementation?</i></p> <p>The Young Athletes Program is run by the NGO Special Olympics, an organization established in 2007 in Montenegro. Since 2011, UNICEF have shared a strong global partnership with Special Olympics to integrate children with disabilities into development strategies and programming, and to provide sustained social integration. To implement the program in the country, NGO Special Olympics cooperates closely with Ministry of Education, preschool institutions and municipality authorities.</p> <p><i>What are the main sources of funding of the initiative?</i></p> <p>'Young Athletes' has been funded by UNICEF CO Montenegro, through the support of the UNICEF National Committee in the US.</p>
SDG Alignment:	<p><i>To what SDG goal/target/indicator is this initiative targeted?</i></p> <p>National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030 sets as one of its objective inclusive and quality education as well as the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. A special measure within the framework of the mentioned strategic objective is to provide comprehensive, inclusive and quality preschool education - SDG 4 (4.2 and 4.a).</p>
Alignment with global frameworks:	<p><i>How does this initiative align with/contribute to the objectives of the Kazan Action Plan *, WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity or other related internationally agreed frameworks on sport and/or physical activity?</i></p> <p>The 'Young Athletes' program is contributing to the achievement of the Kazan Action Plan through fostering of the inclusive climate through sporting activities. In this way, one of the most vulnerable groups in society, children with intellectual disabilities, can be more visible in society and achieve their full potential. When it comes to the WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity, initiative is contributing to the objective 1 Create Active Societies and its Action 1. 4</p>

	aimed at the strengthening of the pre- and in-service training of professionals and it also contributes to the creation of active and inclusive society.
Alignment with United Nations Action Plan on SDP:	<p><i>Which of the four thematic areas of the UN Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace is this initiative designed to align?</i></p> <p>The initiative is designed to align to the thematic area 3. Resource mobilization, programming and implementation.</p> <p><i>To which action area(s) of the Plan is this initiative designed to contribute?</i></p> <p>The initiative is designed to contribute to the two action areas: (i) Encourage multi-stakeholder programme development and implementation at all levels (iii) Strengthen partnerships at the policy level across the intergovernmental and non-governmental development sectors, sport federations and other civil society stakeholders</p>
Outcomes:	<p><i>What are the expected/actual outcomes of the initiative?</i></p> <p>The Young Athletes programme contributes to the quality and inclusiveness of the preschool education in Montenegro. It offers to kindergartens and teachers the approach and activities to provide early intervention support to children and it enables them to organize meaningful joint activities of children with and without disabilities. Through sports and play, all children have opportunity to develop their physical, social and emotional skills.</p> <p>Main outcomes of the initiative are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. improvement of the physical, emotional and social abilities of children with and without disabilities. 2. enhancement of the capacities of parents of children with intellectual disabilities in the field of parenting skills related to physical, social and other developmental areas. 3. positive influence on attitudes of families and communities towards persons with intellectual disabilities
Mechanism for monitoring and evaluating implementation:	<p><i>What are the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation, outcomes and impact of the initiative?</i></p> <p>The impact of the initiative is measured through the regular monitoring field visits to the kindergartens and the use of the checklists (explained in the next paragraph).</p> <p><i>What are the specific monitoring and evaluation tools involved?</i></p> <p>Evaluation of the effectiveness of the program is conducted based on the defined Monitoring Checklist for the assessment of the current developmental status of children. The checklist is an integral part of the Young Athletes programme and it is implemented three times during the programme implementation. The purpose of this tools is to monitor the overall progress of children is static skills, locomotion and object manipulation.</p>
Challenges/Lessons learned	<i>What have been/were the main challenges to implementation?</i>

	<p>No major challenges have been identified in program implementation. The most important thing is to ensure a strong partnership with the Ministry of Education, preschool institutions and other partners that can contribute to the quality inclusive education.</p> <p><i>What lessons learned have been/can be utilized in the planning of future initiatives?</i></p> <p>Implementation of the ‘Young Athletes’ programme has demonstrated the importance of the contextualization of the programme activities. This has ensured that the program is in line with the local context and it responds to the needs of the beneficiaries. It is very important to ensure that the programme is inclusive, but it is also important to continuously work on advocacy to make sure that the policy makers are aware of the importance of the intervention. At the end, to ensure suitability and high quality, monitoring needs to be ongoing.</p>
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*Please in replying use the definition of sport of the Kazan Action Plan of 2017 : “ [...] Noting that, for present purposes and unless specified otherwise, the term “sport” is used as a generic term, comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms;2.Highlighting that sport for all, including traditional sport and games, is a fundamental field of intervention for governments to achieve the full potential of physical activity for personal and social development; 3.Recognizingthat the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda / Sustainable Development Goals form the overarching policy consensus on development priorities, goals and targets that guide international and national policy design, implementation and monitoring;4.Stressing that the preamble of the 2030 Agenda acknowledges sport as an important enabler of sustainable development and peace; [...]“