

# JUMP RUN THROW

Paralympics New Zealand  
REGIONAL COMMUNITY  
PARA SPORT PILOT 2 REPORT  
March 2024



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## About this report

This report contains information specific to the Regional Community Para Sport Pilot, a component of the Collectively Stronger Together project which is part of the Paralympics New Zealand (PNZ) Strengthen and Adapt Plan. The pilot took place between February 2023 – December 2024 and tested the operating approach in establishing a community Para athletics programme in regions where they had not been offered previously, and engaged with established organisations throughout the course of the pilot period. The Strengthen and Adapt investment was focused on allocating human resources and programme resources to co-design, promote, monitor and evaluate a community Para athletics programme for a 20-week period (or 400 hours equivalent). The Parties collaborating on this pilot were:

- Paralympics New Zealand ("PNZ")
- Athletics New Zealand ("Athletics NZ")
- Inclusive Activity Murihiku ("Parafeds or similar organisations").
- Parafed Gisborne ("Parafeds or similar organisations")
- Parafed Northland ("Parafeds or similar organisations")
- Athletics Southland ("Centres/Clubs")
- Athletics Hawke's Bay Gisborne ("Centres/Clubs")
- Whangarei Athletics Club ("Centres/Clubs")

This report uses data collected from key stakeholders which included the above organisations, activators and participants. Survey data was collected after the pilot, whilst additional conversations via Zoom and in-person interviews were conducted to support findings and highlight areas of success.

## Background

### Paralympics New Zealand

PNZ is the National Paralympic Committee (NPC) for New Zealand with the vision 'Through Para sport, lives will be transformed'. The regional community Para sport pilot is aligned to PNZ's strategic outcomes of 'Equity is achieved when Para sport is recognised at all levels of sport in New Zealand' and 'A strong and sustainable pathway to the Paralympic Games'. PNZ believes collaboration with members and partner organisations to design, deliver and enable Para sport experiences across all levels of the pathway is integral to get more disabled people involved in Para sport.

### Athletics New Zealand

Athletics is a highly established sport with pathways for Para athletes and non-disabled athletes, and is a sport that develops fundamental movement skills. Athletics is also among the more popular sports across New Zealand, as noted on a 2022 Parafed Network Community Footprint.

Athletics NZ's strategic plan focuses on enhancing rangatahi (12-18 years old) participation and member retention in athletics, and introducing flexible membership options that match needs and support growth. Athletics NZ also has objectives through an Action Plan under the Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) Disability Inclusion Fund, which aims to help hundreds more New Zealanders with disabilities improve their lives through the power of sport. Therefore the regional community Para sport pilot was planned to complement this work by supporting Centres/Clubs on a journey to build further capability in offering athletics opportunities to disabled people. Once established, these community environments have the potential to continue operating ongoing Para athletics programmes through facilitation or delivery by the Centres/Clubs in collaboration with Parafeds or similar organisations, and local activator(s) that will be connected as part of the regional community Para sport pilot. Note, the term 'Centres' are used by Athletics NZ instead of Regional Sport Organisations.

### **Pilot purpose**

The objectives of this pilot included:

- Increased participation in Para athletics;
- Enhanced Athletics Centre (Centre) and/or Club operating approach to ensure a community pathway for disabled people in Gisborne, Northland, Southland;
- Increased number of Centres and/or Clubs with inclusive organisational practices, and awareness of diversity and inclusion of disabled people;
- Addressed a geographical gap in the provision of Para athletics in regions across New Zealand.

## **What did we do? The journey towards launching the pilot**

### **Consultation**

At the completion of the community Para sport landscape mapping exercise undertaken by the PNZ Para Sport Community Manager in 2022, PNZ welcomed applications from NSO Members to partner in the delivery of a regional community Para sport pilot. Applications closed in December 2022, with Athletics NZ selected and informed in early 2023.

Athletics NZ and PNZ discussed gaps and opportunities to establish and deliver Para athletics in the regions of Gisborne, Northland, and Southland. Athletics NZ also declared their need for a resource in the form of a 'handbook' to support Centres/Clubs to build their knowledge and capability to deliver Para athletics.

PNZ utilised and adapted a template developed in the previous regional community Boccia pilot as a Project Brief to present to Parafed Gisborne, Parafed Northland and Inclusive Activity Murihiku. At the same time, Athletics NZ initiated contact with athletics Centres/Clubs in the same regions to identify the potential scope of the

Centres/Clubs to undertake the pilot. During that time, the Gisborne Athletics Club was not affiliated to Athletics NZ and it was agreed that Athletics Hawke's Bay Gisborne could assume responsibility as a pilot partner to build and support Para athletics in the Gisborne area. It was also agreed that Whangarei Athletics Club could assume responsibility as a pilot partner in Northland as there was no other Centre supporting that region.

## Clarification

The Project Brief outlined:

- Purpose/Objectives
- Outcomes
- Description
- Approach
- Marketing and Communications Plan
- Timelines
- Resources
- Budget
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- Relevant Insights/Considerations.

As was the case in the regional community Boccia pilot, it was agreed that the pilot's outputs could be fulfilled over a period longer than the initial 20 week plan, and the investment broadly factored in 400 hours of work per pilot partner allowing flexibility and time for the co-design, recruitment, training and delivery process.

Concerns were highlighted around the travel commitments of a number of key people within the pilot, and the work athletics Centres/Clubs needed to commit to during its off-season. This represented the Parties' first challenge, in turning what Centres/Clubs might typically consider a closed period, to gaining their operating commitment during the down time to help prepare the Centre/Club for its future seasons. This meant that roles and responsibilities needed further clarification as timings on when and how every partner engaged with each other varied depending on the outputs required. Plans were also put in place to ensure additional contacts were available and informed to support the pilot's progress.

Following the clarification of roles and responsibilities, PNZ shared a Service Delivery Agreement with Athletics NZ, the Centres/Clubs, Parafeds and similar organisation, to confirm the commencement of the pilot partnership between all the Parties.

## Co-design approach

What does success look like and who is responsible for driving it? (scenario / situation)



Risks / Bottlenecks



Current Status: What's working well?  
Who can help? Equipment? Other needs?



Image above: Notes from the Parties' first whiteboarding session.

Using a co-design approach, the Parties took part in an online whiteboarding session to check understanding, and discuss shared expectations and obligations for the pilot. All partners considered and progressed the following approaches together to help shape the pilot outcomes:

- An online resource link via Google Drive to document reflections, meeting minutes, communication toolkits, marketing templates and other resources relating to the pilot;
- A Para athletics resource handbook that can be used by any stakeholder within athletics to increase their knowledge and confidence in activating and regulating Para athletics;
- An 8-week programme plan based on Athletics NZ's Run Jump Throw to cater for a broad age, ability and impairment range to help maximise participation and enjoyment. The programme uses a bottom-up approach to teach skills and adaptations needed for athletics movements where participants can learn the necessary fundamental skills and basic movement patterns in an inclusive, positive and supportive environment, and continue to challenge and refine their skills through athletics clubs following the programme;
- A national online education session featuring a tailored version of the Halberg Foundation's Inclusion Training and an introduction to Athletics NZ's Run Jump Throw contents to complement a practical camp;
- A practical weekend camp in each region led by Athletics NZ to upskill people within the Centres/Clubs, as well as provide a practical opportunity for new

activators, new participants and their families to interact and try adaptations of Run Jump Throw activities in a safe environment;

- An equipment wish list along with a stock take of existing inventory to allow for the delivery of an adaptive Run Jump Throw programme in each region;
- Connections with schools or other organisations that could support the recruitment of new activators and volunteers for clubs;
- The terminology 'activator' used throughout the pilot to describe any person who may organise, initiate, or help deliver community Para athletics sessions and maintains the positive engagement of participants. This term encompassed committee members, coaches, officials, school teachers and parent volunteers who typically support or engage in athletic club environments. This term was coined in a previous PNZ regional community Para sport pilot (Boccia), and was well received as it removed any perception that the programme required coaches with sport specific qualifications, expertise or skills to deliver the sessions.

## Resources

Athletics NZ made a start in pulling together a Para athletics handbook which contained classification content, pathway information, and event regulations from the World Para Athletics and Athletics NZ websites. However, following recommendations from pilot Parties, Athletics NZ prioritised the development of a resource containing mostly coaching considerations.

Aligned with its intellectual property and print standards of an existing Run Jump Throw coaching manual, the Athletics NZ team led the co-design of a resource manual to be used in conjunction with Run Jump Throw. As a result, the Parties agreed to name the programme Adaptive Run Jump Throw. Further research of existing and publicly available Para athletics resources were also used as inspiration, such as from Athletics Ontario, British Blind Sport, England Athletics, and Welsh Athletics.



*Image above: Run Jump Throw coaching manual as a printed collateral.*



The development of the adaptive coaching resource cross-references detailed activities in the Run Jump Throw coaching manual while also specifying adaptations for:

- wheelchair users
- participants with co-ordination impairment
- participants with limb impairment
- participants with short stature
- participants with visual impairment
- participants with intellectual impairment.

Illustrations were then taken and modified from the Run Jump Throw coaching resources to feature a more diverse range of illustrations in the adaptive resource. Holly Robinson MNZM (Paralympian #183) also played a significant role in providing insights and supporting the co-design of this resource.

*Image left: Adaptive Run Jump Throw resource cover page.*

Discussions about equipment led to an understanding that each region had different requirements, but a Run Jump Throw basic kitset was the minimum requirement to deliver the programme. The Parties supplemented this kitset with an order for items such as:

- relay batons
- long jump take-off mats
- measuring tapes
- starting blocks
- stopwatches
- elastic cross bar
- additional shot puts and discus
- customised throwing frame
- second hand racing wheelchair
- tethers and blindfolds
- assorted bean bags and balls.





*Image above: A Run Jump Throw basic kitset, available for procurement through Athletics NZ or Sports Distributors NZ.*

## How well did we do?

### Activator recruitment and education

PNZ drafted a template job description and advertisement to support the activator recruitment process with the Parafeds and similar organisation. A number of Parties shared the content with their athletics club community as well as via social media to promote activator opportunities. PNZ also drafted consent forms and survey forms that were then distributed to all Parties, activators and participants.

The Parties took a regional approach to the online education seminar, with Gisborne and Northland offering activators to gather in-person at their Regional Sports Trust offices to mix and mingle with Parafed staff during the compact 3-hour online education seminar. The session took place on 18 September which first featured James Glen (Senior North Manager, Halberg Foundation) introducing concepts, knowledge and tools necessary to create inclusive club environments. In the second half of the session, Mariah Ririnui (Coaching Coordinator, Athletics NZ) provided an overview of the Run Jump Throw coaching manual contents, suggested cues and key reference points. This was also complemented by Holly Robinson and Raylene Bates (Para Athletics Lead, Athletics NZ) who then introduced the adaptive coaching resource and provided anecdotes relating to positive community Para athletics experiences.

Following discussions about the design of a practical training session, the Parties agreed to use the terminology 'Launch' instead of 'camp', and to condense the upskilling of activators to a Saturday. Athletics NZ drafted a 6-hour schedule which contained separate briefings for activators and participants, three rotations of Run Jump Throw activities, a lunch break and an activator debrief.

The first Launch took place in Southland on 23 September, which was very well received. A parent of two participants took to social media to comment on the excitement it generated and was grateful for the collaborative efforts to bring the programme to the Southland community.

The Launch in Gisborne and Northland took place on 7 and 14 October respectively. All Launch days were highly engaging sessions and as a result of learnings from the first Launch in Southland, the sessions in Gisborne and Northland were shortened to a 4-hour period to maintain activator concentration and manage participant fatigue.

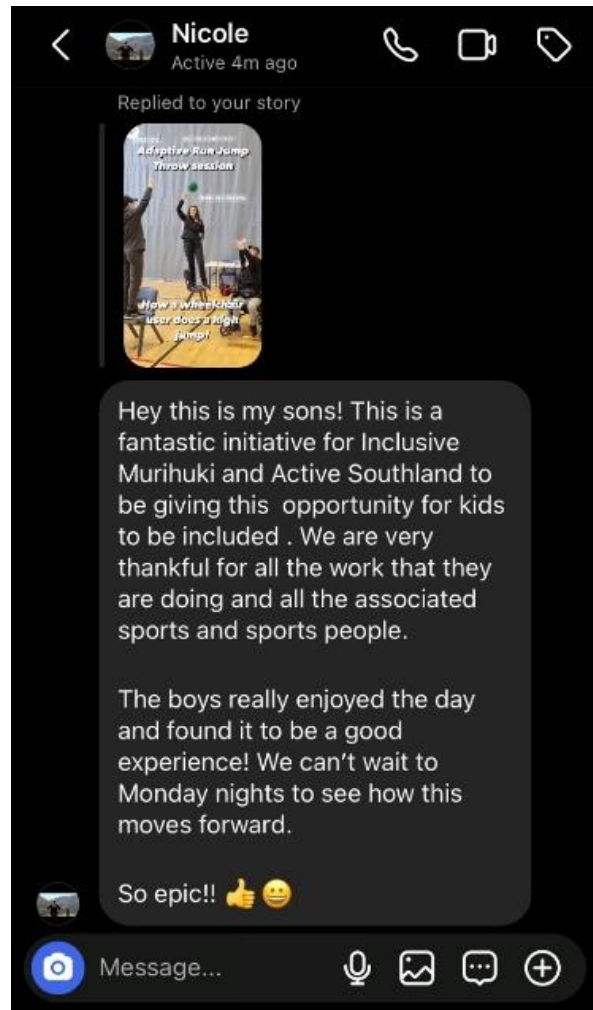


Image above: Positive feedback from a parent following the Launch in Southland.

## Marketing and communications

Registration forms and 'Get Involved' flyers were regionalised so that logos and information about the organisations collaborating were distinctly showcased. Parafeds and similar organisations also had direct access to participant details and were able to tailor their communications with participants leading up to and during the programme start date.

Although the imagery on flyers and social media tiles were consistent, the terminology used across different Parafeds and similar organisations on their social media communications resulted in different pitches. Examples of three social media tiles can be seen below:



The Parafeds and similar organisations also shared information about the programme to a range of local, regional and national stakeholders, listed in the table below.

Gisborne	Northland	Southland	National
Blind Low Vision East Coast	BLENNZ Blind and Low Vision Education Network NZ	Active Southland staff	Blind Sport New Zealand
Gisborne Volunteer Centre	Blomfield Special School	Ascot School	Achilles New Zealand
Hauora Tairawhiti Child Development Services	NorthAble	Aurora College	Blind Low Vision New Zealand
Parafed Bay of Plenty	Northland Sports Coalition	CCS Disability Access Southland	Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand
Parafed members	NorthTec	Donovan School	Disabled Persons Assembly New Zealand
Parent to Parent Gisborne	Parafed members	iAM members	First Port
Primary, intermediate and high schools	Primary and secondary schools	James Hargest College	Halberg Foundation
Sport Gisborne staff	Special Olympics Whangarei	Local support services	Invictus Games
Stroke Tairawhiti	Sport Northland - Healthy Active Learning and Rangatahi teams	Te Whatu Ora Child Development Services	Little People of New Zealand
Te Hapori Disability Trust	Whangarei Primary Schools Sports Association		Muscular Dystrophy New Zealand
Wairoa and Hawke's Bay sport organisations	Whangarei Youth Network		New Zealand Spinal Trust
			NZ Rugby Foundation
			Peke Waihanga - Artificial Limb Service
			Special Olympics New Zealand
			Sport New Zealand
			Whaikaha - Ministry of Disabled People
			Women in Sport Aotearoa

## Delivery

The delivery of the 8-week Adaptive Run Jump Throw programme started on the following dates:

- 18 October in Gisborne (Awapuni Stadium, 91 Centennial Marine Drive, Awapuni)
  - Number of activators engaged: 5
  - Total participants registered: 11 (average age 19.6)
  - Disabled participants attended: 6



*Image above: Adaptive Run Jump Throw in Gisborne.*

- 17 October in Northland (Athletics Track, Park Avenue, Kensington)
  - Number of activators engaged: 8
  - Total participants registered: 17 (average age 9.2)
  - Disabled participants attended: 6



*Image above: Adaptive Run Jump Throw in Northland.*

- 9 October in Southland (Athletics Track, Surrey Park Road, Invercargill)
  - Number of activators engaged: 3
  - Total participants registered: 12 (average age 11.2)
  - Disabled participants attended: 6



*Image above: Adaptive Run Jump Throw in Southland.*

The disabled participants who experienced Adaptive Run Jump Throw across all three regions had at least one of the following:

- Hearing impairment
- Intellectual impairment
- Neurodiversity
- Physical impairment
- Vision impairment.

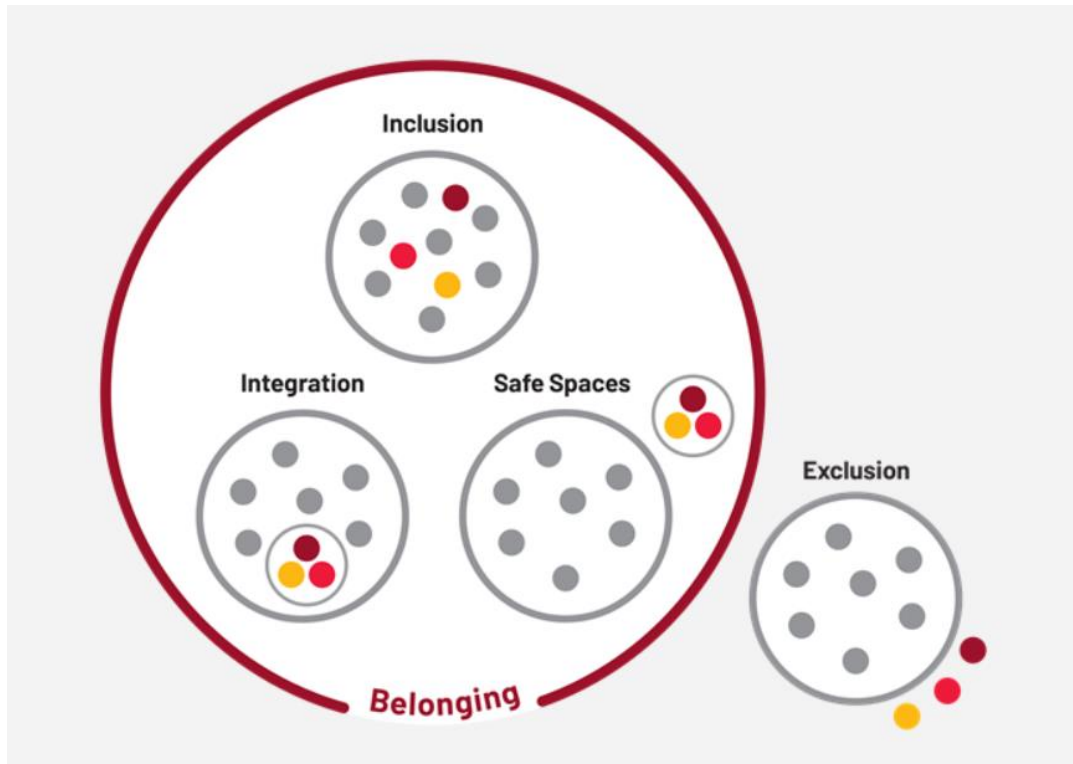
A number of family members and friends of disabled participants joined in the programme but these numbers were not captured due to irregularity of their attendance. The programme was intended to be inclusive across all three regions but Gisborne and Southland partners adapted during the co-design period as a result of the stage of resourcing and capability they were in. This also gave PNZ an opportunity to clarify and discuss the understanding of inclusion with all Parties.

As per Sport NZ guidance (<https://sportnz.org.nz/inclusivity-hub/what-is-dei>): “Inclusion is the ongoing exercise of valuing diverse groups by creating safe, welcoming and collaborative environments in which everyone can fully participate and thrive. It’s about pro-active behaviours, options and actions to make people from all backgrounds, ages and abilities feel that they belong. There are different ways to help participants feel included. The best thing to do is to provide choice, and ask what works for them.” For this pilot, the following settings took place:

**Integration** - In Gisborne, disabled participants were included in the athletics club (mainstream setting) but needed to adapt to the standardised environment.

**Inclusion** – In Northland, the athletics club space and activities were adapted to enable everyone to participate together.

**Safe spaces** – In Southland, the needs of disabled participants were catered for in a separate tailored environment with others like them.



*Image above: Variety of sport environments (from Sport NZ website).*

### Monitoring and evaluation

Activators, Centre/Club administrators, along with staff from Parafeds and similar organisations sourced verbal feedback from disabled participants and/or their caregivers throughout the programme. The Parties came together at a midway point of the 8-week programme to share their observations and reflections, and discussed how they practiced what they learnt during the Launch. One activator also shared their best practice in assigning parents to activity stations with printed activity cards to prepare them for how each activity should look.

Other opportunities and learnings relating to Centre/Club capability were also raised as discussion topics, including:

- how to better welcome and integrate participants arriving at different points of the time considering how 'busy' a club session can be with over 100 attendees (having a welcoming officer, buddy system, more visible entry and contact point were suggested)

- how the structure of activations and events might impact the experiences of new participants (depending on their abilities, new participants lacked confidence to join in event-based competitions but preferred game-based activities instead so having that choice to do either or both was important)
- how a perception that disabled participants required more individual attention could be overcome with enhanced organisation (overall, people felt that more preparation was required to ensure more volunteers are recruited, briefed and/or trained to support the coordination and delivery of each activity).

Despite these learning curves, one activator was quoted:

*“Anyone can learn and improve, but to see the smiles when an achievement is reached, is a thrill.”*

The programme in all three regions was slightly interrupted by inclement weather, which caused session cancellations at various points of the 8-week period. Southland was affected by a state of emergency once, while the outdoor grass venue in Gisborne was often water logged and closed by the Council as a result of health and safety concerns. The group in Gisborne only managed to complete half the sessions despite an extension of the programme. The interruptions impacted attendance as participants sometimes doubted if sessions were going to be on and often made other plans ahead. Other factors that the Parties felt may have impacted attendance include disabled participants being unsure about participating in large groups and that ‘free’ sessions do not always secure participants’ commitment to a programme.

At the end of the programme, the Centres/Clubs led the collection of activator survey responses, while Parafeds and similar organisations led the collection of participant survey responses. PNZ also led 1-1 discussions with contacts from all Parties to evaluate the responses and consider the collaborative impact, learnings and future opportunities. The following case study video was also developed to capture key features of the pilot and the Adaptive Run Jump Throw programme: <https://youtu.be/m8mgHzIHdiE>.

## **What impact did we have?**

Findings from post-pilot surveys and discussions with participants and activators found that several were interested in participating in Para athletics further. For example, at least one of the younger participants in each region had registered for their school athletics events, Colgate Games, and/or Halberg Games which are components of Athletics NZ’s Para sport pathway. Activators had also taken initiative to provide support to disabled participants on junior and senior athletics days at their local school.

## Impact on participants

From 10 participant survey responses collected:

**40%** were non-members or new to Parafeds and similar organisations

**80%** were new to Para athletics

**80%** were very or extremely satisfied with Adaptive Run Jump Throw

**80%** were motivated to participate in Para athletics further.

The following quotes highlight the impact on participants:

*“It was wonderful for him to be active in a different way he normally wouldn’t be.”*

*“It’s given him more confidence to participate with kids his own age.”*

*“Never thought I could do athletics with my vision impairment.”*

A common piece of feedback from participants was to embed activities during warm up phases to allow and encourage participants to introduce, familiarise and get to know other participants better. They also wanted more variety, less wait times, fun and different ways to learn activities. It was also clear that participants appreciated how well the activators built relationships and delivered during the programme, with comments such as:



*“Awesome inclusion, can see change in the club.”*

*“Building confidence has been key and this is really important for our children.”*

*“My daughter is a powerchair user and initially we had doubts whether she could participate but she was completely immersed at the launch, was included in all the athletics activities, and even improved her mobility by the end of the session!”*

Image left: A participant with a wide smile jumping over step hurdles.



## Impact on activators

From 7 activator survey responses collected:

**100%** found the resource easy to follow, learn and use

**100%** increased their skills by being part of Adaptive Run Jump Throw

**100%** were very or extremely satisfied with Adaptive Run Jump Throw

**85%** were confident in delivering or offering Adaptive Run Jump Throw.

Activators wanted flexibility to be part of the programme as they were unable to attend all the set session times. This flexibility was catered for in all regions as a result of having more than three activators trained and committed to the programme. Another common reflection from activators was around adapting activities to maximise participation and confidence:

*“Make sure everyone is involved.”*

*“Not plan too much, just go with what participants want.”*

*“Be more self confident in offering help and direction.”*

*“Be more inclusive and mindful of activities in regards to people’s abilities.”*

*“This programme not only brings participants joy but me joy.”*

Activators also cherished the opportunity to work with disabled people who have not participated in athletics activities before and felt rewarded when participants were improving their mobility and fundamental movement skills as a result of the programme.



Image above: An activator challenges participants to throw a vortex through a hoop that the activator is holding.

## What has been learnt from the pilot?

### Reflections from Centres/Clubs

The Centres/Clubs noted that the pilot stimulated new perspectives as their activators and administrators gained a better understanding from a new participant's points of view, whilst also recognising that they need to be prepared to recruit and support volunteers over time.

*“Connections to people is very important to making them feel welcome.”*

Administrators felt that there is an ongoing need for Centres/Clubs to develop better personal connections with committee members, activators, other volunteers and participants. It was understood that one of the ways to help grow awareness of the types of volunteer roles available was to develop basic job descriptions so that people understand the tasks and commitment required whilst also empowering volunteers to have choices and set boundaries. Just as the pilot co-design and planning took place before the start of the national athletics season, the Centres/Clubs were also asked to consider using time during the off-season to provide opportunities for volunteer development and participant engagement.



*Image above: A group of activators in Gisborne being briefed, with print versions of the Adaptive Run Jump Throw resource manual in their hands.*

## Reflections from Parafeds and similar organisations

The Parafeds and similar organisations provided consistent guidance to the activators, participants and overall programme coordination and delivery. There was a consensus that the Centres/Clubs required further capability building, but the Parafeds and similar organisations stayed focused on their scope, and felt safe to provide input, explore challenges and share knowledge and learnings with PNZ. At the same time, they also continuously encouraged participants, giving them confidence to try something they have not experienced, and helped with the upskilling process of Centres/Clubs around inclusion. One of the Parafeds and similar organisations also experienced a significant injection in participation, gaining three new members which was quoted as a 'huge change' for the region.

Parafeds and similar organisations gave the resource co-design a very positive review. Parafed Northland as an example has shared it with school teachers in their region. There were minimal skill increase opportunities within Parafeds and similar organisations as they already work within inclusion spaces and did not need to be sport experts. However, learnings were reported around marketing and communication, and evaluating the programme with an encouraging and empowering lens. Although they would have liked more check-ins from Athletics NZ, the Parafeds and similar organisations appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the sport's process around Centre/Club capability building, activator education and participant engagement.

*“Seen an increased number of Para athletes and a positive impact in making our (athletics) club more inclusive.”*



*Image left: A wheelchair user prepares to throw a ball over a specified height as part of an adapted high jump exercise.  
Image right: A participant leaps onto a yellow high jump mat.*

## Reflections from Athletics NZ

Athletics NZ felt that the keys to success for Adaptive Run Jump Throw were about maintaining regional differences within the programme. With approximately 17 events to learn in Para athletics, it was important for education and training to be flexible depending on participants' experiences, ages, and impairments. Although Athletics NZ believes that any club session could be inclusive, they also embraced environments that each Centre/Club chose to deliver the programme, supporting a

staged approach toward integration and inclusion within club environments. Even if a session was delivered in safe spaces, the ability to bring a friend or family member was extremely helpful in building participant confidence.

*“The practical training on Launch day needs to be flexible depending on the athletes’ age and impairments - so being very agile is critical”*

Athletics NZ also reflected that not all communications flow smoothly to the relevant people, and saw a need for the NSO to be more engaged with Centres/Clubs. For example, as the Parties discussed the value of financial models to attract participants to the sport, it was revealed that Athletics NZ have previously considered and recommended participant fee structures that encourage casual and social attendance as an alternative to regular or competitive membership.



*Image right: A happy participant with visual impairment on a high jump mat.*

## **Reflections from Paralympics New Zealand**

PNZ learnt that Para athletics in the three regions were at different stages of development, therefore support was tailored according to what the Centre/Club and Parafeds were comfortable with. In Southland, giving participants time to feel safe, be comfortable with themselves and their skills before introducing them into larger groups worked well. Whilst still giving disabled participants options, Athletics Southland has committed to support disabled participants to transition from their tailored environment into club environments in 2024. In Northland, Athletics Whangarei is commended for undertaking the task of building better awareness and practices for including disabled people into their Club. Participants in Northland described athletics generally as ‘busy’ and ‘fun’ which is consistent with the higher number of activators and participants they need to oversee. Due to limited engagement from Hawke’s Bay Gisborne Athletics, Parafed Gisborne drove the relationship with committee members and at the Gisborne Athletics Club. These personalised connections and meetings with key volunteers were key to the success of the programme in Gisborne.

Noting how motivated the Centres/Clubs and Parafeds were on the pilot, any follow up or ongoing support from the Athletics NZ’s Community Team could be beneficial in maintaining momentum of the programme. Clubs involved were seeking information, resources and tools that could help with their general capability, not only for Para athletics. A touchpoint following the end of the pilot saw Parafed Gisborne initiate a request for Athletics NZ to return to Gisborne to upskill committee members and activators who may have missed the earlier Launch day upskilling opportunities.

All activators felt that the upskilling on the Launch day was very effective as a result of observing Athletics NZ lead the activities for disabled participants. However, it was recommended that Athletics NZ structure future Launch days with more education and time for committee members and activators to deliver activities to disabled participants while having Athletics NZ observe, challenge or provide feedback in a safe context.

Overall, all Parties have had to alter their mindsets throughout the pilot in a way that challenged them to see beyond 'the difficult', and initiated action or empowered others to be solutions focused. It was recommended that PNZ deeply explore and analyse each regional and national sport environments to better understand how the relationships, roles and responsibilities might affect each stakeholder's expectations on future pilots. In addition to committing to an agreed set of outcomes, this practice can enable all Parties in future pilots to share, understand and discuss challenges ahead.

## **Ongoing operating considerations**

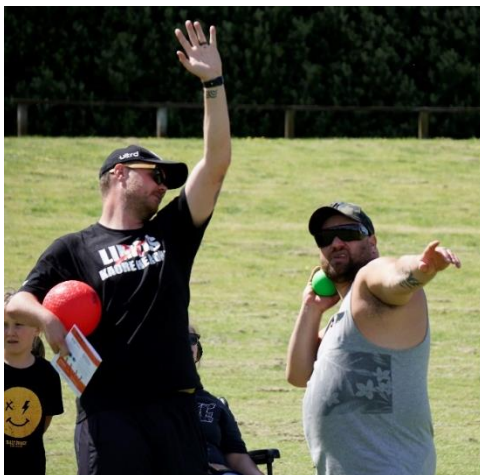
To continue the development of Para athletics, it was recommended that all Centres/Clubs and their activators have access to both the Run Jump Throw coaching manual and Adaptive Run Jump Throw resource prior to any online seminar and practical training sessions. This would give activators an opportunity to familiarise with the materials and then discuss scenarios online. Athletics NZ could also consider allocating tasks for activators to plan, prepare and adapt for ahead of the practical training sessions. Following the pilot period, the continued engagement between Centres/Clubs and Parafeds and similar organisations was also encouraged to foster joint capability and participation growth.

To build on the positive participant experiences, Centres/Clubs were asked to consider the drop-off rates when moving toward competitive event-based training. Anecdotal feedback from families of disabled and non-disabled participants suggested that they wanted a choice to have Run Jump Throw activities continue to take place over and above event-based training to continue building on their fundamental skills. It was also noted that Centres/Clubs utilising youth club members as activators energized and strengthened the athletics community. However, the challenge was for Centres/Clubs to coordinate session times where they could assist without interfering with their own athletics training session and commitments.

Due to mixed reviews for the online seminar, it is recommended that Athletics NZ take a regional approach to consider the variety of audiences that might require education and training. Non-athletics representatives want to learn more about the structure and contents of Run Jump Throw, along with the skills to plan a session. In contrast, athletics representatives want to learn more about inclusive practices and activity adaptations for the sport. Although having an online seminar was useful to connect people from different regions together, not surprisingly, a full day of practical training comprising of inclusion and sport-specific themes seemed to be the preferred way. It was thought that time could also be allocated prior to a practical training session to

explore what a typical club session looks like and discuss what adaptations and plans could be implemented to maximise accessibility and inclusion in each environment.

Each Parafed and similar organisation took the opportunity to consult and inform organisations within the disability, education and health sectors about the Adaptive Run Jump Throw programme. Marketing templates created are available and can be used by any organisation promoting Adaptive Run Jump Throw in the future. However, a more consistent approach could be applied to drive the messaging on social media to help more disabled people become aware of and be presented with the opportunity to participate. It was recommended that all Parties consider ‘tagging’ stakeholder organisations (new or known) to maximise reach and ‘pinning’ social posts for a specific period to avoid being submerged under other communications over time.



*“The programme and relationships hold more credence and strength working in partnership with Athletics New Zealand and Paralympics New Zealand. The marketing and promotional templates were also useful and looks better with nationwide branding.”*

*Image left: An activator encourages a participant with a visual impairment to release a shot put as high and far as possible.*

## Future Developments

### Education and training

Following the national online education session combining the Halberg Foundation’s Inclusion Training and Adaptive Run Jump Throw introduction, Athletics NZ’s Para Athletics Lead anticipates using a similar approach to training new activators in other regions in the future. Another opportunity identified following the pilot was for Centres/Clubs to offer LevelUp modules to activators as part of furthering their professional development post-pilot. (Note: LevelUp is series of online modules for coaching disabled athletes launched by PNZ in August 2023). The Lead also included LevelUp on their 2024 work plans for coach development.

### Marketing and communications

To leverage the pilot’s momentum, PNZ has requested the Adaptive Run Jump Throw resource be published within the Coaching Resources section of Athletics New Zealand’s website, while LevelUp could also be shared within the Further Reading & External Education section.

### Other collaboration opportunities

Athletics New Zealand is interested in leading similar developments and implement learnings from this pilot in Canterbury, Otago, Taranaki, Tasman, and Wellington. In addition, Athletics New Zealand has begun introducing running frames across a number of regions and will seek to understand the demand across New Zealand and work with PNZ to lead a collective funding application for regions in need for this equipment.

This pilot has also fostered engagement and discussions between Hawke's Bay Gisborne Centre and Disability Sport & Recreation Hawke's Bay to offer a similar programme in late 2024. Athletics Whangarei has expressed interest in supporting the development of Adaptive Run Jump Throw further north in the region with Parafed Northland. Athletics Southland has committed to support Invercargill Athletics Club on integrating disabled participants into 2024 sessions.

### Enhanced operating approach

The Para athletics pilot has prompted the importance of identifying and understanding the different types of regional sport environments that exist and how inclusion might be enabled sustainably in those environments. This has influenced the operating approach for PNZ's regional community Para sport pilot 3 with Table Tennis New Zealand.



*Image above: Two participants high five each other in a relay run on an athletics track.*