



MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS SUPPORT ACTIVITY IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (PPMG)

COOPERATION AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN USAID AND THE EMBASSY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

David Barth, USAID Mission Director for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Jakub Skalnik, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Bosnia and Herzegovina, signed a cooperation agreement on July 27, 2015 in Sarajevo, as a part of a common initiative to promote the responsible deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities in BiH. The agreement was signed at the Service Center for Children with Disabilities “Dajte nam šansu” (Give Us a Chance). David Barth, USAID Mission Direction for Bosnia and Herzegovina, stated that as the agreement is signed in BiH, the United States celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. “This is a very important law stipulating that every child, regardless of



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their type of disability, or whether or not they have one, must be provided with excellent education. The law also stipulates that every public building must be accessible to persons with disabilities” - said Barth. He added that the same must be done in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTO CAMP

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USAID MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS SUPPORT ACTIVITY (PPMG)

While the international community has long supported activities that facilitate the inclusion of marginalized populations in civic and political decision-making in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), these groups are often overlooked or ignored by the BiH Government. As a result, many citizens – youth, women, religious minorities, Romani, disabled persons, minority returnees and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons – remain unheard and excluded from mainstream social, cultural, economic and political life. Youth are disaffected. Romani, largely disenfranchised, are excluded from decision-making processes, while most cannot get the skills or training they need to join the labor market. Persons with disabilities are marginalized from early childhood. Many are institutionalized and lack access to basic education in mainstream schools. Women's participation in political and public life is extremely low. BiH society continues to abhor the idea of homosexuality and most institutions ignore discrimination or violent acts against LGBT persons. In fear for their physical safety, most of them stay hidden from the public sphere, and, as a result, LGBT activism is weak. A new marginalized group emerged in the aftermath of the 2014 floods, when 40,000 people were displaced. Assistance is still needed to provide economic and social stability to help flood-affected citizens from the most marginalized groups rebuild their lives.

USAID's Marginalized Populations Support Program supports activities of local organizations that advocate for the rights, empowerment and dignity of underrepresented groups of BiH society, and builds the capacity of local NGOs, BiH institutions and USAID implementing partners to do so. Providing underrepresented groups with opportunities to participate in civic and political issues, through their engagement in civil society organizations, will ensure that the government recognizes them as necessary and respectable partners in policy development.

The program provides grants to local organizations that promote the rights and dignity of marginalized populations and to enhance their performance and management capacity through formal classroom training, mentorship and one-on-one coaching. Training topics include legal structures,



financial management, human resources, internal control systems, project performance management, procurement systems, organizational sustainability, and monitoring and evaluation. The program also builds the capacity of USAID partners, institutions and government leaders to promote and protect the rights of these underrepresented citizens. A component of the program is designed to respond flexibly and swiftly to public demand for humanitarian and other material assistance. More information is available at www.ppmg.ba.

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David Barth, USAID Mission Director for BiH, and Jakub Skalnik, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to BiH, July 27, 2015

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"Now we must focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina. Theoretically, there are plenty of laws that are good but are not being implemented. I am pleased with our cooperation with the Czech Embassy and look forward to working on issues regarding the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities in BiH" emphasized Barth. Jakob Skalnik, the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to BiH agrees that this is a very important issue. "The

Center, where we are signing this agreement today, proves that the situation regarding this issue can be much better. I am pleased to be signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the USAID today, regarding the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities in BiH. The goal is to support the implementation of responsible deinstitutionalization in BiH through local or

international organizations active in BiH" stated Jakub Skalnik, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to BiH. USAID and the Czech Government will combine efforts in a two-year activity that will provide local organizations with grants and technical assistance to support the responsible deinstitutionalization of children and adults in BiH who are intellectually, psychologically or physically challenged, but with support can live independent lives. As part of the Marginalized Populations Support Activity in BiH (PPMG), a public call for a 150,000 USD grant will soon be announced, awarded by the USAID in cooperation with the Czech Republic Development Agency. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is estimated that some 2,000 mentally and physically disabled persons reside in public institutions. Responsible deinstitutionalization is possible and necessary.



Service Center for Children with Disabilities "Dajte nam šansu", July 27, 2015

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTO CAMP: YOUTH CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING TRUST THROUGH INSPIRATION AND PHOTOGRAPHY



Photo portrait, NGPC participant Enedina Žepčan

Twenty high school students from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina who participated in the six-day National Geographic Photo Camp presented their best photographs in Sarajevo. They worked in teams of two, photographed each other and made friends through photography. Imran and Darija had never met before. During the six days that they spent in Camp, they learned, as they state, a lot about each other. They presented what they had learned through their photographs. Amer from Gornji Vakuf and Ivana from Novi Grad say that the Camp was a wonderful experience and that during their stay they learned how to use photography to document and share aspects of their communities. The trainer, photographer Stephanie Sinclair, shares their joy and claims to have seen much talent in youth who participated in the Camp.

Ross Goldenberg, National Geographic Photo Camp Coordinator, stated that the aim of the Camp was for youth to learn to tell their stories through photography. "Here, we are working with youth who were born after the war in BiH. We wish to learn what they expect from their future. The purpose of these camps, all 60 of which have been organized by the National Geographic since 2003, is for youth to speak of their lives in their own words, and not have someone else tell them about it" - adds Goldenberg. Nicholas Geisinger, the Deputy Cultural Attaché of the U.S. Embassy in BiH, emphasized that the high school students performed amazing work. "This year

is the 20th anniversary of establishing peace and there are many projects being implemented under the slogan "Together We Achieve More". I am happy to see that all youth who participated in the Camp are artists who use photography to tell their story and establish relationships with complete strangers, since the participants had never met before" – emphasized Nicholas Geisinger.

Photo Camp is a project implemented by Internews with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Marginalized Populations Support Activity (PPMG) and Office of Public Affairs of the United States Embassy in BiH.



National Geographic Photo Camp, June 16, 2015

DOBOJ: USA AMBASSADOR IN BIH MAUREEN CORMACK OPENS CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

In Doboj, there are around 400 children with disabilities, 216 of whom are under 18. The interests and requirements of children and youth with disabilities were the main motivation to build the Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities that will certainly facilitate their daily activities. The opening ceremony was held on 18 June and performed by Maureen Cormack, the American Ambassador in BiH. "I am a mother of three and I am truly glad to have the opportunity to open the Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities in Doboj" – stated Ambassador Cormack. Even though it was opened today, the Center will operate at full capacity in September. It brought much joy to its future users. "I expect this to be great, that we will be happy and communicate together. I will certainly have a great time" – stated Suzana Pančić, a beneficiary of the Center. The Center was built thanks to the funds of the City of Doboj, the American Embassy, the UNDP and the Embassy of the Czech Republic, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Marginalized Populations Support Activity (PPMG) and the Office of Public Affairs of the United States Embassy in BiH. The Ambassador of the USA in BiH Maureen Cormack commended all those who participated and contributed to building the Center, especially the European Command of Armed Forces of the USA. She emphasized that the Center was built to respond to all the needs of children with disabilities. "The parents will feel safe leaving their children at the



Maureen Cormack, U.S. Ambassador to BiH, June 18, 2015

Center and going to work, knowing that their children are in safe hands and that they are being looked after appropriately. Doboj is a multiethnic town that is working on overcoming obstacles and is a symbol of successful integration" – added the Ambassador of the USA in BiH. Slobodan Mitrović, the Director of the Center, expressed his gratitude for the generous donation, and the Mayor of Doboj, Obren Petrović, emphasized that the will to open such a center existed for a long time, but that now, thanks to US donations, it has finally been done. "I want the children in the Center to be happy, and they can be now, thanks to our friends from the USA" – he stated.



Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities in Doboj, June 18, 2015

TRAINING ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION HELD

A three-day training “Monitoring and evaluation” was held in Sarajevo on June 23-25, 2015. The training was attended by municipal officers in charge of issues of youth, the Roma, women, persons with special needs and other marginalized groups, and representatives of youth councils from FBiH and RS.



This topic was chosen by the participants themselves because they consider it very important in their everyday work. They all agreed that this very important topic is actually neglected. “Judging by what I have learned during the past three days, my previous experience in this area was negligible” - said Sunčica Zuban from the Municipality of Novo Sarajevo. She also stated that the training taught her a lot. “We learned about new models of monitoring and evaluation, new ways of keeping track of the projects we are implementing and we were taught to adequately observe our project performance.” Svetozar Vučkovac from the Youth Council of Prijedor shares this opinion. He stated that they will pay more attention to monitoring and evaluation in future projects, which is certain to make them more successful. The lead trainer, Jasmin Bešić, pointed out that the participants were very motivated to learn and drew parallels between their everyday work and what they have learned. “During this training we tried to motivate them to present the results of their work to the public differently. Citizens do not want to hear merely about the activities of local authorities, they want to know how they will benefit from such activities. Therefore, we learned not to say “We constructed 3 km of road”



because citizens do not see how they themselves benefit from that. Instead, we will say “Citizens can now get from point A to point B more easily because the road is better and shorter”. That way citizens see a direct benefit for them and see the investment” - added Jasmin Bešić. Gender equality was also one of the topics discussed during the training, in an attempt to teach the participants about gender equality, the legal framework and the ways of practicing the principle of gender equality when awarding grants and setting indicators in their evaluations. This session was very successful. Jasmina Keserović, from the Youth Council of Velika Kladuša, stated that she learned a lot and intends to share the knowledge acquired with her co-workers in her organisation and local community. All the participants agree on one thing: they hope that the knowledge acquired during this training will help them improve and be more competitive.



USAID PPMG ISSUE PUBLIC CALL FOR SUBMITTING PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR THE INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (ODI)

Care in large institutions, often isolated from normal life and inherently limited in the possibilities of provision of care according to preferences of beneficiaries, are now clearly recognized as discriminatory and contrary to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Living independently and being included in the community are rights guaranteed to persons with disabilities by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified this convention in 2010. Yet little has been done to support deinstitutionalization, prevention of institutionalization and the provision of support to persons with disabilities in their local communities. However, for far too many living in institutions, these are nightmarish residential prisons in which they are held against their will. Enabling legislation to support deinstitutionalization of disabled persons exists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, like many challenges facing the country, policies supportive of deinstitutionalization remain unimplemented. It is estimated that in BiH some 2000 persons with mental and physical disabilities reside in public institutions.

In order to contribute to solving this problem, USAID’s Marginalized Populations Support Activity (PPMG) issued a public call for submitting project proposals for the Initiative to promote responsible deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities in BiH (ODI). All organizations able to legally operate in Bosnia and Herzegovina (including, but not limited to: NGOs, citizen groups, private companies and international organizations) are eligible and invited to submit their project proposals for supporting the implementation of the Initiative to promote responsible deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities in BiH, launched by the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** and the **Czech Development Agency**. Political agents or government institutions are not eligible to apply.

USAID PPMG ISSUE PUBLIC CALL FOR SUBMITTING PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS INITIATIVE (ANTI-TIP)

Trafficking in persons continues to be a major challenge in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The U.S. Department of State Trafficking In Persons (TIP) Report characterizes Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) as a source, destination, and transit country for men, women, and children who are subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor. The fight against human trafficking in BiH is a priority for the U.S. Government. Therefore, USAID’s Marginalized Populations Support Activity (PPMG) issued a public call for submitting project proposals for the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Initiative (anti-TIP). All organizations able to legally operate in Bosnia and Herzegovina (including, but not limited to: NGOs, citizen groups, private companies and international organizations) are eligible and invited to submit their project proposals for supporting the implementation of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Initiative (Anti-TIP), launched by the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**. Political agents or government institutions are not eligible to apply.

The complete text of the public calls and all the necessary forms are available at www.ppmg.ba

**USAID - Marginalized Populations Support Activity
in Bosnia and Herzegovina (PPMG)**

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