



USAID MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS SUPPORT ACTIVITY (PPMG)

OCTOBER 2016

TUZLA AND BIJELJINA MARK EU ANTI-TRAFFICKING DAY

USAID/PPMG supported the activities of the Tuzla association “Zemlja djece u BiH” and the Citizen’s Association for Promoting Roma Education “Otaharin” from Bijeljina, marking October 18 – “EU Anti-Trafficking Day”.

The EU Anti-Trafficking Day was marked in Tuzla through the activities of the initiative “United in the fight against



modern child slavery”, funded by the USAID/PPMG. The promotional activities included life-size figures of children in the city center, inviting citizens to not support begging. Photographs were also set up along with messages on shopping carts in city stores, coasters printed with messages were handed out in the five most popular cafes in the city center, and an education workshop was held for the Center’s users – parents and children - on the topic of preventing human trafficking. The association “Zemlja djece u BiH”, in cooperation with the Ministry of Security of BiH, has been marking the EU Anti-Trafficking Day for five consecutive years, in order to draw attention to this phenomenon and its growing impact in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries. Watch a [video](#) on how to deal with children victims of human trafficking, according to the Protocol on handling abuse cases.

The Citizens’ Association for the Promotion of Roma Education “Otaharin”, in an attempt to raise consciousness among citizens in the community on the types of human trafficking and the mechanisms of addressing this problem, organized a street activity and round table with the working group concerned with protecting the rights of the child, comprising representatives of the police, Social Work Centre, City Administration and citizens’ association “Otaharin”. The street activity was organized thanks to the local volunteer office, volunteers of “Otaharin” and high school students. The volunteers’ performance at the city

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square presented different types of human trafficking, from begging, to organ trade, prostitution and forced marriages, and handed out informative flyers to passers-by.

The activities in Bijeljina were supported through the initiative “The street is not a home, it only leads there – protect children’s rights”, funded by the USAID/PPMG. According to data presented in the Report on human trafficking in BiH for 2015, BiH is a destination, source and transit country for men, women and children who are victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labor.

PROBLEMS OF CHILDREN FROM MARGINALIZED GROUPS CONCERN ALL OF US

Chief of Party of the Marginalized Populations Support Activity (USAID/PPMG), Jasmin Bešić visited the association “Zemlja djece u BiH” in Tuzla.

The Chief of Party and representatives of the Association talked about the problems faced by children in the Tuzla Canton, and across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Special focus was on children from marginalized groups, one of the target groups the Association cares for through the project “United in the fight against modern child slavery” supported by the USAID/PPMG.

“The problems of children from marginalized groups

concern all of us, and we must care for them. Children are the most vulnerable social category, especially children in need.” - said Jasmin Bešić, Chief of Party of USAID/PPMG.

The goal of the association “Zemlja djece” is to continuously draw public attention to the suffering of children, and to provide organized help to children in distress, regardless of their race, nationality, religion, sex, or any other social category.

The project provides comprehensive support to children – potential victims of human trafficking or children at risk of falling victim to human trafficking, in accessing their right to social care, the right to education, and in training them to act preventively in order to avoid becoming victims of human trafficking.



BRIGHTER SIDE OF LIFE OF PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Representatives of the Marginalized Populations Support Activity (USAID/PPMG) visited residents of housing communities for persons with intellectual disabilities in Zenica, Nemila and Jajce, which operate through the Alliance of organizations for supporting persons with intellectual disabilities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina “SUMERO”.

The housing communities were created within the project “DI-SP” Strengthening the Process of Deinstitutionalization and Support Services in Local Communities, implemented by SUMERO, and supported by the Marginalized Populations Support Activity (USAID/PPMG).

Instead of living in institutional housing for persons with intellectual disabilities, these individuals now live in apartments in local communities, which enables them to receive better care and improves their social inclusion. More than 2000 persons live in institutional housing for persons with intellectual disabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which includes 120 underage children. Institutions are crowded with users, which hinders therapeutic work and leads to the social exclusion and violation of human rights of this segment of population, which is particularly true for persons with intellectual disabilities.

The goal of “DI-SP” is to enable persons with intellectual disabilities to access their basic human rights guaranteed to them by the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities; right to choice and life in the community, right to access information, education and services, which



would be the key changes achieved by this project. Through the process of deinstitutionalization and support services, the USAID/PPMG has thus far supported the successful integration of twelve users into local communities.

The initiative is part of the process intended to demonstrate that quality, inclusive, comprehensive, sustainable and cost-effective services in the community can and should be developed as alternatives to stationary institutional placement.

PROF. SINIŠA RISTIĆ, MD, ON HIS COOPERATION WITH ASSOCIATION “ZAJEDNO”

Mid-summer this year, Mr. Siniša Rastić, Professor at the University of Istočno Sarajevo and Banja Luka, had the opportunity to see the work of the Citizen’s association “Zajedno” in Banja Luka, whose project “Deinstitutional protection of persons with mental illnesses” is supported by the USAID/PPMG.

Professor Ristić said that while he was working on textbooks for medical and special education students, for the Nervous System Physiology and Biological Psychology courses, he wanted to familiarize himself more closely with this vulnerable population group, because he believed that it would help him better understand how he needs to write one particular section of the





textbooks, and provide him with details that he felt were lacking in his education as a medical doctor, and education on experimental physiology and pathological physiology, which he chose as his specialty.

“In mid-summer this year I had a chance to see the work of the Citizen’s association “Zajedno” in Banja Luka which advocates for the interests of persons with mental illnesses who have been coming to the Day Center for 9 years, whose services help them build their social capacities and influences their quality of life in the face of deeply rooted stigma. The contact happened spontaneously, during an informal conversation with several friends, who are also health professionals who deal with mental health and psychopathology in all their segments, and have experience with the work of this Association, or more precisely the Day Center. Establishing contact with the users of the Day Center and its staff truly invigorated my views of mental health and illness.” - said Professor Ristić.

Professor Ristić believes this gave him a fresh perspective on mental health and illness, because he got to know this vulnerable category of population outside psychiatric clinics, which seem stuffy and bleak due to being in a state of disrepair, and whose patients are in acute stages of illnesses.

“I met these people here, at the Day Center, in an environment brimming with everyday life situations, where meals are prepared and served, where people talk and listen to each other, they listen to music and they create it, they engage in creative activities, and organize meetings with other people outside of the Day Centre, thus combatting the stigma that has always been associated with mental illnesses, and will continue being so. This infused my primarily theoretical knowledge on the biological basis of psychology and psychopathology with a new, vivid, practical aspect, i.e. improvement.” - said Professor Ristić. Professor Ristić was particularly impressed with the quality of psychotherapy workshops he attended, and said that they not only taught, but also inspired him.

He says that in his conversation with the Project Coordinator, Ms. Tanja Valentić, he learned that the project is funded by the USAID/PPMG and that the association “Zajedno” is collaborating with the association “Apel” from Sanski Most on expanding the project. He thinks this is particularly important since this model of care is the only one of its type in BiH and the region.

“I noticed a banner in the Day Center with USAID/PPMG written on it, and I was happy to know that donors come here and acknowledge the needs and encouraging the improvement of services for this nearly invisible segment of population. The staff and users told me that this organization is supporting this model of care through a project called “Deinstitutional protection of persons with mental illnesses”, by funding the Project for six months.” - says Professor Ristić.

Finally, Professor Ristić noted that he would like to see students and politicians, not just donors, visit associations such as “Zajedno”, because he believes that visits and cooperation can improve knowledge and change widely held beliefs and stereotypes.

“I wished that more people visited this Center: students of medicine, psychology, social work, other young people, politicians and donors, not only to help the Association which is obviously determined to break stereotypes, but also to learn and to examine their beliefs on persons with mental illnesses and become aware that these people deserve support.” - said Professor Ristić.



MONITORING VISITS COMPLETED

In September and October, 2016, the PPMG team visited grantees implementing projects selected through the RFA Initiative for promoting responsible deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities (ODI) and the RFA Anti-Trafficking in Persons (Anti-TIP). The visit concerned three segments: the process of implementing the recommendations of PPMG's team, project implementation and the OCA process (organizational self-assessment process).



During the monitoring visits, the USAID/PPMG team visited the following organizations: Association "Zajedno" (Banja Luka), Association "Budućnost" (Modriča), Association "Sunce" (Mostar), Library for persons with visual impairments in BiH (Sarajevo), Alliance SUMERO-FBiH (Sarajevo), Association "Narko-ne" (Sarajevo), Association "Otaharin" (Bijeljina), Women's association "Derventa" (Derventa), Democratic Youth Association (Velika Kladuša), Association "Zemlja djece u BiH" (Tuzla), Association "ProReha" (Sarajevo), Association "Dajte nam šansu" (Sarajevo).

The focus was on monitoring the progress made in the project thus far and analyzing results and future planned activities. During the visit, the project team assessed the progress of organizations in implementing recommendations regarding grantee's capacity building. During the OCA process, consultations were conducted, the achieved results were summarized, and plans were made for improving the OCA index of organizations. Given the fact that one of the main goals USAID/PPMG is the institutional strengthening of these organizations, during the pre-award survey determining the readiness and ability of the organization to be a grantee the USAID/PPMG team gave recommendations with a strong

focus on organizational and financial management. It was determined that almost all organizations/grantees, had implemented a significant number of recommendations, which will, as they themselves say, make their work much easier, and their organizations more functional. Furthermore, all the grantee organizations developed capacity building plans with the help of the PPMG/USAID team. The plans are based on the results of the OCA process, i.e. the results of the organizational capacity self-assessment conducted by the grantee organization, in order to build their capacities and meet the needs of their target groups more efficiently.

USAID/PPMG PART OF POSITIVE STORIES IN BIH



The USAID/PPMG team visited the premises of the Day Center, and observed the activities organized to celebrate Children's Week in the sports hall of Tuzla's "Centar" elementary school. Support in holding workshops in this school was provided by volunteers and members of the Club "Budi muško", acting as a part of the association "Zemlja djece u BiH".





TRAVELING PLAY – BRINGING JOY TO CHILDREN

Volunteers of the citizen’s association “Srce puno osmijeha” held an interactive play at the “Vuk Stefanović Karadžić” sports hall in Doboj, as one of the activities of the project “Circle of Love”, supported by the USAID/PPMG.



The play in Doboj was organized in cooperation with the Association for Children with Special Needs, which conducts its activities in this city. It was attended by youth from the Doboj Foundation for Children with Special Needs, students of the pre-school program for social inclusion and integration “Children’s Corner”, and students of the “Vuk Stefanović Karadžić” elementary school.

The play “Everyone Needs Love” was replete with interactive songs, funny sketches and games tailored to children. Beaming, happy faces of the young audience are



the proof of success for the show and volunteer actors. The activities of this Project of the citizen’s association “Srce puno osmijeha” include visits to associations and institutions working with marginalized groups throughout BiH, and the Traveling Show is planned to visit Prozor-Rama, Banjaluka, Mostar, Pale and Sarajevo. “We’re glad that USAID’s Marginalized Populations Support Activity recognized the importance of including children and youth, and their interaction. The content and the way the show was performed, allowed the children to participate in the activities equally, and it brought them joy. We sincerely hope that we will be able to continue our cooperation with volunteers from Sarajevo in the near future.” - said Sanja Živković from the Association for Children with Special Needs.

Watch a [video](#) about the Travelling Play held by “Srce puno osmijeha” volunteers for children in Doboj, and see the children’s reactions.



CARAVAN OF HOPE IN MOSTAR

The Association of parents and friends of persons with special needs “Sunce” from Mostar, with the support of the MoStars dance studio, hosted a caravan of peace and friendship called the “Caravan of Hope”, on October 22, 2016. This is an event held by associations from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that focus their activities on persons with disabilities. The Caravan of Hope included students and teachers from ten schools in BiH, and 8 associations that focus on issues of persons with disabilities.

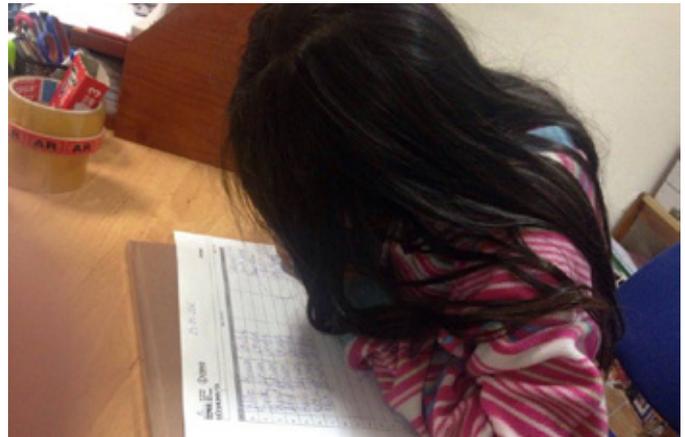
“We are trying to show how much love and hope there is in this symbolic location. The Old Bridge, a bridge of friendship, of hope and victory, shows that there is hope for better and brighter days. Persons with disabilities do not have the same opportunities, and that’s what we need to provide them with. We need to give them access to education, medical treatments, social inclusion and sports and cultural activities.” - said Erna Kotlo from the Association of parents and children with special needs “Sunce”.

Zorana Mitrović, a young woman with cerebral palsy said that she is making her dreams come true despite the society’s lack of understanding. She achieves excellent results in swimming competition.

Watch the video story about the Caravan of hope and the participants’ impressions [here.](#)

FOCUS GROUPS IN CAZIN

The Democratic Youth Organization DOM, as part of the project Velika Kladaša Mladi i zajednica – “You have the right to know!”, funded by USAID/PPMG, provides direct assistance to victims of human trafficking, particularly young Roma people engaged in different types of begging. In an attempt to find a way to help this population group, two focus groups were held in Cazin, on the premises of the Social Work Center. Each focus group comprised 10 Roma participants and included parents and children. In one of the families, the children are in school and are diligent students. Their daughter Samida is an excellent student, commended by the teacher’s council.



During the focus group, the participants were educated about the meaning of begging, and human trafficking as one of the consequences of begging. Volunteers of the Democratic Youth Organization Velika Kladaša states that the children actively participated in discussions and showed awareness of the significance of these topics, and were fairly well aware of the consequences. Still, they pointed out that sometimes they are forced to beg so they can stay in school and buy food.

During the focus group, the participants were also told about other ways of finding funds, after which they submitted requests to the Social Work Center in Cazin for lump sum assistance. The Democratic Youth Organization will continue their activities and will provide their users with direct support, while keeping them informed on additional education, retraining programs, and employment opportunities, all with the goal of reducing the number of human trafficking cases.



Marginalized Populations Support Activity in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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