



INTERNATIONAL
PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEE

IPC IMPACT STRATEGY

September 2025





CONTENTS

- 3** IPC President's Welcome
- 4** IPC CEO's Introduction
- 5** The IPC
- 6** Executive Summary
- 8** International Landscape
- 9** Defining Impact
- 10** IPC Impact Areas
- 14** Collecting Data

IMPACT - the process of effecting change that is long-lasting, structural or systemic

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Since the IPC's creation in 1989, the organisation has made strong progress in serving members and athletes to advance the Paralympic Movement and showcasing athlete excellence through the delivery of transformational Paralympic Games.

With more than 200 member organisations, athletes excelling around the world, and the Paralympic Games now firmly established as one of the world's biggest sport events, the Paralympic Movement can be rightly proud of what has been achieved to date.

Despite this success, we cannot stop driving for progress.

With the global platform, reputation and influence we have worked hard to

establish, the IPC is now well positioned to use Para sport to do more to improve the lives of the world's 1.3 billion persons with disabilities who remain the planet's biggest marginalised minority.

To truly deliver on our vision *to make for an inclusive world through Para sport*, we need to articulate and expand on the role we play in advancing social change and, through the launch of the IPC Impact Strategy, lead the IPC and Paralympic Movement to the next level.

The IPC has and always will be a membership-based sports organisation. However, it is essential for the sustainable growth of the IPC and our members that we can more clearly demonstrate how the IPC and Paralympic

Movement's services and activities have a tremendous societal impact.

Aligned with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Sustainable Development Goals and with our approach based on the social model of disability, the IPC Impact Strategy has been developed with the purpose of demonstrating how the IPC's activities and services have a global impact in making for a more inclusive world for persons with disabilities.

By being able to better measure and demonstrate the impact of the IPC's activities, we will be able to further support our members and the Para athletes they serve. By partnering with like-minded organisations and

institutions, the IPC will advocate for and work towards focusing global attention on systemic changes required for disability inclusion.

Producing this strategy has taken a great deal of work and I would like to thank our members for their valuable participation and contributions. Without doubt, the IPC Impact Strategy will strengthen the Paralympic Movement at all levels, ensuring it plays an even greater role in advancing the lives of persons with disabilities worldwide.



Andrew Parsons
IPC President





CEO'S INTRODUCTION

Para sport is a powerful tool for advancing disability inclusion. I have personally experienced its power as a two-time Paralympian, where time and again, my experiences on the pitch have led to opportunities that otherwise would not have been afforded to me. As Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), I also have had ample opportunity to witness the power of Para sport play out across different communities, nations and regions. These experiences have led me to conclude, without question, that the collective efforts of the Paralympic Movement make a monumental difference in the lives of many, triggering a transformational societal impact across the globe.

The IPC is a sports organisation first and foremost; Para sport is

what we do. At the same time, our work in Para sport is grounded in the social movement of disability rights, which we embrace through the IPC's vision to make for an inclusive world through Para sport. This social movement requires us all to lean in and contribute, not only because we understand the strength of difference, but because we know that the finish line can be realised only once we live in an equitable world.

In our rigorous pursuit of excellence, and in service to the Paralympic Movement, we have designed the IPC Impact Strategy to be an effective instrument to articulate, lead, create and demonstrate the impact of Para sport within and beyond the Para sport ecosystem.

This strategy marks an evolution of the IPC's approach. While we will

continue to grow and implement programmes that benefit our members and the Para athletes they serve, we also will work to enhance data infrastructure and data collection to better articulate the evidence-base for our collective impact. Doing so will enable us to better measure and mobilise knowledge about the benefits of physical activity and Para sport, and to build a stronger base of empirical evidence that will showcase the power of Para sport to transform lives and bring about equitable opportunities for persons with disabilities, whether on the field of play, or in the classroom, boardroom or concert hall.

In the world of sport, success drives success, is a well-known and time-proven principle. This same principle operates in the IPC Impact

Strategy, an overall ambition of which is to attract additional resources for Para sport by demonstrating its transformative power to stakeholders, partners and public and private decision makers.

In the coming months and years, we look forward to working with our members, strategic partners and stakeholders to bring the IPC Impact Strategy to life. We also look forward to advancing the vision of our founding members, whose convictions about the power of sport and the rights of persons with disabilities still guide us today. If we know anything, we know that Change Starts with Sport.

Dr Mike Peters PLY
IPC Chief Executive Officer

THE IPC

MEMBERSHIP

As a membership-based organisation, the IPC serves its members and athletes to advance the Paralympic Movement. Our membership consists of:

3

**INTERNATIONAL
ORGANISATIONS
OF SPORT FOR THE
DISABLED**

An international organisation recognised by the IPC as the sole worldwide representative of a specific disability group.

5

**REGIONAL
ORGANISATIONS**

A regional organisation recognised by the IPC as the sole regional representative of IPC members located within a specific region.

18

**INTERNATIONAL
FEDERATIONS**

An international sport federation recognised by the IPC as the sole worldwide representative of a specific Para sport on the Paralympic Games sport programme.

185

**NATIONAL PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEES**

A national organisation recognised by the IPC as the sole representative of the Paralympic Movement in the NPC's country or territory.

*Membership number include the three provisional members that will be put forward for approval at the 2025 IPC General Assembly.

VISION

TO MAKE FOR A MORE INCLUSIVE WORLD THROUGH PARA SPORT.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Persons with disabilities continue to be routinely overlooked, ignored and forgotten. Progress in advancing disability rights can only be made if it is prioritised at all levels in all contexts.

Stigmatised and discriminated against throughout history, persons with disabilities - who make up over 15 per cent of the global population - continue to face significant barriers that prevent access to the same opportunities as everyone else.

Challenges include navigating the built environment, and having adequate access to education, healthcare, and social services. As a result, persons with disabilities face far lower rates of education and employment, and much higher rates of physical inactivity, physical and mental health illness, poverty, and poor quality of life.

Access to sport and physical activity are a fundamental right, as described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). And yet, according to the World Health Organization, persons with disabilities are significantly less likely to meet physical activity guidelines compared to those without disabilities. Barriers to sports and physical activity include inaccessible facilities, inaccessible programming, lack of appropriate equipment and discriminatory attitudes.

At the IPC we strongly believe that Change Starts with Sport, and that Para sport serves as a vehicle to drive structural and systemic social change, leading to greater inclusion across all sectors. Para sport reduces the stigma and discrimination associated with disability,

it can empower individuals, transform attitudes, drive mobility and lead to inclusive communities, better employment, health outcomes and stronger economies.

This is why, following over a year of consultation with our members, Para athletes and other key stakeholders, the IPC Impact Strategy has been developed with the aim of establishing how the IPC's and the Paralympic Movement's activities and services have a global impact, making for a more inclusive world for persons with disabilities.

The Impact Strategy will explain what impact means to the IPC, bring members and stakeholders together around this shared purpose, and ultimately provide evidence of the power of Para sport to change communities, nations and societies.

While the IPC will remain first and foremost a sports organisation, the Impact Strategy positions and defines how the IPC as an organisation will also focus on creating social change.

As part of the Impact Strategy, the IPC will strengthen its ability to gather and use empirical evidence to identify and demonstrate the individual, community, and social benefits of increasing participation in Para sport and physical activity opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The IPC will continue to collaborate with its 200 plus member organisations worldwide to implement programmes that support participation in Para sport and physical activity driving social change. In parallel, the IPC will leverage its influence in advancing disability

inclusion through global policy leadership, public and private partnerships, and innovative financial resource streams.

In addition, the Paralympic Movement's most powerful platform is the Paralympic Games. The event generates crucial media and public attention, creates tremendous transformational legacies and highlights - through outstanding sporting performances - what persons with disabilities can achieve at the highest level when unnecessary barriers to success are removed. The Games showcase an inclusive model from which society at large can be designed.

Embarking on this ambitious, complex, interconnected, and challenging endeavour of generating impact at all levels is strengthened when the underlying analysis is

rigorous and systematic. The IPC Impact Strategy is based on a logical theory of change, that carefully considers the sequence of steps necessary to transmit positive change from the realm of Para sport and across the sports ecosystem to the desired long-lasting systemic and structural impact.

This strategy will showcase how the IPC's impact work is based on four interconnected key areas which aim to achieve positive transformational change towards disability inclusion. This strategy is a starting point from which we will learn, adjust and expand on going forward.

INTERNATIONAL LANDSCAPE

GUIDING FRAMEWORKS

The IPC is a sport organisation that is grounded in a social movement aimed at advancing the rights and opportunities of persons with disabilities. The existing global frameworks are essential in defining what we understand by an inclusive world, where no one is left behind.

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) aims to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities.

The CRPD is an instrument that is ratified by UN Member States. It defines disability and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities have the right to enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and identifies where protection of rights must be reinforced.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) overarching objective is to leave no one behind, eradicating poverty in all its forms, ending discrimination and exclusion, and reducing the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind. Persons with disabilities represent 15 percent of the world's population. They make up the largest minority group worldwide, and have been and, still are, subject to marginalisation and systemic exclusion. This makes the goals to ensure full and meaningful participation in society of the utmost importance.

Looking forward, beyond Agenda 2030, it will be critical that persons with disabilities are represented in defining the way forward, and that barriers are addressed in a directed way. No single goal can cover the complexities of disability, and rather the lens must be applied systematically across to achieve greater equality and equity for all.



SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

Historically, the concept of disability has been understood through a medical model focusing on the diagnosis or impairment, locating and equating the problem at the individual level as subject to medication or as a problem to be “fixed”. This antiquated model has gradually been replaced by the social model, which views disability as a result of societal barriers rather than individual impairments. The social model emphasises that persons are disabled by obstacles such as inaccessible services, environmental barriers, and societal prejudices, rather than by their impairments alone. The shift from the medical to the social model involves locating the problem at the structural and systemic level rather than with the individual.

DEFINING IMPACT

The IPC understands impact as the process of effecting change that is long-lasting, structural or systemic.

For the Paralympic Movement, this means that providing Para sport opportunities at all levels will act as a catalyst – not only delivering immediate personal benefits but also creating knock-on effects that extend to communities and society. Going forward, the IPC will use impact to refer to long-term social change. This recognises that both the long-term outcomes and the contributions to the process both generate impact - in other words, both the steps along the way and the broader change they collectively create.

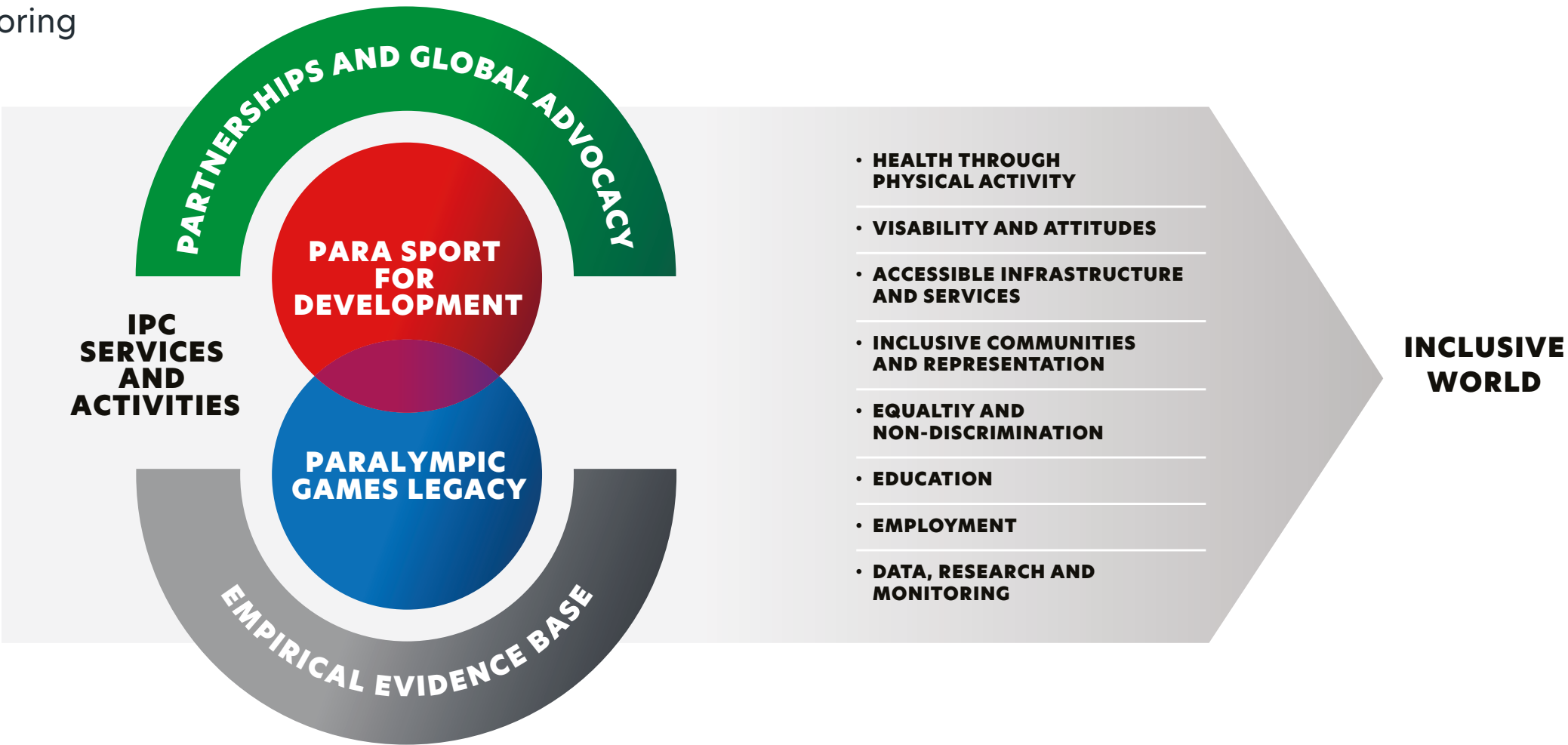
The transformational societal developments and changes – both tangible and intangible – that the IPC aims to influence for persons with disabilities are:

- Improving health through Para sport and physical activity
- Increasing visibility and changing attitudes
- Improving accessibility of infrastructure and services
- Advancing inclusive communities and representation

- Advancing equality and non-discrimination
- Enhancing skills and access to physical education
- Improving meaningful employment outcomes
- Strengthening data, research and monitoring

These long-term social impacts are vital for an inclusive world and the IPC's contribution will be through the four interconnected impact areas which are:

- Para sport for development
- Paralympic Games legacy
- Partnerships and global advocacy
- Empirical evidence base



IPC IMPACT AREAS

PARA SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE

Increase opportunities for persons with disabilities to engage in Para sport and physical activity at all levels and in all contexts.

HOW

Working with our members, the IPC will provide services and programmes that empower, equip and enable persons with disabilities to engage in Para sport and physical activity with a focus on supporting the Para athlete pathway, developing leaders, and increasing participation.

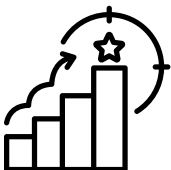
TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS

- Children, youth and adults with disabilities
- IPC member organisations
- Sports programme providers
- Primary caregivers
- Teachers
- Healthcare professionals



SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Individuals taking part in Para sport and physical activity improve their physical health and mental well-being, increase self-reliance and independence, develop self-identity and physical literacy, and improve their social competencies and network, benefitting the individual and local community.



LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The immediate individual and community benefits drive, over time, life skills that are transferrable and can lead to education, occupation and employment opportunities. In addition, communities can experience benefits, such as increased labour skills, greater productivity, and reduced health and social care costs. These longer-term outcomes also require that unnecessary barriers (such as stigma and access) are actively reduced and removed.

IN PRACTICE

The IPC Development Model, implemented with 11 National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) in the Americas, has supported national and community-level efforts to grow Para sport by training over 2,000 local leaders, reaching 41 vulnerable communities, and enabling over 800 Para athletes to access regular training. The model combines national planning and training, local leadership, recruitment, awareness and community engagement through Para sport festivals.

“ From our perspective, one of the key goals toward achieving an inclusive world for persons with disabilities is creating equitable access to sports and physical activities at all levels, from grassroots to elite competitions. Sport is a powerful tool for inclusion—it fosters self-confidence, builds communities, and breaks down societal barriers” (IPC Member input)

IPC IMPACT AREAS



OBJECTIVE

Deliver transformational Paralympic Games as a global platform to showcase sporting excellence, challenge stigma, and promote disability inclusion, leaving tangible and intangible legacies in host cities, countries and beyond.

HOW

The IPC will work with Organising Committees to plan and deliver accessible and inclusive spaces and services for all client groups attending the Games. Organising Committees will be required to develop context relevant Disability Inclusion Action Plans that accelerate and initiate national policy changes, and investments in disability inclusion, including access to Para sport. The IPC will also maximise global broadcast and media coverage of the Games to produce role models and challenge stigma and societal perceptions.

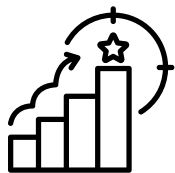
TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS

- Global audiences with and without disabilities
- Host governments and policymakers
- Organising committees and delivery partners
- Sports community
- Private sector



SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Planning for and delivering the Paralympic Games increases access to Para sport, and triggers policy change and investments in disability inclusion, including in infrastructure and tourism. Representation of persons with disabilities is improved in organisations associated with the Games. The Paralympic Games serve as a model where universal design and disability-inclusive ideals come to life.



LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The legacy of the Paralympic Games increases awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities on a global scale; improves accessibility, including in public infrastructure; increases investment and policy reforms supporting disability inclusion.

IN PRACTICE

The legacy of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games includes major investments at the city, region and national level to enhance accessibility, including sports facilities, public transport, and inclusive policy changes such as reduced VAT on adaptive equipment and expanded inclusive education. Across the country, the Club Inclusif programme has expanded opportunities for children and youth with disabilities to be physically active.

“It's critical to use Paralympic sport as a powerful vehicle to visibly model what systems and structures founded on the principles of universal, inclusive, and accessible design can look like - and the positive social impact they can have for all people.” (IPC Member input)

IPC IMPACT AREAS

PARTNERSHIPS AND GLOBAL ADVOCACY

OBJECTIVE

Develop strategic partnerships that enhance global advocacy for disability inclusion, promote and support implementation of policy change at the national and international level, and drive investment in Para sport, physical activity and disability inclusion.

HOW

Leveraging UN agency partnerships and other multilateral organisations and platforms, the IPC will advance national implementation of effective Para sport and physical activity interventions, policies and frameworks including by providing evidence of the societal impact of Para sport and physical activity. The IPC will also promote public and private investments in Para sport and physical activity.

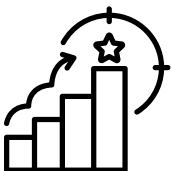
TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS

- Multilateral organisations (including UN Agencies)
- Governments
- Governmental agencies
- Non-governmental organisations
- Private sector partners
- IPC members
- Disability inclusion advocacy groups



SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

International strategic partnerships will enhance global standards, promote best-practices, and increase opportunities for public and private investment in Para sport and physical activity.



LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Partnerships and global advocacy will contribute towards policy changes at the national level. Applying best practice examples and policy guidance to support and facilitate the work undertaken by NPCs will result in improved recognition of Para sport, increased support for Para athletes, and enhanced rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities. In addition, the IPC aims to increase investment into the Para sport sector by educating governments about its positive societal impact and engaging private sector partners to contribute to the wider Para sport ecosystem.

IN PRACTICE

On the eve of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, the IPC and UNESCO brought together international decision-makers to draw up a [roadmap](#) to increase the inclusion of persons with disabilities in sport and across all areas of society, with key policy recommendations on access, infrastructure, inclusive education, media inclusion, and disability-specific data collection.

“ We say we are a sport organisation, but our athletes live 18 hours a day not being sports people. Transport, health systems, employment have an impact on Paralympians. So that is our license to speak out on other topics” (IPC Member input)

IPC IMPACT AREAS

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE BASE

OBJECTIVE

Improve data collection, analysis and research of Para sport and advance advocacy for better international and national data infrastructure to credibly showcase the impact effects of the IPC and Paralympic Movement activities.

HOW

The IPC will better inform members, policy and decision-makers on Para sport’s direct and indirect benefits at an individual and community level by gathering and sharing empirical research and data with involvement from academic institutions. The IPC will advocate for the construction and enhancement of foundational data infrastructure, in particular the collection of disaggregated data on disability, whether in international assessments, national activity, or in local interventions and projects.

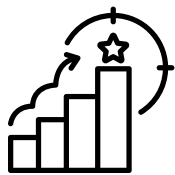
TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS

- IPC members
- Multi-lateral organisations
- Academic researchers
- Programme implementers (NGOs)
- Funding bodies
- Government policy



SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Better empirical data will enable the IPC, Paralympic Movement and stakeholders to conduct impact evaluations of national and local interventions. This will facilitate informed decision-making to address prevalent challenges of stigma, barriers to participation as well as low physical activity levels.



LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Basic data and information on physical activity levels for persons with disabilities will provide evidence and validate effectiveness of programmes, projects and interventions to better inform policy and programme decisions. The IPC aims to provide members and policy makers with evidence that Para sport and physical activity are a cost-effective investment to justify policy changes and resource allocations.

IN PRACTICE

To advance the fourth impact area of the IPC’s impact strategy – demonstrating the individual, community and societal benefits of Para sport through data and evidence – the IPC will initiate a coordinated effort to build a credible and globally relevant empirical evidence base. It will focus on quantifying the broader impact and benefits of increasing physical activity levels among persons with disabilities.

“Expanding and refining its [IPC's] service areas can further empower stakeholders to enhance the impact of Para Sport. [...] new IPC services could provide value by facilitating knowledge transfer and resource-sharing platforms to ensure smaller NPCs can access best practices and support.” (IPC Member input)

COLLECTING DATA - LET'S GET STARTED!

Implementing the IPC Impact Strategy is going to require a team effort, including data from many different people and places. Included below are examples for both members and the research community so we can advance the availability of disability-specific data together.

BASELINES FOR BENCHMARKING

Currently, data on persons with disabilities (PWD) is fragmented, inconsistent, and often non-existent. To be able to motivate and advocate for actions and policy-change, the IPC will work with members to better define, measure and collect data.

The first step is to set baselines to be able to document and demonstrate the impact of our actions. The IPC will support and encourage all members to collect basic data in their jurisdiction including on the following examples as listed in the table below.

KEY DATA POINTS FROM MEMBERS

- NPC granted the same legal status and recognition as the NOC within national legislation, (Y/N)
- % of total national sport funding dedicated to Para sport
- # of PWD trying Para sport
- # of Para athletes nationally classified
- # of national licensed Para athletes
- # of trained national Para sport coaches

BUILDING A POSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE RESEARCH CULTURE

Persons with disabilities or their organisations must be involved throughout the research process to enhance useability and for research to truly reflect the needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities.

IPC encourages researchers, academics and institutions to collect data, like the examples below. Together, let's improve the collection of standardised data on persons with disabilities.

KEY DATA POINTS FROM RESEARCHERS

- % of persons with disabilities (PWD) who meet the WHO physical activity recommendations
- % of PWD self-report: increased self-esteem, independence as effect of physical activity and sport (PAS)
- % of PWD self-report: reduced care needs as effect of PAS
- # accessible Para sport clubs and venues, and as % of total # sport clubs and venues
- # of curricula required hours of quality physical education in public schools for children and adolescents with disabilities.
- National physical activity policy or plan for PWD ratified (Y/N)
- % difference in education levels between mainstream pop. and PWD
- % difference in employment rates between mainstream pop. and PWD



INTERNATIONAL
PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEE

WORLDWIDE PARALYMPIC PARTNERS



Dahlmannstraße 2, 53113 Bonn, Germany
Tel. +49 228 2097-200
info@paralympic.org, www.paralympic.org

© 2025 International Paralympic Committee - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

PHOTO CREDITS:

© Front cover: Joséphine Brueder/Ville de Paris, Ayano Shimizu/IPC, Agitos Foundation, P3: GettyImages,
P2: Steph Chambers, P4: Ralf Kuckuck, P5: John Hurd, Back cover: Glenn Gervot, Amos Gumulira

