



**Special
Olympics**

26

ASIA PACIFIC COUNTRIES

AFGHANISTAN
AMERICAN SAMOA
AUSTRALIA
BANGLADESH
BHARAT (INDIA)
BHUTAN
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
CAMBODIA
FIJI

LAOS
MALAYSIA
MYANMAR
NEPAL
NEW ZEALAND
NIPPON (JAPAN)
PAKISTAN
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

INDONESIA
PHILIPPINES
SAMOA
SINGAPORE
SERENDIB (SRI LANKA)
THAILAND
TIMOR LESTE
TONGA
VIETNAM

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**Special
Olympics**



**SPECIAL OLYMPICS
ASIA PACIFIC**

2014

ANNUAL REPORT

REVEALING THE CHAMPION IN 26 COUNTRIES



MESSAGE

FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT & MD

With up to 200 million people with intellectual disabilities in the world today, they remain the most marginalized and discriminated against population. This stigma transcends national, cultural and socio-economic boundaries.

We continue to shift public perceptions of intellectual disability from exclusion to acceptance. Special Olympics transforms their lives, for them to become contributing members of society. We fulfill this mission through year-round sports training and competition, health screenings and follow up care, athlete leadership, youth advocacy and community outreach for an inclusive society.

In 2014, the Asia Pacific region served 1,401,304 athletes, achieving an 8.2% growth over 2013. We continued to build movement capacity in our 26 Special Olympics countries, to help them serve more people with intellectual disabilities in the region.

In 2014, 35,292 competitions were conducted across the region for our athletes to achieve their personal best. Over 850 Special Olympics athletes from 26 Asia Pacific countries were selected for the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2015 in Los Angeles. The Games promises to be the largest sports and humanitarian event in the world in 2015, highlighting the talents of 7,000 athletes from 170 countries.

Special Olympics Unified Sports® is one of the fastest growing initiatives of the movement and most powerful ways of achieving social inclusion. It includes Special Olympics athletes and Special Olympics unified partners (people without intellectual disabilities) on the same team, promoting attitudinal and behavioral change. In 2014, we reached a total of 144,638 athletes and unified partners in the region.

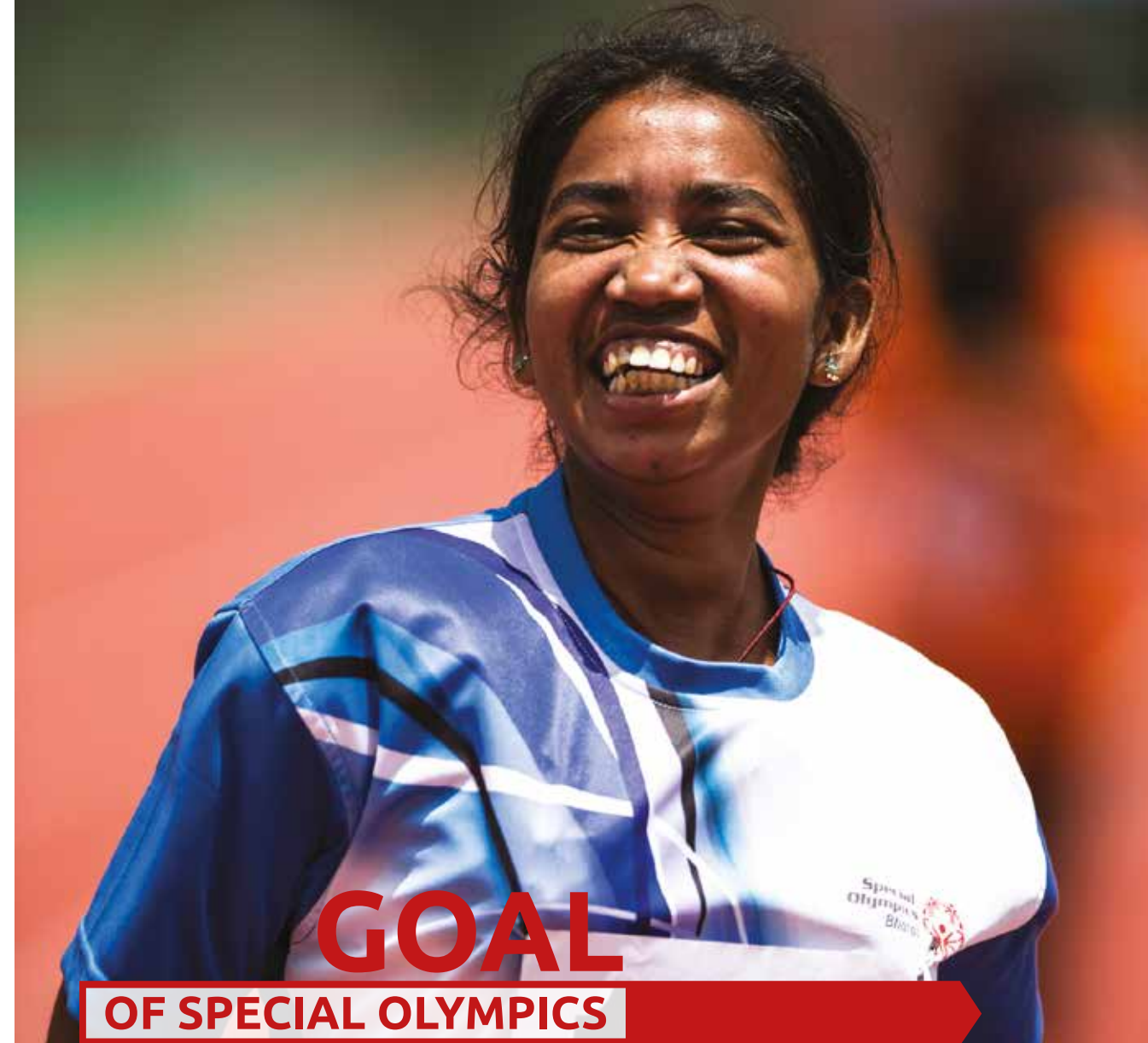
Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® remains another key priority, ensuring that our athletes receive the attention of healthcare providers. It delivered 8,813 screenings and follow up care in seven disciplines in the region. Special Olympics Healthy Communities expanded to Australia and Pakistan in 2014.

Our greatest challenge and opportunity is to create an inclusive environment where our athletes can thrive as contributing members of society. We will continue our efforts to ensure that our work will make a difference in the world.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Special Olympics movement in the Asia Pacific region.



Dr. John Dow, Jr.
Chief Regional Growth
Acting President & Managing Director
Special Olympics Asia Pacific



Special Olympics is dedicated to transforming the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, empowering them with opportunities to socially integrate and become contributing members of society.



DEFINITION OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

According to the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), an individual is considered to have an intellectual disability based on the following three criteria:

- 1 Intellectual functioning level (IQ) is below 75;
- 2 Significant limitations exist in two or more adaptive skill areas; and
- 3 The condition manifests itself before the age of 18.

Adaptive skill areas are daily living skills needed to live, work and play in the community. The definition includes 10 adaptive skills: communication, self-care, home living, social skills, leisure, health and safety, self-direction, functional academics, community use, and work.

JOINING SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Participation in Special Olympics starts at age 2, with no maximum age limit.

Children with intellectual disabilities aged 2 through 7 can take part in the Young Athletes™ program, which helps cognitive and physical growth, preparing them for Special Olympics sports.

Children and adults need to be certified as a person with an intellectual disability by a medical professional or institution before they are eligible for participation in Special Olympics.

Special Olympics is FREE OF CHARGE to eligible individuals.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS VS PARALYMPIC: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Special Olympics and Paralympic are two separate non-profit organizations recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Special Olympics and Paralympic differ in three main areas:

- 1 Who we serve
- 2 Sporting philosophy
- 3 Structure of the respective organizations

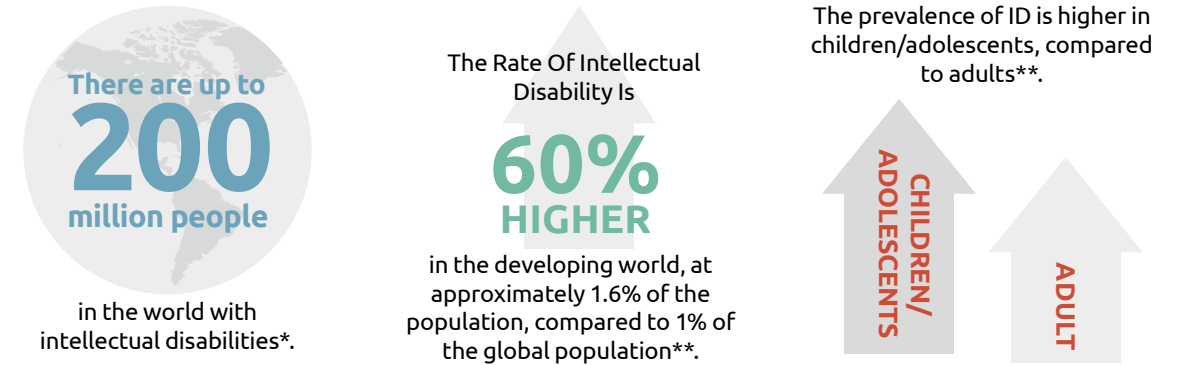
	SPECIAL OLYMPICS	PARALYMPIC
WHO WE SERVE (ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY)	Special Olympics welcomes all people with intellectual disabilities (ages 2 and older) of all ability (ID) levels, to participate in 32 Olympic-type sports.	Paralympic welcomes athletes mainly with physical disabilities who have to fulfill qualifying performance standards. Only top performing athletes can participate in competitions.
SPORTING PHILOSOPHY	Equal ability groupings are the foundation for Special Olympics sports, allowing them to compete within their own ability levels. Winning is not the goal at Special Olympics. Maximizing participation is.	Athletes go through a stringent qualification process, where only the best are selected.
ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE	Special Olympics is a community-based grassroots movement for people with intellectual disabilities of all ability (IQ) levels.	Paralympic is run by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), mainly for athletes with a physical disability.

AN INVISIBLE GLOBAL CRISIS

Intellectual disability carries the unfortunate stigma of an extreme "loss of face". It is a life-long condition which involves large-scale utilization of public health resources**.

Intellectual disability affects not just the individual. It affects the individual, his and her immediate family**.

The cost of intellectual disability to society in the form of additional resources to provide adequate services is huge. This is not accounting for the burden of stigma and other associated mental and physical illnesses and their complications**.



*World Health Organization

**Maulik, P. K., Mascarenhas, M. N., Mathers, C. D., Dua, T., & Saxena, S. (2011). Prevalence of intellectual disability: a meta-analysis of population-based studies. *Research in developmental disabilities, 32(2)*, 419-436

OUR SOLUTION SPECIAL OLYMPICS MODEL OF CHANGE

OUR SOLUTION

SPECIAL OLYMPICS MODEL OF CHANGE

Special Olympics' unique Model of Change combines the power of Sports, Healthcare, Transformative Education & Community Building, allowing us to facilitate and engage in transformative experiences.





Photo: Danny James

EXPERIENCE

TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF SPORTS

Special Olympics uses the power of sports to transform the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. **Sports shifts the focus from disability to ability, from isolation to involvement.** Participation in Special Olympics spurs activity and pursuit of physical fitness as a lifestyle choice. **More than 90% of Special Olympics athletes who participate in Special Olympics sport activities increase their physical and emotional well-being.**

The powerful social benefits of sport are important to people with intellectual disabilities, as one of the first effects of their disability is social isolation. For Special Olympics athletes, training sessions become the source of social inclusion, through friendships with fellow athletes and people without intellectual disabilities.



MAXIMIZING ATHLETE POTENTIAL

Special Olympics allows athletes of **all abilities** an equal chance of winning. This is done through a unique process called divisioning, which groups individual athletes or teams according to gender, age and equal ability levels. Divisioning allows every athlete to compete at their maximum level, and be recognized for his or her performance.

COACHING EXCELLENCE

Coaches play a vital role for Special Olympics athletes. They give Special Olympics athletes deep awareness of their own worth, ability, courage, and the capacity to grow and improve. The key to improving each athlete's performance and well-being is based on the quality of training and experience provided by the coaches. Special Olympics provides coaches with certified training and relevant resources to provide quality coaching to athletes.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED SPORTS®

Unified Sports® brings people with and without intellectual disabilities together on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle – training and playing together is a quick path to attitudinal and behavioral change.

Through inclusive team sports and shared competition experiences, Special Olympics athletes and unified partners (athletes without intellectual disabilities) experience a new understanding, dispelling negative attitudes about intellectual disability and impacting their respective family members, friends, and the community at large to change their opinions of people with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics athletes and unified partners extended their relationships off the playing field, spending time with teammates, outside of team training and competitions.

72,892
UNIFIED ATHLETES



71,746
UNIFIED PARTNERS



SPECIAL OLYMPICS YOUNG ATHLETES™

Young Athletes™ is for children with intellectual disabilities aged two to seven, designed as an early intervention program. For this group, motor skills, cognitive, social and emotional development are key factors for future health and growth.

Young Athletes™ uses a sports play program to introduce children to the world of physical activity, to develop essential motor tracking and hand-eye coordination. Children build these skills by participating in specific activities regularly.

The motor skills of children participating in Young Athletes™ improved by 70% compared to children who did not participate in Young Athletes™.

Young Athletes™ has shown a long term impact that accelerates children's developmental areas (motor, social, communication, cognitive, adaptive behavior).

IMPROVEMENTS IN CHILDREN REPORTED*

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILL AREA	REPORTED BY TEACHERS
MOTOR	75%
COGNITIVE	71%
ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR	69%
SOCIAL	65%
COMMUNICATION	62%

*SOI RESEARCH

9,476
YOUNG ATHLETES™
IN 26 COUNTRIES



SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD GAMES 2015

25 July – 2 August 2015

The World Summer Games will unite 7,000 athletes and 3,000 coaches representing 170 countries. It will feature 25 Olympic-style athletic competitions in 27 venues throughout Los Angeles, California, USA (making it the largest sport and humanitarian event in 2015), and the single biggest event in Los Angeles since the 1984 Olympic Games.

World Games is a flagship event of Special Olympics, which highlights on a global scale our unique Model of Change, combining sports for social change, good health for people with intellectual disabilities, and engagement of youths as agents of change and community development to foster inclusion.

Over 800 Special Olympics Asia Pacific athletes from 26 countries will form the second largest region to participate in the World Games. They were chosen based on their qualifying scores and sporting abilities across all divisions. For them, the World Games is a culmination of years of athletic training and competition, celebrating differences in abilities to compete on one of the world's greatest athletic stages.



Photo: Stewart Hazell

SUSTAINING ATHLETE

HEALTH

BETTER HEALTH, BETTER LIVES

- Perception:** The public believes that people with intellectual disabilities have better healthcare than the rest of the population. (WHO 2011, SOI 2001)
- Reality:** People with intellectual disabilities have unequal access to healthcare services. (WHO 2011, SOI 2001)
- Our goal:** To ensure that the healthcare of people with intellectual disabilities is equal to the general population.

For people with intellectual disabilities, health has a big impact on their quality of life. Poor health can greatly affect an athlete's ability to train and compete in sports effectively. It is this need that motivates Special Olympics to make athlete health a priority, through programming and research.

Special Olympics is the world's largest global health organization for people with intellectual disabilities, via Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® in 125 countries and Special Olympics Healthy Communities, offering health screening services and information to this underserved population. Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® has provided more than 1.4 million health exams (roughly 115,000 exams per year) worldwide.

A GLOBAL HEALTH CRISIS

Compared to the general population, women and men with intellectual disabilities have lifespans shorter by 20 and 13 years respectively. (University of Bristol, 2012)

People with intellectual disabilities have a 40% higher risk of contracting several preventable health conditions than the general population. Health examinations have found that people with intellectual disabilities (Special Olympics athletes) in the Asia Pacific region are at increased risk of secondary health issues.



8,813
NUMBER OF
ATHLETES SCREENED*

309
NUMBER OF
CLINICAL VOLUNTEERS*

*Asia Pacific, 2014

SPECIAL OLYMPICS HEALTHY ATHLETES®

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® has seven different health disciplines, where athletes are examined by medical professionals, as well as educated on how to live a healthy lifestyle.

More than 127,000 healthcare professionals have received training worldwide. Healthcare professionals who volunteer at Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® events are often moved by this experience. They have the potential to be motivated to treat, and even educate the next generation of medical professionals to understand the needs of people with intellectual disabilities.

For every dollar that is made available to Special Olympics, more than seven dollars in healthcare value is delivered. This is possible through powerful leveraging of partnerships with institutions, trainers and medical practitioners. (SOI Research)

SUSTAINING ATHLETE HEALTH IN SEVEN DISCIPLINES

Special
Olympics
**Healthy
Athletes®**



Opening Eyes:
Vision



Healthy Hearing:
Audiology



FUNfitness:
Physical Therapy



Health Promotion:
Health and Wellbeing



MedFest:
Sports Physical
Examinations



Special Smiles:
Dentistry



Fit Feet:
Podiatry

SPECIAL OLYMPICS HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The Special Olympics Healthy Communities initiative expands on the Healthy Athletes program. One-off health checkups are extended into constant care in the lives of Special Olympics athletes and their families.

Building a Special Olympics Healthy Community requires the support of local healthcare professionals, institutions and agencies to offer people with intellectual disabilities continuous, consistent healthcare, in both treatment and education. They provide services to support these health disciplines.

To enable this, medical professionals are trained to increase their knowledge of people with intellectual disabilities, building their willingness to have them as patients in the process. Partnerships are created with related organizations, schools and healthcare providers at the local level to provide follow up care free of charge to Special Olympics athletes.

In the Asia Pacific region, Special Olympics Healthy Communities was launched in 2012 in Malaysia and Thailand, expanding to Australia and Pakistan in 2014.



Photo: UNICEF Thailand

SPECIAL OLYMPICS HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

MALAYSIA

Special Olympics Malaysia launched Special Olympics Healthy Communities in the state of Sabah. It continues to partner with related agencies to advocate good health for people with intellectual disabilities and their families. In 2014, it partnered with Seri Mengasih Centre (SMC), PACOS and Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS).

SMC and PACOS held joint events to inform athletes and their families about “worm infection and the importance of proper hand washing”.

UMS’ medical curriculum will be revised for medical students to include information about people with intellectual disabilities, to understand health problems common in this group. This move aims to train a new generation of healthcare professionals to provide medical care for people with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics Malaysia will also work with UMS’ Faculty of Psychology and Education to research physical mobility of people with intellectual disabilities.

THAILAND

Special Olympics Thailand screened 966 athletes at five locations (Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Phuket, Ubon, and Lopburi). It is also working with the Department of Mental Health to change their Public Health policy to ensure people with ID receive regular healthcare services at the provincial and district levels on a long-term basis. This involves training of medical specialists; and providing resources targeted at families of people with intellectual disabilities, educators, and healthcare personnel.

UNICEF Thailand also supports Special Olympics Healthy Communities, providing Value-in-Kind support for media production of its activities, IT services, apparel, lodging, and meals.

AUSTRALIA

Special Olympics Australia partnered with Australian Hearing Services, Sports Dietitians Australia, as well as its first health ambassador to advocate for athlete health. It also appointed local Special Olympics athlete Kelly Wren as its first Health Advisor representing the Asia Pacific region.

Sport Dietitians Australia reached 675 athletes and 90 family members in five states, through nutrition workshops and health education tips at national games and their training camps, state games, athlete leader advisory group meetings, and family events. It also supported the Special Olympics Australia National Games 2014 with seven dietitians to conduct Health Promotion screenings and provide nutritional advice for athletes.

Australian Hearing Services supported the Special Olympics Australia National Games with full hearing screening services for 350 athletes, including volunteers, equipment, free hearing aids and follow up services for athletes.

PAKISTAN

Special Olympics Pakistan conducted Healthy Hearing screenings in five cities, reaching out to 63 athletes. From this group, 23 athletes were referred to the Ear Rehab Center for specialized care. Special Olympics Pakistan also incorporated Family Health Forums in these events to advocate athlete health, reaching almost 900 family members of people with intellectual disabilities.



TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

YOUTH AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

Special Olympics’ transformative education is building the next ‘Unified Generation’ – one that ends discrimination, advocates inclusion, respect and acceptance for people with intellectual disabilities. As a result, people with intellectual disabilities are valued and respected in their communities, giving them the confidence to achieve their personal bests.

Special Olympics believes that youths can be powerful advocates in leading attitudinal and behavioral change in society towards people with intellectual disabilities – they know first-hand the pain of being left out, teased and excluded. They are open to new thinking and have the courage of conviction to step up and defend their beliefs. They have the potential to change outdated perceptions and influence the communities in which they live and society at large.

Special Olympics collaborates with schools and communities to bring youths with and without intellectual disabilities together through activities. This activity promotes mutual understanding between these two groups, fostering attitudinal and behavioral change, ultimately ensuring that people with intellectual disabilities are not sidelined, marginalized or excluded from society.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS PROJECT UNIFY

Project UNIFY is a school based initiative that brings youths with and without intellectual disabilities together through education, sports and related activities to foster attitudinal and behavioral change for an inclusive school community.

This project, launched in 2011 with Special Olympics Bharat (India), has been a resounding success and will expand to two new countries in 2015: Indonesia and Pakistan. This project has been made possible by the generosity of Stephanie and Ray Lane.

PLAY UNIFIED CAMPAIGN



Special Olympics has a 'Play Unified' marketing campaign aimed at youth around the world, introducing them to Special Olympics, to seek support and encouragement for people with intellectual disabilities.

The campaign aims to mobilize youths to participate in Unified Sports, where people with and without intellectual disabilities play on the same team.

The Special Olympics Red Ball is the campaign's symbol. The bold tone highlights the importance of Special Olympics' mission – changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, offering hope and dignity to this underserved population.

WHITE HOUSE CELEBRATES A 'UNIFIED GENERATION'

US President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle welcomed 24 youths with and without intellectual disabilities from five countries on 1 August 2014 at the White House, to honor Special Olympics' work with young people to fight inactivity, intolerance, and injustice in their schools and communities.

The Asia Pacific region was represented by Neha Naik, Special Olympics Bharat (India) athlete and International Global Messenger; Brina Maxino and Sashi Montana, Special Olympics Philippines' unified partners. They were joined by over 200 guests for the evening, including leading social activists, business leaders, entertainers, sports legends, and members of the United States Congress.



YOUTH LEADERS CREATING A UNIFIED GENERATION



Youths in Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand have been advocating for people with intellectual disabilities to peers in their respective communities. Working together with Special Olympics athlete leaders, they hold activities to create awareness of Special Olympics at school and community levels.

Indonesia: Special Olympics Philippines athlete Kemal Avicenna and youth leader Farhan Aranda reached out to 10 schools in Jakarta and the West Java area, on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. From these schools, they have created Youth activation committees and engaged a total of 300 youths and Special Olympics athletes to help continue their work in Indonesia.

Malaysia: 26 Leo Club Malaysia youth leaders learned facilitation skills to conduct call to action activities, with the aim of promoting respect and inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities in mainstream schools. These leaders will hold call to action activities in Malaysia's Klang Valley area, reaching out to over 400 youths in nine schools, preparing them to advocate for people with intellectual disabilities.

Thailand: Special Olympics Thailand held its first Youth Activation Conference for 40 youths from Rajabhat Songkhla University and Prince of Songkhla University. The conference focused on strategies to educate and motivate youths to advocate for Special Olympics. These youths partnered with Special Olympics Thailand athletes to assist at Opening and Closing ceremonies, and Healthy Athletes® screenings for Special Olympics Thailand's National Games.

Pakistan: Volunteer Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Pakistan used school based activities to engage a total of 1,555 youths and Special Olympics athletes. They held a two day unified camp, using sports activities to build understanding between these two groups. They also conducted awareness opportunities by introducing Special Olympics to a total of 72 mainstream schools and community groups, to help students better understand the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities.

Philippines: Special Olympics Philippines athlete Brina Maxino and youth leader Sashi Montana have reached out to the youth of Philippines, engaging a total of 501 youths and Special Olympics athletes. The pair promoted acceptance and respect through speeches and activities to a total of 14 schools, universities, youth groups and disability centers.



Photo: UNICEF Thailand

COMMUNITY

BUILDING

CREATING COMMUNITIES OF SUPPORT

Special Olympics at its essence is a community-based enterprise. The community is the channel and place where the action happens and where the work of the Special Olympics, on behalf of people with intellectual disabilities, makes a difference.

Whether through building partnerships with relevant stakeholders, mobilizing resources to benefit sports, or health and education programs, Special Olympics strives to create an environment where people with intellectual disabilities are included and accepted in their communities.

Special Olympics has a much wider circle of influence than simply athletes and their families. Working with governments and policymakers worldwide generates enormous potential to shape public attitudes, which in turn affect policy decisions and the way people with intellectual disabilities are treated on a daily basis.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK



11,896
Family Support
Network Members

The Family Support Network's objective is to support families, develop partnerships with community organizations, and train new Family Leaders.

Families of people with intellectual disabilities have the opportunity to mentor, learn and provide resources and emotional support to one another. As an inter-dependent unit, the family benefits when an athlete or child is positively impacted by Special Olympics, cultivating a positive attitude towards the Special Olympics. Families have also stated that they support their child athlete to join Special Olympics because it provides a support system for both parties.

The Network also provides family members with training in sports, coaching advocacy and resource mobilization, empowering them to contribute to the movement as coaches, spokespersons and leaders.

For families, the impact of Special Olympics extends beyond sports. It significantly boosts family members' perceptions of and expectations for their child's future.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE LEADERSHIP

"When given the opportunity, Special Olympics athletes can speak for themselves and provide us with valuable insight into their lives."

Special Olympics Research

Athlete Leadership allows Special Olympics athletes to explore leadership opportunities, beyond sports training and competition.

Through Athlete Leadership, athletes can serve on the Board of Directors or local organizing committees, as a spokesperson or member of an Athlete Input Council. They learn how to speak persuasively, be interviewed by the media, mentor and speak up for other athletes, and voice their opinions on policy and governance.

Athlete Leadership gives athletes ownership to shape the Special Olympics movement and a voice to champion the remarkable transformations Special Olympics brings about for people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ASIA PACIFIC SPEECH AND GOVERNANCE TRAINING



14 Asia Pacific athletes received athlete leadership training in Singapore to equip them with speaking and presentation skills to advocate for Special Olympics to supporters, stakeholders, and the general public. The event was supported by the US Embassy in Singapore.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS SARGENT SHRIVER INTERNATIONAL GLOBAL MESSENGERS



Stephanie Handojo



Chanchai Kemkaew

The International Global Messengers (IGM) program is part of Athlete Leadership, where Special Olympics athletes are appointed to be spokespersons to spread the message and vision of the movement.

Stephanie Handojo (Indonesia) and Chanchai Kemkaew (Thailand) have been appointed as IGMs serving from 2014 to 2018. Both athletes were selected based on their interest in participating as ambassadors for Special Olympics beyond sports and competitions, and their overall leadership skills.

As part of the 12 selected IGMs globally, the pair will speak at the Special Olympics World Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies. They will attend events in their respective countries and throughout the world, advocate for Special Olympics and provide input on the athlete leadership strategy.



BUILDING

CAPABILITIES IN 26 COUNTRIES

As one of the seven regional offices operating under Special Olympics International, the Special Olympics Asia Pacific regional office role is to support countries in the region. We help our countries to reach out and serve more people with intellectual disabilities, improve the effectiveness of our four platforms (sports, health, youths as agents of change, and mobilizing community resources), develop leadership abilities of our country leaders, establish partnerships, and build financial sustainability.

LEADING WITH IMPACT

The Leadership Academy is part of Special Olympics' Global Strategy to develop Movement Leadership, to help Special Olympics Leaders drive the growth of Special Olympics in their country. Special Olympics Asia Pacific was the first region to launch the Leadership Academy in India. The global curriculum was tailored to make it relevant for the attending Asia Pacific countries – both culturally and in the context of the environment in which the Leaders work.





The annual Asia Pacific Leadership Conference equips leaders with capabilities to deliver our initiatives of transforming the lives of people with intellectual disabilities in their country.

Through plenary sessions and breakout discussions, the focus of the conference is for Leaders to learn practical ideas, skills and knowledge, inspiring them to chart future directions for the Movement's growth.

DELIVERING REAL SPORTS EXPERIENCE

Train the Trainer (TTT) programs are designed by Special Olympics International, for coaches to help athletes reach their maximum sport potential. The Asia Pacific office implements this certification course to coaches in the region, enabling them to coach current and new athletes in their countries. Two TTT programs were held in Singapore for Open Water Swimming and Unified Sports (Football and Basketball), reaching 32 coaches from 17 countries.



GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

Special Olympics Cambodia was awarded a grant from USAid to implement sports training and competition opportunities to recruit new coaches and athletes, and set up a Family Support Network for parents of athletes.

To ensure effective utilization of USAid funding, Special Olympics Asia Pacific provided Special Olympics Cambodia staff financial knowledge training to ensure the grant reporting benchmarks are achieved.

TRANSFORMED

LIVES



“Amin’s mental capacity has improved – he listens attentively and processes instructions better.”

Nur Azida Dato Daud
*Acting Deputy President
Special Olympics Kuala Lumpur*

19 year old Amin has Seckel Syndrome, which manifests in low birth weight, smallish physical features (facial and body size) and varying degrees of intellectual disability. Growing up, he was bullied in school for his disability, resulting in low confidence. Often keeping to himself, he lacked friends.

Upon joining Special Olympics Malaysia in 2013, Amin was selected for equestrian sports, having a jockey’s physique. His coaches hoped horse riding would improve his emotional and social well-being, and enhance his sports skills.

Within two years of joining Special Olympics, Amin is on his way to his first international equestrian competition at the 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Los Angeles.

Balance, stability and communication between the horse and rider are key elements to equestrian success. For Amin, who had neither prior riding experience nor exposure to horses, the initial lessons were challenging. Coach Zainal Safri Mohamed recalls, “each time he approached the horse, Amin was nervous – his hands were cold and he was shaking. After he mounted the horse, we had to calm him down.”

His coaches persevered with the training, providing continuous encouragement. To lessen his anxiety, they suggested Amin bond with his horse by taking responsibility to care for it.

Amin immersed himself in the sport, developing a keen interest in horsemanship. His moment of triumph came during the Riding for the Disabled (RDA) Intro Dressage Competition, held at the Malaysia International Horse Show in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. His confidence was apparent in the manner which he handled his horse. He accomplished the dressage test and won 2nd Place. Nur Azida Dato Daud, Acting Deputy President, Kuala Lumpur Chapter of Special Olympics Malaysia adds, “Amin’s mental capacity has improved – he listens attentively and processes instructions better.”

Amin now looks forward to every riding lesson and plans to train hard to win a medal at the 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games.



**“I can.
Just believe
in me.”**

Chris Bunton
Special Olympics Australia

Chris Bunton is a high achiever and he is enjoying success.

At just 22-years of age he has won multiple gold medals for Australia in gymnastics. He is also an actor, volunteer, coach, employee, friend, university student, disability advocate, creative thinker and all-round nice guy.

He just happens to have Down syndrome and is often challenged by people’s low expectations of his ability.

Chris came face-to-face with this when he started kindergarten at a mainstream school where his peers told him “You can’t!”

“You can’t join our team.” “You can’t do that.” “You can’t be our friend.” “You can’t!”

This went on for years before he joined Special Olympics Australia and developed the confidence and courage to say “I can!”

Representing New South Wales at the first-ever Special Olympics Australia Junior National Games in 2004, at the tender age of 12, set him on a road to success.

“Up until this point there were many times when everything seemed impossible for Chris, but after representing his state in gymnastics, things changed and he started to see what was possible,” says mum Halina.

The Junior National Games was the first time Chris had ever been away from his family and when he returned home with a silver medal for his state he realized he had achieved something that many of his peers hadn’t, and his fellow students were suitably impressed.

He was recognized at the school assembly, the school promoted his achievements on the public notice board, he was invited to participate in new activities and most importantly he began to feel like he belonged and being different was OK – because now he was better at something!

As his journey with Special Olympics Australia developed Chris continued to grow physically and mentally stronger and he learnt how to set goals – and achieve them. When he left school this was reflected with great results and lifelong friends.

Chris is now a veteran competitor with Special Olympics Australia and he has a swag of medals. But medals are not his only motivation.

“Special Olympics Australia has let me show my ability, not my disability. It’s helped me make friends, feel strong, be proud and try new things because I can. Just believe in me,” Chris said.

Chris is now employed part-time by Special Olympics Australia while he explores his acting career, continues coaching young gymnasts at the local YMCA and begins studies at Sydney University.



**“Let me win,
but if I cannot
win, let me
be brave in
the attempt.”**

Stephanie Handojo
Special Olympics Indonesia

To Stephanie, the Special Olympics athlete oath is not just a saying – it is a motivation for overcoming her greatest fears.

Stephanie had a near-drowning incident at a swimming competition at the age of nine. The incident traumatized her – she was afraid to venture into the deep end of the pool, even getting sick before competitions. Stephanie’s mother Maria helped her conquer this fear, staying in the water with Stephanie during training, and reassuring her during her protests. It took at least half a year before Stephanie could swim 50 meters independently.

Once Stephanie overcame her fear of the water, her sporting abilities were maximized by regular training with Special Olympics Indonesia. Stephanie started winning local and national competitions, achieving gold in the 50m breaststroke at her first international event, the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece.

From this international triumph, Special Olympics Indonesia saw potential in Stephanie’s abilities and helped her develop other life skills. She was inducted into Athlete Leadership training, where she learned public speaking and leadership skills for her to promote Special Olympics in schools and youth groups.

In 2012, Stephanie was selected to be a torchbearer for the London 2012 Olympics because of her Special Olympics achievements, which have inspired children and young people all over the world.

Stephanie’s accomplishments in Special Olympics brought her community recognition, including accolades from Office of the President of the Indonesian Republic. UNICEF Indonesia also commended her leadership with the “Champion for Children” honor.

“Stephanie is able to achieve so much, thanks in great part to Special Olympics Indonesia, her parents, coaches and the community around her, who have played major roles in giving support and encouragement,” says Dr. Pudji Hastuti, Board Chair of Special Olympics Indonesia.

These experiences have helped Stephanie increase her confidence and conquer her fears. In 2014, Stephanie was appointed a Special Olympics International Global Messenger. From 2014 to 2018, she will travel the world to advocate for Special Olympics at global events.

Stephanie is looking forward to her new role, and will continue to give her personal best at every opportunity.



“I wanted to try sports, to change my life.”

Chanchai Kemkaew
Special Olympics Thailand

“Never Give Up” is Chanchai’s motto in life. Despite his disability, Chanchai has not wavered from his desire to excel. He joined Special Olympics Thailand at 13 years old in 2005, through his schoolteachers.

Chanchai has intellectual disability and mild cerebral palsy – a condition that affects body movement like muscle control, coordination, posture and balance. Chanchai walks with a limp, and has trouble with balance. Whenever he walked, or fell, he was teased by his peers. At that time, he was driven by a desire to develop himself: “I may not be good at many things, but I wanted to try sports, to change my life.”

Special Olympics coaches trained Chanchai in table tennis and football – sports which require footwork and agility. He dedicated himself to improving his physical skills. By 2008, he won medals at the Special Olympics Thailand National Games, and again in 2010. These accomplishments strengthened Chanchai’s confidence to learn new skills.

Building on his sporting success, Chanchai was recruited into Athlete Leadership in 2008, where he learnt leadership skills to advocate for Special Olympics. Chanchai showed great enthusiasm to learn new skills, and with his mentors’ encouragement, thrived in this new role. He spoke about the transformative work of Special Olympics to corporations and supporters, and effectively recruited new athlete leaders for the movement. He also learned coaching skills to guide fellow athletes on the sporting field.

Chanchai also contributes to society through successful employment at Hana Microelectronics PLC as Quality Control staff, checking on finished products.

Special Olympics gave Chanchai the opportunity to thrive and achieve his personal best. Combined with his positive attitude, his sports and leadership success gave him skills for successful employment, and appointment as a Global Messenger in 2014 to advocate for Special Olympics in his country and around the world.



“In the last 10 years, Special Olympics sports has brought Guang Joo out of his shell, equipping him with the social skills to do well in life”

- COACH GABRIEL TAN

Ang Guang Joo
Special Olympics Singapore

As a football player, Guang Joo lets his footwork do the talking, displaying confidence on the field. Quiet off the pitch, he initially did not socialize with his teammates and coach. Guang Joo’s Special Olympics Singapore coach Gabriel Tan recalls: “When I first saw Guang Joo in 2006 playing at his special school, I remember him being a great player, but he was really shy when I spoke to him.”

Gabriel invited Guang Joo to join the Special Olympics Singapore football team. Over the next five years, Guang Joo trained and competed with the same team and coaches, playing in local friendly matches and tournaments. Through his coaches’ guidance, Guang Joo learned not only how to better his football technique, but also the mental focus to keep a positive attitude and be a team player.

In 2011, the team had their first international competition at the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens. Guang Joo rates this experience his top sporting highlight. “I felt our team is stronger, and we played really well. We won Gold, against Chile!” Gabriel also saw Guang Joo mature as a player and person in Athens: “Guang Joo was willing to take up responsibility to encourage his team mates. He rallied the team and even cheered me up when he saw that I was disappointed with the team performance during the Games.”

Guang Joo has also used that mental focus in other parts of life. Since 2008, he has been working as a barista for The Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, transitioning from part time to full time after graduating from school in 2012. He is currently employed at a city-center branch, working eight hour shifts five times a week. Adds branch manager Siti Mariam: “Guang Joo is a very hardworking worker, and we enjoy having him here on the team.”

In the last ten years, the mix of Special Olympics sport opportunities, plus the guidance of his coaches has brought Guang Joo out of his shell, equipping him with the social skills to excel in life. Concludes Gabriel: “What impresses me the most was that he had taken the values that we had imparted on the sporting field to his personal life and living well.”

Guang Joo remains committed to his sports and work, and looks forward to the next football match with his team.



OUR

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A VERY SPECIAL CHRISTMAS



GOLISANO FOUNDATION



Lions Clubs International



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A VERY SPECIAL CHRISTMAS

A Very Special Christmas (AVSC) is the single most successful benefit album in musical history. For the last 27 years, leading singers in the music industry lent their efforts to Special Olympics to create this holiday album series. Sales proceeds from the AVSC albums go to the Special Olympics Christmas Record Trust (CRT).

In 2014, the CRT grant enabled Special Olympics countries in the Asia Pacific region to serve the needs of people with intellectual disabilities through strengthening capabilities in sports training, competitions, outreach, coaching, staff training, and introducing new sports. It also funded the annual Asia Pacific Regional Leadership Conference, for Special Olympics leaders to share practical ideas, skills, and knowledge to chart future directions for the Movement's growth.

FIFA FOOTBALL FOR HOPE

FIFA Football For Hope supported five Pacific Islands (American Samoa, Samoa, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Tonga) in building relationships with their respective National Football Federations, increasing awareness of Special Olympics through football and the number of football playing athletes, coaches, and competitions.



LIONS DISTRICT 308-B1

Lions Clubs of District 308 B1 Malaysia has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Special Olympics Asia Pacific, providing Special Olympics Lions Club International Opening Eyes vision screening and follow up services for people with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics Family Health Forums will also educate families and caregivers of people with intellectual disabilities, and inclusive sports events to reach more youths.



NBA CARES

The NBA's global partnership with Special Olympics spans over 30 years. NBA Cares is the league's global social responsibility program. In 2014, NBA Cares visited Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, where NBA stars ran a skills clinic for Special Olympics athletes.



P&G

P&G continued their valued support in 2014 to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics in Singapore, partnering local supermarket chain NTUC. The theme of the campaign was "Thank You Mom Supports Unified Sports®".



U.S. EMBASSY IN SINGAPORE

The U.S. Embassy in Singapore provides valued support for the Special Olympics Movement in the Asia Pacific region, through funding to expand Special Olympics Unified Sports® in Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Bangladesh, through coach training and competitions. It also supported the Special Olympics Athlete Leadership Program training in Singapore, where 14 Asia Pacific athlete leaders from American Samoa, Brunei, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Serendib, and Singapore learned leadership skills to advocate for the Special Olympics Movement in their respective countries.



ESPN

ESPN is the Global Presenting Sponsor of Special Olympics Unified Sports®, supporting Special Olympics' goal of registering one million Unified Sports participants (Special Olympics athletes and Special Olympics unified partners) globally by 2015.

As the largest country with Special Olympics athletes in the world, Special Olympics Bharat received ESPN's grant to increase Unified Sports® participation in India, and has registered a total of 168,782 athletes and unified partners at the close of 2014. Special Olympics Bharat's success has spurred ESPN to earmark Indonesia and Philippines as potential growth markets for increased participation in Unified Sports.



USAID

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead agency of the U.S. Government for foreign assistance. USAID provided funding support to Special Olympics Cambodia to identify and recruit over 1,000 people with intellectual disabilities, over 100 new coaches, and 250 new family members to join the Special Olympics Movement. The 18 month long project will provide these new athletes from the four provinces of Takeo, Kampong Thom, Battambang and Svay Rieng with regular training and semiannual competitions in athletics, bocce and football.



TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR FOUNDATION

Tottenham Hotspur Foundation (THF) supported Special Olympics Bharat (SO Bharat) by improving the quality of football coaching in India for people with intellectual disabilities.

THF is the first Premier League club selected by Special Olympics for its expertise in delivering high quality training to athletes with all disabilities. The club is a leader in the field of disability football, with over 10 years of experience including a long working relationship with Special Olympics.

More than 2,000 SO Bharat Football coaches will receive training from THF to further train 30,000 athletes across India with intellectual disabilities.



— VALUE IN KIND —

The Local

Since 2012, The Local has partnered with Special Olympics Asia Pacific, providing design and copywriting expertise for its Annual Report.

The Annual Report has been effective in providing a clear understanding of the Special Olympics mission in the Asia Pacific region, enabling current and potential stakeholders to extend their support.

SG Story

SG Story's pro bono support in strategic counsel, media pitching and dissemination of press releases has helped public awareness of Special Olympics Asia Pacific's initiative.

SportsFive

The sports marketing company supported the Special Olympics Unified Sports® 'Train the Trainer' with video production to document the event. SportsFive also ensured the video was broadcast on on Singapore's cable channel SuperSports.

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