

Strategy 2012-2015



*Special Olympics
Ireland*



*Let me win, but if I cannot win,
let me be brave in the attempt.*
~ the Special Olympics Athlete Oath

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Message from the CEO



I am delighted to present the Special Olympics Ireland Strategic Plan 2012 – 2015 which will guide us over the next four years. The plan is the end result of a very wide-ranging consultation process over a six-month period, involving athletes, families, volunteers, staff, funders and other stakeholders across the island.

I look back with pride and absolute joy at the tremendous progress the organisation has made during our last strategic phase. In particular, we have welcomed 3,139 new athletes to the programme and have established 79 new clubs since 2008 alone. We have successfully brought the Special Olympics Programme closer to our athletes and deeper into local communities and yet, we have much more still to do.

Special Olympics Ireland has been a leader and beacon of light for the global organisation. We will continue to lead the way. Our vision for the future is to build a sustainable programme, one that continues to provide a high quality sports programme for athletes in their local community. Through our many different stakeholders, including over 25,000 registered volunteers and our countless family members, key sponsors, council of patrons, skilled staff, government agencies, police forces north & south, other community leaders and, most importantly, over 10,000 fantastic athletes, we are an unstoppable force.

Although we face challenges, a number of which we have identified within this Strategic Plan, our proven recipe of success is that, as a movement, we pull together. As we look forward to the new four-year cycle, recognising the backdrop of gloomy economic prevailing conditions, Special Olympics will continue to be “a flame of hope” for Irish communities. Continually we advocate that the two key enablers to achieving our vision are people and finance. As we approach our new strategic period, this remains as true as ever. We will raise the bar. We will continue to change lives. Our athletes and their families deserve the very best. Our athletes are central to every aspect of this strategy and they are our constant source of inspiration and pride.

I look forward to embracing our new strategy with your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt English'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Matt English
CEO, Special Olympics Ireland

Introduction

As part of the worldwide Special Olympics movement, Special Olympics Ireland's primary purpose is to work across the island of Ireland to further the organisation's global mission, which has remained unchanged since 1968:

Provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills & friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

Special Olympics takes place every day. The essence and spirit of Special Olympics sport is visible and palpable at local level, where athletes train on a weekly basis in the 410¹ clubs² that are established in communities across the island. Thousands of volunteers help support and drive the vision of the organisation which is to provide every person with an intellectual disability the opportunity to take part in a regular high quality sports programme within their local community.

Over 4,000 club volunteers, including coaches and management team members, ensure athletes have a quality participation and training experience at local level, which, of course, includes preparation for competition. Competition opportunities for athletes range from seasonal leagues, inter-club events to once-off tournaments and one-day competition events organised at Area and Regional level as part of the regular programme of activities, as well as official advancement competitions. Event volunteers run and manage all competition events.

In official advancement competition, an athlete needs to have participated at each prior level, i.e. Area and Regional level, and be selected to advance from each level to the next, in order to progress to All-Ireland level. Traditionally, All-Ireland level competition is offered in an olympics-type setting of a Residential Games. From All-Ireland level competition, athletes are selected to represent Ireland internationally at the Special Olympics World Summer Games, an event that

is held every four years. All-Ireland competition takes place in the year prior to a World Games and thus also takes place once every four years. The next All-Ireland Games will take place in 2014, followed by World Games in 2015.

The sport programme in Special Olympics is complemented by a range of other initiatives and programmes that facilitate athlete development, the involvement of the families of athletes and

the recruitment, training and assignment of volunteers. Committed volunteers at every level deliver all of our activities, from the Board of Directors to the local Club. The volunteers dedicate their time to improve the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and advance their integration within Irish society. The organisation continuously strives to ensure that all our activities are run in compliance with good governance and management and in line with best practice guidelines, policies and procedures. In this regard, the ongoing development and training

of our athletes, volunteers, staff and board is vital to our continued success.

Since hosting the World Games in 2003, Special Olympics has used a strategic planning process to build on the legacy of the Games and continue developing Special Olympics in Ireland.



1 31st October 2011.

2 'Club' is any group established to run a Special Olympics Sports Programme, i.e. community groups, intellectual disability service providers and special schools.



This plan begins with a brief review of progress made during implementation of the plan for 2008 – 2011, highlighting many successes but also raising issues and opportunities to address as we look to the future.

Foremost among these is the sea-change in Ireland's economic situation, which has fundamentally changed the context for our activities. Aside from the obvious pressure it has placed on our ability to raise funds, it has made life more difficult for intellectual disability service providers, and the ageing demographic of our volunteer population may be challenging to address as many young people are again forced to emigrate. Conversely, a recession can drive interest in volunteering as many people seek to add new skills or simply make good use of their time if they are unemployed.

Another significant factor in our planning is the continuing trend towards mainstream education for

people with intellectual disabilities. It is a choice that more and more families are making, particularly at primary level, and is a situation we must handle well if we are to continue offering life-long opportunities to people with intellectual disabilities.

Notwithstanding this and other socio-economic changes of recent times, Special Olympics Ireland's brand still has 90%+ recognition amongst adults in the Republic of Ireland, a platform we can continue to leverage.

Our new strategic plan has been developed in consultation with athletes, their families, our volunteers, supporters and stakeholders. It tackles the challenges and opportunities we see in the years ahead, providing us with a framework to continue striving for positive change and tangible improvements in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and their families in Ireland.



Review of Progress Strategy 2008–2011

Five key goals were identified as the foundation for the strategy for 2008 – 2011. Despite the severe downturn in the economy, solid progress was made in relation to each goal, as outlined below.

1. Deliver high quality programmes

Emphasis has been on the development of solid plans for each sport and setting appropriate standards aimed at improving the overall quality of activity across the programme. Specific plans have been developed for some sports with others yet to be completed. Minimum quality standards have been set for running clubs and competition events, and tracking of these standards started in 2011. A continuous drive to improve coaching standards resulted in 641 coaches completing an Introductory-level coaching course and 98³ completing courses at a higher level, all certified by Coaching Ireland.

Development Days, where athletes and coaches learn new skills and learn more about their sports, were successfully introduced to provide an alternative participation opportunity that complements the competition calendar. The promotion of Inter-club Activities has led to a significant increase in the number of events being run between local clubs and the events are widely recognised as a successful means of providing more sports opportunities for athletes.

2. Strengthen activity at a community level through better local support

An initiative introduced in early 2008, called Support and Engagement, whereby a face-to-face meeting was held with each local club over the first three years of the Strategy, has been so beneficial to all that it is now firmly rooted within the year-round regional programme.

Minimum standards are in place for the running of clubs and these will be tracked from 2011 to promote better quality management and delivery of club activities. It is currently estimated that 80%

of clubs have a club management team in place, a critical minimum standard for the development of a sustainable club.

Regional Council Meetings (open to all members) are now a regular feature in the calendar of events in each region but, with just 30% of clubs represented at these meetings, the need to raise attendance levels remains, as they are an important two-way information-sharing forum.

3. Improve long-term sustainability

In order to achieve our aim of improving long-term sustainability two approaches were planned:

a) to increase the proportion of core income from government sources from an annual average of 34% in 2008 (€2.78m) to 50% (€4m) in 2011

and

b) to build up sufficient levels of reserves to underpin continuity.

By mid-2008, reaching the target of €4 million multi-annual funding from government was looking extremely unlikely as the radically changing economic environment became more apparent. Instead, maintaining the existing government funding level became the challenge.

Over a three-year period, Government funding via the Irish Sports Council Core Grant was cut by 46% to €1.5 million in 2011. In Northern Ireland, significant progress has been made, particularly in 2010, to secure multi-annual government funding. Support is now very strong and indications are favourable for securing core funding.

Other revenue avenues such as sponsorship and fundraising are seeing greatly reduced returns for increased effort, all impacted by the changing economics facing corporate agencies and the general public alike.

³ Number only reflects coaches that undertook Special Olympics Ireland specific coaching courses (approved by Coaching Ireland) and coaches who have been supported to undertake NGB courses up until 31st October 2011.

Sponsorship has remained an important part of the funding mix throughout the strategy period. Sponsorship opportunities have become more difficult to put in place – companies have curtailed spending in this area, and when they do invest they are looking for direct value in terms of commercial benefit. Although securing sponsorship money has proven more difficult over the last four years, value-in-kind continues to be a way in which a sponsor can support the organisation. This proved particularly successful during the 2010 Ireland Games.

eircom remains our premier sponsor and this relationship celebrated its 25th Anniversary during the strategy period. We work very closely with eircom on all projects related to Special Olympics Ireland to ensure that the company receives the maximum benefit from its investment.

A new fundraising strategy, involving all revenue streams, was implemented in January 2010. This strategy is broadly welcomed by many as it is seen to be more coordinated, effective and working in unison with initiatives more locally. Special Olympics Ireland currently has to fundraise over €2 for every €1 received through grant funding. It was important to address this in a coordinated approach with regional involvement.

On the people side, attracting volunteers to take on key committee roles saw the adoption of a team-approach across all levels from 2008, with revised structures and roles approved in 2010. This approach has been reasonably successful and is widely recognised as the way to progress the sharing of workload, responsibility and delivery of the programme at all levels.

Looking to the future, we need to work hard to protect existing income streams and, at the same time, establish new avenues for funding. Funding cuts in the Health Service Executive and the resulting impact on Intellectual Disability Service Providers is also impacting on the delivery of Special Olympics sports programmes. Many services withdrew from development and competition activities during 2010 and did not re-affiliate at the end of that year. We must continue to address this challenge to ensure athletes still have access to sports training and competition; this may generate an increased demand for new clubs in communities to fill the void.



4. Growth across all programmes

Consolidation and deliver of quality sports programmes also involved building on existing activities around the island while continuing to reach out to people with an intellectual disability. We achieved a steady, continuous growth in our athlete membership from 2008 – 2011 and with new athletes we also have welcomed new family members.

The table below indicates growth rates during the period:

	Target	Actual Increase
Coaches	100	627⁴
Athletes	1,600	3,136
Families	800	1,986
Clubs	No target set	83
Volunteers	No target set	6,003

The 2010 Games meant an additional 3,000 volunteers in the Limerick area registered for that particular event. The successful legacy of the Games has resulted in a total of 300 volunteers getting actively involved in the Munster regional programme on an ongoing basis.

In terms of young children with an intellectual disability who are not yet eligible to join (i.e. under 6 years of age) little work has been carried out in this area. A means of reaching out and communicating with this age group is an area to be addressed.

5. Ensure that involvement in Special Olympics is enjoyable

Enjoyment for all participants, whether that be athletes, volunteers, family members or others, is always a consideration in the planning of activities and, although no formal assessment of the successful delivery of this goal has been undertaken, our retention figures for athletes and volunteers would suggest that they are still motivated to be part of the programme. Our athlete and volunteer membership numbers have continued to grow since 2008, and the totals at the end of October 2011 are shown below:

	Current Total ⁵
Athletes	10,646
Volunteers	25,107

⁴ Number only reflects coaches that undertook Special Olympics Ireland specific coaching courses (approved by Coaching Ireland) and coaches who have been supported to undertake NGB courses up until 31st October 2011.

⁵ As on 31st October 2011.

Strategy 2012-2015



Special Olympics
Ireland



Special Olympics Ireland

Strategy 2012 – 2015

Long-term vision:

To build a sustainable Special Olympics Ireland programme so that every person with an intellectual disability has the opportunity, in their local community, to participate in high quality sport and development activities that bring life-changing experiences of increased skills, self-confidence and joy.

Key Challenges Ahead:

- **Addressing sport participation by Intellectual Disability Service Providers and Special Schools**
 - » Cuts in funding in government department areas such as Health and Education are impacting on the participation levels of athletes and coaches within Intellectual Disability Service Provider Centres and Special Schools and this has led to an increase in the number withdrawing from development activities and competition. As a direct consequence, there are athletes who no longer have access to the programme offered by Special Olympics and, in addition, there is a greater demand on community-based clubs.
- **Managing the need and new demands**
 - » Our athlete age-profile is changing and many of our ageing athletes now find their chosen sport less appropriate and these athletes, their families and coaches are looking to Special Olympics for support in finding alternative physical activities.
 - » Children with an intellectual disability under 6 years of age are the athletes of the future and Special Olympics currently has little or no offering to the families of these young athletes.
 - » Athletes wishing to participate in the Athlete Leadership Programme (ALPs) are experiencing difficulty in finding a mentor.
 - » There is a stronger focus on leading a healthy lifestyle in society in general and demand is growing for health promotion to be an integral part of the sports programme offered by Special Olympics.
 - » Growth in athlete and club numbers, and corresponding quality development in sports training, has seen an increasing demand for additional competitive opportunities, some of which are currently being addressed through inter-club activities and development days.
- **Attending to gaps in provision to some children and young adults**
 - » Many children and young adults with an intellectual disability now attend mainstream schools thus driving a need to ensure that there is communication with schools, parents and students to educate them on opportunities in Special Olympics.
 - » Students with an intellectual disability transferring from a school setting to avail of services offered by an Intellectual Disability Service Provider may not necessarily automatically have access to Special Olympics activities. Many of these athletes may have been participating for several years but may find they have no sports training during this transition period.

- **Engaging Volunteers, particularly youth, to support the growing programme**

- » Increased need for the effective empowerment of volunteers in order to meet demands and expectations of the programme.
- » Our volunteer base is ageing. A need exists to actively engage with youth (young potential volunteers) to ensure awareness levels are kept high and the organisation continues to attract younger volunteers.
- » Many athletes, coaches and families are looking for opportunities for their athletes to take part in inclusive activities, which, at present, occurs, in many cases, on an ad-hoc and infrequent basis. Creating these opportunities will require engagement of youth groups, schools and organisation at local level.
- » Since the re-introduction of the Schools Programme into primary and secondary schools across Ireland in 2007 and 2008, interactions with schools is varied and irregular and there is no structured plan in place. There is a need to better coordinate how we interact with schools at all levels.

- **Getting our message across about what we do and improving internal communications**

- » Many people are still unaware of the fact that the Special Olympics Programme is a year-round programme, involving weekly training sessions within a club in the athlete's chosen sport and competition and other activities throughout the year. Special Olympics is still often associated with only the high profile 'big event', such as Ireland and World Games.
- » Information still does not reach all relevant people in a format that is understandable

- **Long-term sustainable funding**

- » Two major gaps in funding have arisen in this current economic climate:
 - i) a gap of €5 million in government core funding over the next four years, and
 - ii) funding is also down across all other avenues, i.e. sponsorship, donations and public.
- » An increased pressure to raise funds annually exists
- » The organisation is still too dependent on stand-alone campaigns instead of being able to rely on repeat funding
- » Maintaining the current scope of the programme with reduced funding.



Strategic Framework

This strategy will be set out using the global strategy framework developed by Special Olympics International and launched in December 2010.

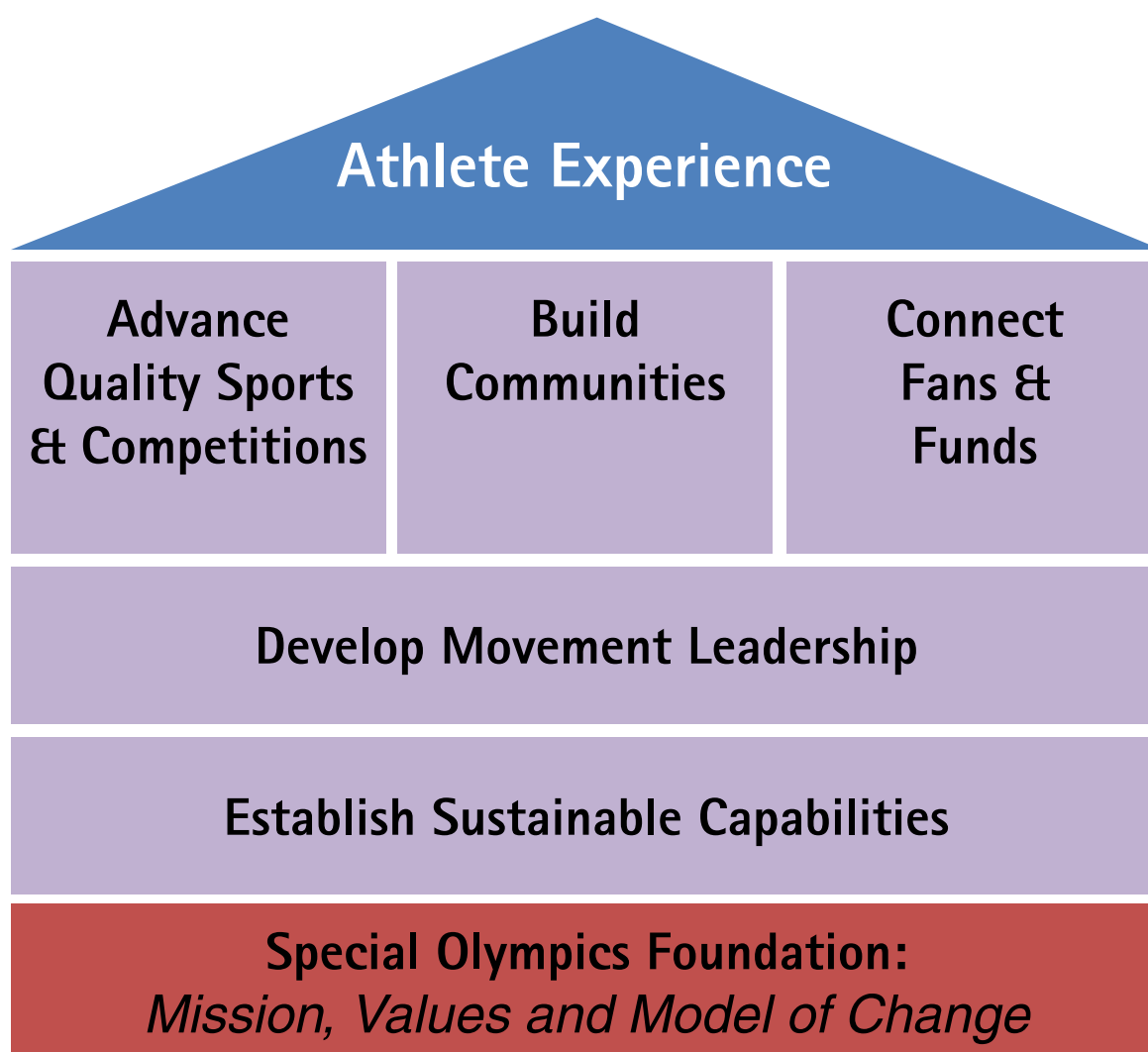
At the core of this framework are five Pillars of Work that ultimately link together to provide a holistic, consistent and quality experience for Special Olympics athletes (see diagram below).

Of the five pillars, three are mission-driving pillars:

- Advance quality sports and competitions
- Build communities
- Connect fans & funds

Two of are enabling pillars:

- Develop movement leadership
- Establish sustainable capabilities.



Strategic Goals

All activities are founded on the Special Olympics mission and values, with the aim of providing the best possible athlete experience through our efforts.

There are three strategic goals that will, individually and collectively, ensure that we address the challenges that face the organisation in a more cohesive and successful manner. Each goal coincides with one of the mission-driving pillars of the strategy.

1. Developing and enhancing sports excellence as the core activity at the heart of Special Olympics Ireland.

Improving coaching standards will remain a key feature of the next strategy and, in particular, there is a need to address Special Olympics specifics not offered by National Governing Body on their coaching courses. Knowledge and understanding of the rules is an area for improvement, along with a desire for more-focused opportunities for technical / low participation events and sports.

2. Supporting Clubs so that they can enhance and drive the impact Special Olympics makes at a local level

Many local clubs are already making an impact within their community and forging links with local schools, businesses and media. Other clubs need further help to extend their impact and enhance their development. In striving for a stronger programme, we look to the fact that "The Club is the Hub" and to the club's potential to deliver across the strategy, e.g. achieving quality sports training, participating in inclusive sports activities, linking with schools and mainstream clubs, delivering health promotion, education and ALPs, enhancing the awareness of the year-round programme.

3. Driving education to achieve public understanding of Special Olympics as a year-round activity that requires ongoing funding

There is still a strong perception that Special Olympics is an event rather than a year-round programme of activities. Increasing awareness of the programme will lead to a better understanding of what we do and why we need ongoing funding to run our programme.



Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives for each pillar are outlined with key actions required and timeframe within it is expected that they will be completed.

Pillar 1: Advance Quality Sports Goals & Actions

Strategic Initiative(s)	Objectives	Key Actions	Year(s)	Target	
ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT	Improve the quality of existing sports	Continue the development of sport-specific multi-year plans	2012-2014	5 new sport-specific plans	
		Increase the number of Development Days offered to coaches and athletes	2014	25% increase in number of Development Days	
	Expand participation in training and competition	Encourage Club participation in Inter-club events	2012-2013	50% Clubs will have participated in Inter-Club events	
		Focus on increasing participation in low-participation sports	2013-2015	20% increase in athletes in 3 low-participation sports	
		Ensure greater provision for athletes competing in more technical events within some sports	2013-2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 coaches upskilled in coaching technical events • Double the number of athletes participating in technical events across 2 sports 	
		Explore demand for an additional Special Olympics sport	2013-2015	1 additional sport supported	
	Enhance participation opportunities for lower and upper age groups	Explore opportunities for coach development in relation to the training of 6-8 year olds	2013	Formal link established with bodies who deliver sports training to 6-8 year olds 25 coaches trained	
		Provide information on existing programmes which may help older athletes transition to age-appropriate activity.	2012	Transition education roll-out complete	
	COACHING EXCELLENCE	Enhance coaching quality	Promote quality sports training and focus on a manageable number of sports	2013	Three specific education / communication channels used to promote key messages
			Provide educational materials and opportunities to learn about Special Olympics rules	2013	Two coach education channels in place
Increase coach participation in education		Implement a thorough system to track coach qualifications / accreditation	2014	Coach tracking system in place	
		Continue to promote participation in National Governing Body (NGB) training	2012-2015	500 coaches through NGB courses	
		Introduce a system dedicated to recognising achievements in coaching	2015	Coach recognition system in place	

Strategic Initiative(s)	Objectives	Key Actions	Year(s)	Target
GAMES & COMPETITIONS	Embed understanding of and adherence to event standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the roll-out of event standards education across all events Expand resources to assess adherence to standards 	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of events assessed 90% of assessed events achieving minimum standards
	Expand the number of officials	Identify gaps in provision and target for growth in numbers	2014	40 new trained and registered sports officials
	Maximise the use of Games Management System (GMS) across all sports	Increase the number of volunteers trained on GMS and use GMS to manage all competition events.	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 new GMS volunteers per region GMS in operation for all sports competitions
INCLUSIVE SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES	Identify ways to foster inclusive sports activity	Provide guidance on how to approach inclusive sports activity at a local level	2012	Inclusive sports guide published and rolled out
		Encourage clubs to engage in inclusive sports activities in their communities	2015	10% of clubs participating in inclusive sports activities



Pillar 2: Build Communities

Goals & Actions

Strategic Initiative(s)	Objectives	Key Actions	Year(s)	Target
ATHLETE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME (ALPs)	Build awareness of what ALPs is	Develop a simple description of the ALPs programme and communicate it at club level and to stakeholders	2012	ALPs description rolled out to all clubs
		Develop a Club ALPs programme	2014	New Club ALPs programme introduced
	Increase the number of athletes / Clubs involved	Increase in ALPs athletes	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150 new athletes • New ALPs programmes in 20 clubs
	Increase the number of mentors	Identify partners who can help source mentors	2012	One major new ALPs partner
		Implement a mentor recruitment campaign	2015	150 new ALPs mentors
	FAMILIES / YOUNG ATHLETE PROGRAMME	Engage with more family members	Implement a campaign to get contact details for family members of athletes	2012-2013
Enhance access to information for family members			2014	Communication and information channel in place
Promote Special Olympics to families of future potential athletes		Link in with existing services for families of under 6 year olds to communicate what Special Olympics offers	2013	Links in place with two relevant services in Republic of Ireland and two in Northern Ireland
		Distribute Special Olympics literature aimed at families with potential athletes (under 6 year olds)	2013	Literature distribution complete
YOUTH ACTIVATION		Strengthen relationships with schools and 3rd level institutions	Ensure mainstream schools with students with intellectual disabilities are aware of Special Olympics and what it offers	2013-2014
	Educate Transition Year teachers and students (ROI) about Special Olympics through a structured information pack, e-learning module		2012-2015	500 Transition year students informed about Special Olympics each year (ROI)
	Educate second-level teachers and students (NI) about Special Olympics through a structured information packs and e-learning module		2012-2015	125 second-level students informed about Special Olympics each year (NI)
	Encourage Clubs to engage with local schools		2013	25% of Clubs engaged with schools
	Target the involvement of 3rd level students as active volunteers		2012-2015	100 new students engaged each year
	Leverage existing youth groups to reach young people		Link with youth organisations where there is strong potential for mutual benefit	2013

Strategic Initiative(s)	Objectives	Key Actions	Year(s)	Target
HEALTH AND WELL BEING	Focus on health and fitness at Club level	Roll out health promotion initiative to Clubs	2012-2014	50% of Clubs involved in health promotion
		Identify additional opportunities to promote healthy lifestyle	2013	10 health promotion sessions held
	Offer Healthy Athlete outside of Ireland Games	Introduce components of the Healthy Athlete (HA) programme at Regional level	2014	One HA discipline at Regional level in three Regions annually
INFLUENTIAL LEADERS AND ORGANISATIONS	Expand the number of sports celebrities	Recruit local high-profile sports celebrities who can provide ongoing help with awareness-building	2012	At least three new sports celebrities per Region
		Recruit high-profile sports celebrities who will be a Regional Ambassador	2013	One celebrity ambassador per Region
	Enhance relations with public officials and representatives	Support Clubs to provide regular updates to community-level officials and politicians	2012-2015	Support provided to Clubs twice a year
		Pro-actively engage with high-level officials to update them on Special Olympics activities and input to policy development	2012-2015	High-level update provided annually to officials
		Keep the major political parties informed about Special Olympics activities and needs	2012-2015	Political party updates provided annually
CLUB DEVELOPMENT	Collaborate with intellectual disability service providers	Engage major intellectual disability service providers at senior level to agree long-term strategies	2012	Four major service providers engaged
	Improve how Clubs operate	Embed support and engagement visits to Clubs to ensure continued development	2015	At least 75% of Clubs achieving minimum standards
		Support Clubs who want to integrate or partner with mainstream clubs while maintaining Special Olympics ethos and rules	2013	Guidelines developed to support the process



Pillar 3: Connect Fans and Funds

Goals & Actions

Strategic Initiative(s)	Objectives	Key Actions	Year(s)	Target
CURRENT REVENUE SOURCES	Establish multi-annual revenue streams	Protect and strengthen current level of Government funding and improve contribution from new Government Departments	2012-2015	60% multi-annual funding from Governments
		Engage with relevant Government Departments to nurture and develop strong relationships	2012-2015	Communicate, at least twice, with relevant Departments
		Expand and develop the Collection Day concept to increase potential funds	2012-2014	€1 million per year
	Maintain a 'Premier Partner'	Engage and involve Premier Partner in regular communication and activity	2012-2014	Quarterly meetings and three profile event involvement
NEW SOURCES OF REVENUE	Increase funding through new revenue avenues	Legacy giving	2012	Establish a legacy programme
		Investigate opportunities for Cross-border grants / funding	2012-2013	One application for funding made
		Online fundraising	2012-2015	Increase our revenue through online subscriptions and donations my minimum 1% per annum of overall target
		Build a 'Supporters Club'	2012	€500k from Supporters by 2015
	Attract new sponsors	Actively engage with corporate organisations across the Regions to maintain and develop sponsorship opportunities	2012-2015	One new sponsor per Region engaged
AWARENESS BUILDING	Improve understanding of 'year-round programme'	Communicate scope and impact of Special Olympics to increase funding	2012	Committee established to increase and enhance engagement with relevant Government Departments
		Support and leverage Clubs to increase visibility and presence of Special Olympics in communities	2013	15% increased awareness of year-round activity in ROI and 25% increase in NI
	Celebrate 10th anniversary of 2003 Special Olympics World Games	Leverage the anniversary year to recognise volunteers and to promote the 'year-round' programme	2013	Celebration campaign held

Pillar 4: Develop Movement Leadership

Goals & Actions

Strategic Initiative(s)	Objectives	Key Actions	Year(s)	Target
LEADERSHIP STRENGTH AND DEPTH	Strengthen current leadership	Address gaps in Area / Regional / All-Island Committees and Teams	2013	At least 85% of positions filled
		Increase the number of localised cluster meetings to support Clubs	2012-2015	Three cluster meetings in each Region each year
		Provide help to Club Management Teams with club administration	2012-2015	Club Administration training offered annually in each Region
	Identify and develop the leaders of the future	Identify or recruit people internally and externally with potential and interest for leadership roles	2013	50 new leaders identified/ recruited
		Implement a development programme for potential leaders	2014	75% potential leaders on programme
RECOGNISE AND SHARE ACHIEVEMENTS	Recognise achievements at Club level	Introduce a way of recognising Club achievements	2013	Annual Club recognition plan in place
SPECIAL OLYMPICS GENERAL RULES	Improve knowledge of Special Olympics General Rules	Provide educational opportunities to learn about General Rules	2013	Two education channels in place



Pillar 5: Establish Sustainable Capabilities

Goals & Actions

Strategic Initiative(s)	Objectives	Key Actions	Year(s)	Target
RESEARCH	Use research to support key messages and activities	Complete longitudinal study into relative benefits of Special Olympics involvement	2012-2014	Research findings launched
		Identify and complete at least one additional piece of beneficial research	2013-2015	Research findings launched
SHARED SERVICES / SUSTAINABILITY	Effective cost-management	Ensure organisation is sustained by managing costs versus income	2012-2015	Contingency planning annually to meet budget
	Enhance information available to Leaders	Promote maximum usage of existing Information Systems to ensure senior leaders can leverage accurate point-in-time information	2013	Library of Key Performance Indicator reports created for senior management
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION	Improve communication with internal stakeholders	Promote the website as a source of useful information	2012	25% increase in internal website hits
		Establish channels where information, communications and materials are directly accessible, in user-friendly format, by the athletes and families	2013	Two channels in place with relevant information for families and athletes
		Increase club attendance at Cluster, Area, or Regional Council meetings	2014	75% of clubs attending a Cluster, Area, or Regional Council meeting each year
		Improve email communication with clubs	2013	Single email accounts with multi-person access available to each club
		Establish a vehicle for ongoing updates to / amongst staff	2012	Staff communication update system in place
CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	Leverage new CRM system to improve communication with key contacts	Migrate all remaining contact datasets into new system	2012	All key contact databases moved to CRM
		Ensure CRM becomes the primary means of managing contact relationships	2013	Key contact information updated daily

Resource Requirements

Efficient and effective use of available resources will be paramount to the successful delivery of this strategy. The economic climate continues to be challenging in terms of funding and fundraising and Special Olympics will seek to maximise available resources to deliver on its objectives over the next four years.

We will continue to actively engage and empower our volunteers, who contribute so much to the implementation and delivery of the programme. The organisation will seek to deliver on the strategic initiatives within the current level of staffing resources.

The Strategy Plan for 2012-2015, as outlined in this document, is forecast to cost in the region of €26.3m. In comparison, the original costing of the 2008-2011 Strategy was €32.2m. On a very positive note, latest projections to the end of this 2011 show that total costs for the four-year period will be in the region of €26.9m, reflecting significant savings as a result of cost-saving measures. We will continue to implement these cost-saving measures during the strategic period 2012 -2015. The financial projections include a marked increase in expenditure planned for 2014, the year of the All Ireland Games and the European Games, with smaller increases in 2013 and 2015, reflecting Regional Advancement Competitions and Winter Games and the World Summer Games respectively.

Implementation and Monitoring

- Project plans will be developed annually and the milestones to be achieved clearly mapped out against the time frame.
- Plans will have identified key performance indicators.
- Plans will be prioritised and budgets will be assigned
- Plans will be prepared by those who will be implementing them, as ownership of the plan is essential.

Communication and ongoing consultation at all levels will also be a high priority throughout the implementation phase

An initial task of establishing baseline information in some programme areas is required in order to tracking progress in relation to the targets. Progress will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis against the key performance indicators and changes to plans will be implemented when and where necessary. All plans will also be subject to an overall review on an annual basis to ensure that the goals set out are being achieved.



Special Olympics Ireland
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