



Special Olympics

**Social inclusion for people with intellectual
disabilities through
sports and sports-related programming in
Russia**

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Final Report
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Special Olympics Inc.

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A. Executive Summary

The expected results for this project included the establishment of 11 sustainable regional programs in Russia. Programs were established in Sverdlovskaya, Chelyabinsk, Tomsk, Omsk, Irkutsk, Yaroslavl, Smolensk, Stavropol, Saratov, St Petersburg, and Moscow. On-going sports training was organized for 15,000 children and adults by the end of 2006, involvement of 5,000 students from regular schools in SO activities, and well documented participation of SO Russia teams from the project regions at the 2005 World Winter Games in Nagano, the European Games, and the preparation activities for the 2007 World Summer Games which will be held in Shanghai, China.

Quantitative Indicators		
Activity Level Indicators	Target	Achievement
Athletes outreach and services	15,000 athletes in a centralized database, 2:1 ratio of athlete:participant	15,530 total of whom 500 participants, centrally registered representing a ratio of 31:1
Adapted Physical Education (APE)	100% of regions develop APE.	All regions have developed APE and have lasting relationships with Sports Universities and Academies, and Sports High Schools. 5,503 coaches participated in the project, with a certification ratio of 1 in every 31 coaches, significantly up from the initial 1:76.

Quantitative Indicators Continued		
Activity Level Indicators	Target	Achievement
Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPs)	All regions develop ALPs so athletes provide input to local boards/committees, are featured in media and serve as assistant coaches	ALPs developed in all regions, exceeding plan. 152 athletes in total have been trained and serve as board members, assistant coaches and advocates/messengers.
Family Support Network (FSN)	All regions develop FSN for 1,000 family members minimum	FSN service developed in all regions, with 7,890 family members served , exceeding goal close by almost 8 times.
Healthy Athletes (HA)	At least one HA discipline in each region. 5% of athletes screened.	Special Smiles introduced to all regions, over 100 medical practitioners recruited and trained, 792 athletes screened , which represents 5.1% of all athletes, exceeding the planned goal.
Special Olympics Get Into It (SOGII) – students of regular schools involved	SOGII development in all regions. 5,000 students volunteer at events	SOGII in all regions, 13,401 volunteers , exceeding plan by 268%.
Torch Run and Opening & Closing Ceremonies	At least one Torch Run in each region, in cooperation with law enforcement.	Torch Runs and Opening and Closing Ceremonies in all regions , in cooperation with Police, Army, Police Academy and Special Units.
Institutional development, sustainability and legacy	11 regional programs	11 strong regional boards , staff with project and financial management skills, connected and engaged in their communities, developed relationships with media .

B. Project Background

According to the State Report on “Status of Health of the Population in the Russian Federation” in 2002, the total number of children with disabilities reached 620,342. 56.3% of these disabilities are developmental disorders and intellectual disabilities. An estimated 35,000 children aged 4-18 are, currently, in 134 institutions for children with intellectual disabilities managed by the Ministry of Health and Social Development. Traditionally, services provided to children and youth with such disabilities have an emphasis on medical care and are not supported by developmental and mainstreaming and community integration activities. As a result, these services do not reduce the risk of placing children with intellectual disabilities into institutional care.

According to a 2002-2003 Attitudinal research conducted by Special Olympics, Inc. in conjunction with Gary N. Siperstein, Ph.D. and Jennifer Norins Bardon from the University of Massachusetts Boston showed that there are significant negative attitudes towards intellectual disabilities prevalent in Russia. These negative attitudes are often a result of misunderstandings and have resulted in a history of isolation and segregation from society. Special Olympics Russia was created to challenge these negative perceptions and provide an environment for those with intellectual disabilities to thrive with the resources made available directly to them.

Prior to the USAID project, Special Olympics Russia was just beginning to create local and regional programs. In 2003, Advanced Physical Education programs were offered in 2 of the 11 regions with a small Athlete Leadership Program available in Moscow only. Family Support

Networks were only available in 2 of the 11 regions and there were no SO Get Into It, Torch Run, or Healthy Athlete programs. The USAID project allowed Special Olympics Russia to create thriving programs in each of the 11 regions and offer all those programs in each region.

C. Goals, Strategic Objectives and Final Results

Special Olympics Russia (SOR) and Special Olympics, Inc. (SOI) promoted the integration of children and adults with intellectual disabilities through sports and sports-related community involvement programs.

By meeting this goal, SOR and SOI were able to contribute to the USAID Mission Strategic Objective 3.21, *Use of Improved Health and Child Welfare Practices Increased*, IR 3.2.2 *New Child Abandonment Prevention Models Implemented*. SOR established a comprehensive model to deliver community-based services to:

- Enable children and adults with intellectual disabilities to participate in sports activities, and;
- Facilitate community involvement, advocacy, and public awareness related to community integration of children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics Russia targeted the following population groups:

- Children and adults with intellectual disabilities;
- Families of individuals with intellectual disabilities;

- Local communities, including professional, university, and business communities;
- Local and Federal Governments;
- School and University Students;
- Non-governmental organizations;
- General public

In order to accomplish these objectives in the given timeframe, Special Olympics, Inc. worked closely with Special Olympics Russia. SOI was able to bring its expertise and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of local SOR committees and allow them to develop and implement sports and sports-related community integration activities.

D. Beneficiaries

Special Olympics, Inc. and Special Olympics Russia undertook the following actions in order to impact the targeted beneficiaries in Sverdlovskaya, Chelyabinsk, Tomsk, Omsk, Irkutsk, Yaroslavl, Smolensk, Stavropol, Saratov, St Petersburg, and Moscow.

D.1 Children and Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

SOR provided educational opportunities involving life skills, social skills, self-confidence, and self esteem through regular coaching, training, and competition opportunities for the athletes. SO Russia expanded the Athlete Leadership Program (ALP) in order to advance self-advocacy for fuller inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities. The ALP program allowed athletes to

participate in public appearances, and provided the necessary mentoring to allow them to serve as productive positions on local boards, athlete committees, and to serve as assistant coaches. During this project, SO Russia recruited and trained 15,530 athletes, of whom, 500 are identified as participants. This far exceeds the goal of an athlete to participant ration of 2:1 with the actual ratio being 31 athletes to every 1 participant. Athletes were recruited from the Ministry of Education and Science's special schools, the Ministry of Health and Social Development's institutions, and various family associations.

D.2 Families of Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

SOR worked to prevent the abandonment of children with intellectual disabilities by expanding the SOR Family Support Network (FSN). Through newsletters, community clubs, and other public awareness events, the FSN allowed families to share common experiences, learn from peers, and overcome feelings of loneliness. The FSN was able to demonstrate to other families of children with intellectual disabilities that alternatives to institutionalization exist. The original project goal was to involve 1,000 family members with FSN activities in the target regions, but at the end of February 2007, the project had 7,890 family member participants which is an eight-fold increase over the original target.

D.3 Local communities, including professional, university, and business communities

SOR expanded its network of local programs which engaged local community contributions in time, in-kind, and cash, which has helped to create a sustainable framework to support children

and adults with mental disabilities. Through the community outreach efforts, SO Russia now has 5,503 coaches with a certification ratio of 1:30 which is a significant improvement over the previous ratio of 1:76. 100 physicians have also volunteered their time to participate in Healthy Athletes events. In total the 11 regions have 18,904 volunteers from the local communities that serve as physicians, organizers, volunteers, and coaches.

D.4 Local and Federal Governments

Through sports specific actions, such as the National Games, Opening and Closing Ceremonies, Torch Run, and direct communications, SOR educated local and Federal Governments about the unrecognized abilities of individuals with mental disabilities and demonstrated the efficiency of strategic alternatives to institutionalization.

The regional government departments have also agreed to support the activities in 2007. For example, the Irkutsk Administration have pledged the following support for 2007: Department of Social Affairs (294,000 RUB), Department of Sports (200,000 RUB), Department of Education (120,000 RUB) and the City Sport Department (100,000 RUB). In the Saratov Oblast, the Ministry of Education put all Saratov events on the official sports calendar and covers the participation of all athletes representing schools within their oblast. The Ministry of Sport for the Saratov Oblast paid for all oblast Special Olympics events (5-6 per year).

Most notably, On 7 April 2005, Russian President Vladimir Putin met with athletes who participated in the Special Olympics World Winter Games. The meeting was held in the

Alexander Hall of the Kremlin in Moscow. Special Olympics Russia was represented by Dr. Andrei Pavlov, President; Mrs. Nina Bespalova, Alpine skiing coach from Republic of Karelia, Mr. Alexander Asikritov, floor hockey coach from St. Petersburg; and athletes Alexander Gutnikov, figure skating (St. Petersburg), Svetlana Makarova, Alpine skiing (Karelia), Irina Nikitina, speed skating (Penza), Eduard Savchenkov, floor hockey, and Andrei Shkuratov, cross country skiing (both from Smolensk Region). High-ranking representatives from The Federal Agency for Physical Culture and Sport, including the Director, Mr. Vyacheslav Fetisov, and members of the Committee on Sports of the State Duma were also present at the event.

President Putin, who raised a glass of champagne to toast all of the athletes present, said:

“I am pleased to ... personally congratulate you on your outstanding sport achievements ... at the biggest world competitions. You fortify people’s belief in their abilities regardless of limitations... We have to admit that for decades, without justification, no one paid proper attention to adaptive sports for people with limited capabilities... It is good to see that this situation is changing now. I believe it is important that public awareness about competitions of this caliber become standard practice. I would like to underline that we are determined to further support adaptive sports involving federal, local and private resources. Generally speaking, systematic and persistent work toward development of the adaptive sports in Russia is necessary. For many people, especially young people, it is often a matter of their perspectives in life. Sport can change the lives of many people and society’s attitude toward, giving them a feeling of personal fulfillment and enrichment.”

D.4 School and University Students

SOR introduced a dedicated curriculum to educate Physical Education Academy students in how to coach individuals with intellectual disabilities and launched the SO Get Into It (SOGII) curriculum in eight regions. This not only resulted in a pool of qualified teachers and coaches, but also helped to build positive relationships between young people with and without intellectual disabilities and helped to deepen the understanding of the concept of social inclusion among all people. Each region now has a State University level partner and there are 13,401 SOGII volunteers from regular schools that participate in SOR events. The State University level partners provide free consulting, sports facilities at reduced or no charge and volunteers.

D.5 Non-governmental organizations

SOR worked in coordination with other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are committed to providing assistance to support the community integration of people with intellectual disabilities. This helped to create momentum and public awareness of intellectual disabilities which resulted in government awareness and heightened awareness among the general public which was most notable in the Tomsk region.

In Irkutsk, SOR worked with the Association of Family of Handicapped People, the Association of People with ID in Angarsk, the Association of Children with ID in Shelikov, and the Association of Family Autistic Children in the Saratov region. Working with these any many

other NGOs allowed SOR to expand the services offered and the spread the Special Olympics message with the help of these organizations.

D.6 General public

SOR used media coverage of its events and the participation of Russian athletes in international events to positively change the public perception of the contribution of individuals with mental disabilities. To achieve this goal, SOR trained 152 athletes from the 11 regions in the Athlete Leadership Program which trained the athletes to serve on boards committees, act as assistant coaches, and serve as advocates in the media. SOR also sent 79 athletes from 11 regions to attend the 2005 World Winter Games in Nagano, Japan which received very favorable media attention both in Russia and in other international venues.

E. Project Focus Regions

In order to reach the beneficiaries designated by this grant, SOR originally developed a model utilizing 8 pilot regions and 8 Special Olympics components. In a comprehensive consultation with SOR, national and regional government authorities, USAID, and NGOs, the project focus regions were selected and 3 additional pilot regions and 3 additional Special Olympics components were added as well. The criteria used to select these regions were urgency and scope of needs, potential for meeting the project objectives, the likelihood of leaving lasting legacy, efficiency to deliver within the project's constraints.

The original 8 pilot regions were:

- Sverdlovskaya
- Tomsk
- Irkutsk
- Yaroslavl
- Stavropol
- Saratov
- St Petersburg
- Moscow

An additional three regions were selected due to increased demand. The three additional regions were:

- Chelyabinsk
- Omsk
- Smolensk

These regions were visited, and the existing services were evaluated by SOEE management staff, together with SOR HQ staff, before a final decision was made. SO Russia HQ in Moscow is the hub which led these regions in reaching the project objectives.

F. Methods of Work

To achieve its goals, this project benefited from methods of work developed and tested by Special Olympics in over 160 countries around the globe. Data is consistently collected, and the approach is constantly improved. To have information, skills and expertise with national,

regional and local coordinators, Special Olympics has developed a proprietary dynamic Knowledge Management System (KMS, <http://kms.specialolympics.org>), from which the project in Russia benefited, and contributed to. However, skills development is traditionally a very labor-intensive activity, which made it necessary to organize numerous face-to-face meetings, seminars, train-the-trainer sessions, progress review meetings and conferences. Given the great distances in Russia, a higher than average amount of staff time and travel budget were dedicated to the transfer of expertise.

In each region, seven SO components were introduced and/or expanded:

- Adapted Physical Education
- SO Get Into It
- Athlete Leadership Program
- Family Support Network
- Healthy Athletes
- Torch Run
- Opening and Closing Ceremonies

These components were designed to create a lasting and sustainable local program that would impact athletes, families, and the community at large. Each component was administered by the local office with technical expertise and assistance available from SOI headquarters as well as the SO Europe-Eurasia office which is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.

F.1 Adapted Physical Education (APE)

The art and science of assessment and prescription within the psychomotor domain ensure that an individual with a disability has access to programs designed to develop physical and motor fitness, fundamental motor skills and patterns and skill in aquatics, dance and sports so that the individual can ultimately participate in community based leisure, recreation and sport activities and enjoy an enhanced quality of life.

It is a diversified program of physical education having the same goals and objectives as regular physical education, but modified when necessary to meet the unique need of each individual. Students are given appropriate placement within the LEAST RESTRICTIVE environment in accordance with Public Law 94-142, P.L. 101-476 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the subsequent reauthorization of the law in 1997.

An issue which the project coordinators had to address was the general attitude of sports coaches, educated to excel in their quest for sports excellence. The majority of coaches are gradually accepting the fact that in Special Olympics athletes are celebrated for achieving their personal bests, with respect for their varying levels of ability.

F.2 SO Get Into It (SOGII)

SO Get Into It provides teachers with the tools and resources to introduce Special Olympics to students with and without disabilities. This is key to increasing SO involvement with schools and increasing the number of athletes to the program.

The resource kit offers materials to teach regular students to become aware of and understand disabilities and learn that people with disabilities can achieve goals in spite of barriers. It also introduces them to inspirational Special Olympics athletes and offers them guidance in creating service-learning activities for school and community participation with Special Olympics.

The SO Get Into It kit includes the following types of materials:

- Lesson plans on disability awareness, inspirational athletes, setting and achieving goals, and service-learning activities for school and community
- Videotapes about the message of Special Olympics and inspirational stories
- Activity cards for action-oriented involvement with Special Olympics
- Fact sheets on Special Olympics, mental retardation, Unified Sports™, Partners Clubs®, and other related topics
- Web-related resources and links relevant to the lesson plans
- Special Olympics athlete bios and stories with photographs

Through the SOGII curriculum being launched and integrated into the curriculum of schools in all regions, SOR was able to recruit and train a total of 13,401 volunteers from local schools.

While this method was successful in Russia, we have learned from experience in other countries that a prior agreement with the respective national ministry in charge of education facilitates local level partnerships with schools.

F.3 Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPs)

Special Olympics-Athlete Leadership Programs (SO-ALPs) allow athletes to explore opportunities Special Olympics participation in roles previously considered “non-traditional.” Such participation might come in the form of an athlete serving on the Board of Directors or local organizing committee; or it might find an athlete as a spokesperson, team captain, assistant coach or official.

To achieve those goals of inclusive decision-making SOR offered training and support at all levels of the program.

During the project period, SOR trained 152 athletes from the 11 regions. Those athletes served on boards and committees, served as assistant coaches, and served as advocates in the local media. SOR athlete, Ruslan Chekmarov was the primary presenter of the SO Russia Team during the European Games and met with the Mayor of the Italian town that hosted the Russian delegation. Rashat Emebiegok is a SOR basketball player who routinely represents SO Saratov in television interviews. Olga Ivanova from the Irkutsk region is an outstanding public speaker who gave the welcome speech during the Adapted Physical Education Conference in 2005. She spoke to over 80 participants from 8 cities and 6 universities. These athletes are outstanding representatives of both their region and Special Olympics and have helped to shatter the preconceived notions about people with intellectual disabilities.

Despite these success stories, much more could be done in this respect. One specific area where more attention is needed is how athletes are accommodated when they cease to be in the limelight as athlete leaders.

F.4 Family Support Network

The Family Support Network is based on the premise that the family members of present and future Special Olympics athletes are valuable and have an important role to play in Special Olympics outreach. The Family Support Network connects Special Olympics families with new families of a child with an intellectual disability and provides supportive links and information.

Using traditional and multimedia outreach methods, Special Olympics forms a supportive global community of families with a common experience or expected child has an intellectual disability, they are often faced with a crisis of conscience. In an instant, the joy and anticipation that these parents were experiencing turns into anxious questioning: What does the future hold for my child? What can we do? How will we cope? The FSN works to prevent abandonment and institutionalization and offers alternatives and resources to the families with young children with an intellectual disability.

The Family Support Network created opportunities for family members to:

- Become advocates for the Special Olympics movement;
- Match Families to share ideas, issues and common interests;
- Volunteer in their loved ones' athletic training; and

- Encourage new families who can benefit from Special Olympics to join.

During the project period, FSNs were created in each of the 11 regions. The initial goal was to recruit 1,000 family members, but by the end of the project there were a total of 7,890 family members participating in the FSN and SOR activities.

While this approach proved successful, there is room for improvement, particularly in attracting and meeting the needs of families with children just diagnosed to have an intellectual disability.

F.5 Healthy Athletes

The Special Olympics Healthy Athletes initiative is designed to help Special Olympics athletes improve their health and fitness. Its ultimate aim is to improve each athlete's ability to train and compete in Special Olympics as well as life.

The key objectives of Special Olympics Healthy Athletes are:

- Improve access and health care for Special Olympics athletes at event-based and other health screening clinics;
- Make referrals or recommendations for follow-up to local health practitioners when appropriate;
- Train health care professionals, students and others about the needs and care of people with intellectual disabilities

- Collect, analyze and disseminate data on the health status and needs of people with intellectual disabilities; and
- Advocate for improved health policies and programs for persons with mental retardation.

After detailed consultations with SOI and SOEE, the first Healthy Athlete discipline was launched in Russia. Several Healthy Athlete and Special Smiles training seminars for regional staff and clinicians were held in 2006. Now that there is demonstrated success with Special Smiles, SOR will begin adding disciplines to future screening events.

Special Olympics Special Smiles is a dental screening, education and referral program that seeks to increase access to dental care for Special Olympics athletes and all people with mental retardation. Dental screenings are used as a means to increase awareness of the state of oral health for Special Olympics athletes, providing awareness for athletes, their parents, caregivers and policymakers.

At a Special Olympics Special Smiles event, athletes receive

- Oral screenings;
- Oral health education;
- Individually fitted sports mouth guards, if needed;
- Oral health education and personal preventive products; and
- Information concerning needed follow-up care by community-based dentists and educational institutions.

One of the primary objectives of Special Olympics Special Smiles is to increase the number of dental professionals who will serve people with mental retardation in their practices and clinics. This is accomplished by encouraging dental students, as well as practicing dentists, to volunteer to participate in screenings at Special Olympics events. Academy of General Dentistry (AGD)- and American Dental Association-recognized credits also are given for participation, allowing students and dentists the opportunity to gain a comfort level working with the Special Olympics population, while gaining education credits.

The original goal was to screen 750 athletes (or 5% of the original athlete goal). SOR was able to exceed this goal and hold multiple training seminars. Over 100 physicians participated in the athlete screening and 792 athletes were screened (5.1% of total athletes).

While Healthy Athletes met the stated goal, expectations for future growth should be realistic. The approach yields results worldwide, but projections for future development in Russia should take into account economic realities associated with the medical profession in the country.

F.6 Torch Run

At its most basic level, the Torch Run is an actual running event in which officers and athletes run the "Flame of Hope" to the Opening Ceremonies of local Special Olympics competitions, state/provincial Games, and National Summer or Winter Games. Every two years, law enforcement officers from around the world gather to carry the "Flame of Hope" in a Law

Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg in honor of the Special Olympics World Summer or World Winter Games.

In May 2006, the Saratov region conducted their first ever Torch Run event with over 50 participants from the Department of Policy and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In Russia the Torch Runs are conducted in cooperation with Police, Army, and Special Forces, in city centers, to attract public attention and raise public awareness. In each of the 11 regions, torch runs are conducted held prior to the opening ceremonies of major national and regional competitions.

While Torch Run is a fund generating activity in its original form in the USA, in Russia attempts to raise funds through it were not realistic. In the future, the Torch Run will continue to be exclusively a public awareness initiative.

F.7 Opening and Closing Ceremonies

Opening ceremonies are held for each major national and regional event. The Opening Ceremonies provide both athletes and volunteers with an opportunity to celebrate their achievement and spirit and reward their efforts. The Opening and Closing Ceremonies are an excellent public awareness opportunity and a chance to recognize the participation of both key officials and key sponsors. In addition, the ceremonies help to explain the larger mission of Special Olympics and include the recitation of the SO athlete oath. The Closing Ceremonies include an award ceremony to recognize the achievements of the athletes, bring joy and pride to the families, motivate volunteers, and recognize supporters.

F.8 Social Study

Prior to the start of this grant project, SOI conducted a social study in 2003 to evaluate the general public's attitude towards children and adults with intellectual disabilities, in which results from Russia were compared to those from other countries. With the support of the USAID funds, a study was conducted to research issues with greater relevance to Russia. Discussion groups were held with all stakeholders, and demonstrated an increased understanding and support for the issues, significant satisfaction among families and greater commitment not to abandon children. The main conclusions of the study are:

- there is a greater need for information and support for families with just born children with intellectual disabilities, in order to decrease the levels of abandonment, and
- there is a greater need for systematic activities for people with intellectual disabilities, who leave schools and move back to sedentary lives at home.

The social study conducted by the conclusion of the project had a different scope and subject than the initial one. It was not possible to conduct a study similar to the initial one, which compared general attitudes in several countries across the globe. The conducted research within the scope of this project focused on identifying practical improvements in our future work in Russia.

G. Local Program Development

In order to successfully implement SO activities in the pilot regions, SOI and SOR spent considerable time developing the local program infrastructure to ensure not only a successfully project, but also to ensure the sustainability of the activities. SOI and SOR took the following steps:

- Translated, printed, and disseminated *Ready Set Go Local Program Development Guide*;
- Trained staff of SOR and local committees
- Recruited and trained local program coordinators
- Planned, monitored, and evaluated local programs
- Established a local program calendar of events
- Established local program monitoring mechanisms
- Designed and implemented medical community involvement through conducting medical screenings of athletes at events
- Trained coordinators for the Family Support Network Program, identified families and associations, communication tools, and possible events to participate in;
- Designed and implemented European Football Week and Basketball Development Activities;
- Published information, education, and communications materials;
- Prepared for Regional, National, European, and World Games
- Exchanged best practices among local communities, regions, and globally as well.

H. Project Infrastructure

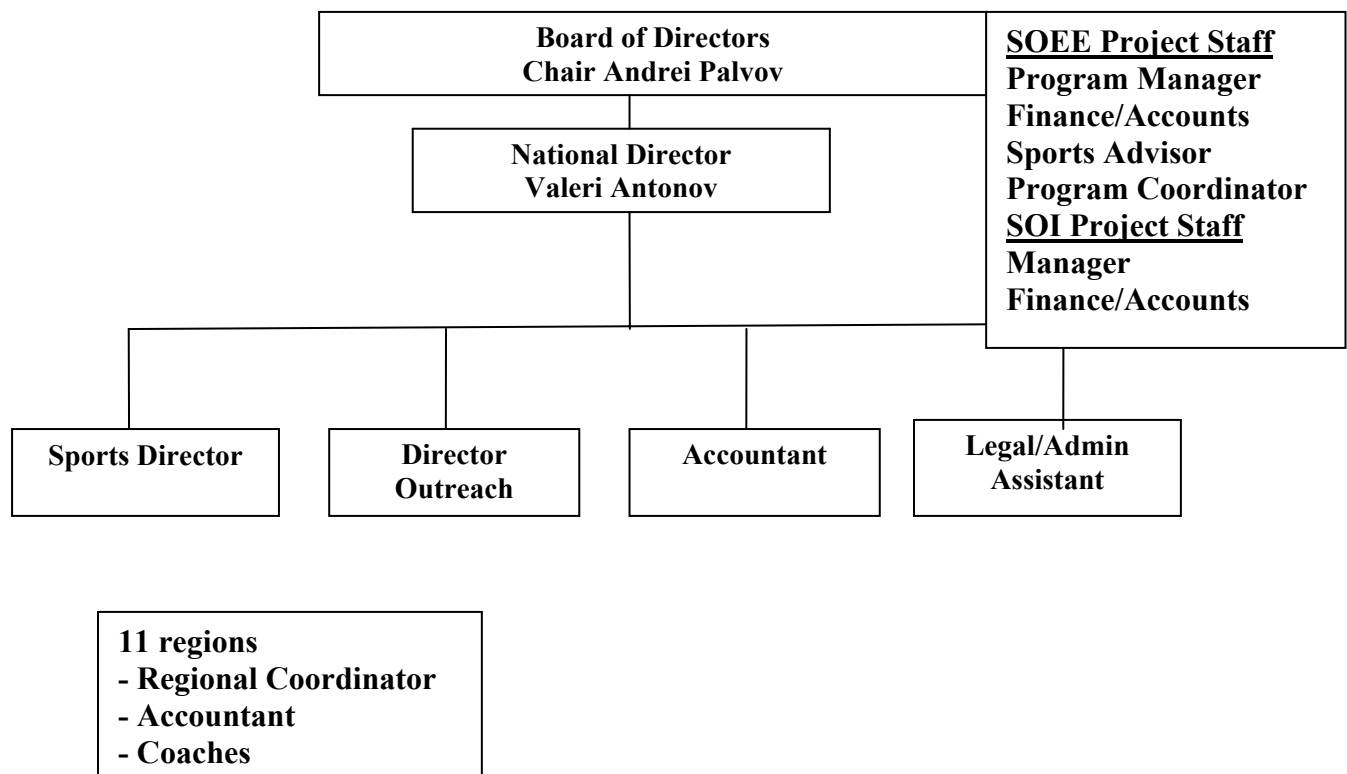
To make the project a success, Special Olympics completed the following activities:

- Created the necessary structures;
- Established the necessary legal relations;
- Established the reporting and financial and information flows procedures;
- Recruited the necessary key personnel;
- Trained the personnel;
- Built the regional advisory committees;
- Reviewed the regions' needs in term of IT, and sports equipment, providing and distributing the equipment;
- Reviewed the regions' needs in terms of documentation, producing the distributing the documentation;
- Finalized regions' workplans;
- Relationship building at national and regional level; and,
- Launched project programs at regional level.

H.1 Project Administration

Special Olympics Inc. (SOI) is the prime recipient of the award, a US registered non-profit organization. Special Olympics Europe/Eurasia is a Brussels-based management and resource centre, legally part of SOI. The award's sub-recipient was SO Russia, a Russia-registered non-

profit organization. For the purpose of making this project a success, SOI reviewed the relationship between these structures, and the efficiency of the structures to implement the project from a management and financial point of view. Key financial and management staff from SOI and SOEE was dedicated to the project. Several trips to Russia were made, to review the structure, governance and leadership of SO Russia. Finally, the following structure was put in place as optimal, in view of achieving the project objectives.



H.2 Establishing the necessary legal relations

After establishing the project structures, the next step was to finalize roles and responsibilities, and to formalize them in a legal form. Ultimate responsibility for delivering the project vests with SOI. SOEE provide management and resource support, and on-going monitoring and evaluation. SOR is in charge of delivering the project on the ground.

The above stated roles and responsibilities were legally formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), co-signed by all parties, as required by USAID. The MOU has been delivered to USAID.

H.3 Recruiting key personnel

The needs for key personnel were reviewed in relation to the project objectives, and the amount of work and expertise required.

At SOR HQ level, the following personnel were required:

- Sports Director
- Outreach Director
- Accountant
- Legal/Admin Assistant

The SOR National Director and the PR Coordinator are also involved in the project, but are not directly hired by it.

The SO Russia project staff was interviewed and evaluated by SOEE managers. SOEE managers were also involved in the recruitment of the key regional staff.

In each region, the following positions had to be filled in:

- Regional Coordinator
- Accountant
- Sports Coordinator/Coaches

Regional Coordinators and Accountant are full or part time, while Sports Coordinators/Coaches are part time, receiving a stipend for the services they deliver in the framework of the project.

H.4 Training project personnel

At national level training was provided for Regional Coordinators and Accountants.

Training for Regional Coordinators was provided on 2 occasions, and the topics covered included:

- SO orientation
- Project objectives
- USAID expectations and requirements

- Project programs: SO Get into it, Healthy Athletes, Family Support Network, Adapted Physical Education
- Regional growth/How to build a local SO program

The training for the accountants was led by USAID financial experts, and focused on USAID requirements and procedures, purchasing requirements, VAT exemption, bank account management requirements, reporting requirements. The meeting was also attended by SOEE Finance Manager.

At a regional level, the Regional Coordinators provided training for sports coordinators/coaches, volunteer leaders, and orientation sessions for special schools and internats principals and staff.

Additionally, SOEE Sports Director provided Adapted Physical Education training for over 25 Physical Education Academy and Faculty Deans and Principals, and made a curriculum available for them to introduce to their students. They were very receptive to this idea, and the training was repeated and expanded in April and November 2005.

H.5 Establishing the reporting and financial and information flows procedures

Financial and information flow procedures were established to meet the project needs, and to satisfy USAID requirements. SOI produced and distributed financial reporting templates, which are now being used by the accountants.

Monthly reports of the regional accountants are centralized at SOR HQ, and then forwarded to SOEE and SOI. The SOEE Finance Manager is overseeing the flow of funds and financial reporting on a quarterly basis. Upon completion of previous quarter's reports, SOI advances funds for the upcoming quarter's activities.

H.6 Building Regional Advisory Committees

In each of the project regions, SOEE and SOR project managers focused on building Regional Advisory Committees, to support the work of the Regional Coordinators. While situations differ, an effort was made to involve representatives of the local government, particularly from the Departments of Education, Youth and Sports, and Social Affairs, journalists, local business and SO athletes' family members. Today we can reports that this model is functioning, and fosters the implementation of the project.

H.7 Reviewing the regions' needs in term of IT, and sports equipment, providing and distributing equipment

The next task of the Regional Coordinators was to review the needs of their regional in terms of IT and sports equipment, in consultation with the sports coordinators/coaches. Needs were centralized at SOR HQ, and reviewed against project specifications. SOR HQ conducted the search for best offers, within the framework of USAID purchasing requirements, and evaluated centralized purchasing and distribution against decentralized purchasing. IT equipment worth

US\$18,118 was purchased and made available for the project implementation. Sports equipment worth US\$77,769 was also distributed to the regional, to meet their need during sports activities.

H. 8 Reviewing the regions' needs in terms of documentation, producing the distributing the documentation

Additionally, the need of the regions in terms of SO general sports, special initiatives and other documentation was evaluated. An updated SO Sports Rules edition was translated, produced and distributed to the project regions. Football, basketball, SOGII, FSN and other specific initiatives documentation is also disseminated on on-going basis.

H.9 Relationship building at national and regional level

SO has been successful in establishing good working relationship with the Federal Agency of Physical Culture and Sport. Minister Fetisov has attended a number of SO events. He has made a firm commitment to involve the Agency in organizing a major SO Russia European level event, to raise the level of awareness across Russia.

At a regional level a number of key partnerships have been established. Most beneficial for the project results are the partnerships with Physical Education Academies, regular sports schools, special schools (#8), family associations, local government inspectors for special education and social affairs.

I. Conclusion

As a result of the support of USAID, SOI and SOR were able to exceed all of the stated project goals. Due to the huge success of the project, the activities were expanded to 11, instead of the originally planned 8 regions. This was most significant achievement of the project in terms of sustainability and legacy. There are now 11 strong regional programs who know how to manage projects that can meet strict progress and financial reporting standards, and have grown to become credible project partners for any donor. These organizations are much better connected with their communities, and capable of mobilizing them. Through SOR, USAID was a catalyst in these communities.

This project has shown proof of concept and the model used in these 11 regions will be replicated throughout Russia and the best practices will be applied in other Special Olympics programs throughout the world.

Appendix

List of Equipment Purchased with Grant Funds

Financial Forms

Media Coverage Documentation

List of Equipment Purchased with Grant Funds

No equipment with a unit value greater than \$5,000 was purchased with USAID grant funds.

Media coverage of CA #118-A-00-04-00053 Project Activities

A. Broadcasting media

Federal TV channels: RTR, TV6, Ren-TV, TNT, TVTs - via their local outlets;

Local TV channels: TV-2 (*Tomsk*); ATV, ANT, TV Pervouralsk, 4th Channel (*Yekaterinburg & Region*); AC Baikal TV, TV Studio AIST (*Irkutsk*); Regional TV Channels (*Stavropol, Smolensk*); City Channel, NTM, Morning Tea Channel (*Yaroslavl*); Regional TV (*Chelyabinsk*); City TV Channels in Plasta, Zlatoust, Asha, Magnitogorsk (*Chelyabinsk region*), Regional and City TV Channels, TV Poltavsky District (*Omsk region*); Local Cable Channels in Moscow Districts; Shchyolkovo city TV (*Moscow region*); Rossia-SPB, 5th Channel; TV GTRK-Saratov, TVTs-Saratov.

Federal Radio Channels: Mayak, Radio Rossia, Radio Retro and their local divisions.

Local Radio Channels: Evropa Plus Tomsk, RadioRetro Tomsk; Irkutsk Regional Radio, State Radio & TV Company Irkutsk, Radio Tulun, TRK Sayansk; Evropa Plus St.Petersburg, Radio Maria, Eldoradio St.Petersburg; Smolensk Regional Radio & TV Company; Saratov Regional Radio, Evropa Plus Saratov, Echo Moskvyy Saratov; Smolensk Regional Radio.

B. News Agencies & Press-Services: ITAR-TASS, Interpress, RIA-Novosti; Press-service of the Russian Olympic Committee, Official site of the Saratov Region Government; Press-services of the Irkutsk Governor, Irkutsk Ministry of Social Welfare and Ministry of Education.

C. Printed media:

Federal: Komsomolskaya Pravda, Moskovsky Komsomolets, Argumenty & Factly, Trud (all of them print daily insets based on local events in every Regional capital), Sel'skaya Zhizn.

Local: Chelyabinsk regional newspaper, city newspapers in Satka, Karabash, Snezhinsk (*Chelyabinsk region*); Tselinnik, Oreol (*Omsk region*); Tochka Zreniya, Yaroslavskaya Nedelya, Yaroslavskie Starnitsy, Severnyi Krai, Gavrilov-Yam Vestnik (*Yaroslavl region*); Stepnye Zori, Stavropolskiy Meridian, Vecherniy Stavropol (*Stavropol krai*); Smolenskie Novosti, Rabochiy put' (*Smolensk Region*); Saratov Sportivnyi, Saratovskie Vesti, Saratovskaya Oblastnaya Gazeta (*Saratov region*); Vecherniy Tomsk; Nashi Vedomosti, Rosinka, Vecherniy Yekaterinburg, Berezovskiy Rabochiy, Alapayevskaya Gazeta, Perspektiva (*Sverdlovsk region*); Novosty, Sayansk, Tulun (*Irkutsk region*); Peterburgski Chas Peak, Vestnik Administratsiyi, SPB Nevskoye Vremya, SPB Novosti (*St.Petersburg*).