



# The future of Special Olympics in New Zealand

A REPORT FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS NZ



## Why explore the future?

Special Olympics NZ (SONZ) is interested in how it might best position itself to be fit for purpose and sustainable into the future. Its Board and senior management are conscious of the rapid speed of change occurring across society, and how this will impact the environment in which it works.

Therefore, it agreed to partner with Sport NZ to explore possible and plausible futures that may play out, to enable it to test its strategy through understanding the long-term issues and challenges shaping the future.

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The process was designed to:

- identify and test the assumptions held by SONZ that are influencing how the strategic issues are being considered, and to allow those assumptions to be updated as the world changes.
- explore beyond the assumed future to consider a much wider range of possible contexts in which SONZ's strategy may be operating.
- generate new insights into possible future developments so SONZ can take account of them in the way it frames its strategy and be in a better position to assess the wider context and consider the inevitable uncertainties and ambiguities of the future.
- Push the strategic conversation to consider novel ideas to enable a level of anticipation, and therefore preparation, for the inevitable surprises that SONZ will encounter.
- reduce risk by developing strategy that is more resilient to changing conditions and takes advantage of new opportunities.

This document summarises the SONZ strategic foresight conversation from the development of an initial baseline perspective to the elaboration of four potential scenarios.

This involved two facilitated workshops involving the SONZ Board and senior management.





## What SONZ thinks will happen in the future

Ahead of the first workshop, a seven questions approach<sup>1</sup> was completed by a cross-section of SONZ Board and senior staff. These questions are designed to draw out a common understanding of perceived opportunities, threats and aspirations for the future (baseline future).

Baseline future (as identified by SONZ)

- It is anticipated there will be an increasing demand for Special Olympic sports. The demand will continue to outstrip the resources available given society's focus on the importance of sport and recreation opportunities.
- This focus stems from the belief that being physically active contributes to individuals' wellbeing in addition to improving cognitive clarity, independence and an improved sense of belonging. Sport and recreation will continue to be critical for wider community wellbeing and all New Zealanders will have access to appropriate facilities and networks. The ways people engage in sport and physical activity – and the types they engage with – will not fundamentally change.
- The funding models to support these programmes are not anticipated to change, with resources primarily available through existing / traditional institutions.
- However, people will increasingly want different ways to engage in sport and recreational activity and demand for less structured physical activity is likely to continue.

Issues that might disrupt the baseline future (as identified by SONZ)

- There may be a decline in interest in sport and recreation as other pursuits emerge to engage attention. E-sports could capture some of this attention.
- In the face of seemingly more pressing issues (e.g. global conflict, climate) sport and recreation will no longer be considered as important to the support of physical and mental wellbeing and cognitive development.
- Even if it is regarded a priority, a new financial crisis in line with 1929 or 1987 could restrain funding for the Sport and Recreation sector. Even without such an external shock, funding models could change and alter present revenue streams.
- The impacts of the pandemic may continue to impact our community over a long period of time with at present unforeseen implications.
- New providers may emerge to support people with intellectual disabilities more effectively. This may alter the nature of partnerships and funding arrangements.
- The evolution of social media may increase levels of debate and outright disinformation that obscure society's focus on mental and physical wellbeing and undermines the social licence of organisations in the sector.

<sup>1</sup> 7 Questions is an interview technique for gathering the strategic insights of a range stakeholders.



## Moving beyond assumed future

The previous assumed future is a collection of predictions of the future context within which the SONZ strategy will be pursued. The quick discussion within the workshop immediately highlighted the potential alternatives that could emerge to influence the strategic environment. This underlines the need for the move away from prediction to instead consider the most useful questions. A couple emerged in the baseline future discussion including:

- To what extent do plans assume all New Zealanders have access to sport and recreation, when we know they don't?
- How will the Young Athletes Programme influence our direction in 10 - 20 years' time as those athletes come through the system?

The 7-question survey highlighted:

- Concerns for the long health of the club network.
- The need to ensure athletes continue to be supported.
- That expansion and development do not come at the expense of existing services.
- The need to upskill and invest in staff to ensure retention.
- The opportunity to expand partnerships.
- The criticality of retaining robust funding models.

(Full responses are provided in Appendix 1)

These responses are unlikely to surprise those engaged within SONZ and are likely to form the basis of current strategy. However, no single future can be assumed, and therefore an exploration of how respective scenarios may challenge these elements leads to more robust strategic dialogue. Developing these scenario narratives can be achieved through the combination of uncertain disruptors to form stories of the future.



## What experts think will happen in the future – disruptors

The following future disruptors were highlighted as potentially the most impactful for SONZ.

<b>An ageing society</b>	The NZ population continues to age, with rural communities facing acute changes that have implications for Local and Central Government finance and wider employment.
<b>Economic context</b>	Domestic economic development and the health of the global trade system.
<b>Changing nature of work</b>	The pandemic has accelerated work-place change which was already underway through increased automation and changing demographics. This has implications for how time is structured and used. More time for volunteering?
<b>Primary health conditions</b>	Trends in chronic morbidities that rising physical health issues associated with lifestyle patterns and financial stress.
<b>(Bi) cultural understanding</b>	Aotearoa/New Zealand's future development aligned with the aspirations of future generations based on Te Tiriti.
<b>eSports adoption</b>	The growth of online sports as both participant and spectator activities. Will it complement or detract from physical activity?
<b>Human augmentation</b>	The emergence of new wearables and soft robotics technologies opens up the potential for greater participation from those who may have physical impairments.
<b>Facility and space access</b>	Trends in urban land use may change, either positively or negatively, the availability of suitable sport and recreation venues.
<b>Data availability/ubiquity</b>	The emergence of health/performance monitoring wearables etc. will demand increased need for effective data management and associated privacy considerations.
<b>Climate change impacts</b>	Impacts both on (e.g. playing surface inundation) and off (e.g., travel / living disruptions) the pitch.
<b>Sustainability demands</b>	Heightening awareness of ecological fragility is likely to place increasing demands on organisations to adapt their activities to minimise harm.
<b>Levels of mobility</b>	The broader development of sport is reliant both on the availability, ease and cost of post-pandemic travel.
<b>Social media</b>	The dominance of social media platforms for community discussion with attendant challenges of common understanding, information sharing, privacy and inclusion.

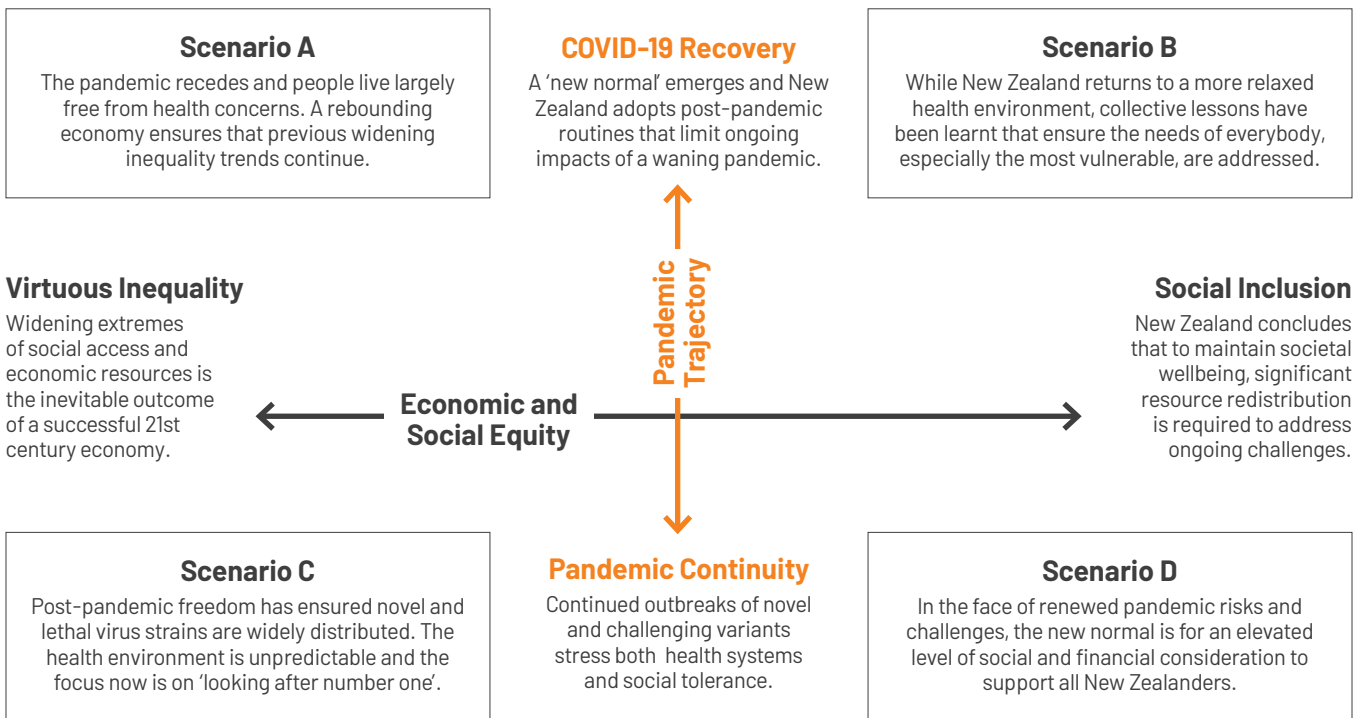
Following a group discussion and ranking exercise, economic and social disparity and pandemic recovery were the drivers chosen to develop several future scenarios. They were qualitatively chosen based on potentially high impact and uncertainty.

<b>Economic and social disparity</b>	Trends in individuals abilities to participate in wider society through inclusion and economic capacity.
<b>Pandemic recovery</b>	The trajectory of the pandemic over the medium term with attendant issues of social distancing; event disruption; social trust.

It was noted that this selection is not strictly definitive as a number of these drivers will come into play through the future. Taking two that have greater levels of uncertainty ensures greater distinction between the scenarios and enables the others to be considered in different contexts.

## Alternative futures

To identify possible and plausible alternative futures for SONZ, four scenarios were created based on the opposite of two uncertainties playing out – pandemic trajectory and economic and social equity. It should be noted that they will likely not happen exactly as described but provide an opportunity to explore a plausible strategic context that could be encountered. The aim is to use them as prompts to highlight what may need to be considered over the coming period.



The full narratives for each scenario are provided in Appendix 2.

While reviewing the narratives it is useful to hold the following questions in mind:

- How would the SONZ strategy fare if the scenario eventuated?
- What implications does this have for athletes, staff and volunteers?
- What steps could SONZ take to develop greater resilience to the challenges?
- How can we work to support the development of the more positive outcomes?
- What actions could SONZ take to ensure its plans are effective across multiple scenarios and not predicated on one?

It's also worth considering how the other drivers noted may play out in these contexts. For example, "how would SONZ athletes' ability to travel be impacted in the given scenario?".

**Overall, the aim is not to judge whether the scenario will occur, but to consider what SONZ would do if it did.**

## Using the scenarios to anticipate the future

Thinking in scenarios enabled SONZ to consider different strategic contexts and anticipate some of the elements to be considered if the future evolves in different ways.

To do this, the group was split into four with each assigned a scenario to address with the following questions:

- What are the key implications for SONZ if this eventuates?
- What is the biggest risk / opportunity this presents?
- What capabilities would SONZ need to mitigate / take advantage?
- Do you regard the scenario as more or less plausible? What assumption supports your view?

The teams also gave each scenario a name to reflect what they perceived as the key essence of the narrative.

## Scenario A: Trump

The pandemic recedes, and people live largely free from health concerns. A rebounding economy ensures that previous widening inequality trends continue.

### Key Implications

- Vulnerable communities would be placed at greater risk, with athlete wellbeing and health deteriorating
- “The village is breaking down (not being inclusive)”. There’s pressure to be “on the right side of the ledger”
- Both lower athlete participation and volunteer support can be anticipated
- The connection with athletes and families would deteriorate, and communication channels potentially break down
- There would be pressure to identify new funding streams to support at risk communities
- In an environment where ‘the rich get richer’ – SONZ could act as the vehicle to redistribute wealth, gaining donor funding to support athletes

### Biggest Risk / Opportunity

- Funding would be critical with money from traditional sources (e.g. gaming trust, Sport NZ) under pressure or even stopping
- The opportunity is to secure high net-worth donors to continue to underpin the SONZ programme
- A critical focus would be athlete health, with the need both to directly address these issues and shine the spotlight on them to secure support

### Necessary Capabilities

- SONZ would need to have both a well-connected and high-powered leadership group
- It would underscore the need for an effective communications strategy and connection with key stakeholders (athletes, donors etc.)
- Bottom line would be the need to continually secure funding

### Plausibility

The team assessed that recent political history increased the plausibility of this scenario.

## Scenario B: Utopia

While New Zealand returns to a more relaxed health environment, collective lessons have been learnt that ensure the needs of everybody, especially the most vulnerable, are addressed.

### Key Implications

- Funding channels are more abundant and generous
- There are fewer barriers to inclusion for athletes both in and outside sport
- A reduced stigma around ID enables greater reach into the community. There's a positive perception of being a SO athlete
- Awareness of SONZ grows to the extent it becomes a desirable brand to be aligned with
- Wellbeing improves exponentially as families and communities are well supported and engaged.

### Biggest Risk / Opportunity

- The sector's ability to effectively scale to meet demand and provide a positive experience
- It would unlock the greater resources needed to grow athlete numbers
- Greater profile would ensure relevance to advocate for our community beyond sport
- Competitors would naturally be drawn to SO as it becomes more desirable

### Necessary Capabilities

- Marketing and acquisition skills to reach an expanding number of athletes
- Effective relationships with approved delivery partners to meet the expanding need
- Being open to restructuring the organisation to ensure orientation around the athlete and many ways that they need support
- Beyond competition. The need to adopt a cooperative/ partnership approach to serve the community in an advocacy/leadership role. This would ensure quality and standards are delivered to the community and a greater range of experiences offered to cater to the broader range of members
- Optimisation of business processes and systems to support the increase in services. This would be particularly important with respect to volunteer recruitment and training.

### Plausibility

- The requirements of most corporate organisations for a defined return on investment to sponsor/partner, suggests the 'utopian' name.
- There appears limited appetite for sponsors to 'do the right thing' suggesting it is likely implausible.
- Many SO families are on the wrong side of an increasing economic divide

The wider social trend toward individualism and rise of misinformation appear heading in the wrong direction for this scenario to eventuate.



## Scenario C: Dark Reign

Post-pandemic freedom has ensured novel and lethal virus strains are widely distributed. The health environment is unpredictable, and the focus now is on 'looking after number one'.

### Key Implications

- Recurrent pandemic conditions would increase isolation between athletes and coach
- Transport would again be a big factor as many athletes are not drivers
- Well-being and mental health would be under pressure across the community
- Volunteer stress would increase
- It would raise the need to adapt and use other forms of delivery

### Biggest Risk / Opportunity

- Lack of resources as budgets came under pressure
- Athletes would miss out and be overlooked
- Connection via remote forms (e.g. social media) would increase in importance
- SONZ would have a key role to be a strong voice lobbying for better outcomes for the community

### Necessary Capabilities

- An expansion of SONZ capabilities and capacity to lobby effectively
- The placing of greater emphasis on partnerships to benefit athletes

### Plausibility

- The team assessed this to be finely balanced – it may, or may not, eventuate.
- The lessons from previous lockdowns and sense of community would suggest that it can be avoided. However, ongoing pressure on the health system and economic constraint could see such a scenario come about.

## Scenario D: **Benign Withdrawal**

In the face of renewed pandemic risks and challenges, the new normal is for an elevated level of social and financial consideration to support all New Zealanders.

### **Key Implications**

- The need for greater brand recognition to ensure SO community needs are not overlooked
- Having to adapt to the way we think that online participation should be welcomed. Digital platforms (gaming / eSports) may have a role
- It's anticipated that polarisation rather than inclusion will be a challenge with consequent loss of participation

### **Biggest Risk / Opportunity**

- Greater use of technology in general population enabling greater opportunity for connection and communication
- Continued polarisation will remain a challenge
- There is a role for co-design approaches to ensure inclusion and effective programmes

### **Necessary Capabilities**

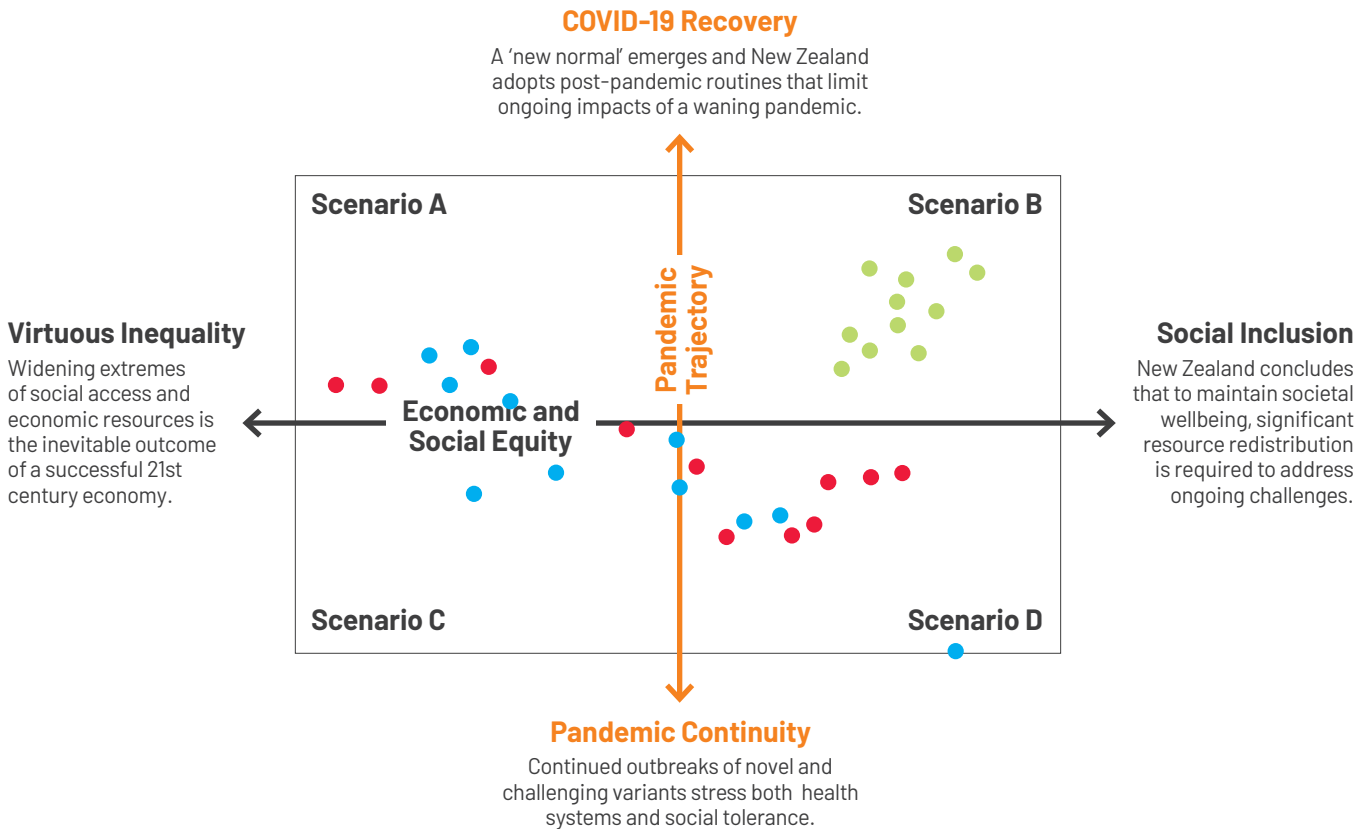
- Ensuring high trust is retained and developed
- Smart messaging/communication will be critical
- Co-design capabilities that include a diverse stakeholder base

### **Plausibility**

- Current societal trends, the rise in working from home, and the continued proliferation of digital devices all point to this being a plausible future.

# Scenario Outlook

Participants identified the most preferred scenario (green), the scenario most reflected in the present (blue), and what they believe to be the most likely future (red).



The scenario outlook exercise is qualitative and biased by the group perspective but is a useful mirror for reflection.

- The highly aligned preferred future is reflective of the team’s values but acknowledged as unlikely to occur. That said, a useful question for SONZ is *to what extent does a considered action align to this ideal, or does it need to reflect an alternate reality?*
- There is a reasonable spread of views that the present is reflected across three different scenarios. This highlights that perceptions of the current context within the group are not clear-cut and reflect significant levels of ambiguity. This is healthy as it implies a spread of perspectives that can be explored with ongoing critique of assumptions.

There is more consensus on where it is believed the future context lies (scenario D) that may prompt a greater exploration of the questions raised by this scenario and also the reference points / data that may suggest its emergence (or otherwise).

The scenarios provide a link between the developing New Zealand environment and the strategic conversation within SONZ. Having reflected upon them, and the strategic questions they prompt, it is useful to consider what early indicators point to their emergence.

What indicators could be monitored to assess whether NZ is moving closer to a Scenario C world or Scenario B? How might these be measured? Here are some possibilities:

- What are the trends emerging for levels of inequality?
- Are there social attitudinal measures that point in a particular direction?
- What is the direction of travel for economic policy – is it more social support or austerity?
- What will we look out for with new variants of virus that will determine the broader health context?
- Do we have any assessment of the psycho-social impact of the pandemic on the Special Olympics community? Can we assess their response to risk over time and levels of mental wellbeing?



## The Preferred Future

Given the consideration of the range of future possibilities, a fundamental question remains:

### What future does SONZ wish to make happen?

Elements of this were covered in responses to the 7Q inquiry and included:

- Clear pathways from school to a strong club network.
- Financial sustainability
- Solid foundations to offer to all.
- Visibility across the wider community.

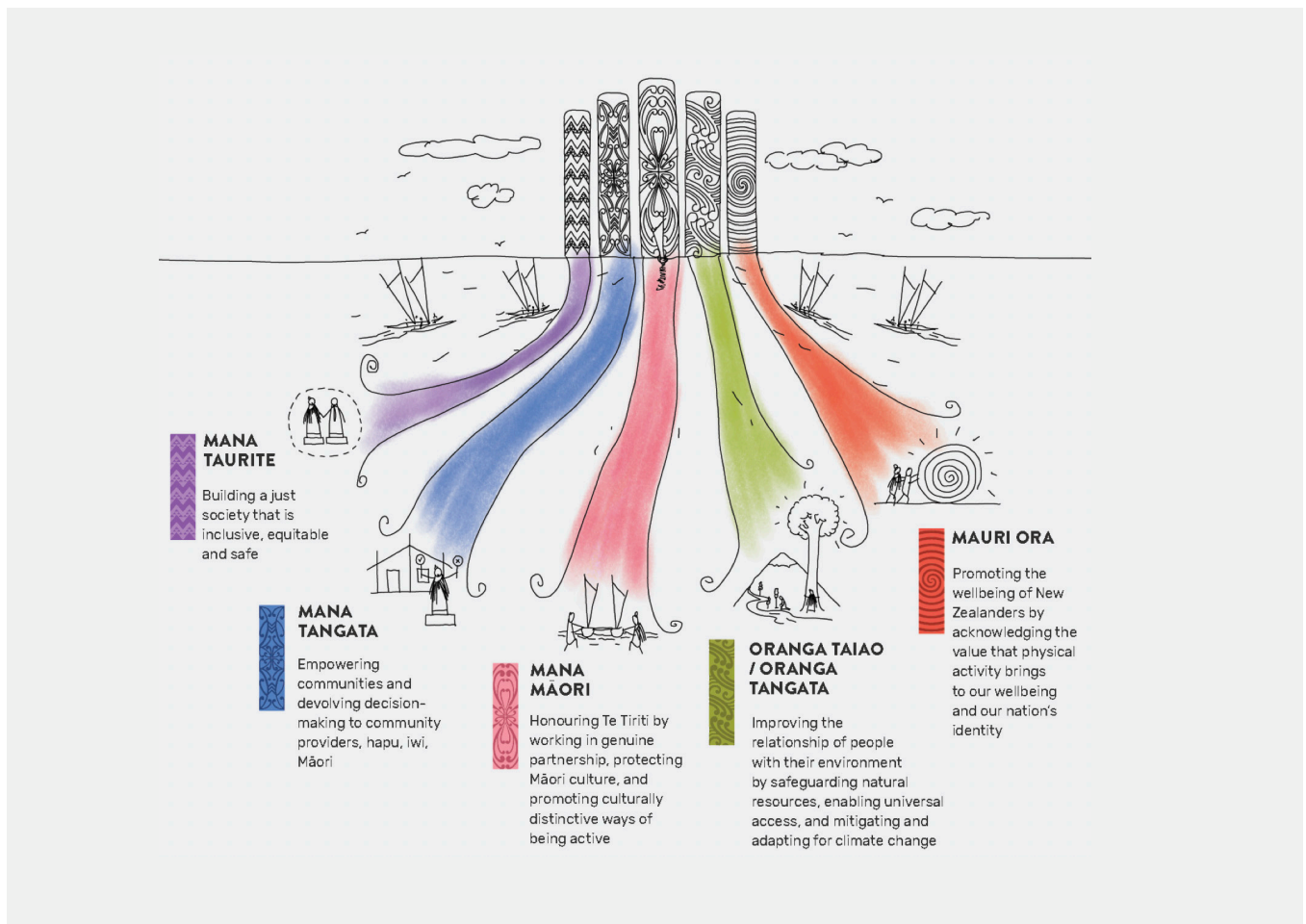
SONZ has a vision – people with intellectual disabilities in Aotearoa are valued.

An elaborated vision of SONZ's preferred future can then also be gauged against the changing external context represented either by the scenarios above, or additional trend analysis of specific areas.

Understanding how these fit within the broader context may also lead to discussions around SONZ's strategic objectives and the extent to which it wishes to influence wider discussions and developments that impact the lives of Special Olympic athletes.

### Sector's preferred future

Sport NZ, in conjunction with the wider sector, has developed a preferred future that guides its decisions and approaches and is offered as an exemplar.



SONZ has an obvious alignment with the 'Just Society' and 'Wellbeing' pou.

## Summary of Action Areas for SONZ

The scenarios highlighted a number of key action areas SONZ may consider in extending its strategic plan beyond the current 2025 timeframe. When prioritising / developing the plans, it is worth reflecting their potential to have the greatest impact across multiple futures.

### Mitigate Challenges

- Broadening brand awareness to ensure SONZ's mission is widely appreciated.
- Establishing brand premium to increase the number of organisations who are keen to support.
- Co-Creation capabilities to ensure new programmes align with changing athlete and community needs and attract new participants (especially women).
- Developing effective advocacy to lift the community profile and secure access to resources.
- Ensuring high trust to maintain the cohesion of the network and minimise disinformation.
- Understand and engage eSports as potential platform to engage athletes in both offline and online venues.
- Drawing on the International experience of the SONZ network to understand how other national networks have tackled similar opportunities and challenges.
- Developing SONZ digital and social media capability to enhance communication and strengthen the community network.

### Capitalise on Opportunity

- Develop an approach to identify key contacts / influencers that may support
  - Philanthropic funding
  - SONZ as a vehicle for advocacy
- Identification of potential partners to provide athlete services. This could support wider athlete empowerment (e.g. transport, web access)
- Develop understanding of organisations' respective environmental, social and corporate governance initiatives and the potential for SONZ to become a part of their programmes.
- Explore the role of unified sports as a way to expand athlete opportunity
- Focus on strengthening the club network with appropriate resources and tools

## Ongoing futures focus for SONZ board

### Ongoing Assumptions

The process of evaluating the future strategic context is ongoing. Regularly surfacing and non-judgementally assessing underpinning assumptions is a critical element of this. For example, the team highlighted the assumption that SONZ is perceived as a self-evident good. This may not be shared by potential partners, funders, but in identifying what substantiates this assumption it may be possible to develop a stronger communication profile to widen the perception of the sector.

Appendix 3 provides an example of assumptions that the SONZ Board could adapt for monitoring on a six-monthly basis.

### Metrics to Track

Tracking the changing SONZ's operating context is an ongoing task to assess whether the anticipated challenges and opportunities are more/or less likely to eventuate. Given the nature of the scenarios explored, and the deep levels of uncertainties they represent, the SONZ team may consider a limited set of metrics that provide pointers to what the future may hold. These could include:

- The GINI index to measure levels and direction of NZ inequality
- Global pandemic trends to highlight emergent issues like the Covid outbreak
- Changing demographic profiles to highlight impacts on volunteer communities
- Comparative funding – to underpin the business case for additional resources
- Levels of women participation to track gender balance and inclusion
- Inflation and other economic indicators to assess the financial pressure on communities

Appendix 4 provides an example of how the SONZ Board might monitor its operating context.







### Looking at your internal systems, how might these need to be changed to help bring about the outcomes you desire?

- “Succession planning for staff”
- “Better communications with Clubs”
- “Consideration of delivery model.”
- “Up-skill/invest more in staff.
- “Consideration of how technology could support engagement”.
- “Identify the barriers to engagement with mainstream sport.”
- “Further streamlining/centralisation and technological efficiencies.”



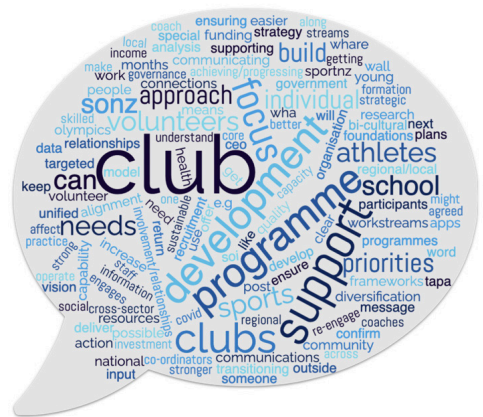
### Looking back, what would you identify as the significant events which have resulted in Special Olympics being in its current situation?

- “New CEO and Board”
- “Covid and some regions having to change how they do things”
- Previous “Long periods of a ‘status quo/this is the way we’ve always done it’ mentality”
- “...a lack of belief that we belong in the wider sporting space and aspiration has been limited”



### Looking forward, what do you see as the priority actions which Special Olympics NZ should carry out soon?

- “clear, core priorities and work-streams”
- “Volunteer and club recruitment and development.”
- “Formation of cross-sector relationships”
- “Diversification of income...government funding streams outside of Sport NZ.”
- “Re-engage all participants across SONZ programmes (post covid)”



### If all constraints were removed and you could direct what is done, what more would you wish to include?

- “Double the number of Regional Support staff”
- “Income streams with corporate world that would allow some certainty of planning”
- “Provision of a greater variety of sport and physical activity opportunities”
- “focus on all aspects of inclusion in society for our athletes”
- “better connections between programmes”
- “more focus on the voice of the athletes and have the athletes lead other athletes”
- “More staff on the ground delivering to our athletes in schools”



## Appendix 2

# Scenarios

### Scenario A

- The pre-pandemic economic orthodoxy returns even more vigorously as New Zealand society focuses on monetary discipline, and the pursuit of individual financial wealth, as the keys to overall wellbeing.
- Given the improving health environment, collective social apathy has again settled on New Zealand, with those in more vulnerable situations primarily overlooked. The most well regarded are those whose business success enables them to pursue philanthropic opportunities to address specific needs.
- There are few restrictions on entertainment experiences, including sport, which has enjoyed a resurgence at domestic and international levels in recent years. However, a wide disparity exists between those who can afford to pursue these leisure activities as ticket prices and costs have steeply increased beyond the reach of many.
- New Zealand's sense of community is subtly undermined by indifference to those without social or financial assets. As a result, it is difficult to get traction on the stubborn issues related to continued inequality, including poverty levels and chronic health trends.
- New technologies that augment sensory experiences (through virtual reality) and physical capabilities (through augmentation) are readily available to those who can afford them. They enable broader perspectives and opportunities, though these are unavailable to those without the resources to take advantage of these developments.
- There is an underlying sense that a change of perspective is needed to effectively adapt to the growing challenges of the mid-century. Core governance institutions and policies seem to fit those who continue to succeed. Still, they appear increasingly irrelevant to those left behind and lead to local initiatives specific to the marginalised communities.

### Scenario B

- The pandemic has created a new understanding within New Zealand that society thrives when inequality between individuals is minimised. Creating individual wealth is a function of collective societal wellbeing.
- There's a sense that New Zealand has matured as a diverse community that can walk shoulder-to-shoulder in the face of the ongoing challenges of the 21st century.
- People now focus on the consumption of experiences rather than the pursuit of material goods, given climate concerns and ongoing supply chain fragility. As a result, sport and active recreation are experiencing significant growth, and there is a growing recognition of their role in enhancing local community relationships.
- Some political tensions have arisen as the critical issues of the emerging century are tackled directly. For example, ensuring social equality in the face of climate change mitigation has resulted in new legislation to eradicate wasteful consumption. However, defining this hasn't proven easy. Some of the more asset-rich sectors of society have pushed back politically on the rebalancing of resources to those most impacted by the change.
- Bonds between communities are more vital than ever, and deep respect for all cultures is reflected in the use of Te Reo now commonly heard in everyday conversation. Technology has helped here, too, with new forms of learning available through augmented reality platforms to support people in their daily routines. These have enabled deeper forms of connection and understanding with apps that support the Māori language and culture.
- The new republic of Aotearoa/New Zealand has redefined its place and identity within the global community. It is an international inspiration for societal inclusion as the second half of the 21st-century approaches.



## Scenario C

- The memory of the 'team of five million' has receded as the pursuit of individual wealth drives ever-higher levels of inequality.
- Compassion and empathy appear in short supply as those with the resources ensure they insulate themselves from potential areas (and people) where health challenges are most significant. Moreover, the political environment is fraught as arguments of personal responsibility and freedom play out to the detriment of collective wellbeing.
- For New Zealanders who can afford it, consumption of material goods is at an all-time high. However, with health concerns back to the fore, these are primarily for use in the home environment with considerable spending on homewares and digital experiences. Virtual reality platforms are now prevalent, and eSports continues to enjoy substantial success as a result.
- The idea of 'community' seems to be a thing of the past, with seemingly little to connect the respective sections of New Zealand society. Often there appears to be a multitude of New Zealanders with increasing levels of mistrust and misunderstanding between groups.
- Finding virtual communities is less of a problem, and with new forms of 'Meta-like' virtual environments springing up, people seem content to remain in their walled-off spaces.
- Ongoing health constraints and a lack of social cohesion have transformed the idea of what 'normal life' looks like within New Zealand. A sense of national cohesion has been replaced by a fragmented and fearful environment that drives a corrosive politics that only advantages a few.

## Scenario D

- In the face of ongoing and unpredictable health risks, most New Zealanders understand that creating and maintaining societal wellbeing relies on everyone having adequate access to sufficient social and financial resources.
- The strong sense of solidarity across New Zealand has ensured that targeted responses to address historic challenges (e.g. poor housing environments) are finally being overcome to combat increased global health threats.
- Renewed restraints on events are a continued challenge as clubs endeavour to maintain ongoing activities programmes. There is solid demand to keep these going, but the high risk has seen many individuals pull away from the team environment. Technology is increasingly providing solutions here, though, with many engaging in eSport activities that enable engagement through the virtual sphere.
- Public policy to protect all New Zealand citizens from the vagaries of a changing health environment has been criticised by some sectors. In particular, the need to support the more risk-averse has prompted less tolerant perspectives to emphasise personal responsibility, but these are generally at the margins of political discussions.
- There have been considerable efforts made to ensure access to digital environments is widely distributed across communities to ensure no individuals are left isolated by the reliance on technology. Consequently, community innovation is high, with new uses being found daily to put cutting edge tech to use in furthering community projects.
- Through the focus on community wellbeing, New Zealanders are reporting a deeper level of individual freedom despite the significant ongoing challenges of the 21st-century.

## Appendix 3 Monitoring of assumptions

The following are an example of the assumptions typically made within the sport and recreation sector. A low level of confidence in the accuracy of an assumption should prompt organisations to adjust their planning or develop a ‘plan b’ (another term for alternative future).

SONZ could use these assumptions to develop their own assumptions for monitoring. This should occur at least annually. See the Sport NZ future’s website for more guidance.

Assumption	Level of Confidence in Accuracy
Sport and active recreation will continue to enjoy strong cross-societal support (social licence)	1 2 3 4 5 6 <b>7</b> 8 9 10
Total funding levels to sport and recreation will not decrease	1 2 3 4 <b>5</b> 6 7 8 9 10
Further development of the Te Tiriti relationship will foster a positive Māori experience of active recreation	1 2 3 4 5 6 <b>7</b> 8 9 10
The level of volunteer support for active recreation and sport will not decline	1 2 3 4 <b>5</b> 6 7 8 9 10
Local government will not decrease its support for sport and recreation	1 2 3 4 <b>5</b> 6 7 8 9 10
Climate impacts will have only a moderate impact on sport and active recreation	1 2 3 4 5 <b>6</b> 7 8 9 10
The cost of sport and active recreation will only be a moderate barrier to participation	1 2 3 4 <b>5</b> 6 7 8 9 10
The sport and recreation sector sufficiently adapts to change to remain viable and relevant	1 2 3 4 <b>5</b> 6 7 8 9 10
Integrity management frameworks will adapt to emergent challenges and maintain public confidence in fair competition	1 2 3 <b>4</b> 5 6 7 8 9 10
Attitudes to elite sporting events will remain positive	1 2 3 4 5 6 <b>7</b> 8 9 10
An ageing population will not change the Government’s priorities for active recreation and sport	1 2 3 4 <b>5</b> 6 7 8 9 10
The Summer and Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games retain their global appeal as pinnacle international events	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 <b>8</b> 9 10
Government continues to view national identity/pride as the key rational for investment in elite success	1 2 3 4 5 6 <b>7</b> 8 9 10
Gaming, virtual and augmented reality have little negative impact on participation in sport and recreation	1 2 3 4 5 <b>6</b> 7 8 9 10
Changing working life and leisure patterns do not negatively impact on participation in sport and active recreation	1 2 3 4 5 <b>6</b> 7 8 9 10

# Appendix 4

## Monitoring disruptors

The SONZ board could introduce a regular monitor of the issues and events it believes could disrupt its planning. The STEEP categorisation is commonly used for this purpose. An indication that a possible disruptor is strengthening may prompt SONZ to seek more information or to consider how it might respond.

### Disruptor Scan

Relevant data, information, trends, events or threats, from the external world, that could have an impact on SONZ.

#### Political



- ▲ **COVID-19**  
Omicron; ability to recruit/retain; competition access/timing; event impact
- **Gender equity**  
Minister’s priority; Me Too Movement; D & I survey results
- **Sport activism**  
athletes’ voice in sport and on social issues
- **Geopolitical**  
Potential disruption to world games
- **Mental Health and addiction focus**  
Govt release of long-term pathway for mental wellbeing
- ▲ **Crown/Maori relations**  
Māori Health Authority as example of empowering of Māori; co-governance trend
- ▲ **Reforms**  
Health, alignment opportunities with new authority; Local Govt reforms
- ▲ **Wellbeing**  
Recovery and economy dominating

#### Legal



- ▲ ● **Health and Safety**  
Cost of compliance impacts play, physical activity; vaccination complexities
- ▲ ● **Global travel restrictions**  
Impacting athlete travel, hosting of events, and international competition
- ▲ ● **Treaty**  
Heightened emphasis on honouring
- ▲ ● **Vaccine passports**  
Ability to participate, travel, attend events

#### Social



- ▲ **Gender Diversity and fluidity**  
Global move away from male/female only distinction
- ▲ **Changing nature of work**  
Lockdowns accelerating/embedding reshaping of work and time for activity
- **Focus on aging population**  
Global and national issue as aging population rises as proportion of total
- ▲ **Inequality**  
Heightened focus – driven in part of rapidly growing gap between rich and poor
- **Social licence**  
Perceived MIQ inequality within sport and with other interests
- **Health**  
COVID-19 impacting society on all levels; WHO announcement on poor youth activity levels, exercise prescription
- ▲ **Social resilience**  
COVID-19 heightens need for community connection which sport/rec can offer; Polarisation heightened by vaccination of under 12s

#### Technological



- ▲ **Disruptive technology**  
Lockdown accelerating on-line tech; rise of eSports and other virtual and augmented forms entertainment
- **Human enhancement impacts ‘level playing field’**  
Bionics, bio-engineering, genetic manipulation
- ▲ **Surveillance capitalism**  
Use of private data for commercial gain
- **Digital content and multiple devices**  
Growth in digital channels (content and news) accessed across multiple devices provides opportunities and challenges for sports; normalising of ‘at home’ spectating
- ▲ **Credibility of information**  
Heightened potential for fake news
- **Digital divide**  
Unequal access to technology

#### Economic



- ▲ **National economy**  
Tightening of government purse; heightened cost of living; rising insurance costs
- ▲ **International disruptors**  
COVID-19 impact on global economy; additional costs with keeping athletes safe
- ▲ **Workforce**  
Heightened competition for skilled labour, given pandemic, pay freeze, cost of living
- ▲ **Sponsorship**  
Pandemic impact on event sponsorship; Alcohol sponsorship of sport
- ▲ **Local govt focus/spend**  
Focus on three waters and reforms could impact sport/rec focus/spend
- **Discretionary income**  
Housing and rent adding to high levels of personal debt; plus inflationary pressures resulting in cost as increased barrier to sport
- ▲ **Proceeds from gambling**  
Online gambling review response likely to disrupt

#### Environmental



- ▲ **Scrutiny on environmental footprint**  
COVID-19 may permanently change air travel and attraction of events to NZ
- **Housing density, reduced open spaces and transport**  
Auckland, but other metro pressures
- ▲ **Climate Change**  
Transition to zero carbon by 2025
- ▲ **Land ownership and lease-hold land**  
Access to recreational reserves and high country.

▲	Strengthening
▼	Weakening
●	No change





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