



# Handbook on Strategic Management of National Olympic Committees







# Handbook on Strategic Management of National Olympic Committees – Strategic tools to handle the complex future

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- National Olympic Committee of Belgium (BOIC)
- National Olympic Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina (OCBiH)
- National Olympic Committee of Cyprus (COC)
- National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF)
- National Olympic Committee of Greece (HOC)
- National Olympic Committee of Italy (CONI)
- National Olympic Committee of Liechtenstein (LOC)
- National Olympic Committee of Lithuania (LNOC)
- National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of the Netherlands (NOC\*NSF)
- National Olympic Committee of Slovakia (SOSC)
- National Olympic Committee of Türkiye (TOC)
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# Chapter 1

## Organisation of the Olympic Sports World

1.1

IOC as Leader of the Olympic Movement

1.2

Role of NOCs in the Olympic Movement

1.3

Good Governance at NOCs

1.4

Current and Future Challenges for NOCs

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# Introduction to the Handbook

The world is changing at an unprecedented pace, amidst ever stronger disruptions. “Change or be changed” (Bach, 2013) is the motto which means that strategic management is needed to keep track of changes to an organisational environment. The Olympic Movement, led by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), established Olympic Agenda 2020, and extended it to Agenda 2020+5 to capture current challenges, such as digitalisation, attracting the youth, or strengthening solidarity.

In response to the new and complex challenges facing society, National Olympic Committees (NOCs) must act strategically; for example, by developing professional and sustainable action plans. A proactive and creative mindset is essential. This can be realised through increasing partnerships or cooperations with stakeholders from government agencies to the private sector. The work with stakeholders, communications, and public affairs becomes increasingly important. This handbook covers the most important topics of the ERASMUS+ (2020-2022) “RINGS” project (Road towards Innovative Governance of NOCs and Grassroots Sport organisations). A long version with academic citations and deeper explanations is provided in our open access *Guidebook*. The *Guidebook* follows the content and structure of this handbook, thus you can find the respective chapters quickly and easily.

Over the past decade, it has become clear that many Sport organisations do not have a good governance structure, as was

covered in the previous ERASMUS+ (2015-2016) “SIGGS” project (Support the implementation of good governance in sport). Both projects, led by the EU Office of European Olympic Committees, show that it is also essential that NOCs demonstrate high standards of governance, in order to maintain confidence in their activities and to protect the integrity of the Olympic Movement.

NOCs should draw the right and wise conclusions from the many current changes, and then aim to turn the challenges and inherent threats into opportunities. This handbook aims to assist in identifying changes and providing tools to implement them, as well as analysing the situation and the respective NOC, in order to enable the various boards and managers to identify opportunities by avoiding threats and minimising risks. To do so, an NOC should plan for its future. The IOC started that initiative by launching the Olympic Agenda 2020+5, based on the feedback it received from its many stakeholders, including the NOCs.

Since every NOC has a different organisational and communicational culture, as well as different issues and challenges, each one has to adapt the tools, processes, and cases that are presented in this book to its particular needs and requirements. Strategic planning will help to successfully realise the goals of the NOCs.

## ***Strategic Planning in a Nutshell***

Strategic planning is widely used by organisations, as it is an integral part of strategy. It has several advantages that will:

1. provide a clear, coordinated, and prioritised focus for your NOC;
2. engage and inspire external stakeholders of your NOC;

3. motivate NOC staff by providing a clear purpose for each activity.

Strategic planning helps to position an NOC, through prioritising its use of resources according to identified goals, as set out in its statutes, in an effort to guide its direction and development over a period of time. After the planning, strategic management refers to the implementation of a strategic plan that is designed to achieve long-term goals, and the allocation of the necessary resources to meet these goals.

In an environment that is changing at an increasingly faster rate, strategic thinking and action have, in turn, become increasingly important. These factors have been adopted by public and not-for-profit organisations to enable them to successfully adapt to future changes. In this handbook, the aim is to use the best of these adoptions, and in a particular way that would best fit to the Olympic sport system, specifically the NOCs. In accordance with the work of authors such as Robinson and Minikin (2011), we aim to develop the capacity for strategic planning in Olympic sports organisations.

### ***Practical Issues Offered in this Handbook***

This handbook offers many practical applications, recommendations, and training sessions via workshops and case studies. The workshops should be adopted to each of the NOC's particular needs and specific culture. Case studies will end with questions that shall direct you to the issues which are worthy of reflection.

In this book we offer the following formats:

Illustrations:

→ These are best practices from other NOCs, that are used to illustrate good

solutions. Here, you can learn from other experiences, bearing in mind the different culture, different professional environment, and different organisational development of the NOC.

Case studies:

→ These are provided for training purposes. Besides describing a particular case, they also include questions or study activities.

Workshops:

→ These are proposed activity units where the processes are explained in a "hands on" way, and in detail.

Recommendations:

→ Whenever an NOC had found a solution to a problem that could, potentially, be copied, we provide it as a recommendation.

Fact boxes:

→ These contain important explanations, or definitions of terms and facts.

Tool box:

→ These provide you with a short description and the purpose of each strategic tool that is used.

This handbook cannot give assistance concerning which tool and which recommendation are most important to a particular NOC, because they depend solely on the development of an NOC, and on which assessments an NOC has already achieved in the past.

In the literature there are many models for strategic planning. If you would like to learn more about the different types of strategic planning models, please read our *Guidebook*.

In the following, we aim to give some orientation about different Strategic Planning

Models. We base our outlines on the work of Kriemadis and Theakou (2007).

The following models provide a range of alternatives from which NOCs might select an approach and begin to develop their own strategic planning process. An NOC might choose to integrate the models, e.g., using a scenario model to creatively identify strategic issues and goals, and then an issue-based model to carefully strategise, in order to address the issues and reach the goals.

All tools explained below will be described in detail in this handbook.

### ***1st Model - Basic Strategic Planning***

This very basic process is typically followed by NOCs that are extremely small, too busy, and have not done much strategic planning before. The process might be implemented in the first year of strategic planning to get a sense of how planning is conducted, and then embellished in later years with more planning phases and activities to ensure a well-rounded direction for the NOC. Planning is usually carried out by the NOC Executive Board or General Secretary. The basic strategic planning process includes:

1. Identify the purpose (mission statement) – This refers to the statement(s) that describe(s) the NOC's basic purpose. The statement(s) will change somewhat over the years – e.g., based on Agenda 2020+5.
2. Select the goals the NOC must reach if it is to accomplish its mission – Goals are general statements about what the NOC needs to accomplish to meet its purpose or mission, and address major issues

facing the NOC (special circumstances).

3. Identify specific approaches or “must-do” changes that have to be considered in order to reach each goal. Particularly, by more closely examining the external and internal environments of the NOC (e.g., athletes' representation).
4. Identify specific action plans to implement each strategy – These are the specific activities that each major function (for example, a specific department, etc.) must undertake to ensure it is effectively implementing each strategy. Objectives should be clearly worded, to the extent that people can assess whether or not the objectives have been met.
5. Monitor and update the plan – Planners regularly reflect on the extent to which the goals are being met, and whether action plans are being implemented. Perhaps the most important indicator of success of the NOC is positive feedback from the NOC's main stakeholders.

### ***2nd Model - Issue - Based (or Goal-Based) Planning***

NOCs that begin with the “basic” planning approach described above often evolve toward using this more comprehensive and more effective type of planning. The following depicts a rather straightforward view of this type of planning process, but an NOC may not undertake all of the following activities for every Olympiad.

1. External/internal assessment to identify “SWOT” (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats).
2. Strategic analysis to identify and prioritise major issues/goals.

3. Design major strategies (or programmes) to address issues/goals.
4. Design/update vision, mission, and values (some NOCs may do this first in planning).
5. Establish action plans (objectives, resource needs, roles, and responsibilities for implementation).
6. Record issues, goals, strategies/programmes, updated mission and vision, and action plans in a Strategic Plan document, and attach SWOT, etc.
7. Develop the 4-year Operating Plan document.
8. Develop and authorise budgets for year one and for the entire Olympiad.
9. Conduct the NOC's year-one operations and also plan the further 3 years.
10. Monitor/review/evaluate/update the Strategic Plan document.

### ***3rd Model – Alignment Model***

The overall purpose of the model is to ensure strong alignment among the NOC's mission and its resources to effectively operate the NOC. This model is useful for NOCs that need to fine-tune strategies or find out why those strategies are not working. An NOC might also choose this model if it is experiencing a large number of issues around internal efficiencies. Overall steps include:

1. The planning group outlines the NOC's mission, programmes, resources, and needed support.
2. Identify what is working well and what needs adjustment.
3. Identify how these adjustments should be made.
4. Include the adjustments as strategies in the strategic plan.

### ***4th Model – Scenario Planning***

This approach might be used in conjunction with other models, to ensure that planners truly undertake strategic thinking. The model may be useful, particularly in identifying strategic issues and goals.

1. Select several external forces and imagine related changes which might influence the NOC, e.g., change in regulations, demographic changes, etc. (see chapter on challenges).
2. For each change in a force, discuss three different future organisational scenarios (including best case, worst case, and OK/reasonable case) which might arise with the NOC as a result of each change. Reviewing the worst-case scenario often provokes strong motivation to change the NOC.
3. Suggest what the NOC might do, or potential strategies, in each of the three scenarios, to respond to each change.
4. Planners soon detect common considerations or strategies that must be addressed to respond to possible external changes.
5. Select the most likely external changes to affect the NOC, e.g., over the next three to four years, and identify the most reasonable strategies the NOC can undertake to respond to the change.

### ***5th Model – “Organic” (or Self-Organising) Planning***

Traditional strategic planning processes are sometimes general-to-specific or cause-and-effect in nature. For example, the processes often begin by conducting a broad assessment of the external and internal environments of the NOC, conducting a strategic analysis (SWOT analysis), narrowing down to identifying and prioritising issues, and then developing specific strategies to address the specific issues.

Another view of planning is similar to the development of an organism, i.e., an “organic” or self-organising process. Certain cultures, e.g., Native American Indians, might prefer unfolding and naturalistic “organic” planning processes more than traditional linear mechanistic processes. Self-organising requires continual reference to common values, dialoguing around these values, and continued shared reflection around the system’s current processes. The general steps include:

1. Clarify and articulate the NOC’s cultural values. Use dialogue and story-boarding techniques (see also the chapter on Mission development).
2. Articulate the group’s vision for the NOC.
3. Assess on an ongoing basis, e.g., once every quarter, dialogue about what processes are needed to arrive at the vision, and what the group is going to do know about those processes.
4. Continually remind yourself and others that this type of naturalistic planning is never really over with respect to any stage, and that, rather, the group needs to learn to conduct its own clarification process regarding values, using dialogue/reflection, and an update process.
5. Be extremely patient.
6. Focus more on learning and less on method.
7. Ask the group to reflect on how the NOC will portray its strategic plans to stakeholders etc., who often expect the “linear mechanistic” plan formats.





## Chapter 1

# Organisation of the Olympic Sports World

### 1.1 IOC as Leader of the Olympic Movement

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) was founded by Baron Pierre de Coubertin in Paris on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1894, and has been headquartered in Lausanne since 1915. Today, the IOC is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) in the legal form of an association under Swiss law, with an explicitly pro-social ambition to promote education and peace, thus ensuring its moral legitimacy. With the help of strong commercialisation and digitalisation, the IOC promotes Olympism, which is enshrined in seven Fundamental Principles of Olympism in the Olympic Charter. Principle 3 defines the idea and ownership, and thus the cognitive legitimacy, of the Olympic Movement and Olympic Games:

*"The Olympic Movement is the concerted, organised, universal and permanent action, carried out under the supreme authority of the IOC, of all individuals and entities who are inspired by the values of Olympism. It covers the five continents. It reaches its peak with the bringing together of the world's athletes at the great sports festival, the Olympic Games" (IOC, 2021, 8).*

From 2017 to 2021, the IOC generated USD7.6 billion from the Olympic Games. Of this, 10% remain for IOC's organisational needs, 21% goes to NOCs, and 69% is passed on to other IOC-recognised organisations of the Olympic Movement. The Games are a major source of funding for

the Olympic Movement. However, the money also ensures that the IOC has its practical legitimacy, and thus its power in the governance of world sports. This has to be considered in any strategic consideration.

The Olympic Movement comprises the majority of the organisations in world sport, and at its core it consists of

- 1) the IOC as the leader of the movement,
- 2) 40 International Sports Federations (IFs), and
- 3) 206 National Olympic Committees (NOCs).
- 4) Summer and Winter Olympic Games (OCOGs, Organising Committees for the Olympic Games), and
- 5) Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in summer and winter.
- 6) the International Paralympic Committee,
- 7) recognised IFs, whose sports may, at some time in the future, be included in the Olympic programme.
- 8) 60 other recognised organisations (e.g., Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF), or simply the International Olympic Academy (IOA), and the International Pierre de Coubertin Committee (CIPC)).

All of the organisations that are recognised by the IOC (Fig. 1), and which represent the Olympic Movement, must follow the duties for their organisation, as written in the IOC Statutes (Olympic Charter), in return for the money and other benefits that they receive.

**Fact box: Olympic Charter**

Every organisation of the Olympic Movement is guided by the Olympic Charter. That is, the codification of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism, Rules, and Bye-laws that are adopted by the IOC. It governs the organisations, actions, and functioning of the Olympic Movement and establishes the conditions for the staging of the Olympic Games.

The Olympic Charter serves three main purposes:

- as a basic instrument of a constitutional nature (Fundamental Principles and essential values of Olympism).
- as statutes for the IOC.
- it defines the main reciprocal rights and obligations of the main organisations of the Olympic Movement (IOC, IFs, NOCs, OCOGs), as all of them are required to comply with the Olympic Charter.

This practically means that all of these organisations must bring their statutes and activities in line with the Olympic Charter, in order to remain recognised. However, each IF and NOC retains its autonomy in the governance of its sport and territory.

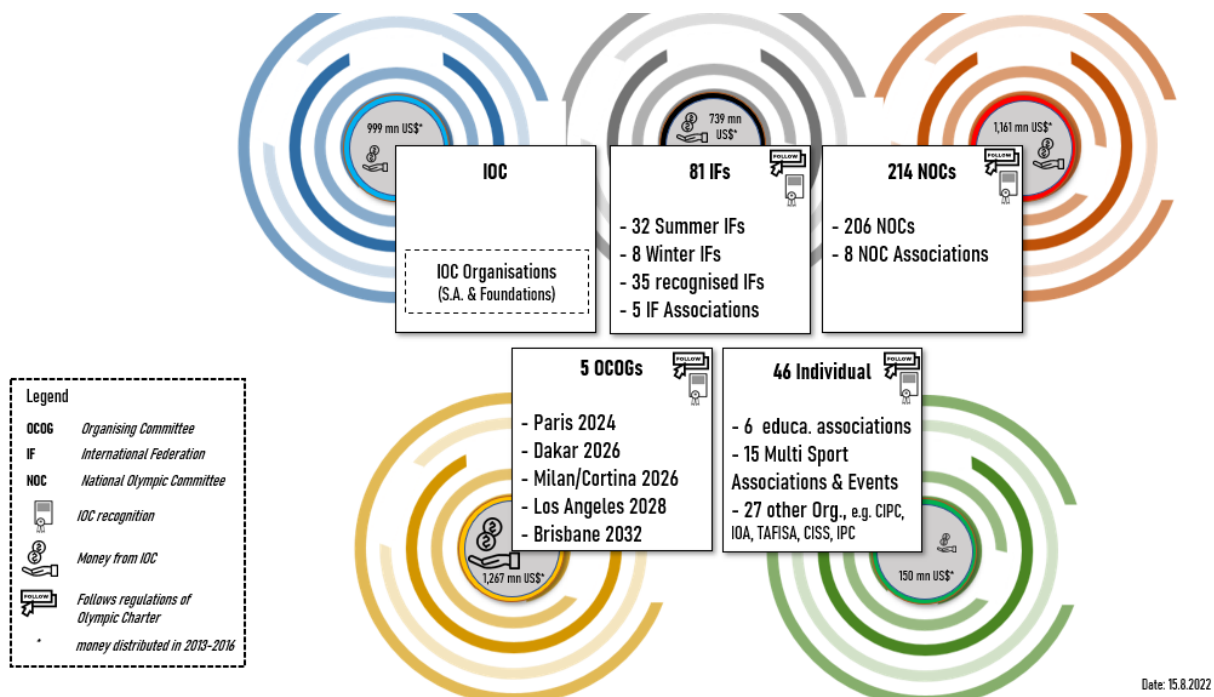


Fig. 1: Organisations of the Olympic Movement financed by the Olympic Games

## 1.2 Role of NOCs in the Olympic Movement

The NOCs are the representatives of Olympism within their respective territories, and play a vital role in spreading the Olympic values and the work of the Olympic Movement around the world. Their

functions include preparing athletes and teams for the Olympic Games, developing sport at

all levels, training sports coaches and administrators, and creating Olympic

educational programmes. However, the last function can also be taken over by National Sport Federations or governments, e.g., in Türkiye this role is undertaken by the Ministry of Youth and Sports (government), to whom all the NFs are affiliated.

NOCs are *not-for-profit (private)* or *non-profit (public)* organisations. They all must be non-governmental, as required by the Olympic Charter, and they must also be legally organised as a non-profit/not-for-profit organisation, where the majority of member votes are from the Olympic National Sports Federations. The choice of the legal form has an influence on strategic planning, as it can limit or extend the number of activities.

If you would like to learn more about the different types of NOCs (public non-profit NOC, private not-for-profit NOC or for-profit organisations) please read our *Guidebook*.

#### Illustration: Change of legal form

The Hellenic Olympic Committee recently changed from a public to a private not-for-profit organisation. The reasons for that can be a lower influence of the government on the one hand, but also a better possibility to get private financing, on the other.

### 1.2.1 Duties and Rights of NOCs

In NOCs, the Executive Boards have their powers constrained by statutes and regulations which predetermine, to various degrees, not only the very purpose of the NOC but also its level of freedom to diversify or reduce a service. The primary financial driver in NOCs is not profit, but to maximise output and follow the IOC obligations, that are predefined in the statutes via the Olympic Charter within their given budget. While elements of competition exist,

cooperation is much more common, because an NOC has a monopoly position in a territory.

Via the NOCs, the IOC is territorially represented all over the world and disseminates its basic ideas, the so-called “Fundamental Principles” (IOC, 2021a, §27.2.2). The Olympic Charter contains some strict duties for NOCs.

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**Fact Box: Olympic Solidarity**

The Olympic Solidarity Commission (chaired by Dr. Robin E. Mitchell) has a special mandate and responsibility under Rule 5 of the Olympic Charter over the following programmes in support of world sport. The budget has been increased to USD590 million (2021-2024) and is divided up into 41% for world programmes (for NOCs to develop sports), 44% for continental programmes (projects of NOCs by continent), and 10% for NOCs to secure participation in the Olympic Games. The missing 5% is used for administration and technical support. This support is intended to help NOCs professionalise, create efficient structures, and organise training at various levels of performance. Thus, the IOC works very closely with all NOCs, supporting them in the development of their teams for the Olympic Games, and their efforts to promote the Olympic Movement around the world.

Besides the financial benefits, NOCs have the exclusive authority for sending athletes to the Olympic Games, or selecting interested hosts to organise the Youth Olympic and the Olympic Games. Additionally, the IOC provides substantive support by spreading the Olympic ideals and fighting against manipulation of sport events, doping, racism, etc. NOCs also get support for different projects, e.g., on

environmental protection, grassroots sports, and athlete health. Further, they receive accreditations to participate in all of the Games and all of its events (IOC Session, Olympic Forum, and Olympic Congresses). The Olympic Games and the Olympic Channel deliver media visibility to the NOCs. All of this could be considered in strategic planning.

**Fact Box: Olympic Charter, Chapter 4: NOCs**

According to the Olympic Charter, the mission of the NOCs is to develop, promote, and protect the Olympic Movement in their respective countries. The expected contribution is to

- promote the fundamental principles and values of Olympism in their countries,
- encourage the development of sport (high performance & sport for all),
- help in the training of sports administrators,
- take action against any form of discrimination and violence in sport,
- adopt and implement the World Anti-Doping Code, and
- secure medical care for, and health of, athletes.

The NOCs must preserve their autonomy and resist all pressures of any kind, including but not limited to political, legal, religious, or economic pressures. The tasks of the NOCs are framing the potential strategic planning and are, therefore, important to consider here. Their tasks are to

- constitute, organise, and lead their respective delegations at the Olympic Games,
- provide for the equipment, transport, and accommodation of the members of their delegations,
- assist the IOC regarding the protection of Olympic properties, and
- recognise national federations.

Further, it is recommended to

- regularly organise an Olympic Day to promote the Olympic Movement,
- include in their activities the promotion of culture and arts in the fields of sport and Olympism,
- participate in the programmes of Olympic Solidarity, and
- seek sources of financing in a manner which is compatible with the fundamental principles of Olympism.

### Illustration: Turkish Olympic Committee

The TOC is a non-profit, autonomous, and non-governmental civil society organisation which is made up of volunteers.

The TOC is the representative and the national constituent of the worldwide Olympic Movement in Türkiye and, as such, promotes the fundamental principles of Olympism at a national level within the framework of sports. It has the exclusive authority for the representation of Türkiye at the Olympic Games and at the regional, continental, or world multi-sports competitions that are patronised by the IOC.

As one of the most important stakeholders of Turkish sports, the TOC uses its mandate as a member of the Olympic Movement to positively enhance Turkish sport. The TOC delivers this by putting athletes first, to ensure that it does all it can to help them achieve their full potential, through providing practical, effective, and value-adding support and services to, firstly, athletes and national federations, as well as coaches, other sports officials, and technicians at every level of their sporting pathway.

The TOC also commits itself to the physical, mental, social, and emotional development of Turkish children and youth.

To inspire the children and youth through sport and Olympic values, the TOC runs various programmes, integrating sport with culture and education, and encouraging participation in physical activity for children and youth, thus expanding the universality of sport and attempting to bring it to everyone.

There is no separate sport confederation in Türkiye.

### 1.2.2 Finances of NOCs

The financial structure of NOCs provides information about indirect dependencies on national governments, sponsors, and also the payments of the IOC. The two most important financing sources for smaller NOCs are the national governments and the IOC. Sponsoring, Lottery, or NOC assets are other revenues. Revenues from

private industry (sponsors, licenses, etc.) are often bound to the use of the Olympic emblems. However, NOCs may only use the Olympic symbol, flag, motto, and anthem within the framework of their non-profit-making activities and in their territory, provided such use contributes to the development of the Olympic Movement, and does not detract from its dignity.

**Case Study: Finances of NOCs**

The chart in Fig. 2 illustrates the share of revenues of NOCs. The size of the country varies, as well as the market for sponsors. What can be seen is that the revenues roughly reflect the relations an NOC has with its supporters.

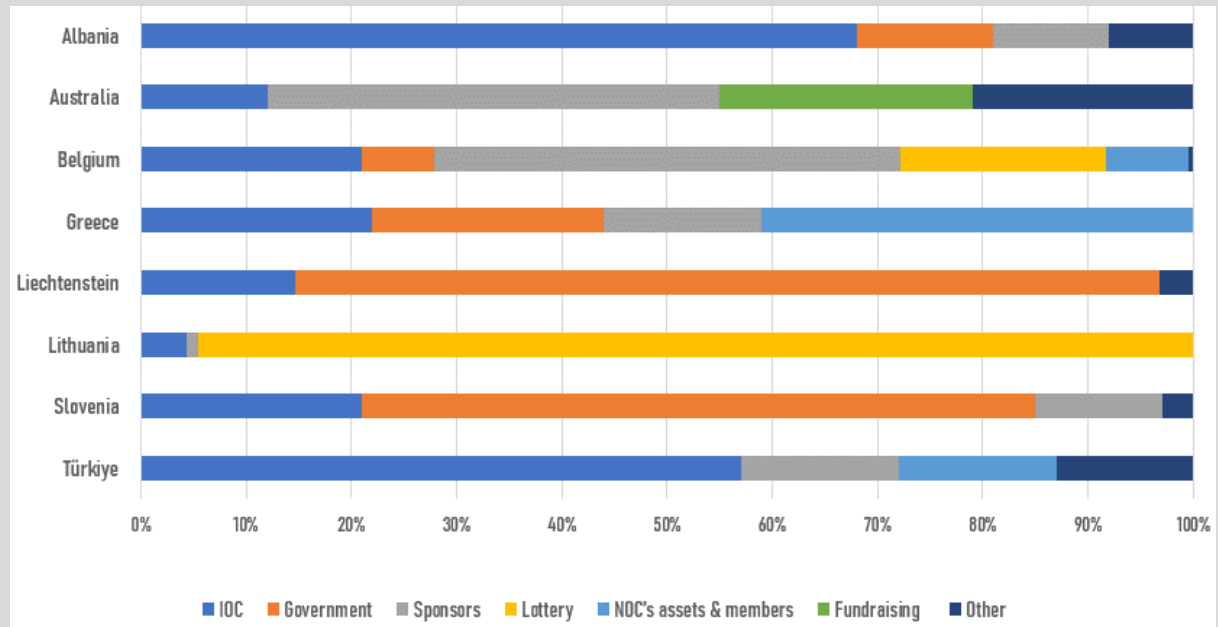


Fig. 2: Share of revenues of various NOCs in percent

Questions to reflect upon:

1. Try to explain why the IOC contribution to NOC budgets is so different. Reflect upon that in relation to your NOC.
2. The government is important in different ways regarding offering help with financing the NOCs. How is that in your country? What do you give to your government in exchange for the money?
3. Sponsors are not easy to find. What are the difficulties in your country to find sponsors? Compare your country to those countries in our case study, and judge how you perform under your particular circumstances.

The following illustrations showcase how different the governmental funding, and the relation between the NOC and the government are. These already show the different roles the government or other sport leading organisations play as stakeholders.

**Illustration: Public Funding of NOCs – a huge variety**

Due to a complex political and economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the **NOC of BiH** is registered as an Association of Citizens and, as such, it is not permanently funded by the governments, but the NOC of BiH has to apply for governmental grants under the same criteria as national sport federations and sport clubs. The NOC of BiH does not receive the funds from the government in order to distribute the financial aids. However, the NOC of BiH implements a great number of Olympic Solidarity programmes and projects, through which it helps the national sport federations in the country.

The **NOC of Belgium** has to work with three different communities that have their own political competence over sport. Thus, the NOC only receives around 7% of its income from public authorities (without taking into consideration the subsidies from the National Lottery). The funding for federations (only community-level federations) is managed directly by the executive agencies of these communities.

The **Slovak NOC** has really close collaboration with the government. Sport falls under the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport, where a special Sport Section is designated to handling all sport-related matters. Moreover, in 2019 a position of State Secretary for Sport was developed. The funding is approx. 30% from the government funding, and the amount is based on the fixed percentage, which is stipulated in the sports law. The Slovak NOC is not distributing the government money to the federations, but rather they receive the government funding directly from the government. However, they have several grant projects which are aimed at the NFs via project-based funding, whereby they can benefit from the funding which the Slovak NOC offers.

**1.2.3 Stakeholder Landscape of NOCs**

Stakeholders are all groups of people or individuals who are affected by the NOC's activities, or can influence its success. Many strategic actions which involve stakeholders and NOCs should take into consideration their power, interest, influenceability, and alignment with each NOC project (see stakeholder analysis). Many initiatives will only be successful when the

NOC cooperates successfully with stakeholders because, often a value is only created when both involve their resources (value co-creation). In other words, strategic planning involves cooperation with stakeholders in order to create the value.

The following case study addresses many stakeholders, and illustrates how a collaboration of them creates value through Olympic Day.



### Case Study: Olympic Day – Digital 22nd-26th June 2021

Every year, more than 140 countries participate in Olympic Day. From South Africa to Norway, and from Canada to Australia, millions of people celebrate Olympic values. Olympic Day marks the founding day of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on 23rd June 1894, and all National Olympic Committees are encouraged to participate.

What is special about Olympic Day is that it combines sport and movement with Olympic values. Under the motto of “Move”, “Learn”, and “Discover”, people of all ages can try out a wide range of sports, meet sports stars, and take part in hands-on, and many entertaining, activities related to the fascination of the Olympics. The organiser of Olympic Day in Germany is the German Olympic Academy (on behalf of the German Olympic Sports Confederation, DOSB).

Sports students at the University of Leipzig are looking into Olympic Day 2021 as part of a project.

What could Olympic Day in Germany look like in the future? What creative approaches are there to enable its implementation, even in the current pandemic situation? At the University of Leipzig, 28 sports students presented their answers to these questions to a jury of the German Olympic Academy (DOA) and the University of Leipzig.

As an international day of exchange and movement, Olympic Day combines Olympic Values and an extensive sports, information, and exercise programme. However, the Covid-19 pandemic situation of 2020/21 made it almost impossible to implement Olympic Day as a live event for the second year in a row. The University of Leipzig students took up this current challenge, and dealt with how a comprehensive Olympic Day concept for Germany could look. In addition to creative solutions for times with limited contact opportunities, important criteria for the jury were clear visions and goals, as well as realistic financial and marketing plans.

The groups chose contemporary formats that are centralised and decentralised, as well as purely digital or hybrid, for a possible implementation of Olympic Day. Ideas ranged from an Olympic Family Day, to a school competition. The international motto of Olympic Day, “Move, Learn, Discover”, was taken up and imaginatively considered in the respective concepts. Theoretical workshops, practical (digital) sports activities, and the Olympic Run were the common thread throughout the concepts of the individual groups for Olympic Day. The target groups for the implementation of the project varied, from children and young people, to parents and senior citizens. In addition, the individual groups focused on different locations such as Munich, Leipzig, and Frankfurt.

Questions to reflect upon:

1. Besides the DOA (DOSB), which other stakeholders were involved in the plan of Olympic Day?
2. Using a brainstorm process, consider which resources were involved at Olympic Day, from the respective stakeholder groups.
3. Discuss why the value of Olympic Day is only given when it gets co-created by several stakeholders

Figure 3 illustrates the various stakeholders (interest groups and partners) of an NOC, which can be internal and external.

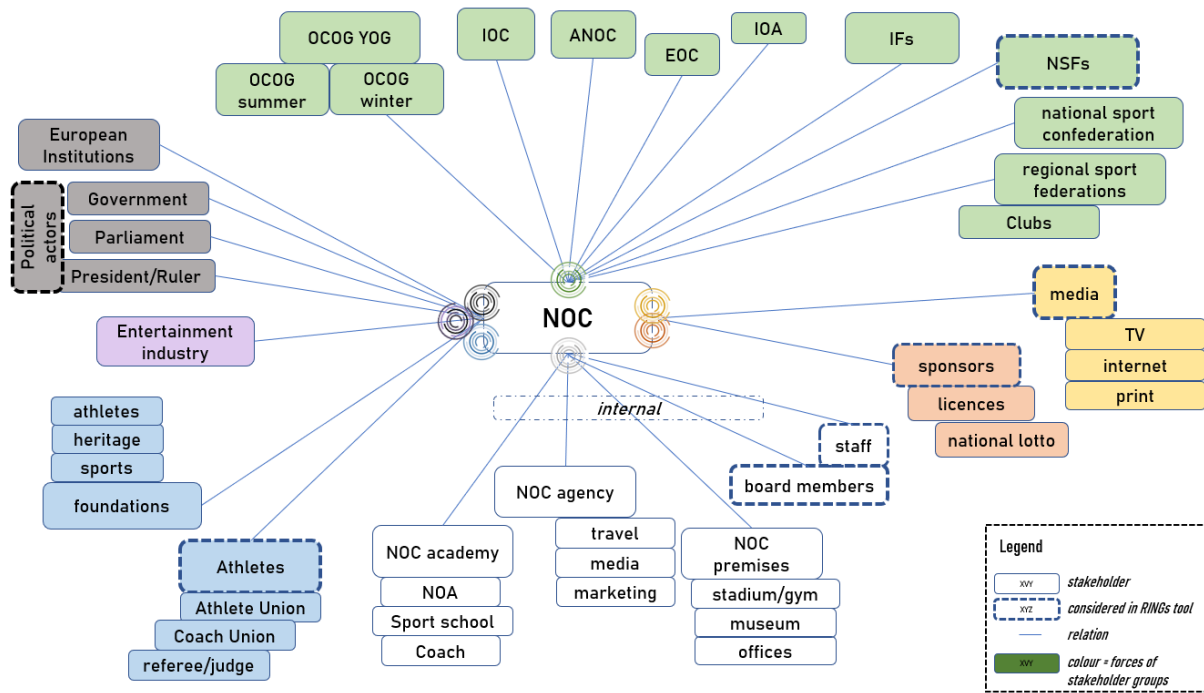


Fig. 3: Stakeholder Landscape of NOCs

The RINGS Project contains 10 main stakeholder groups which are the most important for NOCs. Political actors, athletes, member organisations, NOC board, staff, media, sponsors, NGOs, and other actors in sport and international umbrella organisations (marked in Fig. 3).

Figure 3 contains six forces.

1. Relations among the Olympic Movement (green)
2. Sport media corporations (yellow)
3. Sponsors and other commercial partners (orange)
4. Athletes, coaches, fans, and their unions and foundations supporting them (blue)
5. Entertainment industry (lilac)
6. Governments, intergovernmental organisations, and public authorities are interested, as sport is an important socio-economic phenomenon. They often (but not always) finance the NOC (e.g., the Liechtenstein NOC extensively, but

the Türkiye NOC not at all) (grey colour).

The force missing here is internal (white colour), which can be board members, staff, or internally built (strongly connected) institutions. Often, that is the National Olympic Academy, internal marketing, or travel agencies owned by the NOC. Finally, NOCs sometimes have their own premises (e.g., a national stadium or an office building, is the case for the Hellenic Olympic Committee, for instance).

**Insights: Governments as Stakeholders of NOCs**

A poll among 11 European NOCs (RINGS Partners) has shown that the government is the most important stakeholder, and that it is also the most difficult to work with.



\* Spelling mistakes stem from participants

Fig. 4: Poll on the most important stakeholders of 11 NOCs

Further, the question was asked: “Currently, what are the biggest challenges for your NOC?” Of the responses, government relations are in bold type; and each NOC could only mention three most important challenges:

- 65%     **convincing the government**
- 40%     financial instability
- 35%     restructuring my NOC
- 30%     lack of monitoring the success of efforts
- 30%     no public funding
- 25%     lack of professionalisation
- 20%     people engaging in sport outside clubs
- 20%     federations losing members
- 10%     missing knowledge about how to manage change
- 10%     federations are losing government trust
- 5%     loss of reputation

**1.3 Good Governance at NOCs**

As good governance will have to be considered as a must in strategic management of NOCs, and due to the fact that it is also necessary for successful change management, this chapter will provide some basic explanation.

*“The sports movement has a special responsibility in the discussion about integrity because by definition, all sports organisations stand for the values of excellence, fair-play and respect. As values-based organisations, we have the double*

*duty to ensure that we uphold the principles of good governance in all our activities” (Bach, 2017).*

The ASOIF published its fourth review of IF Governance led by the Governance Task-force (GTF). In the context of evidence of

cases of mismanagement of major sporting bodies, the ASOIF General Assembly in 2016 mandated a Governance Task Force (GTF) to assist the summer IFs in promoting a better culture of governance, to help ensure that they are fit for purpose, or could rapidly achieve that status.

Tab. 1: Governance status of IF

Integrity Section	Min	Max	Mean	Median
Transparency	27	39	35.6	36
Integrity	16	39	29.3	28
Democracy	20	39	30.5	31
Development	11	39	29.2	30
Control Mechanisms	16	39	28.1	28

SIGGS, developed in an Erasmus+ Sport co-financed project and led by the EOC EU Office, (see Fig. 5) was designed to help the NOCs in undertaking a self-assessment of governance. It is important to note, that strategic management must consider and promote a better culture of governance. Further, the level of good governance has an effect on options and also on stakeholder relations. Good governance must be considered in strategic planning.

Strategic management involves “the use of power to direct, control and regulate activities within an organisation, and deals with high-level issues of strategy, policy, transparency and accountability” (Robinson, 2020, 18). Governance is the process of

decision-making, and the process by which decisions are implemented. An analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors (athletes, NFs, etc.), and the formal and informal structures (strategic planning, programmes, systems, etc.) that have been set in place to arrive at targets and to implement decisions.

In a slightly different way, compared to the analysis of IFs, we can consider four principles of good governance for the NOCs: 1. integrity, 2. autonomy and accountability, 3. transparency, 4. democracy, inclusivity, and participation.

**Illustration: Good Governance at NOCs**

SIGGS (<http://pointsapp.novagov.com>) is an online self-evaluation tool, which aims at providing practical guidance to NOCs and federations on the implementation principles of good governance. SIGGS 2.0 consists of an online questionnaire of 61 questions, depending on the nature of your organisation, focusing on four main principles:



By completing this online self-assessment, sport organisations can achieve an overview of their strengths and weaknesses, in terms of the implementation of these four principles, and a customised action plan, that is tailored to their specific situation.

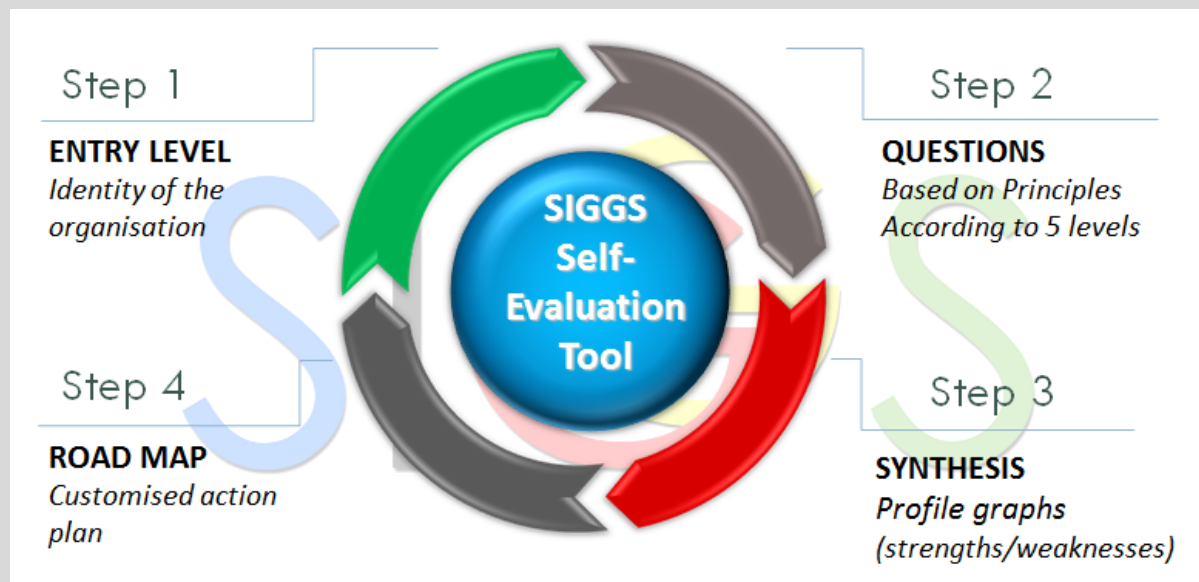


Fig. 5: SIGGS Self-Evaluation Tool

Source: EOC EU Office, [www.siggs.eu/content/information-sheet-siggs-self-evaluation-tool.html](http://www.siggs.eu/content/information-sheet-siggs-self-evaluation-tool.html)

The tool is accessible to all sizes of organisations, free of charge, and it contains multiple examples of guidance and good practices.

Table 2 shows the four principles of good governance and 20 SIGGS headlines. Those marked in red colour are of particular importance, or they directly refer to strategic planning.

Tab. 2: Principles of good governance

	Integrity	Autonomy and Accountability	Transparency	Democracy, Inclusivity, and Participation
1	Personal integrity	Autonomy	Vision and mission (2.3)	Statutes (2.3)
2	Sanctions	Accountability	Strategy (2.0)	Democratic process and elections
3	Risk management	Responsibilities and clearness of role	Availability of documents	Decision-making process
4	Human resources management	Career support for athletes/ staff/ volunteers	Internal communication and consultation	Representativeness and participation of athletes
5	Integrity of sport competitions	Financial aspects	External communication	Diversity and inclusivity

Red = content directly connected to strategic management / (x.x) = refer to chapters of this handbook

Each NOC should take a closer look at the four principles and their meaning for strategic planning.

#### Insights: Autonomy of NOCs and Cooperation with National Authorities

In the application of Recommendation 28 of Olympic Agenda 2020, the IOC now allows the NOCs and NFs at the national level, and the competent government authorities to develop a regular and constructive dialogue (i.e., memorandum of Understanding, a cooperation agreement, and/or a partnership agreement) on the basis of the Olympic Charter (IOC, 2021a, Fundamental Principle 5)

*“Recognising that sport occurs within the framework of society, sports organisations within the Olympic Movement shall have the rights and obligations of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport, determining the structure and governance of their organisations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and the responsibility for ensuring that principles of good governance be applied.”*

But, it is clear that autonomy alone is not supporting the Olympic Movement. The development of sport in a country requires harmonious collaboration, synergies, and common-sense relations between the public authorities and national sports organisations, in the framework of their missions, as both aim to develop, regulate, and manage sport.

“Responsible Autonomy” implies rights, such as the power of self-regulation, and internal governance rules, without undue external interference, etc., but also duties such as respect for the general legal framework that is applicable in the country, the rules of the IFs, the principles of good governance, etc. Thus, the NOCs and NFs do not act in isolation, outside of their particular national contexts. They are part of the local society. It is a fact that the majority of NOCs and NFs rely on the technical and/or financial support of the public authorities to pursue their activities and sport within their country.

Additionally, the public authorities support sport by having policies that are established to fight against doping, corruption, illegal betting, match-fixing, violence, racism, etc.

Sports organisations are non-governmental organisations with their own legal personality, that are governed by their own statutes, with the ability to comply with the World Anti-Doping Code and to implement it at their level, and to make provision for independent mediation and/or arbitration mechanisms to deal with sports-related disputes. All of this is in conformity with the general framework of the applicable law and the universal principles and rules of the IFs by which they are recognised. A constructive and inclusive dialogue between the government authorities and the sports organisations is needed in order to establish a consistent sports policy and a legislative framework, which are compatible with the general principles of law in the country, the minimum principles of the Olympic Movement, and the rules of the IFs.

An example of a structural cooperation with public authorities comes from the **NOC of Belgium**. It has a close cooperation with the three different language communities that have their own political competence over sport. The type of recognition and the type of cooperation differ from community to community. In terms of elite sport policy, the NOC works together with the three communities within the ABCD cooperation agreement, which sets out the principles of cooperation, and creates the formal structures for interaction between the different actors. The highest level of interaction is called the 'Olympic Platform', and it brings together the three Ministers who are responsible for Sport, and the President of the NOC.

If you would like to learn more about the four principles and what they mean for an NOC, please read our *Guidebook*.

#### Illustration: Good Governance of NOCs

Good governance is part of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism. Since 2017, the IOC has increased its efforts to strengthen its principles of good governance, promoting integrity across all NOCs. For the IOC, it is clear that good governance is important, in order to justify and constantly maintain the autonomy of sport and the Olympic Movement. According to the IOC and Robinson (2020), there are seven themes that impact on the governance of NOCs:

1. Vision, mission, and strategy
2. Structures, regulations, and democratic process
3. Highest level of competence, integrity, and ethical standards
4. Accountability, transparency, and control
5. Solidarity and development
6. Athletes' involvement, participation, and care
7. Harmonious relations with governments while preserving autonomy

## 1.4 Current and Future Challenges for NOCs

Sport is currently exposed to multiple influencing factors and challenges. It is shaped by society (e.g., conditioned by societal demand for eSports), driven by pressures for sustainability (e.g., the IOC commits all recognised sports organisations,

including NOCs, to sustainable sports), and transformed by modern technologies (e.g., use of video referees at Olympic Games since 2016). The dynamics of these influencing factors have never been as large and uncertain as they are today. In this dynamic environment, the systematic examination of future scenarios becomes an

indispensable prerequisite for the future viability of athletes, and officials of the NOCs, because for more than 20 years “sport no longer represents [...] only a system of activities that is primarily shaped by sport-related rules” (Breuer, 2003, 4).

The following brief explanations describe the challenges that NOCs are facing today. Many of them either affect the strategic plan or must be considered in strategic thinking. In 2021, the IOC released Agenda 2020+5. The trends and challenges that the IOC foresees are integrated into the explanations regarding NOCs.

#### Fact Box: Agenda 2020 and Agenda 2020+5

Olympic **Agenda 2020+5** (IOC, 2021c) builds on the results of **Olympic Agenda 2020** (IOC, 2014) (adopted in 2014). Agenda 2020 strengthened the Olympic Movement by introducing 40 changes (e.g., make the Olympic Games fit for the future; safeguard the Olympic values; and strengthen the role of sport in the society; and others). These achievements have laid a solid foundation for the future.

The 15 recommendations of Agenda 2020+5, launched by the 2021 IOC Session, emerged from an inclusive and collaborative process of proposals around the world, and from all NOCs. The new recommendations are based on “key trends”, that are identified as likely to be important in the post-COVID world, where sport and Olympic values could play a key role.

The five key trends include:

1. The need for greater solidarity within and among societies
2. The growth in digitalisation
3. The urgency of achieving sustainable development
4. The growing demand for credibility, for both organisations and institutions
5. The need to build resilience, in the face of the financial and economic consequences that will result from the COVID-19 pandemic, and which will most likely influence future priority-setting among governments and enterprises

These trends are backed by 15 recommendations, but not all of them are applicable to NOCs. They are all tangible, with key deliverables:

1. Strengthen the uniqueness and the universality of the Olympic Games
2. Foster sustainable Olympic Games
3. Reinforce athletes’ rights and responsibilities
4. Continue to attract the best athletes
5. Further strengthen safe sport and the protection of clean athletes
6. Enhance and promote the Road to the Olympic Games
7. Coordinate to harmonise the sports calendar
8. Grow digital engagement with people
9. Encourage the development of virtual sports and further engage with video gaming communities
10. Strengthen the role of sport as an important enabler for the UN Sustainable Development Goals
11. Strengthen the support given to refugees and populations affected by displacement
12. Reach out beyond the Olympic community
13. Continue to lead by example in corporate citizenship
14. Strengthen the Olympic Movement through good governance
15. Innovate revenue generation models



The challenges presented here may be the reason for change and must, therefore, be considered in strategic planning.

In the following, some challenging areas are displayed (see also ASOIF, 2019). If you would like to learn more about the different types of challenges and how they affect an NOC, please read our *Guidebook*.

#### 1.4.1 Organisational Challenges

- 1) *Each new edition of the Olympic Games will be new, modern, and demanding for NOCs*
- 2) *NOCs need good governance*
- 3) *IOC expects that NOCs develop Olympic Festivals*
- 4) *NOCs shall fight manipulations*
- 5) *Safeguard athletes and sport events*

#### 1.4.2 Financial Challenges

- 6) *Capitalism & monopoly*
- 7) *Sustainability*

#### 1.4.3 Technological Challenges

- 8) *Covering the Olympic Movement 365 days a year*

#### 9) *Digitalisation*

#### 10) *Virtual worlds and eSport*

#### 1.4.4 Political Challenges

#### 11) *Political neutrality required*

#### 12) *Supporting refugees*

#### 13) *Gender equality*

#### 14) *Solidarity and social change*

#### 15) *Autonomy of sport organisations and NOCs*

#### 1.4.5 Environmental Challenges

#### 16) *Pandemics*

#### 17) *Global warming*

The list of challenges for NOCs, as noted in this subchapter, is certainly not exhaustive. The utility of this list, is in providing an impetus to stimulate strategic discussions, to question the existing processes and projects in an NOC, and should serve to stimulate sports policy debates and promote innovation in the NOCs.

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# Chapter 2

## Strategic Management of Olympic Sport Organisations

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## Chapter 2

# Strategic Management of Olympic Sport Organisations

The following subchapters will introduce the strategic management process for NOCs. Common knowledge on strategic management in the industry was customised and tailored specifically for NOCs. This chapter aims to enable the reader to reflect upon his/her culture and NOC organisational culture, and help to sensibly fine-tune the recommendations and workshops that are provided in this handbook.

### 2.1 Strategic Management of NOCs

Strategic planning is an intelligent preparation for action, which is systematic, deliberate, continuous, widely used by NOCs, irrespective of their cultural background or size, and the formal consideration of an organisation's future course. Every NOC needs strategic planning to govern the direction in which it is headed, irrespective of whether it operates as a quasi-private entity or remains a publicly owned non-profit organisation. An NOC should know the three core questions in strategic management:

- 1) Where it stands - Ask yourself "What are we doing?"
- 2) Where it wants to go - Ask yourself "For whom do we do it?"
- 3) How it will get there - Ask yourself "How do we excel?"

Before an NOC starts to develop a strategic plan (subchapter 2.2), it must formulate a

detailed political and administrative plan. According to Robinson, that should address four key questions:

- 1) Why do you need a strategic plan?
- 2) How will you develop your plan?
- 3) How much time do you have?
- 4) What is your budget?

It is important to have influential advocates of the strategy and its development process, and to communicate both properly (see chapter 4).

### 2.2 Strategic Management Process

There are different reasons for an NOC to use strategic management to develop a strategic plan, such as the following:

- 1) internal problems (e.g., vague objectives, unclear priorities, poorly defined roles and responsibilities, and an overall lack of organisational cohesion).
- 2) external factors (e.g., the need to demonstrate good governance, please sponsors, and better communicate Olympic values)

As the environmental factors and persons are constantly changing, so does an NOC also need to adapt in order to keep up over the course of time, if it wants to avoid being changed forcibly by outside pressure(s). Therefore, each NOC board should always consider moderate change(s), in order to achieve its strategic plans/aims. In what follows, the nine steps of strategic management, according to Bryson, are reorganised into five phases (Fig. 6). Then, we can start to draw up an NOC strategic plan (subchapter 2.4).

**Toolbox: Vision & Mission**

This tool helps to find a good vision and mission statement, which is the founding structure of any strategic management process. The vision statement describes the goal and the reason why your organisation wants to reach it. The mission statement describes which path and which direction will be taken to achieve this goal.

In this section, an overview of the Strategy Change Cycle is given. The nine-step process adopted from Bryson explains the strategic management of NOCs, and contains five general phases (the RINGS in Fig. 6) with which to provide hands-on recommendations. The nine steps are:

1. Initiate a strategic planning process for any challenge the NOC has adopted.
2. Check the NOC mandate for the project area.
3. Reflect the project towards the current vision and mission of the NOC.
4. Diagnose the external and internal environmental factors, in order to identify the strengths and weakness of the NOC, and the opportunities and threats from those environmental factors.
5. Identify the strategic issues facing an NOC.

6. Formulate a strategic plan.
7. Review the strategic plan and develop an implementation plan.
8. Implement the project through change management.
9. Monitor the change process, and then reassess the situation.

**2.2.1 Phase 1 – the BLUE RING: Prepare & Start**

First, the NOC identifies the problem areas for which it wants to develop a strategic plan (project). The project can be about the current challenges (subchapter 1.4), topics related to IOC Agenda 2020+5, or other issues.

Implementing a precise definition of the purpose of the strategic plan (project) is important. Then, a steering team must be set up, and the members must fully understand the decision-making structures

**Illustration: Liechtenstein Strategy Process**

The NOC of Liechtenstein started its strategic process in 2014 with a situation analysis. Here, the answer to “Why do we need a strategic plan?” was developed. Then, in 2016, the NOC defined its strategic plan for 2017-2020. Before implementing the plan, goals were set on the basis of the vision and mission (see subchapter 2.3). Actions were defined to achieve the goals, resources were allocated, and a four-year plan was prepared. But the NOC learned that two important actions were not addressed in this early phase – the involvement of stakeholders, and a stakeholder (external) evaluation of the plan. Thus, the lessons learned from the entire strategic process were:

1. Analyse the initial situation before you start planning.
2. Aim to foresee the future, or imagine the future you would wish to achieve – that is, set your goals.
3. Organise or provide resources to achieve those goals – but be as realistic as you possibly can.
4. Plan your actions in detail and over a long period of time – changes can take time.
5. Determine and integrate your stakeholders – consider their power and alignment impacting on your changes.
6. Constantly rethink and evaluate your strategy and your actions, and check whether you are still on the right track

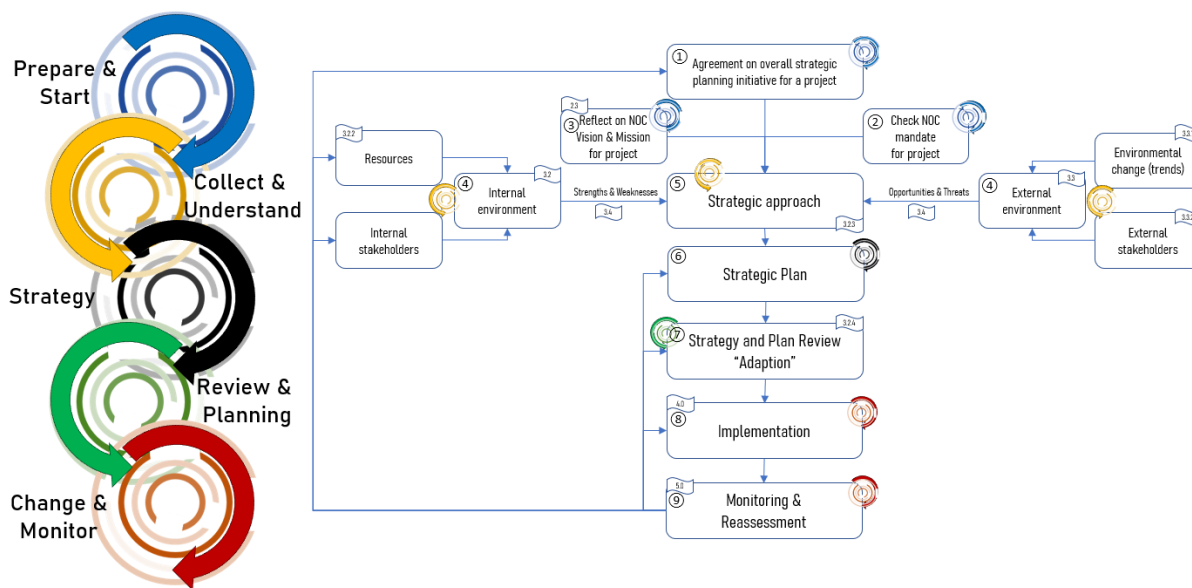


Fig. 6: 5-Phases in NOC Strategic Management related to the nine steps from Bryson

within the NOC. The team should be made up of a good mix of people, who know all about the different areas of the problem(s) (internal, external) at hand. They should collect existing internal data as well as existing strategies (if available) concerning the project. An external search can be added (e.g., seeing if other NOCs, or the EOC, or the IOC have any relevant data). In

this phase, the steering team should write a draft of a “strategy development plan”, and also reflect upon “what must stay the same”, and “what must be changed”. Here, both must be set up, a priority and an understanding of the importance of issues. To do that, an “NOC Vision” is needed (subchapter 2.3).

**Recommendation: Blue Ring - Prepare & Start**

- Identify and describe your problem or aim, as precisely as you can.
- Identify the persons that would be suitable for the steering team. They should be ambitious and/or influential people, such as communicators and decision makers.
- Write a strategy development plan - i.e., produce a Gantt Chart.
- Identify red lines to determine “what must stay the same” and “what must be changed”.

**2.2.2 Phase 2 – the YELLOW RING: Collect & Understand**

Here, the NOC needs a team that looks deeper into the current situation and the problem/project to gain an overview of actions that would be necessary for fully understanding the current situation. In other words, a diagnosis must be undertaken.

The NOC may use a brainstorming session to formulate questions that need to be answered, for a full understanding of the NOC’s current situation regarding the topic. It is important to gather all relevant information here. To this end, the NOC can use assessment questions to develop a tailored guide for consultation interviews that are aimed towards the project/issue.



After that, the NOC can conduct consultation interviews with internal and external stakeholders.

**Recommendation: Data Gathering via Consultation Interviews**

Choose enough people to gain a good breadth of opinion and knowledge.

Conduct 6-15 interviews, depending on the complexity of the issue/project, including people in charge of the project, to determine whether they are positively or negatively affected by the project.

Identify any knowledge gaps (outcome).

The NOC can also conduct benchmarking regarding the project against other NOCs and/or other national sports organisations. For benchmarking, it is recommended to consider organisations with a similar geographical and cultural background.

**Tool Box: Benchmarking of NOCs**

Benchmarking is the practice of comparing organisational processes and performance metrics to good practices from other NOCs. It is a tool with which you can measure your NOC's degree of success (in a project) against other similar NOCs, in order to discover whether there is a gap in performance that can be closed by improving your performance/processes/governance. Studying other NOCs can highlight what it takes to enhance your own NOC's efficiency and thus become a better organisation within the Olympic Movement.

In a final step, compile all findings from analysis, diagnosis, and consultation interviews, and then produce an overview of insights. With this information, a SWOT analysis (see subchapter 3.6) can be conducted. The result of the SWOT analysis is a direct link to strategy development.

**2.2.3 Phase 3 – the BLACK RING: Strategy**

This phase can be undertaken once the objectives (goals) are clear, following which, a strategy can be developed. Important stakeholders should be included by workshops, or informed via feedback loops.

In these workshops, it is necessary to develop a set of actions for each objective in the strategy. A clear ownership and a high-level timeline for each action are also needed. The actions of a strategy are, for example, targeting:

- People concerned, such as staff, athletes, etc.
- Venues, and their staff and volunteers to run the project

- Financial resources (costs and revenues) of the NOC
- Leadership, governance, and organisation
- Legal issues

As can be seen here, a strategy is composed of several strategic objectives, each addressing the different action areas. Specific criteria for setting goals and project objectives should be SMART (Drucker, 1977). To be effective, every project goal must adhere to the SMART criteria: Specific – Measurable – Attainable – Relevant – Time-bound.

**Illustration: SMART Goals for NOC Project Managers**

SMART goals can be applied to all aspects of NOC project management. To be clear, all SMART goals should be simplified into one simple sentence. In this way, it becomes a powerful tool for aligning the NOC team around a shared intention. For instance, the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) developed a “Strategy 2028” and formulated SMART goals, some of which are as follows:

By 2020, we will formulate a “Strategy for Major Sporting Events of the DOSB” in consultation with the relevant partners in the federal government, the states, and member organisations, and implement the first steps by 2022, under the responsibility of the DOSB Director of Association Development.

Together with the member organisations, we are creating at least 20% more offerings in the “Sport pro Gesundheit” [Sport for health] quality label by 2022. We are revising quality management by the beginning of 2020, and adapting it to the new framework conditions, under the responsibility of the DOSB Director of Sport Development.

By the end of 2020, we will reverse the downward trend in the number of German sports for all “Sportabzeichen” [badges] awarded each year, and increase the number of sports badges awarded annually to 900,000, again by 2022, under the responsibility of the DOSB Director of “Sport Development”.

**Case Study: NOC Liechtenstein goals prepared prior to adoption into its strategic plan**

In 2016, the NOC of Liechtenstein formulated its goals, that were driven by its vision/mission, and were divided into 5 areas, which then needed to be conveyed into actions. Here, the assignment of goals of its revised strategy 2021-2024 is shown.

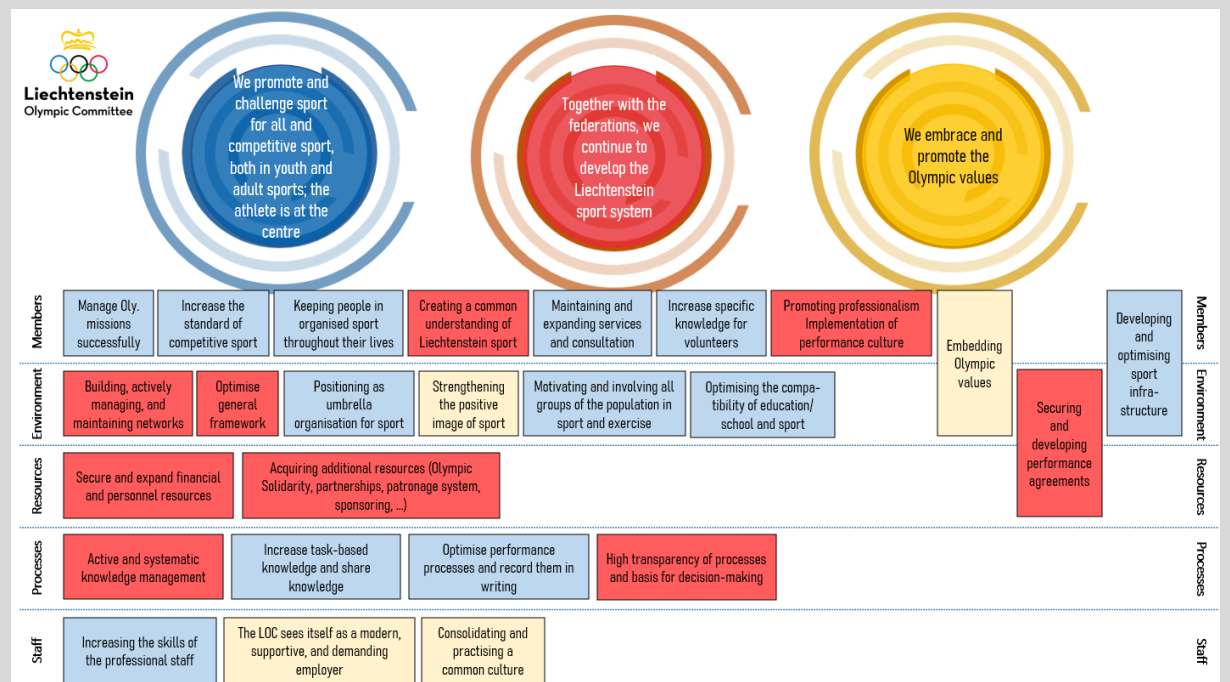


Fig. 7: Goals of NOC Liechtenstein Strategy 2021-2024

Questions to be answered:

1. Notice the overarching goals of the NOC. Do you also have these for your NOC?
2. Discuss whether all of the subgoals are assigned to the overarching goals.
3. Take some subgoals and reformulate them, by considering the SMART concept.
4. Imagine that you are the NOC Liechtenstein, and then aim at placing the subgoals from your perspective into the Action Priority Matrix (explained below).

As there are actions and SMART goals for many strategic objectives, an NOC should build priorities. To identify priorities, the NOC can use an action priority matrix.

**Toolbox: Action Priority Matrix**

This tool helps an NOC to decide upon its prioritisation of projects/activities. This is useful, because not all projects/activities have the same importance, in accordance with the NOCs mission and vision.

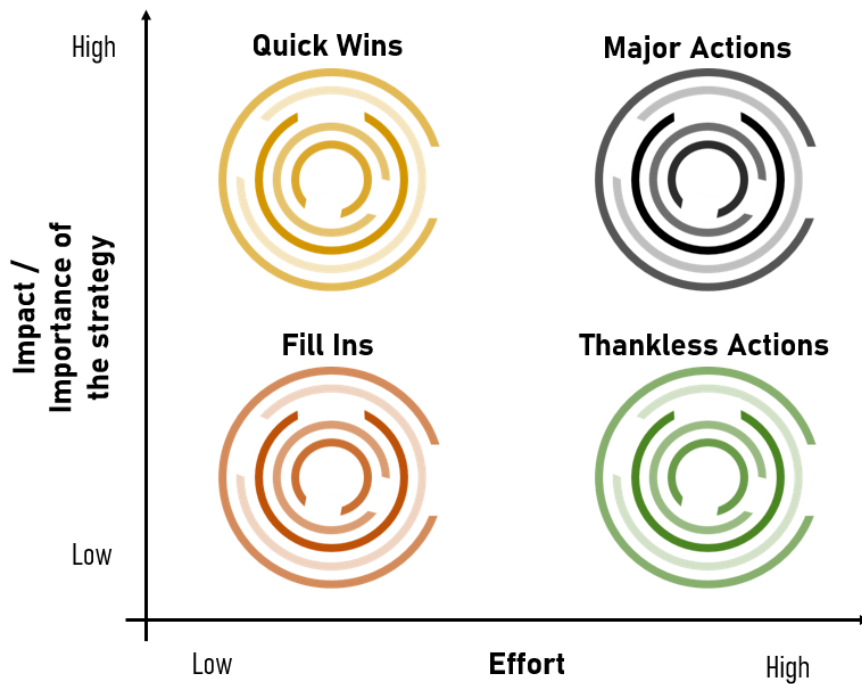


Fig. 8: Action Priority Matrix for NOCs

To use the matrix, you score tasks based, firstly, on their impact and, secondly, on the effort needed to complete them. If you would like to learn more details about the matrix, please read our *Guidebook*.

### Workshop: Strategy Development for NOCs

Strategy development workshops should have the most relevant attendees to achieve the goals. They can then facilitate a successful implementation of actions or even organisational change (explained in RING RED - Change).

A) The attendees who are needed for strategic change vary from project to project, NOC to NOC, and culture to culture. In many cases, they are in senior positions (with experience), directors, board members, and external stakeholders (e.g., delivery partners, athletes, politicians). The attendees must be relevant for the action which is discussed in the workshop. Attendees should represent those that will later be important in the change process (e.g., the leader, the enablers of change, the blockers of change).

B) Size and duration depend on the size of the project and its degree of importance. Decide between: a one-off discussion versus a series of workshops.

C) It is important to think about the potential reasons for the failure of change.

D) Prioritise actions via the action priority matrix: Develop a list of all your actions, and rate each of the actions that you need in your strategy, based on:

IMPACT: Importance of your strategy, such as number of people/stakeholders reached, other benefits received

EFFORTS: resources used, such as time to implement, costs, staff required

How to manage priorities

Step 1: List the major activities that you need to manage for achieving your goal.

Step 2: Score these in consultation with others on:

- i. Impact (zero for no impact and ten for maximum impact)
- ii. Effort involved (zero for no real effort [included in business as usual] and ten for maximum effort).

Step 3: Plot the activities on an "Action Priority Matrix" (Fig. above), based on your scores.

Step 4: Check if any action that has a low impact is a "must do" activity which is vital for your strategy.

Step 5: Prioritise actions appropriately, and then decide on the actions to take.

### 2.2.4 Phase 4 – the GREEN RING: Review & Planning

This phase represents the planning process of how the drafted strategy can be put into action, i.e., the so-called "action plan".

When reviewing the planned actions, it will be necessary to confirm whether or not the financial requirements can be met. The reviewing should include internal stakeholders (board members and affected members) - to review and discuss the draft strategy, and to ensure the feasibility of any actions - as well as external stakeholders (athletes, sponsors, government, etc.).

Any problematic issues that are identified must be addressed here. Consider the ac

countability and the timeline for the resolution, and address the right persons in this regard. The strategy development team should, therefore, not only identify the issues, but also rate them and develop a plan, thus aiming at resolving those issues.

A final adjustment of the strategy will be done, based on the feedback received from the internal and external stakeholders, the resolution of problematic issues, and the availability of necessary resources. The final "action plan" includes an assignment of ownership, plus prioritised and established timelines for each strategic action.

At the end of this phase, the NOC will develop the final strategy document.

**Case Study: "Strategic Plan" IOC Agenda 2020**

Started by the IOC Session in December 2014, Olympic Agenda 2020 is a set of 40 SMART Actions, whose overarching goal was to answer the challenges of outdated structures and a loss of interest in the Olympic Games. Agenda 2020 was made to safeguard Olympic values, and strengthen the role of sport in society, and is built on the three pillars of Credibility, Sustainability, and Youth.

The "strategic plan" for the IOC (and indirectly for the Olympic Movement) was formulated as Olympic Agenda 2020. The 40 separate - yet interrelated - recommendations were identified and collated through a collaborative and consultative process, involving Olympic Movement stakeholders and a panel of external experts. Since February 2014, the IOC received 1,200 ideas that were generated by 270 contributions, and 43,500 emails from various stakeholders from within the Olympic Movement, as well as from various organisations and individuals from the civil society (academics, NGOs, business, etc.). These ideas were shared with the relevant working groups. They were driven by a recognition that the world was evolving rapidly, and that the Olympic Movement had the opportunity to be an important agent of change.

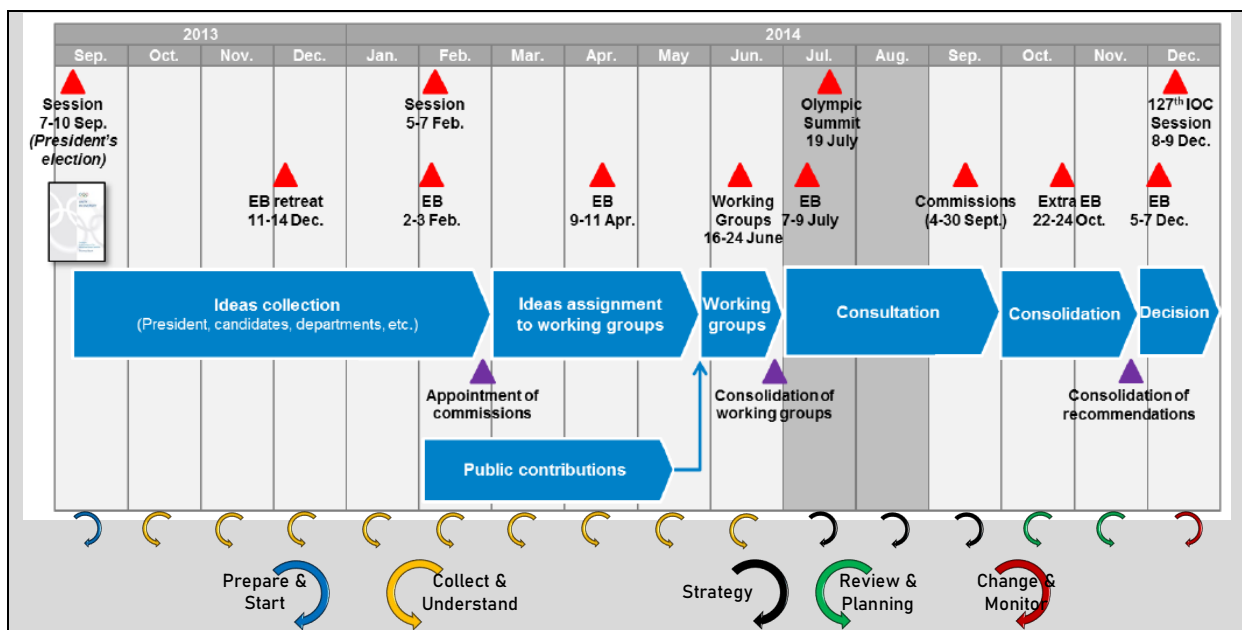


Fig. 9: Timeline of the Development of Agenda 2020

Figure 9 shows the process that was used to develop the strategic plan (phase 4), which took 15 months to build, and included a worldwide consultation process. Agenda 2020 closed in March 2021, when IOC President Thomas Bach published the "Closing Report" ahead of the 137<sup>th</sup> IOC Session. The Session voted on it, as it is an important step to formally close a strategic plan. This plan was well communicated and agreed upon by the members of the organisation.

The closing report describes in detail each of the 40 recommendations, the different activities undertaken to implement them, and the impact that all of the recommendations, both individually and together, have had on the IOC and the Olympic Movement since December 2014.

Case Study questions to be discussed:

1. Check which of the recommendations are also valid for your NOC, and to what extent you can consider the IOC action as a benchmark.
2. Judge how well the recommendations follow the SMART formulation of objectives.
3. Look at Agenda 2020+5 and discuss potential actions which your NOC may address.

### 2.2.5 Phase 5 – the RED RING: Change & Monitor

Here, the change process starts (see chapter 4), and the NOC needs to get a buy-in from all the relevant stakeholders. The main task here is to develop a plan for organisational changes, and a communication plan.

## 2.3 Setting NOC Objectives: Vision – Mission – and Working Objectives

A strategy is a clear plan that describes the path by which an NOC intends to reach its vision by fulfilling its mission. The mission defines why the organisation exists, what it aims to accomplish, and how it will proceed on its journey, while the strategy specifies the practical steps the organisation will take to achieve its vision. This chapter helps to find a good vision and mission statement, which is the founding structure of any strategic management process.

The typical deliverables from a mission, vision, and values project in NOCs would include:

- Stakeholder agreement on the mission of an organisation, resulting in renewed commitment to, and enthusiasm for, the NOC's work (the most important deliverable).
- A clear and shared picture of what the NOC will look like in four years' time (i.e., the next Olympiad) should be compelling enough to rally the commitment of the people.

After successful implementation, the NOC should monitor the ongoing strategy and constantly review/evaluate its development.

### 2.3.1 Vision

A vision is a representation of a future reality that an NOC aspires to. It thereby defines the ambition level; that is to say, the "height of a bar over which the NOC would like to jump one day" (i.e., aiming at a goal). (Chappelet & Bayle, 2005). See multiple examples in Table 3.

To establish a vision, an NOC must be very clear about the values it wants to protect and promote. Values, such as those that guide the Olympic Movement (friendship, respect, excellence), are the essence of an NOC's vision, working both as principles and as a framework that will inspire the formalisation of its objectives and the implementation of its strategic plan. The perception of Olympic values can vary by culture (see chapter 2.5). Fig. 10 shows the core values of the Olympic Movement, as tested in four cultures. Each of the value positions is described by four adjectives, giving a deeper understanding of that value. They are the essence of the NOC's vision.

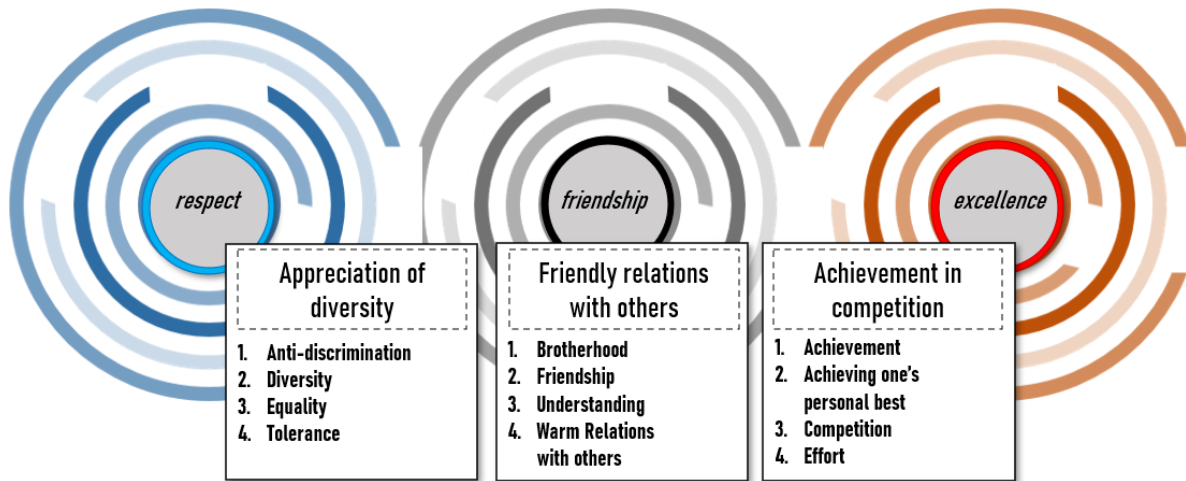


Fig. 10: Values Perceived by the Population (GER, UK, BRA, USA)

**Recommendation: Vision Statement**

Vision should be

1. Unique
2. Simple & Short
3. Memorable
4. Ambitious but Achievable
5. Inspirational
6. Rational & Emotional
7. Meaningful

**2.3.2 Mission**

Any successful strategic planning project requires that first, there has to be clarity and agreement on the NOC's mission or purpose. The mission must be agreed upon by the major stakeholders before undertaking a strategic planning process. Even though the Olympic Charter and the Olympic Movement define a large part of the mission, each NOC will apply it in its own particular way.

A mission is aspirational; therefore, it can never be fully realised. In this way, the purpose explains why the NOC does the work it does, but it does not define how that work is to be done.

Many NOCs centre their mission on the idea of sport performance and winning medals (excellence). Today, NOCs should integrate humanistic, social, and environmental concerns to reflect the values of the Olympic Movement, such as those which are formulated in Agenda 2020+5.

Workshop: Development of a Mission Statement		
This workshop takes about one hour and provides you with a mission statement.		
Steps	Action/Task	Time
Preparation	<p>Paper / Pencils / Whiteboard / Index cards</p> <p>Introduce what you will do, what a Mission is, and why it is important to have one.</p>	5 min
Storytelling	<p>Split up into several small groups of three to five people each, and make the people in each group as diverse as you possibly can.</p> <p>Each member of your small groups gets a few minutes to share a story. This question can prompt some good stories: "What does it look like when we're doing our best work?" If they do not have any story, allow them to simply make one up.</p> <p>Write details out on a sheet of paper, because you will need to share it with the larger group later.</p> <p>Look at the stories and identify and circle every phrase where a specific place or person is mentioned.</p> <p>Now, draw a square around any mention of your organisation making a difference and taking action. (It is fine for you to overlap your squares and circles.)</p> <p>Then, underline the text where something in the story changes for the better; or results from your work, for example.</p>	10-20 min
Sharing	<p>All small groups merge back into one large group.</p> <p>You, as moderator, will create a grid on a whiteboard behind you having the lines:</p> <p>"Our Cause (Who?/What?/Where?)" - then, write down the circled items</p> <p>"Our Actions (What are we doing?)" - then, write down the squared items</p> <p>"Our Impact (Changes for the better)" - then, write down the underlined items</p> <p>Have several group members share stories from their own small group. As they share, have them identify the objects, and place them on your grid (use attributes and abstract terms).</p> <p>Patterns and similarities will develop naturally - group similar ideas together, more or less.</p> <p>Name and identify the "common ideas" (Step 4.) from your stories, and label the Big Ideas.</p>	20-25 min
Craft your statements	<p>Return to your small groups.</p> <p>Write a mission statement for your NOC that incorporates the Big Ideas you identified as a large group (They should still be in a place where everyone can see them).</p> <p>All mission statements have these three elements: Cause (circled), Actions (squared), and Impact (underlined) of Big Ideas.</p> <p>Remind your group of these five factors:</p> <p>Do not worry about word choice. This is the easiest part to nit-pick and the least important for your final statement!</p> <p>Keep it short. Many of the best mission statements have fewer than 10 words.</p>	5-10 min



	<p>Keep it simple. Too many non-profits have long, flowery mission statements that sound as if they were constantly toiled over.</p> <p>Say it out loud. Does it sound awkward? Memorable? Catchy? Humanly possible?</p> <p>If no one would disagree with your statement (e.g., “make the world better” or “act with integrity”) then your statement is too generic. Do not hide behind clichés!</p>	
Sharing	<p>All small groups merge back into one large group.</p> <p>Have the moderator write down each potential mission statement for everyone to see, as each group loudly broadcasts and shares it.</p> <p>If you like, you can identify each time a Big Idea shows up. Remember: The Big Ideas can be implied – they do not have to be stated directly.</p>	5 min
A dose of vision	<p>Now you have several strong, simple mission statement possibilities. Each statement is built from the powerful stories your NOC has experienced, or hopes to make true.</p> <p>The moderator asks for volunteers to share why they think the mission you have defined is important. Why does it matter? And most of all, how do you know that you can achieve this mission together? This is the final, and most important, test.</p>	5 min
Jump	<p>Appoint a committee or final decision maker to take these mission statements and Big Ideas, and finalise the wording.</p> <p>Have the final decision maker present the final mission statement to your organisation at a later date.</p>	

After you have developed your new mission statement, the typical next steps are:

- Individually interview five to nine key stakeholders (board members, staff, and external key stakeholders, like donors, partners, government agency representatives) to assess the alignment on mission, vision, and values. If a wide divergence is observed, additional interviews may be required.
- Hold small focus groups (up to seven people) if needed, to complete the picture and to work in a similar way to that in the workshop above. Ensure that people are not in group as their bosses, so as to facilitate an open dialogue.
- Complete a mini-assessment of the clarity and alignment regarding the mission, vision, and values, and meet with the president and board members (if they are not already included in the workshop) to present the findings. If there is severe resistance and an unwillingness to hear things, then consider terminating the project.
- Design additional communications and discussions to facilitate stakeholder buy-in, and most importantly, member buy-in.

**Case Study: NOC Denmark's Vision and Mission-making Process**

The NOC of Denmark (DIF) developed its vision and mission as follows:

**Vision:** Sport must have a significant place in the lives of all Danes throughout their lives - in communities on and off the pitch, and through experiences that excite and unite Denmark.

**Mission:** DIF moves Denmark through sport, volunteering, and joy. In our many sports and diverse associations, we create great achievements and cohesion in society.

The process behind this was complex and inclusive. Lewis says the following about the Danish leadership style: "Basic Danish assumptions are generally in line with their essentially democratic stance. Leadership is by achievement and demonstration of technical competence. Leaders are expected to be low profile and benign and to consult colleagues for opinions." (Lewis, 2006, 352). This leadership style perfectly complements the communication pattern which primarily involves the examination of facts, followed by the making of a proposal. When resistance comes in from stakeholders, skilful moderations are made and the outcome is repackaged.



Fig. 11: Process of Vision and Mission Development of the NOC Denmark

Questions to be answered:

1. Explore the many stakeholders involved & reflect if these should be involved in the mission/vision process at your NOC.
2. How important is it to reflect global trends and SDGs in the mission and vision statement of your NOC?
3. Reflect upon Table 3, and determine how many NOCs have a similar vision and mission to those of Denmark.

We mention “brainstorming” several times in this handbook. Many senior NOC board members, at some point or another, experience the pain of pursuing new ideas by

way of traditional brainstorming sessions. Coyne and Coyne (2011) developed a better method, called “brainsteering,” and while it requires more preparation than traditional brainstorming, the results are worthwhile.

**Toolbox: Brainsteering**

Brainsteering is a comprehensive, research-based, tried-and-tested approach (more productive than brainstorming) that helps an NOC consistently and effectively in the creation of powerful new ideas

**Recommendation: Brainsteering to Replace Brainstorming****1. Know your NOC's decision-making criteria**

Good ideas often go nowhere because they are beyond the scope of what the NOC would ever be willing to consider. Those hoping to spark creative thinking in their teams should, therefore, start by understanding the real criteria (restrictions, limitations) which the NOC will use to make decisions about the resulting ideas.

**2. Ask the right questions**

Research shows that traditional and loosely structured brainstorming techniques ("Go for quantity – the greater the number of ideas, the greater the likelihood of winners!") are inferior to more structured approaches. The best way to provide more structure is to use questions as the platform for idea generation.

In practice, this means building your workshop around a series of "right questions" that your team will explore in small groups, during a series of idea generating sessions. The technique involves identifying questions with two characteristics: A) They should force your participants to take a new and unfamiliar perspective; B) They should limit the conceptual space which your team will explore, without being too restrictive.

It is recommended to come up with 15-20 questions for a typical workshop that is attended by about 20 people. Choose the questions carefully, as they will form the heart of your workshop. Your participants will be discussing them intensively in small subgroups during a series of sessions.

**3. Choose the right people**

The rule here is simple: pick people who can answer the questions that you are asking. Try to choose participants with first-hand knowledge.

**4. Divide and conquer**

To ensure fruitful discussions, have the participants conduct multiple, discrete, and highly focused idea generation sessions among subgroups of three to five people - no fewer, no more. Each subgroup should focus on a single question for a full 30 minutes. When you assign people to subgroups, it is important to isolate "idea crushers" in their own subgroup. These people are otherwise suitable for the workshop but, intentionally or not, they do prevent others from suggesting good ideas. They come in three varieties: 1) the boss type, 2) the indiscreet or boastful type, and 3) the subject expert type. By quarantining the idea crushers, and by violating the old brainstorming adage that "a melting pot of personalities is ideal", you will free the other subgroups to think more creatively. Your idea crushers will still be productive and, above all, they would never stop each other from speaking up.

Finally, take the 15 to 20 questions which you prepared earlier, and divide them among the subgroups - with about five questions each.

**5. On your marks! Get set! Go!**

After your participants arrive, but before they are divided into subgroups, orient them so that your expectations about what they will – and will not – accomplish are clear to them. Remember, many participants are accustomed to traditional brainstorming, where the flow of ideas is fast, furious, and ultimately shallow. The first five minutes of any subgroup's brainsteering session may feel like typical brainstorming, as people test their pet ideas or rattle off superficial new ideas. The new part is that now each subgroup will thoughtfully consider and discuss a single question for 30 minutes. No other topic should be mentioned during a subgroup's individual session.

Prepare your participants for the likelihood that when a subgroup attacks a question, it might generate only two or three worthy ideas. By anticipating that probability ahead of time, you shall surely prevent participants from becoming discouraged.

6. Wrap it up  
 Consider that a typical subgroup has produced perhaps 15 interesting ideas for further exploration. Thus, all of the 20 persons in their sub-teams have generated up to 60 ideas. One thing not to do, is to have the full group choose the best ideas from the pile, as is common in traditional brainstorming. Instead, have each subgroup privately narrow its own list of ideas to a top-rated few, and then share all of the leading ideas with the full group, in order to motivate and inspire participants. But the full group should not pick a winner. Rather, close the workshop and describe to them exactly what steps will be taken to choose the winning ideas, and how they will learn about the final decisions.

7. Follow up quickly  
 Decisions and other follow-up activities should be quick and thorough. A high-level board member should announce, before a brainstorming workshop, that a full staff meeting would be held the morning after it, in order to discuss the various ideas the group generates. To close the loop with participants, the NOC board should communicate the results of the decisions quickly to everyone involved, even when an idea gets rejected. While it might seem demoralising to share bad news with a team, it has been found that doing so actually has the opposite effect. Participants are often desperate for feedback, and eager for indications that they have at least been heard.

Tab. 3: Selection of Vision and Mission Statements of NOCs

Nation	Vision	Mission
Australia		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop, promote, and protect the principles of Olympism and the Olympic Movement in Australia in accordance with the Olympic Charter and all regulations and directives issued by the IOC;</li> <li>2. Promote, raise awareness of, and encourage participation in sport for benefits of health, longevity, fitness, skill, achievement, social interaction, well-being, others regarding exercise for all individuals in AUS;</li> <li>3. Encourage the development of sport for all for the health, wellbeing and other benefits to all individuals in Australia, and in support and encouragement of those objectives, the development of high-performance sport as the pinnacle of the benefits of sporting participation;</li> <li>4. Promote the fundamental principles and values of Olympism in Australia, in particular, in the fields of sport and education, by promoting Olympic sport and health, educational programmes at all levels of schools, sports, and physical education institutions and universities, as well as by encouraging the creation of institutions dedicated to Olympic education, such as National Olympic Academies, Olympic Museums (OMs), and other programmes, including cultural, and all things related to the OMs;</li> <li>5. Ensure the observance of the Olympic Charter;</li> <li>6. To recognise the heritage, culture, and contribution of our nation's first people, and to give practical support to the issue of indigenous reconciliation through sport.</li> </ol>
Belgium	Contribute to the image of a successful country, and share this success with eve-	Select the Belgian top athletes and send them to Olympic Games in optimal conditions, to perform to the maximum with respect for Olympic values.

	ryone by significantly increasing the number of Belgian athletes in the world top athletes (Top 8) at Olympic Games.	<p>Mobilise all the actors involved to create a 'top sports climate' in Belgium.</p> <p>Support the sports federations, members of the BOIC, in their activities.</p> <p>Promote the values of the Olympic Movement, of which the Belgian Olympic and Interfederal Committee is the representative in Belgium.</p>
Cyprus		The mission of the Cyprus N.O.C. is to encourage interest in Olympic Games and to develop, promote, and protect the Olympic Movement in Cyprus, in accordance with the Olympic Charter.
Denmark	Sport must have a significant place in the lives of all Danes throughout their lives - in communities on and off the pitch, and through experiences that excite and unite Denmark.	DIF moves Denmark through sport, volunteering, and joy. In our many sports and diverse associations, we create great achievements and cohesion in society.
Great Britain	Our vision is to inspire the nation with Olympic athletes, in the pursuit of excellence.	Our mission is to bring our country together behind a team which everyone can believe in through the power of Olympic values.
Greece		<p>The mission of the HOC is to oversee and act to ensure the development, pro-motion, and safeguarding of the Olympic Movement, the spirit of fair play, and out-of-school physical activity, in accordance with the principles of the Olympic Ideal and the traditions of the Hellenic sport. The HOC's role is:</p> <p>To supervise the Olympic Sports and cooperate with the State, as well as with the public and private bodies for the promotion of healthy sport policies.</p> <p>To encourage love for sports and respect for the spirit of sportsmanship among the young.</p> <p>To organise in cooperation with the National Federations the Olympic preparation of athletes.</p> <p>To proceed, on its sole responsibility, to the final selection of athletes, who will represent Greece at Olympic Games and Mediterranean Games.</p>
Ireland	Inspiring the nation through the success of Irish Olympic athletes by improving our Olympic performance in each cycle	Our role is to use our mandate as a member of the International Olympic Movement, to positively enhance Irish sport, Irish athletes, and the country itself.
Italy		The Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI), by authority of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), provides discipline, regulation, and management of national sports activities. CONI is a public entity, which is responsible for the organisation and strengthening of national sports, and the promotion of the maximum proliferation of sport.

Japan		As a National Olympic Committee, constituted in accordance with the Olympic Charter and the ideals of Olympism, the JOC aims to contribute to the promotion of sport by supporting the Olympic Movement, which serves the cause of preserving world peace, and developing international goodwill through sport, and by developing and strengthening athletes in Japan.
Liechtenstein		The Liechtenstein Olympic Committee (LOC) is the umbrella organisation of the federations and clubs, and the direct contact for all sports-related questions. The LOC supports and advises the organisations in their activities and developments for sport in Liechtenstein, provided that these comply with the principles of sports ethics (environment, fairness, anti-doping, anti-discrimination, etc.).
Netherlands	Our ambitions: High sports participation, excellent top sports performance	Our mission is to create optimal sports conditions for everyone: from recreational to top athletes, from disabled athletes to volunteers and fans.  The more specific mission of TeamNL is to inspire and connect the Netherlands from the achievements of TeamNL. This is how TeamNL shows that we win a lot with sports in the Netherlands.
Slovakia		Mission of SOSC is to universally contribute to development of sports in the Slovak Republic, to spread and to popularise basic principles and values of Olympism, to expand the Olympic heritage through sports, to contribute to harmonic development of a human being, mutual understanding and friendship among nations, and to deepen peaceful coexistence.
Spain	In the fulfilment of its aims, the Spanish NOC will act in collaboration with the Spanish Sports Federations affiliated to the International Sports Fed., recognised by the IOC and, where appropriate, with the other sports federations and organisations legally recognised in Spain.	The Spanish Olympic Committee aims to develop and perfect the Olympic movement and sport, to stimulate and guide its practice, and to prepare the activities that will be represented in Olympic Games, as well as to strengthen the Olympic ideal through the appropriate dissemination of its spirit and philosophy. The Spanish Olympic Committee is committed to participating in actions in favour of peace, and the promotion of women in sport. It also undertakes to participate with its athletes in Olympic Games, to defend and encourage the promotion of sports ethics, to fight against doping in accordance with the rules of the World Anti-Doping Code, and to take environmental issues into account in a responsible manner.
Türkiye	Creating a winning Olympic nation in which sports and Olympic values become indispensable parts of the lives of every citizen	Instilling the spirit of Olympism in our people and promotion of our nation via Olympic values, with a focus on: Athletes / Infrastructure / Olympic Games
USA	Inspire and unite the US through Olympic and Paralympic Sport	Empower Team USA athletes to achieve sustained competitive excellence and well-being.

Sources: respective webpages of NOCs mentioned

### 2.3.3 Implementation of the Mission and Working Objectives

It is particularly important that the NOC's vision and mission become its guiding principles. As an example, Fig. 12 shows eight steps (to be read from left to right), demonstrating the use of a so-called "counter-current" process, which oscillates back and forth between top-down and bottom-up processes. In this way, a broad anchoring and widespread acceptance of the mission statement can take place. The initiative for the mission statement should formally come from the NOC Executive Board, as it will later be responsible for it. The NOC board then sets

up a project team in which stakeholders and employees are represented. They create a group of experts, who prepare the first version of the mission statement, based on their particular knowledge. This is then evaluated by the project team to crosscheck it, and if it is found to be good, it is communicated to the staff. This is where further input can take place. The project team can then formulate a final version to present to the NOC board. If it is deemed ideal, they will ratify it, and ultimately pass it to the staff. Here, it needs to be diffused and brought to life by everyone (as similarly described in Müller-Stevens and Lechner, 2005, 241f)

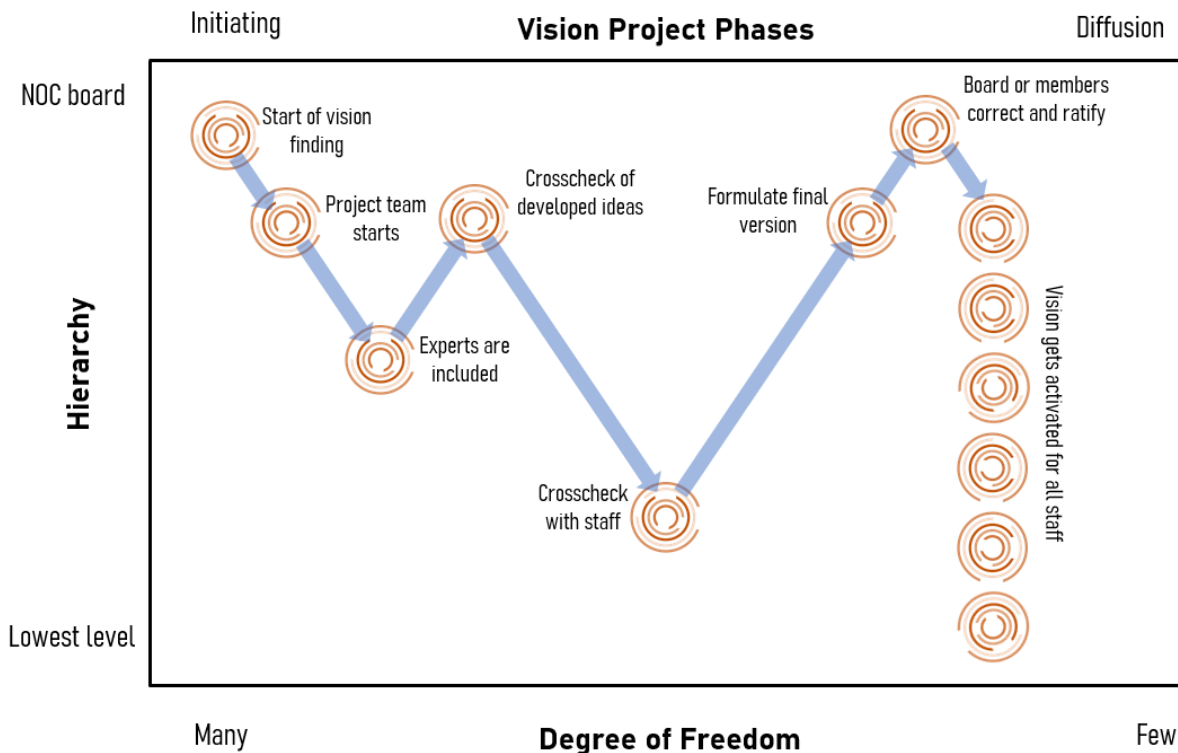


Fig. 12: Stepwise Counter-Current Process to Produce a Mission Statement

**Case Study: Netherlands NOC\*NSF's Development of Strategic Cycle**

The Netherlands developed their strategy in a similar way as described above. The NOC\*NSF started with an internal evaluation of the actual strategic plan, and took a broad look at the overall functioning of the NOC (organisation and association). That process led to the process of the Sportagenda and, specifically, the need of a strategic plan, one year before a discussion with the NOC board and management (in a strategic session) took place. Here, a first draft of the Mission and its goals was written, following which, a consulting session was executed with an advisory group consisting of CEOs as representatives of all members and experts. After that, a working group started formulating a detailed proposal of the strategic plan (led by NOC professionals). Six months before, a discussion of the strategic plan with the council took place. In this discussion, all member federations had access to the proposal. This was important, to obtain a preliminary approval of sorts prior to the strategic plan being taken up for a vote in the annual meeting. After that first iteration, the working group finalised the proposal according to the new inputs. Then it was given via the board to the general assembly, which had to vote on the strategic plan in their annual meeting.

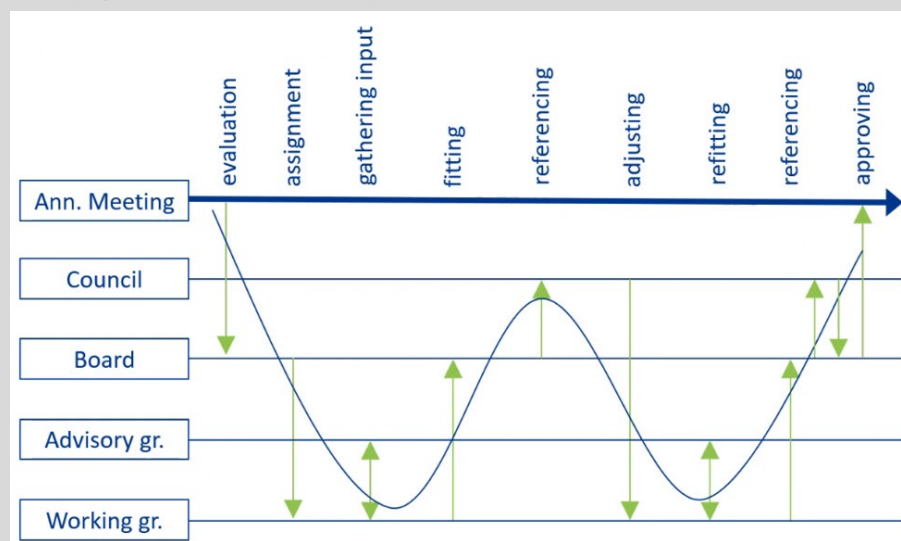


Fig. 13: NOC\*NSF Process Towards its Strategy

Questions to answer:

1. Have a close look at Fig. 12 and Fig. 13 and compare both of them. Can you see a pattern that could also be the process for your NOC?
2. Discuss who you would invite to the working group when you develop your strategic plan.
3. Reflect who or where could be the potential bottlenecks in your NOC when you develop a new strategic plan.

**2.4 Formulating a Strategic Plan for an NOC**

A strategic plan for an NOC takes into account many areas. Depending on the size of the country, the national sporting success, the existence of a national sport association besides an NOC, and many other factors, not all areas of a strategic plan have the same importance. Many areas become more important when the NOC is

also the national sport confederation. In such cases, it not only accounts for the IOC obligations, but also for many governmental activities (e.g., coordinating subventions for high-performance sports, and taking care of grassroots sports). When the NOC wants to bid for the Olympic Games in the near future, that makes some areas more important.



**Illustration: Netherlands NOC\*NSF Strategic Plan**

The NOC\*NSF developed a strategic plan, based on their vision and mission. Fig.14 illustrates the time span of validity for the vision, mission, and the final executed plan.

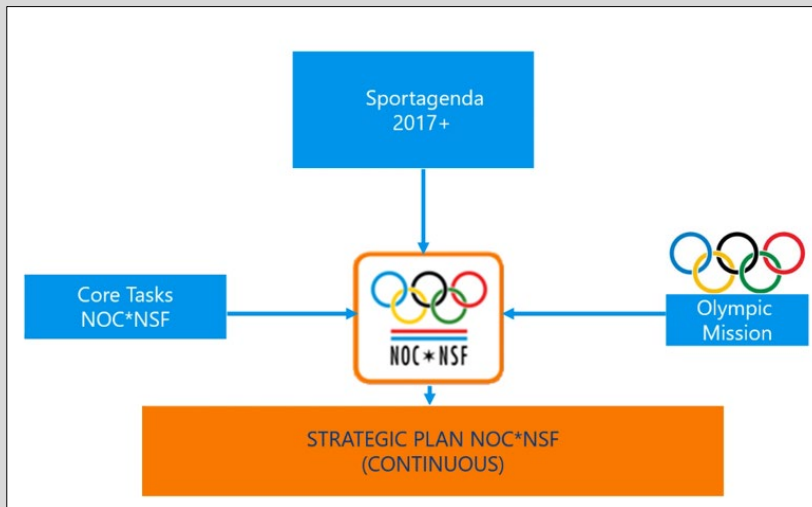


Fig. 14: Fundamental Strategy of the NOC\*NSF plan

The strategic plan was developed by recognising the “binding blocks”, which are the Sportagenda of the Netherlands, the core tasks of the NOC\*NSF, and the Olympic Mission as formulated in the Olympic Charter.

Five areas are particularly considered in the Netherlands, as shown in Fig. 15.

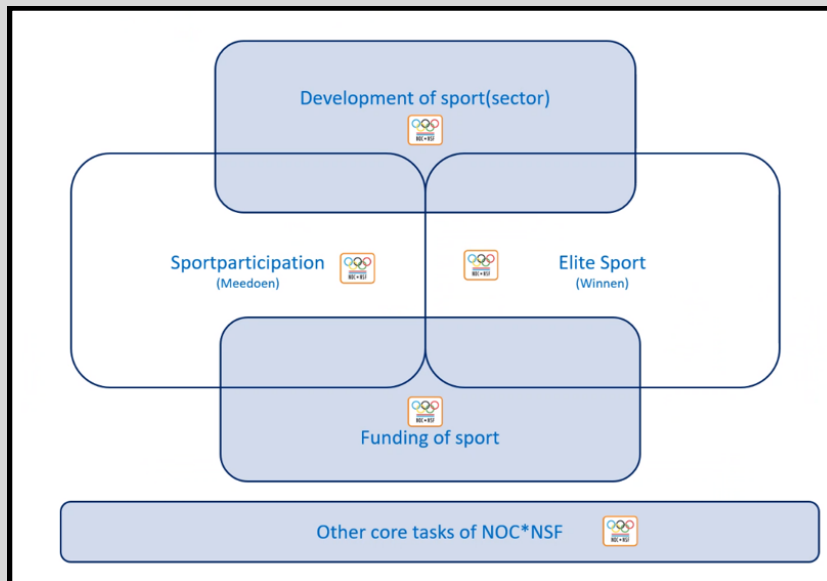


Fig. 15: Fundamental Strategy of the NOC\*NSF plan

There are nine areas which are important for NOCs, without claiming completeness. They are discussed in detail in this chapter.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Governance</li> <li>2. Sport Development</li> <li>3. Sport and Olympic Team Presentation</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Sport Promotion</li> <li>5. Medical and Safety</li> <li>6. Risk Management</li> <li>7. Commercial</li> <li>8. Events</li> <li>9. Sustainability and Legacy</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

Before starting strategic management, an NOC should answer four key questions for each of the nine areas:

- What is the situation of your NOC in each area?
- What are the objectives of your NOC in each area?
- How can your NOC achieve these objectives of each area?
- If you achieved your objectives in each area in the past, how did you do it?

Strategic plans for NOCs often run from one Olympiad to the next, as financial streams are regulated in this way. At the end of each Olympiad, the NOC board and its management must review the plan, and make revisions for the next Olympiad.

#### 2.4.1 Governance

Good governance is increasingly becoming a core topic for sport organisations at all levels. Many NOCs have implemented Basic Principles of Good Governance, through self-assessments (e.g., via SIGGS-Project), and their own initiatives. Good governance standards in the corporate world have also evolved towards an increased level of requirements, specifically concerning transparency, and checks and balances. The expectations from the

general public, sponsors, Olympic hosts, and athletes, to name just a few, have grown accordingly. Consequently, NOC governance needs to match these expectations. If you would like to learn more about good government and important stakeholders, as well as the ideals of credibility and trust in this context, please read our *Guidebook*.

#### 2.4.2 Sport Development

Even though grassroots sport development is closely related to the national sport confederations of the NF, NOCs usually have the responsibility to support the NFs, as they are members of the NOCs. An example of this responsibility would be to take care of sustainable sport infrastructure to ensure that COVID-19 or the 2022 energy crisis in Europe do not stop sports for all. Additionally, NOCs shall develop the national sport system. NOCs can provide athletes with service (e.g., when sending them to the Olympic Games) and help in the development of high-performance sport, in general. The NOC is often the link to the government and, therefore, needs to lobby for greater public support (public affairs).

Another exciting topic here is the potential inclusion and development of physical virtual sports.

#### Illustration: CONI - The Italian Government has Confirmed Plans to Recognise and Regulate Esports

The Customs and Monopolies Agency (ADM, Italy) took action following a complaint, which required it to “verify compliance of taxation on gambling and with regard to the correct application of the legislation aimed at the protection and health of minors.” The Italian Government has confirmed it will seek to introduce legislation, which will include the establishment of an esports federation. That would potentially be a national governing body with the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI).

The Italian Government is considering, in concert with the CONI, the establishment of a federation that oversees the organisation of competitive sports gaming. The Italian Federation for Electronic Disciplines (FIDE) has welcomed the “positive news”. The organisation said that the recognition of esports would support the development and sustainability of the esports sector.

### Case Study: Sport Development Commission of the Indonesian Olympic Committee

The Indonesian Olympic Committee established a Commission to take care of sport development. Even though it is an Asian country, many of its obligations are at par with the Olympic Committees of Europe. The duties and obligations of the Indonesian Olympic Committee are to:

- Help Executive Committee (EC) members and the President to carry out their responsibilities, especially for coaching activities, and the development of sports achievements.
- Provide recommendations to the EC and the President in preparing and establishing the Indonesian Contingent to participate in regional, continental, and international multi-event sports activities.
- Provide technical assistance for the implementation of training camps [...] facing regional, continental, and inter-national competitions.
- Provide deliberations/recommendations to award sportsmen, coaches, referees, and technical coaches who have gained achievements in sports.

Issues to work on:

1. Reflect upon which of the obligations correspond with your NOC.
2. Develop ideas which are important for your NOC's "Sport Development".

According to Olympic Solidarity, the detailed action plan "must be coherent and realistic and must be established in close collaboration with the national federation (NF) concerned, after a detailed analysis of the situation (strengths, weaknesses, objectives, etc.). It must include proof that the training of local coaches will continue once the project has ended.

#### 2.4.3 Sport and Olympic Team Presentation

Each NOC is promoting sport by presenting Olympic sports, the Olympic Games, and in particular the Olympic team. The quickly evolving technology and digital innovations offer new formats and entertainment to present the Olympic and Paralympic Teams. Regarding the Olympic Games coverage, the NOC can take action with its national TV channels and other media forms. NOCs could start events to show the Olympic athletes, and present the Olympic Team, their dressing event, or their arrival after the Games.

#### 2.4.4 Promotion of Sport and Olympic Content

Communication with the public has become increasingly important for NOCs. Information and communication technology, and social media in particular, have altered strategic planning. The use of e-mails, social media, clouds, virtual conferences, podcasts, etc. has become all the more important for planning processes.

Therefore, strategic communication is needed to present the topics and diversity of sport, and the Olympic Movement, more strongly to the public. NOCs shall make greater use of new and digital forms of communication.

Public affairs are also turning out to be ever more important. A large part of the population is sceptical about the Olympic Sport Organisations and the Olympic Movement, which can be seen in public referendums against hosting the Olympic Games, politicians professing to be against

the Olympic Games, or in the many critical news items that are published by the media. Strategic plans are needed to change this perception.

The political representation of the interests of public-spirited sport is a central and increasingly important task for NOCs. The many environment changes (political, economic, media, etc.) lead to an increasing number of policy fields, regulations, and laws affecting the NOC, directly or indirectly. RINGS Public Affairs Guidelines provide information on ten key elements to consider for successful public affairs of an NOC.

#### 2.4.5 Medical and Safety

Strategic planning is needed for athletes' safeguarding, medical services, and all anti-doping and clean sport initiatives. An NOC should strengthen safe sport/safeguarding, to protect the physical and mental well-being of athletes, as recommended by Agenda 2020+5.

The strategic plan covers key aspects, including athlete representation, protection from doping and competition manipulation, thus supporting athletes, both on and off the field of play.

Regarding safeguarding athletes, an NOC should implement safeguarding policies

and procedures among all stakeholders, establish a Safeguarding Officer position within the NOC, promote the fact that the NF should be doing the same, and offer safeguarding education for their national stakeholders (in particular athletes and entourage) through webinars, courses, and international scholarships.

#### 2.4.6 Constant Change of Environment

Each strategic planning process should include risk management, which is the proactive process that involves assessing all possible risks to events and their stakeholders by strategically picked actions which would minimise any of the identified risks (see subchapter 3.5). NOCs should be prepared for incidences affecting their field of action (see case study in subchapter 6.3).

#### 2.4.7 Commercial

Successful sport marketing and financing are the result of carefully structured planning, creativity, and perseverance. Technology and the change of external forces constantly impact on and, consequently, change the commercial environment. NOCs must monitor changes in each of the financing sources, while also being aware of changes elsewhere that could be impacting on those financing sources.

#### Illustration: CONI Transformed by Government

The Italian NOC (CONI) is already facing challenges as a result of government actions in 2018, that included stripping 360 million Euros in funding, leaving it with only 40 million Euros. The sum of 360 million Euros was distributed by CONI to the national governing bodies for sport, a responsibility which is now handled by a new ministry for health and sport.

There are other examples (apart from that of CONI) of changes that can affect an NOC, such as the change in lotteries and gaming legislation, or Pay-TV legislation, or demographic trends. For example, the youth

consume sport in a different way (e.g., in non-linear formats, via social media, or via second screen, like using a mobile device for supplementary content while watching

TV) than in the past, which will have an effect on the finances of an NOC.

Overall, the commercial situation is determined by the market in which the NOC acts.

#### 2.4.8 Events

Many nations develop national strategies on how to attract major sporting events. In a strategic plan, the NOC should consider how responsibilities are distributed among relevant stakeholders in the bidding and the hosting processes of major sporting events. Here are some relevant questions:

- Are special (central) structures established for organising the bidding and hosting processes?
- Is a standardised decision-making process established for the allocation of public funding?
- Is a procedure established to avoid competing bids for the same major sporting event?
- Does a taxonomy for different types of major sporting events exist in the country under study?
- Which major sporting events are eligible for public funding?

- Are clear requirements formulated for an award of public funding?

Further, an NOC has to consider which competitions the national team will be sent to, the relevant team sizes related to multi-sport events, and how the selection process, dressing, travel support, etc. will be organised (e.g., for Special Olympics, Universiade, World Games, Youth Olympic Games, the Olympic Games, Urban Games).

#### 2.4.9 Sustainability and Legacy

Sustainability is a continually evolving and changing process and, therefore, should be a part of each NOC's strategic plan. An NOC sustainability strategy could include a long-term perspective that is aligned with the 2030 Strategic Development Goals (SDGs). These "global goals" provide a framework. The IOC is working to ensure that sustainability considerations are integrated into the future work of Olympic Solidarity with the NOCs, including providing guidance, education manuals, and evaluation of funding requests from NOCs. A strategy is needed to enable your NOC to start implementing sustainable measures.

**Fact Box: NOCs and Sustainability**

The IOC started a European NOC Sustainability Working Group in 2017 to collate and share existing sustainability best practices of NOCs. Discuss opportunities for future support and collaboration; discuss challenges faced in embedding sustainability at an NOC; carry out an initial gap analysis by subject matter; and discuss how best to assist, and share best practices with, other NOCs.

The EOC EU Office (together with the IOC) is running a series of webinars on climate action in sport on areas such as sustainable sourcing, climate, sport and biodiversity, and sport and sustainable events. Additionally, the EOC EU Office will start a new project to educate climate action officers in 18 NOCs and measure the NOCs' carbon footprint.

In response to requests received from the Olympic Movement for simple, easy-to-follow guides on sustainability, the IOC has begun to create a series of entry-level guides that are specifically aimed at NOCs and IFs. Known as the "Sustainability Essentials" series, these guides will provide simple, practical, and useful information on key aspects of implementing sustainability within sport.

An example is the way to create an "event plastic plan" (see below), and also find essentials for climate action, sustainable sourcing, sustainable management, and how to be a sustainable champion. An example detailing ways to create an event plastic plan has been demonstrated below:

**Want to cut down on plastic at your next sporting event?** You'll need to create a plan and get all the right people involved. To have the most impact, be sure to start well in advance. These are the key steps you should take:



**Identify and prioritise**

- Start by understanding where plastic is used and the main sources of plastic waste. You can use the checklist on page 36 to get started.
- You may not be able to tackle everything in one go, so be prepared to prioritise.
- Include some easy-win steps to boost morale but also some more aspirational and challenging goals. If you think big, you'll get further.



**Engage and research**

- Identify the stakeholders who will need to be involved. This may be everyone from suppliers and athletes to catering managers and volunteers.
- Discuss your plans and ask for people's ideas. You may find they have helpful suggestions and creative solutions.
- Explore ways to reduce plastics use and alternative options. Beware of unintended consequences: reducing plastic waste from catering outlets, for example, only to find it increases food waste.



**Plan**

- Write your plan; you can use the template on page 34 as a guide.
- Your plan should set out the goals and policy for your event. Be specific. It should list the actions that must be taken and identify who is responsible.
- You'll probably need to create more detailed plans for different phases and areas of your event.

The importance of legacy is specifically addressed in Rule 2.14 of the Olympic Charter, and highlighted in Olympic Agenda 2020. A strategic plan should cover the various ways in which the NOC intends to further encourage, support, monitor, and promote legacy in partnership with its stakeholders. Olympic legacy encompasses all of the tangible and intangible

long-term benefits that are initiated or accelerated by any national sport project/sport event for people, cities/territories, and the member organisations. NOCs could encourage Olympic legacy celebrations for former host cities and build strategic partnerships.

**Illustration: Importance of the nine areas of any strategic plan for an NOC**

In 2020, 11 European NOCs rated the individual importance of the areas of any strategic plan. Even though all areas were important (scale 1-10; 1=not important, 10=most important), the commercial and governance parts are the most important, followed by sport promotion and events (Olympic Games).

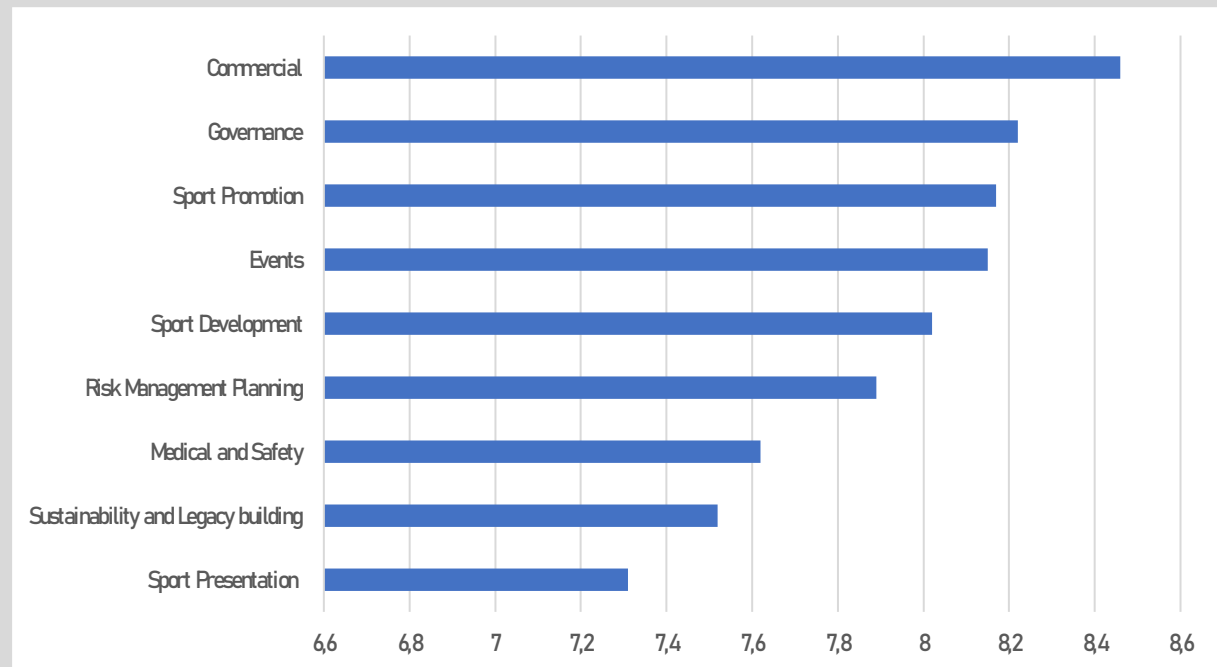


Fig. 16: Importance of Areas of the Strategic Plan Evaluated by 11 NOCs

## 2.5 Organisation and Strategy in Different Cultures

Without doubt, it is clear that culture is a strong influencer on the success of any strategy. The late management guru, Peter Drucker (1977), said that “culture eats strategy for breakfast”, which illustrates the fact that the best strategy does not always work, especially when it is not implemented into cultural habits. Therefore, any advice mentioned in this handbook should not be taken as being equally successful in every NOC. Policies and regulations that are congruent with the IOC or other NOCs (within their own cultural values) may not necessarily be congruent with your own NOC. However, as the Olympic Movement is global, and the objectives may be similar

for each NOC, the management and stakeholder reflections must be culturally adapted.

Two applications of cultural differences are particularly important to consider. One is the differences in leadership style, the other is the differences in communication methodology (see subchapter 4.4). If you would like to learn more about leadership, please read our *Guidebook*.

### 2.5.1 Cultural Roots of Organisation and Leadership

When it comes to the development of strategic plans, and the change management to implement a plan, the mentality of a culture — the inner workings and genius of the mindset — are important for success.

Culturally speaking, each NOC is a specific group. It organises itself in ways that are different from what other NOCs are doing.

The leaders in each NOC think in a variety of ways about authority, power, cooperation, aims, results, and satisfaction.

### 2.5.2 The Sense for Change and Innovation

Depending on the culture, both change and innovation are seen differently.

Tab. 4: Innovation and Change in Different Cultures

NOCs in linear-active cultures (Germany, UK, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, or Finland)	Multi-active leaders in NOCs (Italy, Spain, Russia, Türkiye, France, or Greece)
Change is constantly necessary NOCs must innovate to survive	Change is imaginative and exciting Innovation should be aesthetic
Decisions should be future-oriented Change stimulates growth and improvement	Decisions should be bold and original Change stimulates people
Plan in detail, then change	Change charismatically, then plan details
Change is top-down	Change after key lateral clearances
Democratic brainstorming is an excellent way to foster creativity	Brainstorming is great, but it must be restrained in the presence of superiors

Table 4 illustrates the differences in planning and innovation, and should be taken into consideration at the time of strategic planning.

### 2.5.3 Communication and Culture

Communication is needed when developing a strategy, as well as when implementing it (change management). Effective communication is different in each country. Each NOC that is working with recommendations from this book must reflect on adapting them to their NOC culture (organisational culture) based on the national culture.

Each culture possesses its own set of components dictating the limits of what is culturally acceptable. Therefore, when it comes to communication, it is important whether a culture acts more in a high context or a low context.



**Fact Box: Low versus High Context Culture**

In a high-context culture, there are many contextual elements that help people to understand the rules. As a result, much is taken for granted. This can be very confusing for persons who do not fully understand the 'unwritten rules' of the culture, such as in the trust cultures (i.e., population majority believing that others can be trusted) of Greece, Hungary, and Türkiye, for example.

In a low-context culture, very little is taken for granted. While this means that more explanation is needed, it also means that there is less chance of misunderstanding, particularly when visitors are present: Contract cultures (e.g., Switzerland, Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and the UK). In the middle, between high-context and low-context cultures, we find France, Russia, Spain, and Italy, for example.

If you would like to learn more about high-context and low-context cultures, please read our *Guidebook*.

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# Chapter 3

## Strategic Analysis of NOCs

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## Chapter 3

### Strategic Analysis of NOCs

#### 3.1 Strategic Analysis

This chapter introduces tools to analyse an NOC (internal analysis in subchapter 3.2) and its environment (external analysis in subchapter 3.3). The environmental examination is based on the stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3.2). Further, this chapter presents the so-called SWOT analysis (subchapter 3.4), which matches the strengths and weaknesses of an NOC with the opportunities and threats that are driven by the environment. This is important in order to fully understand the position of an NOC, as well as the interaction

forces of an NOC and its environment. In this way, an NOC gains strategic recommendations, which should be considered when developing a strategic plan.

#### 3.2 Internal Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses of an NOC

The purpose of the organisational (internal) analysis is to provide information about the strengths and weaknesses of the NOC (Fig. 17, ④), which can guide the strategic actions (known as the “strategic approach”; Fig. 17, ⑤).

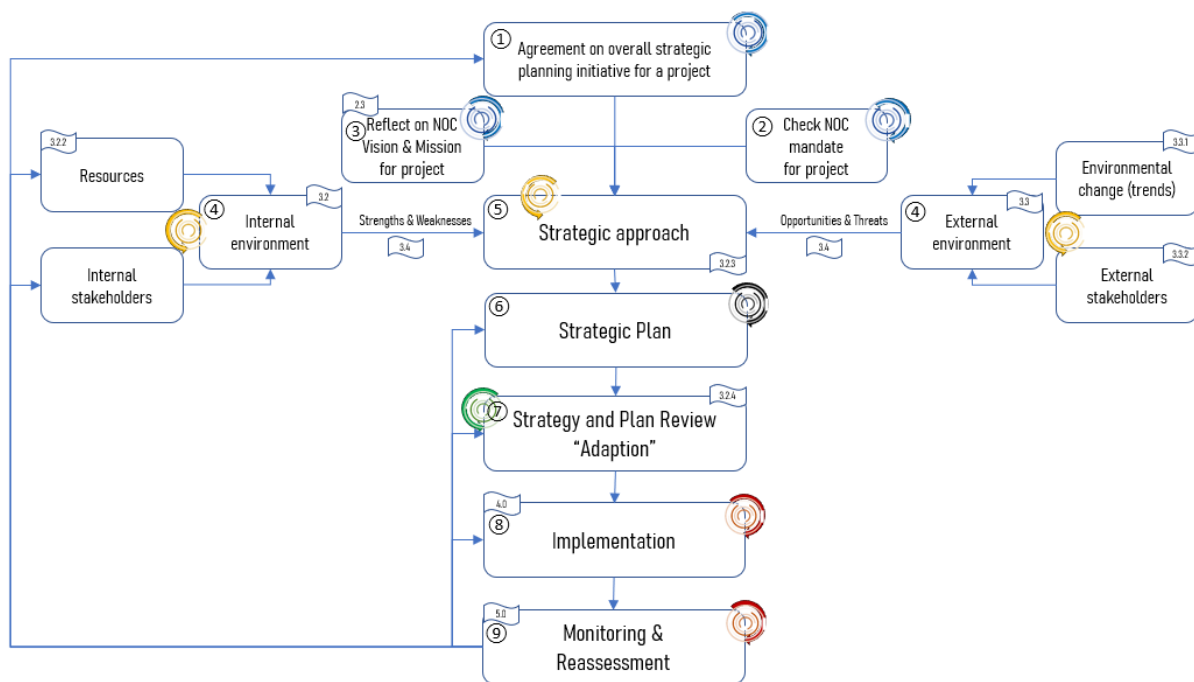


Fig. 17: Overview of Strategic Management

### 3.2.1 Strategic Action Fields and Strategic Action Units

The purpose of the organisational (NOC) and environmental (external factors) analysis is to provide information about a) type, b) strength, and c) interplay of the influencing forces of the NOC and its environment.

When analysing an NOC, you decompose the following two components:

- 1) The environment (subchapter 3.3) into strategic action fields (SAFs). This conveys a market-related structuring of an NOC's current

activities in the environment. It illustrates which fields are not covered by an NOC, and which are.

- 2) The NOC as organisation into strategic action units (SAUs). This visualises the departments (staff working units) inside the NOC, and shows the fields in which the NOC is active.

The segmentation and delineation of the SAFs and SAUs are critical to success. Here, it is not only defined in which activities an NOC sees itself, but it is also decided in which form of internal structuring (SAUs) the NOC would wish to work on the environment (SAFs).

#### Illustration: Lithuanian NOC (LNOC) and its athletes

The Lithuanian NOC (LNOC) has an independent "Athletes Commission" since 2001, where elite athletes are represented. Some athletes believed that the representation in the LNOC (SAU) is not enough. In 2018, a few elite athletes established a separate entity called the "National Athletes Association" (which is funded by government resources) with the purpose of representing elite athletes at the government level and organising qualification improvement seminars. The SAF is comprised solely of elite athletes. Within the LNOC, the athletes have their commission (SAU), which represents them, and therefore, the LNOC views them as important stakeholders. However, the athletes (as a stakeholder group) have built their own government-financed association, as they felt that their representation was inadequate. Hence, this association builds the environment of the LNOC.

Something similar happened at the German NOC (German Olympic Sports Confederation, DOSB), where the "Athletes Commission" (6 members) was established as the SAU of the DOSB, and the "Athleten Deutschland e.V." (founded in 2017, 1400 members) is an association that is independent of the DOSB, and is financed by the government (SAF).

As the illustration (Fig. 17) shows, SAFs are areas within an NOC's environment. Here, the NOC has a professional unit which works with the important issues of the environment. Usually, an NOC creates an SAU (this would be a department, comprised of

at least one person) to be responsible for the respective SAFs. The SAU evaluates which fields of the environment are important for an NOC (e.g., an ethics commission or integrity officer will duly inform us that the NOC takes care of overseeing good governance).

### Illustration: DOSB structure of SAU

The organigram of the DOSB shows which SAUs the DOSB formalised based on the goals it wished to achieve; refer to this document:

The structure is typical for NOCs. The 19 SAUs are structured in five areas:

1. Development of the NOC (federation development, communication, international relations)
2. Sport development (venues & ecology, prevention & health, education, diversity, gender, inclusion, integration)
3. High-performance sport (consultancy/finance of NSF, organisation & management & digitalisation, science & HR at federations, athletes' dual career)
4. Finance (administration, finance & controlling, human resources, IT, legal matters)
5. Youth sport (finance of youth sport, society politics, international youth sport)

By looking at Agenda 2020+5, you can identify the environmental challenges (SAFs) that the IOC would consider as important.

The following list of recommendations highlights (bold letters) where the DOSB has a strategic action unit (SAU) installed:

1. Strengthen the uniqueness and the universality of Olympic Games (not appropriate for NOCs)
2. Foster sustainable Olympic Games (SAU environment)
3. Reinforce athletes' rights and responsibilities (SAU non-existent; but there is the athletes' commission)
4. Continue to attract best athletes (SAU high performance sports)
5. Further strengthen safe sport and the protection of clean athletes (SAU prevention and health)
6. Enhance and promote the Road to the Olympic Games by qualifying events (SAU federation development)
7. Coordinate the harmonisation of the sports calendar (SAU federation development)
8. Grow digital engagement with people (SAU digital communication)
9. Encourage the development of virtual sports and further engage with video gaming communities
10. Strengthen the role of sport as an important enabler for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SAU venue and ecology, diversity, inclusion, and education)
11. Strengthen the support of refugees and populations affected by displacement (SAU Integration, international relations)
12. Reach out beyond the Olympic community
13. Continue to lead by example in corporate citizenship (e.g., sustainability, gender, human rights) (SAU environment, diversity, gender equity)
14. Strengthen the Olympic Movement through good governance (SAU federation development)
15. Innovate revenue generation models (SAU Marketing outsourced)

Many of the relevant SAFs are addressed in Agenda 2020 and Agenda 2020+5. In all of these fields, an NOC can develop an SAU and then take action. This provides opportunities and may reduce risks for the NOC.

An NOC should ask itself:

- 1) In which area (SAF) do we want to operate?

- 2) How attractive is this area (SAF) for our NOC?
- 3) Who are the key stakeholders in this area?
- 4) What is our current position towards those stakeholders? What position do we want to take?
- 5) How do we want to achieve this position?



### 3.2.2 Analysis of NOC Resources

An analysis of NOC resources is useful to better understand the NOC's competencies and the value of its resources.

#### Fact Box: Public Value

Public value refers to the value and benefits that an organisation provides to a society, and answers the question of what makes an organisation valuable to that society. The decisive factor here is the new understanding of "value" creation, which arises solely through appreciation and social acceptance. Public value is intended to provide the management team with guidelines that promote entrepreneurial activity for the benefit of the common good.

#### Case Study: Public Value and the IOC

A number of firms use public value to obtain management information that helps in making strategic decisions. For example: The football club FC Bayern Munich uses a public value approach to systematically assess the challenges pertaining to its societal role, which are concomitant with its growth from a regionally embedded football club to a global entertainment brand. For a football club that enjoys permanent public attention and is seen as a role model by many people, such questions are especially relevant. In this regard, there are different public values involved, such as "Mia san mia" (Bavarian for "we are who we are" or "us is us"), which is the identification at the local level, and the "global brand image" which is the high-performance success and the identification at the international level; and both are partly in tension with each other. The structured compilation and full awareness of these conflicts of the club's societal value can be used as management information for strategic decision-making.

This is similar to the IOC, which faces challenges that are connected with an Olympic-value driven, historically-rooted sport event versus a multibillion-dollar brand, and an organisation which coordinates and rules world sport. The public value of the IOC is partly fixed in the fundamental principles. However, it is very broad. It is apparent that the public values, as listed below, cannot be viewed in isolation from one another. In some cases, the values overlap and are in tension with each other.

- Strong values (fair play and participation, peace building, non-discrimination of any kind, see also Fig. 10)
- Citius (faster), Altius (higher), and Fortius (stronger) - sporty striving for success, performance culture, social role model for success orientation
- Strength of the brand (positive advertising carrier for the Olympic Games, international flagship as sport event, entertainment brand, one of the most known global brands)
- Olympia as a social melting pot (promotion of integration (refugees, all nations), socially focused as a topic of conversation, the Olympic Games as community experience for all social classes)
- Community through polarisation (together against the Olympics, daily friction with the IOC, arrogance and superiority, IOC as an enemy image)
- Olympic Games as event (Olympic Games as a celebration of the Olympic fans, fun and joy, emotional anchor, different needs of the fans fulfilled by a wide sport programme)
- Role model for economic success (solidarity with all sports, independence from external investors, risk awareness, economic role model for associations)

Topics to be worked on:

1. Analyse the conflicting values that the IOC and the Olympic Games have.
2. Discuss what the public values of your NOC are.
3. Look back at the visions of NOCs' statements, and identify where they address public value (Tab. 3).

Considering its own available resources is a necessary step for an NOC, prior to planning any of its actions. In other words, the NOC should be aware if the currently available set of supplies either supports or hinders the actions that it is planning.

Results of studies on organisational capacity show five main variables that describe resources. NOC resources can be viewed as:

- **Financial:** Funds, investment, subventions, lottery shares, sponsors, licences.
- **Human:** Demographics, skills, motivation, knowledge base, experience, social capital, social interaction.
- **External:** Relationships, trust, networks, legitimacy capital.
- **Infrastructure:** Buildings, sport venues, office space, IT.
- **Intellectual:** Brands, athlete data, other databases, processes, NOC culture, strategies.

#### Fact Box: Social Capital

Social capital refers to the trust, norms, mutual support, and informal relations in a society (or an NOC) that enable the coordinated behaviour of members. Social capital characterises the relationships between persons or groups. An association can be regarded as an organised example of social capital. Associations are part of the infrastructure of well-established relations, and contribute to cooperation, compromise, information, and advocacy through negotiations.

Social interactions are central for any engagement with the Olympic Games.

Social interactions shape people's consumption of sport and the development of their lifestyles, which certainly is part of a vision for each NOC.

In the context of NOC's relationship with its stakeholders, eight types of social interactions that are stimulated by the Olympic Games can be identified:

1. motivational (i.e., how the process of interaction is affected by different motivations),
2. knowledge generation/dissemination,
3. advocacy,
4. service provision and consumption (i.e., interactional),
5. partnerships,
6. celebrations,
7. collaborations, and
8. structural (i.e., ability of an NOC to sustain/extend their interactions with different target groups).

### 3.2.3 Analysis of the Importance of NOC Projects

NOCs usually have many projects running at the same time. It is useful for an NOC to sometimes reflect on the importance of

each project. Here, we introduce the BCG (Boston Consulting Group) portfolio matrix.

#### Toolbox: Portfolio Analysis

This tool is used to analyse the NOC's activities and derive strategies. It can be used for setting the correct priorities, when allocating the limited resources that are available to the NOC.

In this book, the BCG portfolio is used to analyse the NOC's activities and evaluate them with regard to their future prospects for success in creating public value and achieving the vision of the NOC. For this purpose, all NOC projects will be presented together in an overall portfolio, to make it easier to visually compare them. This enables an NOC to make strategic decisions for each project.

The tool suggested here is used to figure out if the currently existing portfolio mix of projects/activities is sufficient to secure the future of the NOC, and to achieve its vision. The portfolio matrix (Fig. 18) can be used to determine the extent to which other, more promising projects and action areas should be promoted and is a tool for setting the correct priorities, when

allocating the limited resources that are available to the NOC.

The performance portfolio of an NOC is shown in a matrix on the basis of three dimensions:

- Environmental dimension: the ordinate shows the future importance of a project. It reflects whether the project can reach the vision in future.
- NOC dimension: the abscissa shows the real proportion (percentage) of people the NOC wants to reach via a project.
- Project success: each project (circles) has a different importance (blue quadrants). The size of the circles symbolises the success of the project (success is the degree of target achievement).

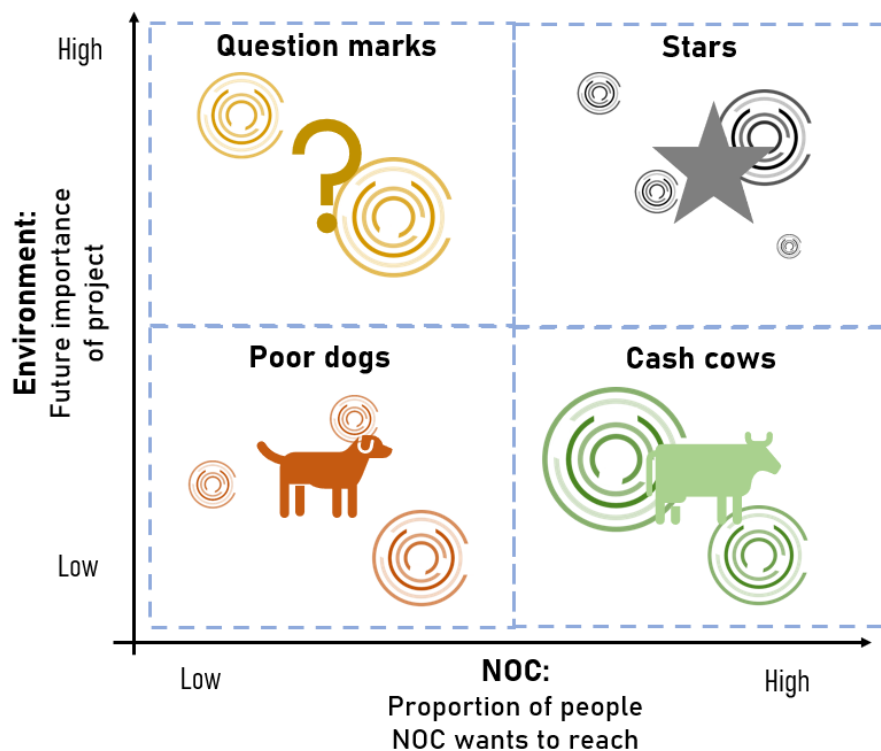


Fig. 18: Portfolio Performance Matrix of NOC Projects

The four areas (blue quadrants) lead an NOC to different strategic considerations.

**?** Question-Mark projects are those that are just being introduced, or are in the early growth phase of the importance of that field (e.g., good governance, safeguarding athletes). At this stage, the future of the projects in this segment is still uncertain, as it can develop into either a success or a failure. In this phase, a lot depends on the resources which the NOC can invest in this project, under the condition that the degree of importance of the project remains high. The projects in this field are not yet developed well enough to attract a sufficient number of people that the NOC wants to reach as per its final goal.

**★** Stars refer to projects that need to be undertaken because of their surging

importance, and where the many people who should be reached have already been reached successfully. These are projects that are in the growth phase. Here, high investments of resources are necessary to maintain the well-running project, and to further increase the number of persons reached. Stars are largely self-supporting and, politically, they are absolutely wanted.

As for the circles and their sizes, the black circles represent projects that reach a large population (e.g., all Olympic athletes) and are very important for the future (e.g., Whistleblowing portal, sustainability guidelines). The satisfaction of the NOC is represented by the size of the black circle, while the small circle means that the NOC is not satisfied, and the target has not been reached within the set time.

**Recommendation: CONI and its portal for Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowers are vital for maintaining an open and transparent society, as they expose misconduct or hidden threats. To ensure that they are better protected against negative consequences, the EU Directive 2019/1937 on the protection of whistleblowers came into force on 16 December 2019 (Refer to the checklist there that can be used for each NOC).

The goals of the EU Whistleblowing Directive are:

To detect and prevent misconduct and breaches of laws and regulations.


To improve law enforcement by establishing effective, confidential, and secure reporting channels to effectively protect whistleblowers from fear of retaliation.


To protect and enable whistleblowers by helping them to confidently raise concerns without fear of retaliation, by ensuring anonymity.

In cooperation with UNODC, the IOC published a study "IOC-UNODC Reporting Mechanisms in Sport: A Practical Guide for Development and Implementation". This guide provides information on good practice for sports organisations, regarding receiving and handling reports of wrongdoings, and provides an overview of current practices and frameworks. At the IOC hotline one can report:

1. Competition manipulation
2. Abuse and harassment
3. Infringements of IOC Code of Ethics and other integrity issues
4. Press freedom violations

The EU directive and IOC's practice was transformed from CONI (NOC Italy) into a whistleblowing reporting centre. However, the centre is limited to issues of corruption and competition manipulation, and is not geared towards the athletes, which is a good step, but one that is missing the above-mentioned points 2-4 of the IOC. [Thus, it makes it a small black circle in the portfolio of CONI, see Fig. 18]. In the CONI reporting centre, all employees, collaborators, and goods and service suppliers can learn about Whistleblowing, competition manipulation, and how to make a report. The reports that are submitted to this platform are forwarded in a strictly confidential manner to the appointed Department, which notifies the authorities in charge. However, alternatively, the report can also be sent to the National Anticorruption Authority (ANAC).

 Cash cows operate in a mature "market", where the number of people that need to be reached are successfully reached. This part of the portfolio matrix is characterised by the fact that the projects usually run longer, and synergy effects and knowledge are built up. Thus, the use of resources has already fallen (e.g., projects have already been designed, and just need to be repeated). Only a small investment is needed to continue generating success in these projects. However, if the size of the circle is small then solutions need to be discussed regarding how to make the project more efficient in at achieving its target.

 Poor dogs represent a project area in which the NOC has a low reach to people it needs to reach. At the same time, the degree of importance of the projects in this area is in relation to questioning, stagnating, or even decreasing. High investments of resources are necessary to maintain the project; therefore, it should be considered whether or not to cancel these projects (if no other political issue is hindering that direction).

In practice, it is difficult to correctly classify all NOC projects and services in a four-field matrix. Firstly, it is important that the NOC is able to quantify the two most important basic terms of the portfolio matrix, “the proportion of people you want to reach” and the “future importance of a project”. The proportion of people you want to reach is the actual number of people you successfully reach, in relation to the population-reaching extent that could have been achieved. You calculate this key figure using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{proportion of people you want to reach} \times \text{number of people you reach}}{\text{total number of people that can be reached}}$$

The “future importance” of a project can be expressed on a scale in the portfolio matrix, e.g., Very important, Important, More-or-less important, Unimportant, Not at all important. The units of your axis should be based on the global future importance of a topic, but also reflected on the local (cultural) circumstances. Here, specific topics and projects can have a high relevance in one culture or geographical region, but no relevance whatsoever in other cultures/regions (e.g., the number of gold medals to be won is important for the French NOC, but not for the Andorran NOC). Each NOC should familiarise itself with important project areas in Agenda 2020+5 or – if available – you can inspect other NOCs’ vision and mission statements (Tab. 3).

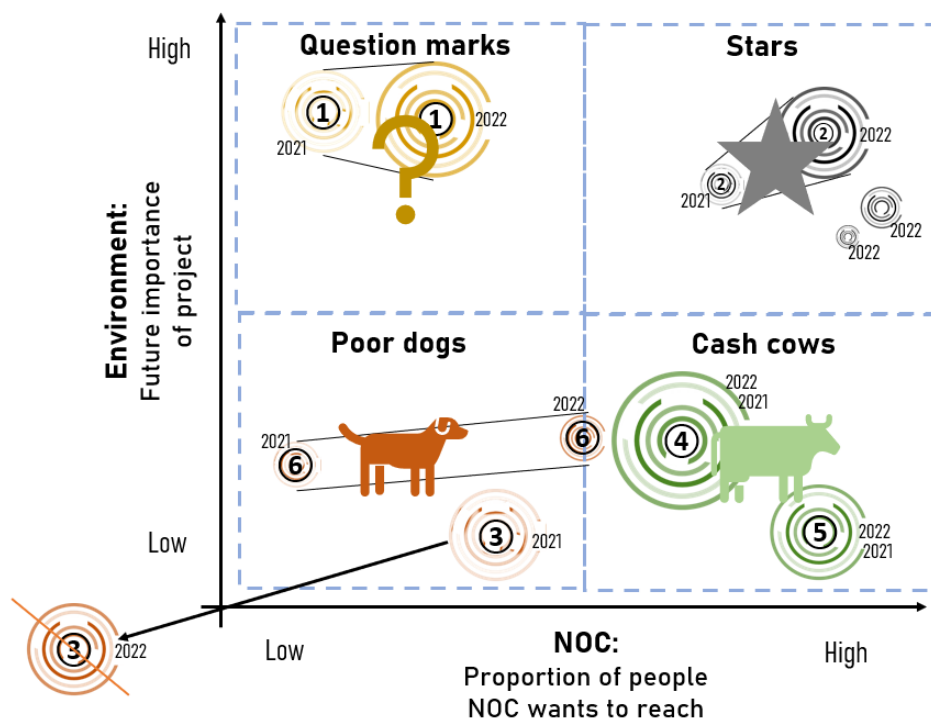


Fig. 19: NOC Project Performance Portfolio 2021 and 2022

Figure 19 shows the performance of projects between 2021 and 2022. Project 1 is now reaching more people and the success of the project became improved

(larger size circle). Similarly, regarding project 2, after reassessment in 2022, it was found that the topic will become more important in the future. Project 3 was quite

large, but in dogs and therefore was cancelled in 2022. Projects 4 and 5 remained the same as the year before. It was discussed that Project 6 should be cancelled, but as it was the duty of the NOC to keep that project (perhaps, it was the organisation of Olympic Day), the NOC made efforts to reach more people. However, the size of the circle is the same, which means that the target is still not reached. It moved up a little (in degree of importance), because Agenda 2020+5 stresses the issue as being important.

### ***Strategies Driven from the 4 BCG Matrix Quadrants***

The division into the four quadrants of Question marks, Stars, Cash cows, and Poor dogs also serves to develop strategies for the future. Each of the four quadrants is assigned to one of the following strategies that an NOC can adopt for the assigned projects:

**Selection strategy:** This strategy is used for Question marks, where the future importance of the project and the development to reach more people is uncertain. Here, the NOC should choose projects that seem most important to develop. The NOC should invest in these projects to reach more people. In other words, the NOC should try to bring these projects into the area of Stars or, eventually, Cash cows. Projects where such a development is unlikely should be considered for elimination.

**Investment strategy:** This strategy is used for Stars, where the NOC reaches a high number of persons in an area of ongoing high importance (e.g., the promotion of the national Olympic team). The investment of resources should be increased if the importance of the project continues to remain high, or even goes on increasing.

**Levee strategy:** For Cash cows, the NOC can reduce investments to the required minimum, to maintain the number of people reached. The input into the project can be checked for saving resources, as the project runs well, but is not of high importance for the future. The resources saved can be used to support the expansion of Stars and Question marks.

**Disinvestment strategy:** This is applied to the Poor dogs. The NOC should consider withdrawing all resources from projects in this quadrant. However, it must be checked if there is a mandate (i.e., a must-do project written in the Olympic Charter or NOC statutes) to keep a project alive. The NOC may even try to bring it into the area of Cash cows. Investments for projects in the Poor dogs area no longer bring any significant improvement, but take up resources. Therefore, the NOC should put these resources and capacities to better use in other projects.

### Workshop: Project Portfolio of an NOC

Preparation: Meet with a group of persons from different departments. Ensure that the people involved oversee all projects, or are well informed about the projects.

1. → Determine which projects or services you want to consider in the portfolio matrix. Show the list to the board members to check for completeness.
2. → Then, determine the proportion of people you want to reach, along with the importance of the project for the future, with regards to your country and culture. This should be done for each project in step 1.
3. → Enter the corresponding values on the two axes and mark the point where the two lines meet as the project under consideration.
4. → Define the targets you want to reach for each project. The higher the success/satisfaction with a particular project, the larger the size of the circle you draw. The determination of "success" is difficult, and should be discussed among members of a small group (independent from the project leader). Then, draw the circle with a specific size over the point from step 3. Keep in mind that a project can also serve to satisfy an external stakeholder, or to maintain relationships, and therefore, it can also be considered to be successful.
5. → Draw lines to define quadrants. The line must not be in the middle of each axis. It is better to orient a line that is related to the projects that are around the middle of each axis. Get the group to agree on the positions of the lines.
6. → Analyse each project following the suggested strategies. Before deciding on a strategy, check whether there are binding mandates, contractual bindings, or promises (from board members) indicating that it would be better to keep a particular project running, even though it appears in the Poor dogs area.

### 3.2.4 Analysis of the Key Competencies, Strengths, and Weaknesses of NOCs

Knowing the NOCs' strengths allows for better decision-making, strategic planning, and management. The awareness of competencies and strengths is needed for the SWOT analysis (subchapter 3.4).

The McKinsey "7S Model" is a well-suited tool to analyse an NOC's strengths and

weaknesses. It is an organisational tool that assesses the well-being and future success of an NOC. It takes into account seven internal factors (7 Ss) of an NOC as a means of determining whether or not an NOC has a good potential to be successful in the future. In particular, it also helps the NOC to analyse what it needs to do to reach its mission.

#### Toolbox: Mc Kinsey 7S Model

This tool can be used to analyse an NOC's strengths and weaknesses. It assesses the well-being and future success of an NOC. It takes into account seven internal factors (7 Ss) of an NOC as a means of determining whether it has a good potential to be successful in the future. Moreover, it helps the NOC to analyse what it needs to do to achieve its mission.

The following section explains the 7 Ss of the model. The most prominent/important S of them all stands for Shared values.

**Shared values:** These are the commonly shared values, the so-called NOC "corporate culture" values, defining the key

beliefs and aspirations that form the core of the NOC culture. Shared values unite, challenge, and give direction to all NOC staff. Shared values are the motivational drivers, and are likely related to the Olympic fundamental principles. However, each





culture and each organisational culture also has values that need to be considered. The shared values are important to all of the other six S areas.

The following six assets contribute to the shared values. The first three are hard elements, which are easier to change. They include the following:

**Strategy** is defined as the set of projects/actions that an NOC plans in response or anticipation of changes to its external environment (Channon & Cooper, 2015).

**Structure** refers to how people in an NOC are organised to work together. It is also the structure of all available resources.

**Systems** refer to the processes of the daily activities. It is how information moves around the NOC and its network partners.

Soft elements are human-related and, therefore, are more difficult to change. They include the following:

**Staff** concerns the background and culture of people who work for the NOC. The staff

can be seen as a valuable pool of resources who need to be nurtured, developed, guarded, and allocated to projects.

**Skills** of your staff and board members are competencies and distinctive capabilities that the people possess, and which are the basis for the NOC's ability to create value.

**Style** refers to the behaviour pattern(s) of the Executive Board and NOC directors and, in particular, how effectively they communicate the values and priorities of the NOC. Style defines the way in which the NOC does things and what the organisational roles are, e.g., who has which responsibilities, who needs to report to whom, and what freedom there exists for decision making.

If you would like to learn more details about each factor and their meaning for an NOC, please read our *Guidebook*.

### Workshop: Analysing your NOC using the 7S Model

This workshop needs time and effort. Data need to be collected, interviews with staff need to be undertaken, etc. You need to take top management people on board.

1. Analyse every "S"
  - Shared values: What are the common and shared values in the NOC? Are they still up to date?
  - Strategy: Do you know the NOC strategy? Do you think that the strategy is sufficient to master the upcoming challenges?
  - Structure: How is your NOC structured? Where is this structure helpful, where is it a hindrance?
  - System: Which systems that you use are up to date, old, or insufficient?
  - Staff: What are the strengths/weaknesses of your staff? Which staff members are missing by not doing the required work or are unavailable?
  - Skills: In what area is your NOC really strong?
  - Style: What characterises leadership and collaboration? Where do they fit? Where do they hinder or encourage?
2. Compare the current situation (internal analysis), as best you can, with other of the NOCs that have a similar vision.
3. Write down your brief analysis and aim at using the facts that you can actually observe, such as the levels of education of your staff members, the communication systems you use, the IT infrastructure you have, or a typical leadership style.
4. Each of the points from step 3 should end with a paragraph entitled: "Choice through degree of importance: The substance of the development, or the degree of development?". Here, you reflect upon where you are, in comparison to where you could be in a "perfect" world. Relative to your desired situation, your "S" can be high/low, average, or strong/weak.
5. Then, draw a conclusion regarding which "S" needs to be developed. Keep in mind what your strengths and weaknesses are – these are needed in the SWOT analysis, where you reflect upon strengths and weaknesses against the environmental changes.

At the end of the internal analysis, the strengths and weaknesses of the NOC should be clear.

### 3.2.5 Internal NOC Analysis by External Stakeholders – Image

For strategic management, it is important to understand how the image of the NOC is perceived by an important stakeholder, in particular, when the NOC is looking for winning arguments in stakeholder relations. Often, the self-perception of an NOC (the so-called identity) is different from the perception of a stakeholder (the so-called image) regarding that NOC.

Methodologically, there are many ways to measure an institutional image. The measurement is always based on the implicit or explicit associations that the respective

stakeholder attributes to an NOC (as a brand). The stronger the associations are, the stronger the NOC brand equity is. The associations should be strong and varied. The measurement of an institutional brand is complex due to the fact that NOCs are tied to the successes at the Olympic Games, and the Games change from edition to edition, which is relative and dynamic and, therefore, varying over time.

The attitude scale refers to the attractiveness of the NOC brand. The rating scale considers brand preference, and

characteristics that distinguish the NOC from other sport organisations.

The measurement of NOC brand image can be done indirectly through the study of perceptions, or directly through the analysis of preferences and direct questions. An NOC brand image is considered to be strong in this indirect measurement approach, when the population (which can be classified into sport-interested vs. non-sport-interested persons, for example) associates many attributes with it.

Psychometrics is a branch of psychology that focuses on the objective measurement of latent constructs (i.e., an NOC brand), that are immeasurable and unobservable directly. The measurement technique is based on questions about the opinion of the population through a pre-

established questionnaire. You can ask the population or a stakeholder of your interest about rating attributes of your choice concerning your NOC or any project, or the Olympic Games itself.

The brand influences our attitude towards an organisation, event, project, product, or service through the ideas in our own heads. Accordingly, the image of a brand is transferred to individually-perceived organisational characteristics (the so-called halo effect, see Kroeber-Riel & Weinberg, 1996). This is exemplified by a survey of spectators at the 2004 Olympic football tournament in Athens (n=1,096). The spectators were asked about the image of the Olympic Games, the Olympic football tournament, and FIFA football World Cup (5-Point Likert scale and the value zero).

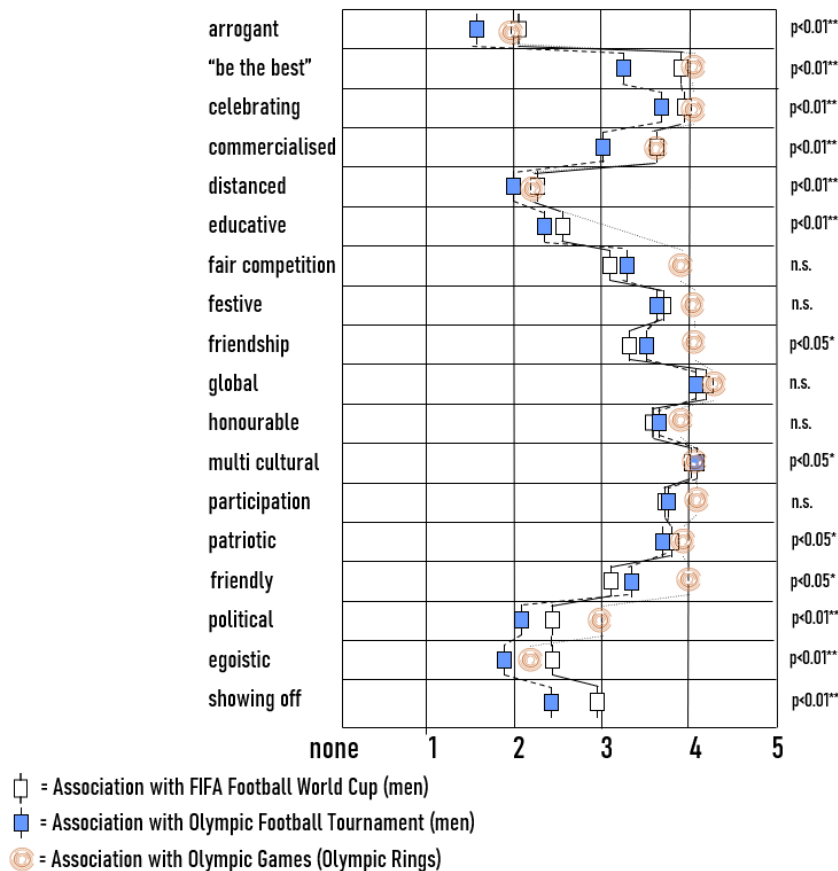


Fig. 20: Image Profiles of Olympic Football Tournament, FIFA World Cup, and Olympic Rings

A more sophisticated method, that also reflects the culture of a country, is the Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) (see case study).

### Toolbox: Image Analysis

This tool helps an NOC to analyse its own image. For strategic management, it can be important to understand how the image of the NOC is perceived by an important stakeholder. Methodologically, there are many ways to measure an institutional image (Psychometrics, RGT, CAESAR, OVS).

### Case Study: Image of the DOSB

The Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) was used by Scheu et al. (2020) to analyse the view of the German population on the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB). The RGT makes it possible to combine qualitative and quantitative research, leading to novel results. More importantly, the bipolar constructs (blue dots below) are set by the culture of the German population. Therefore, the positioning of the DOSB is unique, as seen by the German population in this case. For this purpose, 30 Repertory Grid interviews were conducted. The results show the negative image of the IOC, FIFA, and DOSB. Other organisations were included, in order to see the relative position of the DOSB.

Currently, there is a large discrepancy between the Olympic Games of today, and the ideal Olympic Games as desired by the German population. That provides information on what the ideal Olympic Games should look like, and how the Olympic Games of today should change in order to regain acceptance in Germany. While the DOSB, IOC, and FIFA are seen as being rather critical, boring, not needed, and even corrupt, the study also showed that the sport itself is evaluated positively, and the Olympic Idea is viewed as representing positive values within the population (see Fig. 21).

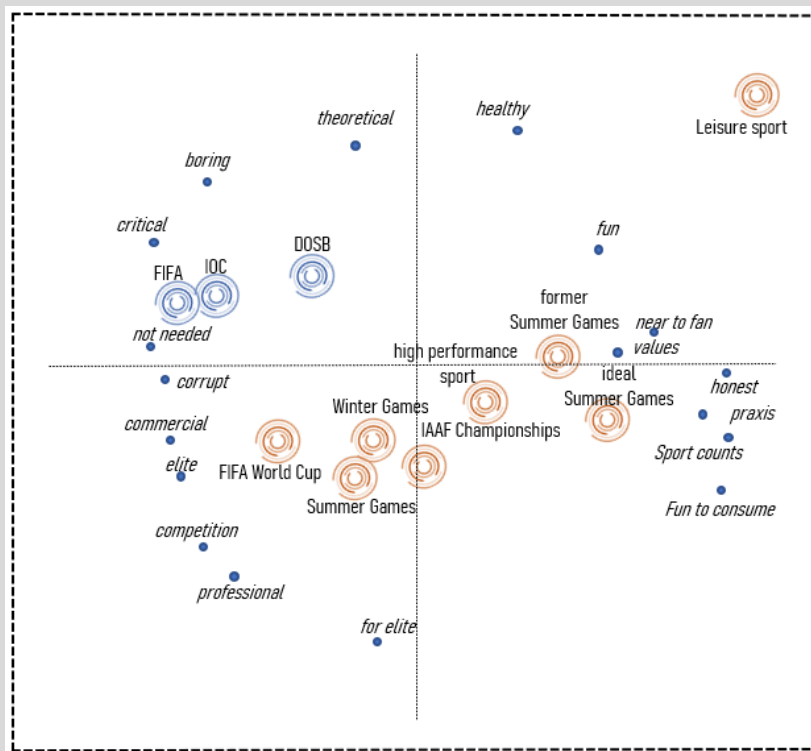


Fig. 21: Repertory Grid Analysis for Sport Events and Organisations by the German Population

You should conduct an image analysis through these questions:

1. For which stakeholder do you wish to know the stakeholder perspective of your NOC image?
2. What kind of research is appropriate to collect information you need to study your NOC image?
3. When is the right time to initiate an image study, while considering that actual media news, staging of Olympic Games, or an actual crisis can influence the result severely?

Another similar, but more advanced, image analysis is called the “CAESAR® Model” (ONE8Y, 2019), which stands for “Concept of Archetypes, Emotional Stories And Regions”. In essence, it is about an image analysis and the associated localisation of brands in a three-dimensional perception space, which consists of four different motif dimensions (Fig. 22).



Fig. 22: Four Different Motif Dimensions

Source: adopted from ONE8Y (2019)

In order to analyse brands on the basis of different attributes, ONE8Y semantically located 49 terms (attributes) in the perception space, with regards to the four motive dimensions, and placed a grid behind them.

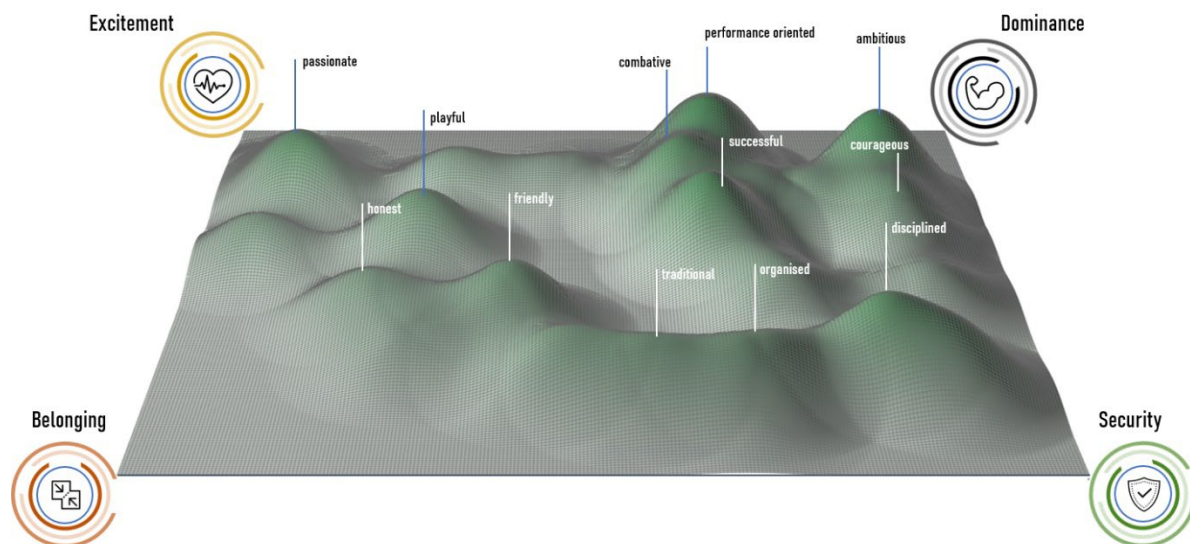


Fig. 23: Visualised Hypothetical Image Profile of the German Olympic Team by the CAESAR® Model

This image analysis is powerful, as it combines explicit and implicit measurements.

It has a strong visual image of the brand, which generates much more

understanding in the discussion, than a typical spider diagram or simple bar charts.

Lastly, it may be of interest to get an idea about what the local population is thinking concerning the Olympic Games and Olympic values. In that way, an NOC can gain information on how the Olympic Movement is perceived in its own country.

Koenigstorfer and Preuss developed an “Olympic Values Scale” (OVS), which is an easy assessment tool. The OVS contains

twelve items that load onto three factors: (1) Appreciation of diversity, (2) Friendly relations with others, and (3) Achievement in competition (see Fig. 10). All three OVS dimensions relate to individuals’ perceptions, attitudes, and intentions. The NOCs and their stakeholders can use the OVS to assess and monitor value perceptions in relation to the Olympic Games, the Olympic Movement, and how the perception may fit to sponsors’ image. If you would like to learn more about the image analyses, please read our *Guidebook*.

#### Workshop: Measuring the Olympic Values perceived by a stakeholder

1. Identify a good sample of persons representing the stakeholder.
2. Run the questionnaire, which should consist of three parts:

**Part 1:** Socio-demographic data. You need these data to check if you have gathered a good sample, and you may also need them to differentiate the results by subgroups. It may be of interest what youth versus mature persons think, or sport fans versus non-sport fans.

**Part 2:** This part is related to the Olympic value measurement. You start in this way: “Please look at the Olympic Rings (Olympic Games symbol) and think about the values of the Olympic Games, as well as how they are similar or different. Please think of the values of the Olympic Games in general, and refer to what ... (here you put in your project, or your NOC, or Olympic Games) stands for. Please do not refer to specific Olympic Games.”

Then you show a variety of values. Ask the interviewee: “Rate how the following values describe the ... (your project or NOC, or Olympic Games). Please think carefully about how applicable each individual value is in describing the project (NOC, the Olympic Games). Do not assume that all values are equally applicable to describing the Olympic Games. Please differentiate between those values that are highly relevant and those that are less relevant to characterising the ... (project, or NOC, or the Olympic Games)”.

Please rate the extent to which each of the following items could be used to accurately describe the values in relation to the ... (project, or NOC, or the Olympic Games), measured on a 7-point scale from 1 = ‘does not describe the values of the ... at all’ to 7 = ‘describes the values of the ... very well’.

Anti-discrimination / Tolerance / Diversity / Equality

Friendship / Warm relations with others / Brotherhood / Understanding

Achievement / Competition / Achieving one’s personal best / Effort

**Part 3:** Here, you can ask about any other topic that you like to attach to the values. For example, Koenigstorfer and Preuss asked whether the people wanted an Olympic Games bid, and whether they see IOC as a corrupt organisation. Later, it was observed that persons who see particular values more than others would support a Games bid more, or see IOC as more corrupt. Learning from that, the promotion of certain values could provide a stronger support of your NOC.

3. Analyse the data and start activities to promote certain values.

### 3.2.6 Analysis of an NOC's Organisational Culture

Each NOC should also understand its organisational culture, which has to be differentiated from the culture of a nation (see subchapter 2.5). Both have an effect on the strategic behaviour, stakeholder treatments, etc.

First, the analysis of the organisational culture is needed, and then an analysis of the (national) cultural habits of an NOC. The latter can provide a first glance towards its openness to change.

Here, the principle of the concept of culture is transferred to organisations (NOCs). Culture develops through the actions of people. In general, an organisational culture is a system of shared patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting, as well as the norms, values, and symbols that convey them within an organisation.

The following common cultural influences are similar for all NOCs:

1. All NOCs have Olympism as their basis, and they follow the Olympic Charter, have the IOC as an umbrella organisation, promote the Olympic values, and send teams to the Olympic Games.
2. All NOCs are “sub-cultures” of their national culture.
3. All NOCs are non-profit organisations, and focus on the interests of the members.
4. All NOCs have a slowly-grown organisational culture:
  - With a specific role of the founder (often an early IOC member). Many organisations were shaped by strong founders or had a strong leader for a period of time.

- The development of how to organise an organisation is closely connected with the organisational structure of the society. Each society breeds the type of leader it wants, develops organisations and their culture, and expects him/her to keep to the well-worn path which their age-old cultural habits have chosen. Religion, language, and climate have some influence, as do crises, successes, and reforms. This can be seen in the formal structures (e.g., rules, hierarchies, principles).
- Daily interactions create informal rules, norms, and values, which become patterns and then solidify into structures that are difficult to control or change.
- New presidents, board members, or executive staff are not solely new individuals that get socialised by the NOC's organisational culture. Change happens whenever a new socialised person comes in, and brings new habits into the organisation.

Organisational cultures can vary a lot. One such aspect of variation is the culture's strength. In this context, the stronger an organisational culture, the more deeply rooted it is among the members of the NOC (degree of anchoring), the more widespread those members are - i.e., no strong subcultures are developed (degree of diffusion), and the stronger the conciseness and scope that are developed. Peters and Waterman (1982) identified the importance of a strong organisational culture as a success factor.

The striving towards a strong organisational culture is justified by the fact that it leads to a uniform orientation of action. In

addition, strong organisational cultures ensure a uniform language and an understanding of language, which should lead to smooth communication. This, in turn, results in a complex and powerful communication network. Important information spreads without regard to titles or positions, and it is reliably interpreted, and also passed on without distortion. Action corrections can be easily communicated through the network, and are effective due to the acceptance of equal values. This

leads to fast decision-making and implementation, as long as the plans are compatible with the basic patterns of the culture. Overall, a low level of control can be assumed due to the internalised common orientation patterns. In addition, strong cultures strengthen employee motivation and team spirit, since the same values and goals are shared.

#### Workshop: Identification of the NOC organisational culture and its strength

1. The Facilitator first explains the objective of the workshop and what organisational culture is. Then, the team reflects individually on the following questions:
  - What are the key values of your NOC?
  - What are the symbols of your NOC?
  - What is the biggest mistake a newcomer/new staff/beginner can make in your NOC?
 Exchange the findings in your team and aim to find a common ground.
2. To find the degree of anchoring, look at the answers from step 1. Count how many members of your NOC have given the same answer in Step 1? Answer: \_\_\_\_\_ %
3. To find the degree of diffusion, you should reflect upon: Are there groups of members (or are there departments) that have their own spirit, own language, or own particular values?
4. To find the degree of conciseness, you should reflect upon: Is it a part of your NOC leadership to communicate the core values, the symbols, and the norms of what should definitely not be done?

Typically, sports organisations, like NOCs, have strong cultures. They have been formed over a long period of time, and are aligned with the values of sport and, in this case, Olympism. The Olympic Rings unite their members under the same symbol, which is part of each NOC logo. Strategy development must address these, especially in the case of strong cultures. On the one hand, there is the chance of easy implementation if the strategy fits well with the existing culture, and on the other hand, there is the danger that the new strategy will fail in implementation, because fundamental values and norms of the culture are

violated. Strong cultures can, therefore, be beneficial or detrimental to strategic management.

Besides the organisational culture, each NOC is a subculture of its national culture and, therefore, is affected by it through the persons acting in that organisation. If the NOC staff members are not highly internationally oriented (as with the IOC), then the common national cultural patterns will influence the strategic management of that NOC.

In most strategic plans, the idea is to change things. However, different cultures have a different level of “uncertainty



avoidance". This defines the society's tolerance for ambiguity, i.e., to what extent do people embrace or avert an event of something that is unexpected, unknown, or away from the status quo. If you would like to learn more about how "uncertainty avoidance" affects the willingness or resistance to change, please read our *Guidebook*.

The NOC culture is seen as a link or transition between individual and collective behaviour. This refers to the idea that an organisational culture is "embodied" in individuals, but shared by the collective, and here, the collective is the NOC as the organisation.

Cultures that are developed in organisations function as stabilisers, in order to resist change. Change represents a situation of imbalance and is considered to be a threat (see chapter 4). This relationship is especially evident in public organisations, such as NOCs. They are often highly governmentally supported, and they are also monopolies, which means they are stable and rarely threatened by bankruptcy. Thus, NOCs as organisations tend to have a culture that is more resistant to change.

### 3.3 External Analysis: the Environment

#### 3.3.1 Analysis of Macro-Environmental Changes

Although all NOCs are part of the Olympic Movement, each operates in a unique cultural and legal environment. The environmental factors lead to opportunities, threats, and challenges. To effectively deliver its services and projects, each NOC should evaluate its operating environment.

PESTLE+M is a mnemonic which, in its expanded form, denotes P for Political, E for Economic, S for Social, T for Technological, L for Legal, E for Environmental, and finally M for Media. It gives a bird's-eye view of the whole environment, from many different angles, that an NOC wants to check and keep a track of while contemplating a certain idea/plan. This subchapter is related to subchapter 1.4, as the challenges for an NOC can also be sorted into the PESTLE+M scheme.

#### Toolbox: PESTLE+M Analysis of Macro-Environmental Changes

This tool helps an NOC to structure and analyse the macro-environmental changes of the NOC's environment and gives a detailed view of the whole environment that the NOC wants to check and keep a track of while contemplating a certain idea, plan, or project.

#### **Political Factors**

Political factors refer to policies issued by organisations that affect an NOC. This can be the IOC, World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), Court of Arbitration (CAS), IPC, European Union, or the national authorities with their laws, policies, and the attitudes of ruling politicians towards sport development. For example, if a nation wants

prestige by winning gold medals, or uses the staging of an event as soft power to improve its image, then high performance sports or event organisation are highly financially supported by the national government. It is a similar situation when a government wants to use sport to improve national health. Then, an NOC or NF will easily get government funds to deliver such activities.

### Illustration: Political Factors influence NOCs

There are several examples of how politics have influenced NOCs.

1. The introduction of quotas for women in management in Norway. Norway was the first country to pass a legislation on gender quotas, whereby women must comprise 40% of corporate boards.
2. A greater commitment to sport added public money to the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) for high performance sport. However, that money is bound to criteria which the government wants to see fulfilled.
3. In the USA, the government does not pay anything to support the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), or any high-performance sports.

Changes of laws also have an impact on NOCs; for example, tax policies may affect income, subvention policies may affect the possibility to get extra funding, etc.

Overall, government policy has a big im-

act on an NOC's operating environment. Conversely, if the relationship between the government and an NOC is poor, it is difficult to get funding, legislative support, and promotion. An improvement in public affairs is needed in that case.

### Fact box: Public Affairs (PA)

Public Affairs (PA) refer to the strategic management of decision-making processes at the interface between politics, business, and society. PA describe that part of the professional communication of NOCs which analyses and plans the relationship with political groups, and with social influence groups. The definition of PA in this context is the organisation of an NOC's external relationships (with governments, authorities, communities, other sport federations, etc.). It implies representing the NOC's interest(s) in a political context. It uses the methods of both classic public relations, (press and social media relations, etc.), and specific instruments (communication with and consultation of relevant decision-makers, directly or via opinion leaders, media, CSR, etc.).

In RINGS PA guidelines, it is explained that PA are all about strengthening the NOC's reputation, legitimacy, relationship with key stakeholders, and ability to influence bodies and decision-makers, thereby gaining political influence. Simply put, good PA are about having and keeping good relations. They are all about the ability to make your interests relevant for the right decision-makers. You need to find an interest and a perspective that you and the decision-makers share, to enable both of you to win on the solution you propose. The challenge and solution you propose must be relevant for the decision-makers' own agenda and policy.

For further information, check RINGS Public Affairs Guidelines, which provide information on ten key elements to consider for an NOC's successful public affairs.

### *Economic Factors*

Each NOC is managing finances within a national economy. Many potential revenues for an NOC are related to the economic strength of a country, such as public subventions, sponsor acquisition, and the overall size and professionalisation of the sports market. The employment rate, offer

of sport opportunities, plus the wealth and education levels of the population, together determine the desire to attend sport events, or the ability to practise sport. High tax revenues enable a government to invest in sport infrastructure and high-performance sports, and then provide stronger support to an NOC.

**Illustration: The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and its IOC funding**

The USOPC receives nearly 25% of the funding that all of the other 205 NOCs receive from IOC. This is due to a contract that entitles the USOPC to 20% of the revenue from the TOP programme (global marketing programme). Since the TOP programme revenues went up dramatically (2017-2020), the USOPC should be much better off financially for the coming years.

NOCs compete for funding and visibility against other national sports and events, which people consume in their leisure time. Most importantly, the governmental funding has a significant economic importance for NOCs.

The value which public authorities see in sport (see political factors above) severely influences the financial situation of an NOC and the NFs. The government as an

organisational environment should, therefore, be constantly observed, and relations should be maintained through public affairs (PA). Each NOC should take into account the opportunities and threats it may face when cooperating with the government, without losing its autonomy.

**Illustration: Financial and economic dependence of the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI)**

According to a changed law, the Italian government was authorised to reorganise CONI, its activities, and its internal organisation. CONI's previous government funding was then divided between the Olympic Committee and the newly-formed company Sport e Salute S.p.a. (i.e., Sport and Health), which is entirely state-owned, by the Ministry of Economy, that distributes the income from state funds and financing. In practice, this gave the Italian government greater control over how much money goes to CONI, and how that money is used.

CONI has historically been primarily funded by the Italian government via a scheme that includes revenues from sports betting, television rights, tickets from football matches, and other sports-related ventures. As already noted in subchapter 2.4.7, the annual CONI budget was approximately 400 million euros, but it was later reduced to only 40 million, while the rest was to be distributed through the new entity (i.e., Sport e Salute S.p.a.).

The changed law also states that the Italian Olympic Committee's activities and responsibilities would depend on governmental decisions. The new law further indicates that the federations which make up the Italian Olympic Committee should abide by the government's statutes, rather than those of the Olympic Charter and the International Federation (IF), with which they are affiliated. Lastly, Italy's government would have specific control over the Italian Olympic Committee's financial activity.

In the Cabinet meeting in January 2021, former Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte managed to push an important legal amendment. By this, he secured the necessary financial and administrative independence for CONI, as requested by the IOC.

It is equally important to understand how the government funds sport and supports NOCs, and how NOCs can benefit from IOC resources (directly as well as through Olympic solidarity). As the illustration above has shown, it is also important to keep political independence, and to aim at diversifying the financial resources.

***Sociocultural Factors***

The demographic structure of the society, paired with the population's interest in sport, affect the manner in which people behave. This can influence the power and position of any NOC. Gender and age distribution, sport interest, family structures, income distribution, and education all

differ across countries and cultures. That not only affects the NOC, but also the interest of sponsors, the political support to construct sport venues, and the desire to have large sport events in the country.

### ***Technological Factors***

These factors pertain to innovations in technology that will affect the operations of the NOC and the Olympic Movement, either favourably or unfavourably. An example is the ongoing digitalisation, where the IOC will use the Alibaba Cloud, which provides almost unlimited features and information to the NOCs. Additionally, technological development plays an increasingly important role for athletes' equipment and training. Technology will also enable eSports, Gaming, and Metaverse. The technology in sports becomes ever more important, and NOCs have to address this development in their strategic planning.

New media technologies and communication channels challenge the way an NOC interacts with its stakeholders. Social media is continually expanding – both in the number of users and in its dissemination reach. Most people and organisations have accounts on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, and the younger generation uses Telegram, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. The target groups on the different social media channels are constantly becoming more fluid. Data-based communication will be the essence of WEB 3.0.

### ***Environmental Factors***

The relevance of sport in the society is already known over the ages. However, for the NOCs, this relevance recently became crystal clear when it was acknowledged in 2015 by the United Nations (UN). This recognition called all NOCs to make sustainability an integral part of all their

activities. IOC Agenda 2020+5 also emphasises upon this development and, therefore, increased the expectations from the NOCs.

Climate change also affects the NOC activities regarding sports and sport events. Training for Winter sports is becoming more difficult in several countries.

### ***Legal Factors***

The NOC must comply with national laws, and is bound to the regulations of the Olympic Charter. Its stakeholders must also act in a legally bound environment. For example, an Olympic Games bidding may be bound to governmental guarantees in terms of security, tax exemptions, or financial shortfalls.

Each NOC is also affected by the legal rules and policies of its external environment. This can be a sponsor's company law, the national laws of the Olympic Games host country to which an NOC sends its athletes and officials, employment laws for NOC staff, national doping laws, data protection and intellectual property laws, laws for not-for-profit organisations, etc.

### ***Media Factors***

Each NOC acts in a culturally-formed media environment. The power of social media and influencers is as important to consider as the degree to which the media are sport-critical. As the media is the central connection to the society, and a strong influencer to the government, the best means of communication should be considered (see subchapter 4.4.5). The degree of digitalisation of a country also plays an important role here. This is related to the capability of accessing (unlimited) Olympic information (OBS cloud), using non-linear broadcasting (streaming), reaching all consumers and stakeholders to offer the

NOC services to the best of their ability. The operating environment is very different from one NOC to another, and this should be taken into consideration during strategic planning.

### 3.3.2 Stakeholder Analysis

A stakeholder analysis can be undertaken for the NOC as an organisation, for a specific issue (e.g., digitalisation), and also for a particular project (e.g., sending the Olympic Team to the Olympic Games). Before starting an analysis, the subject for which an analysis is planned must be made clear.

#### Toolbox: Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder Analysis is a tool that can assist the NOC in understanding the variety of stakeholders that have an interest in the NOC and its activities. A stakeholder analysis can be undertaken for the NOC, a specific issue, or a particular project.

#### **Step 1: Identification of Relevant Stakeholders**

The first step is to identify the stakeholders that are related to the project. The strategy may not work in the absence of a central stakeholder, as actions and relations regarding that important stakeholder will not

considered in that case. Additionally, project-specific stakeholders may be added (e.g., planning the Olympic Day together with the church, i.e., Catholic sport youth, and staging it in a fair ground, e.g., Messe Hamburg, adds two stakeholders that are usually not relevant for an NOC).

#### Fact Box: Automatic assisted tool available in RINGS – Stakeholder Analysis

In RINGS you will find a tool that helps you to select and rate relevant stakeholders. The tool will automatically position each stakeholder in the “Power-Interest Map” (Fig. 25). The tool will work by guiding questions to identify the relevant stakeholders (see below) and position them.

- Political actors
- Athletes
- Members (individuals, Sport Organisations)
- Board members
- Staff
- IOC/EOC and other international sport organisations (e.g., IFs, ANOC)
- Sponsors
- Media
- General public
- Other sport organisations and actors in sport (not members, but e.g., sport clubs, leagues, agents)
- Other NGOs (e.g., Transparency International, Greenpeace)
- Others (possibility to add other project stakeholders)

Furthermore, the stakeholder tool will provide a proposed list of actions with each stakeholder, depending on their “Power” and your “Ability to Influence” them in the project in question.

When deciding on the relevance of stakeholders for a project, care should be taken that some stakeholders are not automatically classified as irrelevant, simply because there is no direct benefit relationship with them. In order to make the selection of stakeholders ethically viable, attention should be paid to stakeholders who have no influence on the NOC (or the project), but who have legitimate interests in the NOC, because they are affected by the strategic action. This also applies if they are not in a position to articulate their interest themselves. For example, the “next generation” is a stakeholder with legitimate interests on how an NOC should deal with the environment.

### ***Step 2: Analysis of Relevant Stakeholders***

The next step is to map stakeholder importance. This is not an easy task, as the NOC needs to analyse the following dimensions for each stakeholder:

1. power, which indicates the power the stakeholder has over the NOC (or the project under consideration);
2. interest, which means the interest the stakeholder has in the NOC (or the project under consideration);
3. influenceability, which means the potential NOC liability to influence the stakeholder, in general, or regarding the project in question;
4. alignment, which means the nature of the stakeholder’s attitude (support versus opposition) towards the NOC (or the project).

Interest is the feeling that accompanies or generates special attention towards the NOC or the respective project. Alignment further defines whether this interest is in the same direction as that of the NOC (supportive), or a counterargument (in opposition). For example, the media can have a high degree of interest in reporting about an Olympic Bid, but may not aligned with the NOC (i.e., the media are in opposition).

It is also important to consider the power which the stakeholder has over the NOC (or the respective project). Taking the two dimensions of alignment and power together, we can design a “Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid” (Fig. 24).

#### **Toolbox: Alignment Matrix**

This is the graphical illustration of the NOC’s stakeholder and it shows the alignment and power which the stakeholder has over the NOC (or the respective project).

One project often has several challenges (e.g., organising an Olympic Day means to get many people involved, obtain funding, get high social media coverage, get member federations involved). For each

challenge, the stakeholder can have a different position, relative to that of the NOC. Therefore, the same stakeholder may be recurrent several times over in the “Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid”.

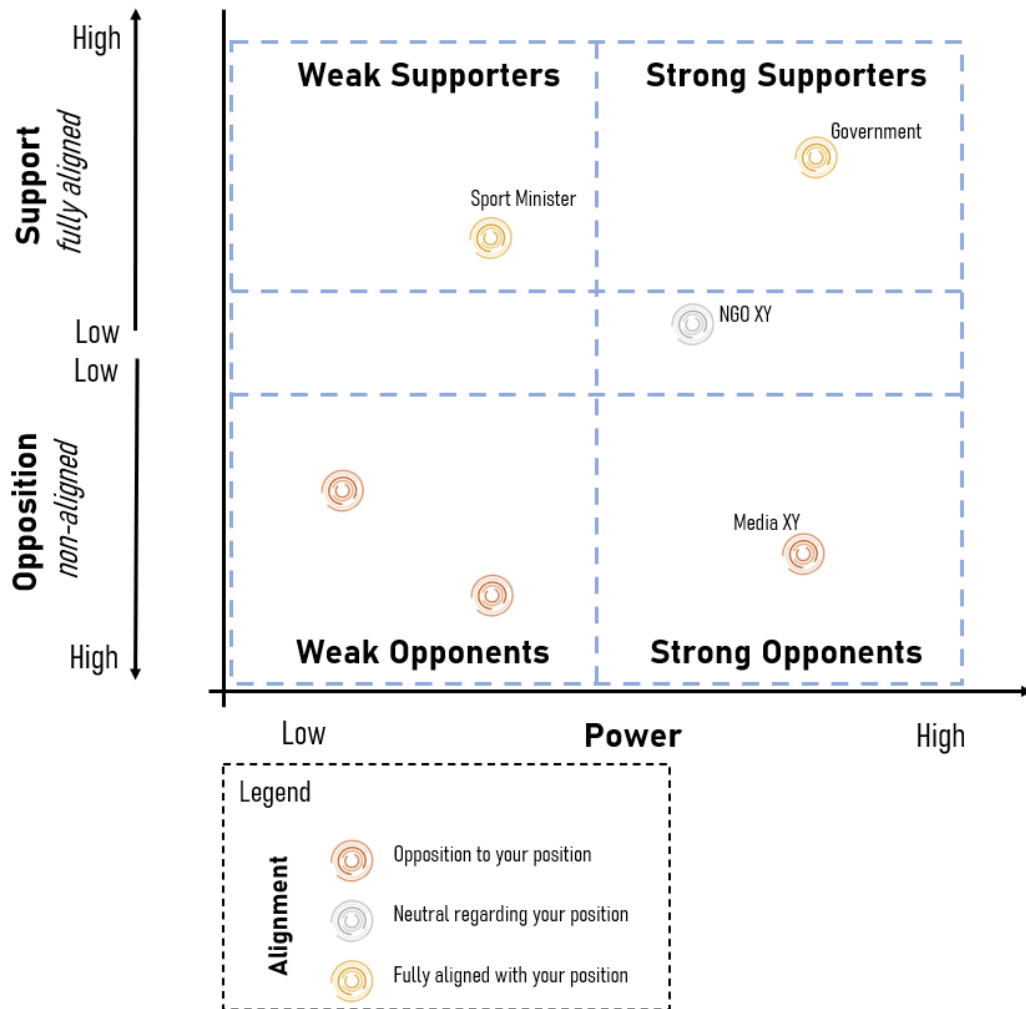


Fig. 24: Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid with Fictive Stakeholders

Figure 24 shows how stakeholders can be categorised by simply looking at their alignment to the NOC’s position, with respect to the project and each of its challenges (ordinate). The abscissa shows how powerful each stakeholder is with respect to the project. The NOC can be pleased when many stakeholders appear in the

upper right and lower left corners. Stakeholders in the lower right corner cause problems, as they are powerful and not aligned. Here, a strategy is needed to either align them, or reduce their power.

If you would like to learn more details about different types of power, please read our *Guidebook*.

It should be considered, that in stakeholder relationships, power is not limited to one source. Normally, the relationship between two stakeholders is characterised by several qualitatively different variables, which are the basis of power.

### Workshop: Developing a “Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid”

1. The facilitator introduces the project proposals – The grid in Fig. 24 is drawn, and the axes are explained.
2. The team reflects on all specific project proposals. For each project proposal, a separate grid should be available.
3. The team identifies the relevant stakeholders for each project proposal. Each stakeholder is written down on a separate label.
4. Each stakeholder will get placed, for each proposal, on its grid (you may repeat this; one proposal after another).
5. The facilitator pins the stakeholder label on the grid(s) after a discussion with the team. If the team is large, then build sub-teams (three to five members each) to create more proposals for step 7.
6. Team members should discuss the implications of the resulting stakeholder placements. Specific tactics should be discussed, and deployed based on the analysis with which to build a stronger coalition. Find arguments on how powerful opponents can be weakened or even converted into supporters.
7. At the end, the different proposals are compared, and those with the most (strong) supporters in coalitions, or those with the least (strong) opponents, can be decided on, either for or against.

The strong supporters of a project proposal build a so-called “winning coalition” (Bryson, 2018, 418). However, it should be considered that the larger the winning coalition is, the more concessions or trades have to be made to please the supporters. Often, a project proposal can get diluted, to the point that it can no longer achieve its original purpose due to too many compromises and concessions.

Next, one must consider the fourth dimension – the influenceability of a stakeholder. Stakeholders that are relevant for a particular project need to be more deeply analysed and categorised. The “Power-Interest Map” (Fig. 25) visualises the categorisation of the stakeholder. The map shows all four dimensions:

- Ability to influence: The ordinate shows how much influence the NOC has over the stakeholder.
- Power: The abscissa shows how much power the stakeholder has over the given topic or project, and the power is measured based on the types of power (see above). Here, only the power that a stakeholder has on the project under consideration will count.

- Stakeholder alignment with NOC view: The colour of the circle shows how likely the stakeholder agrees with the NOC on the topic/project (colours are defined by “Stakeholder Support-Opposition Grid” above).
- Interest of the stakeholder: The size of the ring shows the degree of interest the stakeholder has in the NOC (or project).

In our *Guidebook*, the stakeholder analysis is explained in greater detail and stakeholder mapping is organised through a “Power-Ability to Influence Map” where alignment and interest are also considered. The stakeholder tool as provided by RINGS puts the axis power and interest as graphical dimensions.

In the RINGS stakeholder tool, the axes are “power” and “interest”. “Alignment” and “influenceability” are shown in the box opening next to each stakeholder with the possibility to click on the action list. Stakeholder groups will have a neutral colour (black), whereas “alignment” and “influenceability” are either “green” or “red”, depending on whether it is “yes” or “no”.



Figure 25 illustrates this for a fictive project with fictive stakeholders.

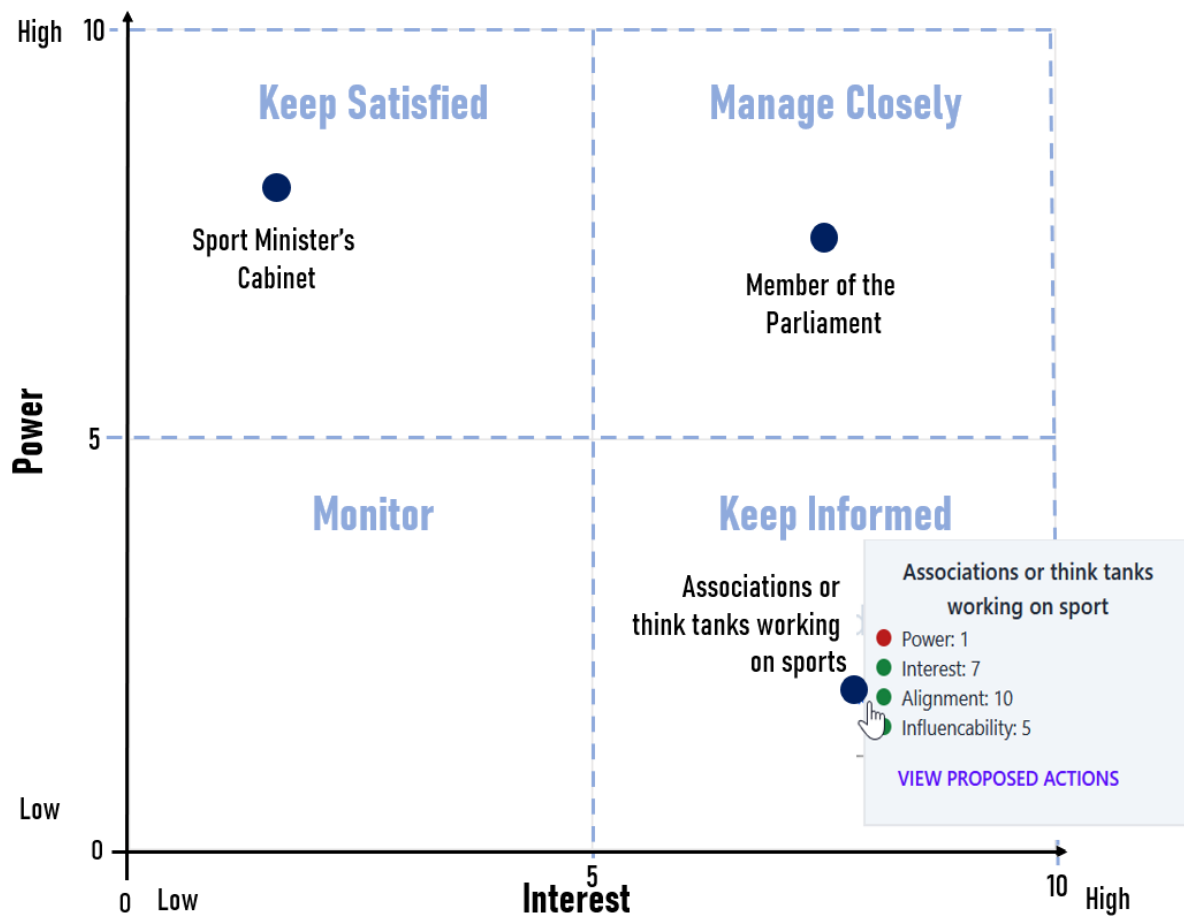


Fig. 25: Power-Interest Map with Hypothetical Examples

The four areas in the diagram are not absolutely defined, but roughly show the meaning of a stakeholder. The power/interest matrix presented by Mendelow (1991) ranks stakeholders based on the level of power they wield and the level of interest they have in the operations of the NOC.

Based on the map above, Key Players need to be managed closely. They have high power, are highly interested stakeholders who need to be managed closely to ensure their satisfaction with the NOC project. This category of stakeholders can spell the difference between the survival or the demise of the NOC, which makes it important

to keep them informed and constantly engaged.

The Keep Satisfied category is made up of high-power stakeholders who display low interest in the NOC project compared to the Key Players. That being said, it is still important to ensure that they are satisfied, but they should not be over engaged.

As for the Keep Informed stakeholders, it is critical to continuously engage them as they showcase high interest in what happens within the NOC project. Even though they wield low power, they are still valuable due to their ability to contribute meaningfully to issues.

The Minimal Effort stakeholders have little power and interest with what happens in the NOC project. They are on the opposite

end to the Key Players. It is helpful to engage them periodically and share information of the NOC with them.

**Workshop: Development of "Power-Interest Map" (if not done by automatic tool in RINGS)**

RINGS provides an automated stakeholder analysis platform where the stakeholders can be picked, and the 4 dimensions of power, interest, influenceability, and alignment can be evaluated for each of them. After completing the questionnaire, you will receive the visualisation grid (see Fig. 25) with a dot representing each stakeholder, along with a pop-up box that shows the stakeholder's interest, alignment, and influenceability, with traffic-light colours as signals, and a link to proposed actions.

Alternatively, you can run the following workshop:

1. The facilitator introduces the project that requires the map to be developed.
2. The team identifies the relevant stakeholders for the project. The stakeholders can be internal or external. You need to be thorough here, so as to not forget important stakeholder groups. Some stakeholders may have to be split up into subgroups (e.g., national media versus international media versus social media, etc.).
3. Each stakeholder will be given a score (scale 1-5) based on the power they have on a given project, and then a score (scale 1-5) based on the interest they have regarding the project. During this exercise, a new stakeholder may come to your mind, and shall be added to the map; or, a stakeholder may have to be split up into more subgroups. The facilitator dots a point for each stakeholder on the map by using the scores.
4. Think about the alignment a stakeholder has in the project (whereas it is not good when it is missing), and also about your ability to influence the stakeholder. The facilitator draws a differently-sized ring in a particular colour over the dots on the map, to represent the alignment and the influenceability.
5. After a discussion, the facilitator draws lines on the map to split the chart into four areas. The lines should be positioned based on the stakeholders; e.g., the team may decide that a particular stakeholder shall count as a "Monitor". In principle, the positions of the lines are similar to those in Fig. 25.

After establishing the stakeholder's position on the map, the NOC can develop a strategic action list, which includes details about working with the different stakeholders.

***Step 3: Strategic Action List I – Understanding Stakeholders' Interests and Power***

To work with the stakeholders strategically, it is crucial to analyse each of the important stakeholder groups for the project. The suggested technique is to use a "Power-Directions of Interest Diagram" (Fig. 26), which should be drawn for each important stakeholder.

This diagram indicates the sources of power that are available to a stakeholder, and the goals or interests the stakeholder seeks to achieve or serve. The NOC can use this information for its internal analysis, with the NOC itself at the centre.

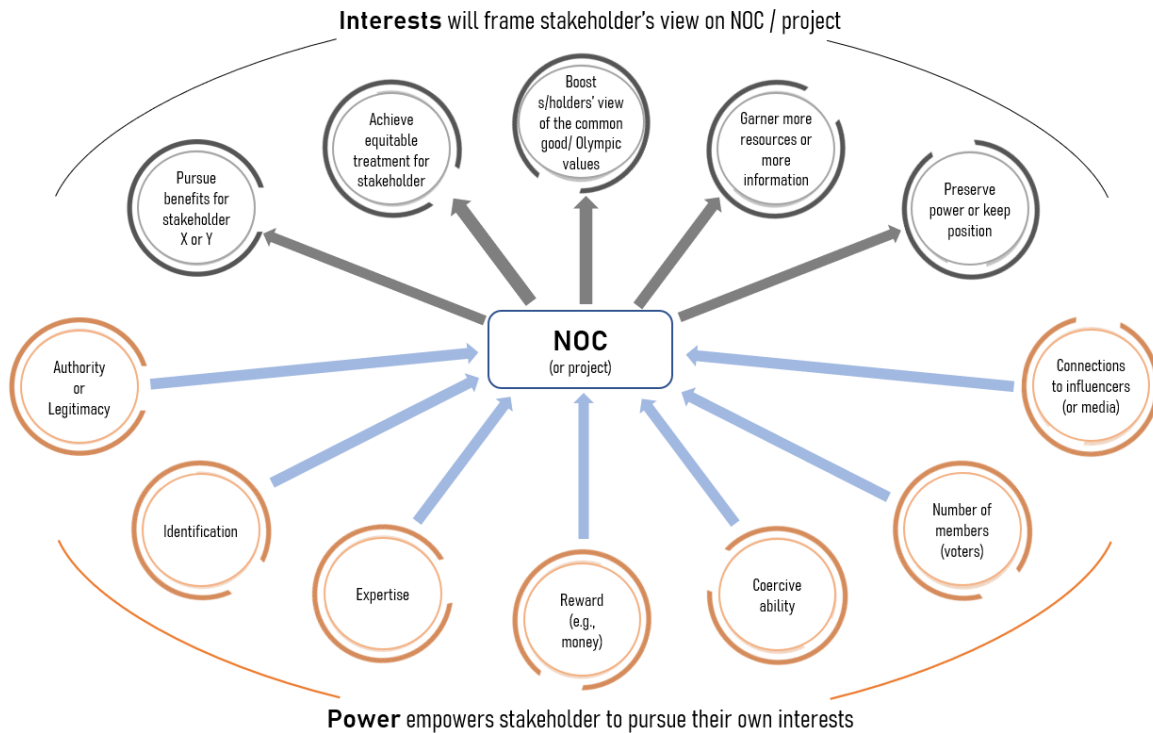


Fig. 26: Bases of Power-Directions of Interest Diagram (with examples)

As presented in Fig. 26, with slight modifications in Bryson's original diagram, it is the NOC that is at the centre here. The lower part of the diagram shows the power a stakeholder has over the NOC/project, and the upper part shows the interests the stakeholder has towards the NOC or its project.

Power can come from access to, or control over, various support mechanisms. The power a stakeholder has over the NOC can come from the five power theories (see above), or the power of voters (or members, in the NOC's case) and the connection to media or influencers. First, this requires an analysis regarding which types of power a stakeholder has.

The direction of the interests of the stakeholder would indicate the stakeholder's aspirations (see also Tab. 5).

There are three reasons to construct this diagram for each (important) stakeholder:

1. It helps the NOC to find a "common ground" in terms of interest. The identification of commonalities across several stakeholders helps to identify "winning arguments", and would move a Joker stakeholder to become a key stakeholder.
2. The diagram helps to collect and provide background information (partly, to be included in the table below), which helps to understand how to tap into the stakeholder's interests, or to make use of the stakeholder's power over the NOC's project.
3. The diagram can also help to understand or foresee the stakeholder's reactions to the project, or specific problems, or proposals to change. For example, the diagram would be useful to find out how the stakeholder can wield their power if he/she is in opposition.

**Workshop: Development of "Power-Direction of Interest Diagram"**

1. → The facilitator attaches a flip chart to a wall and writes the stakeholder's name in the corner of the sheet. This is the stakeholder we are to assess. The facilitator then writes the name of the project or the NOC in the centre of the sheet.
2. → The team brainstorms possible bases of power for the stakeholder (particularly as they affect the NOC's purpose or interests). The facilitator writes them down on the bottom half of the sheet.
3. → Following a team discussion, the facilitator draws arrows on the diagram from the power base to the NOC/project, and between power bases, to indicate how one power base is linked to another. The width of the arrow symbolises the strength of the power.
4. → The team brainstorms goals or interests that they believe the stakeholder has. The interests are particularly important if they are also relevant to the NOC's own purposes or interests. Then, you attempt to find a "common ground". The facilitator writes the stakeholder interests on the top half of the sheet, and highlights the interests with "common ground".
5. → A thorough discussion of each stakeholder diagram and its implications should follow. The facilitator records the results to be used in the strategic table, which is developed later.

Figure 27 explores which interests or themes appear to garner support from stakeholders. For the work with stakeholders, it is also important to find "common goods and the structure of a winning argument" (Bryson, 2018, 411), which increase the potential to gain some degree of influence over the stakeholder. Bryson created a technique to develop a viable political strategy based on the above "Power-Directions of Interest Diagram". Therefore, the "interest" part of the diagram needs to be explored more deeply to determine which interests or themes may exhibit persuasive arguments that would demonstrate how supporting specific policies/projects of the NOC will further the interests of a significant number of important stakeholders, and how to garner their support.

The following considerations apply only to the NOC stakeholders, and no longer to individual projects.

The NOC needs to search for common themes, which are called "super interests". These exist at a meta-level (also called meta-interests). For each theme from the stakeholders, the NOC should create a

label that captures or integrates the specific stakeholder interests which make up the project theme. The identification of common themes is a subjective exercise requiring creativity, discernment, and judgement. After identifying these themes, the NOC should create a map that identifies all of the super-interests that connect the individual stakeholders' interests, and indicates how to emphasise on win-win situations (winning coalition), or how to gain some degree of influence over the other stakeholders.

Developing a variable political rhetoric is a key visionary leadership task which helps an NOC to understand how it can pursue its mission and create public value. It is, therefore, important to understand how specific stakeholders might be inspired and mobilised to act in such a way as to advance the common good. Thus, an analysis is needed to understand how each stakeholder's interests connect with the super-interests.

To gain influence over stakeholders, the NOC should be very clear about the goals and interests of those stakeholders. Parent (2008) collected the core interests

regarding “event management”, which may be financial, human resources, infrastructure and operations, legacies, media/visibility, planning and organisation, policy, relationships and participation, or sport.





















The interests of the stakeholders can be diverse, and can basically be grouped into five areas:

- **Affiliative:** They want contact and cooperation regarding the project; interest in human relationships, and the feeling of belongingness.

- **Informative:** They want information, as interest is knowledge-based.
- **Material:** They want gain/loss of tangible benefits.
- **Political:** They want political power and distribution of influence.
- **Symbolic:** They want to be associated with a symbol, or an image.

Table 5 shows a choice of stakeholders and their interests towards an organising committee of an event (e.g., trials, Olympic Day, the Olympic Games).

Tab. 5: Organising Committee External Stakeholder Interests

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholder	Interests				
		Material	Political	Affiliative	Informational	Symbolic
Governments	Federal, provincial, & municipal					
Community	Residents, sponsors, & Community groups					
Sport Organisations	International					
	National & provincial					
Media	Television, print, & radio					
Delegations	Participants & support staff					

Stakeholder mapping provides a good understanding of the wider strategies that could be applied. Here, it is important to observe whether or not the particular stakeholder is aligned with the NOC position.

It may be that the NOC and a stakeholder have different positions on the project; however, there may also be issues that are of common interest. The technique discussed here refers to finding a common position, or creating a public value, by looking for themes, concerns, or goals that

are shared by key stakeholders. This could downplay opposition to the project. The technique explained here addresses the ways in which opposition to the project needs to be taken into account.

Figure 27 shows the “Stakeholder-Issue Interrelationship Diagram” (see Bryson, 2018, 413). It helps the NOC to understand which stakeholders have an interest, and in which issues, and how some stakeholders might be related to other stakeholders through their relationships with a particular issue

**Toolbox: Common Issue Diagram**

This tool helps the NOC to find a common position, or creating a public value, by looking for themes, concerns, or goals that are shared by key stakeholders.

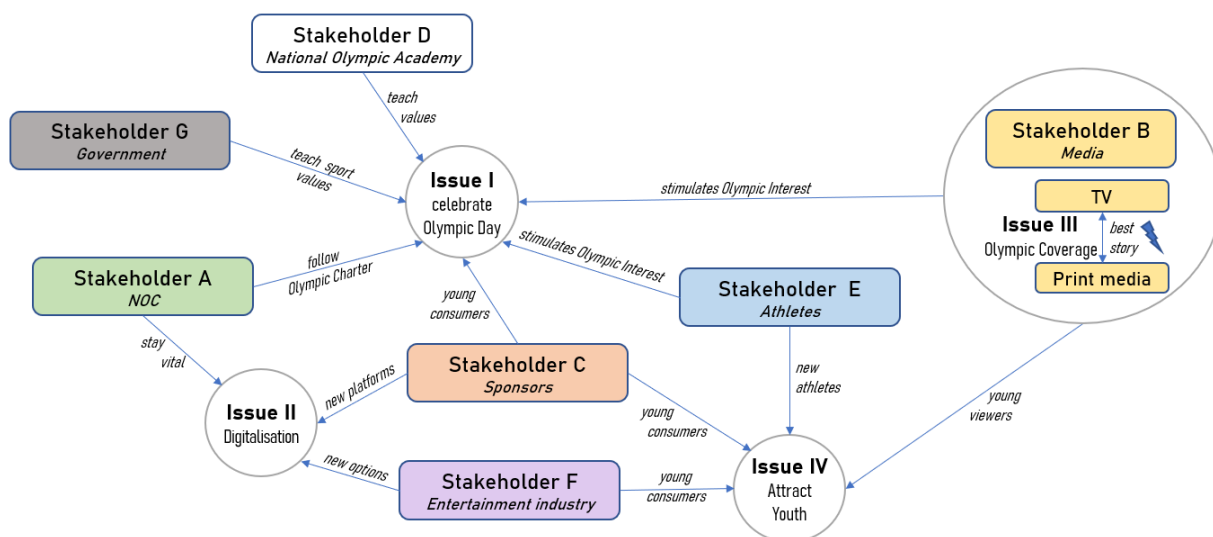


Fig. 27: Fictive Stakeholder-Issue Interrelationship Diagram

The diagram in Fig. 27 is a structured way of presenting issue-related areas. It visualises a number of actual or potential areas for co-operation (or conflict). The arrows in the diagram indicate that the stakeholder has an interest in an issue. The specific interest is likely to be different for each stakeholder. Some interests may even be in relation to conflict. Therefore, it is even more important to understand which stakeholder interests need to be prioritised, and which issue(s) would fare better if they were not overly addressed.

Fig. 27 illustrates that stakeholders A, B, C, D, E, and G each have an interest (or stake) in Issue I (celebration of the Olympic Day). Stakeholder A is also related to

Stakeholders C and F through their joint relationship to Issue II (need for more Olympic digitalisation activities). The sub-groups within Stakeholder B have a further issue between them (Issue III, regarding the Olympic Games coverage, wherein media fights to gain exclusivity over the best story). Issue IV is interesting for B, C, E, and F. In general, many more stakeholders may be interested in all of these issues, but here, only the most important were picked. All arrows should be labelled to explain where exactly the stakeholder’s interest lies. Any conflicting interests should also be marked in the diagram.

**Workshop: Developing a Stakeholder-Issue Interrelationship Diagram**

Have a facilitator with a flip chart. Equip yourself with different coloured pens and self-adhesive labels.

1. → Start with agenda setting. It must be explained what the diagram shall show. It can be projects, trends (e.g., Agenda 2020+5), or challenges of the NOC.
2. → Relevant stakeholders can either be taken from the “Power-Interest Map” or be brainstormed by the team. Write the names of all stakeholders on labels.
3. → The team brainstorms issues related to the project (or to the trends or challenges of the NOC), and writes them down on other coloured labels.
4. → Following a team discussion, the facilitator places the issues (which can be small projects in themselves) on the flip chart, and then places stakeholders all around and connects them to the issues using arrows. An arrow indicates a stakeholder’s stake in an issue. The content of each arrow – that is, the stake or interest involved – should be identified and written down above/below the arrow.
5. → The team thoroughly discusses each issue, stakeholder, and arrow. Any implications for the framing or reframing of issues and the management of stakeholder relationships should be noted during this workshop

**Step 4: Strategic Action List II: Developing Strategic Work with Stakeholders**

Finally, all the information will build the basis for the strategy that is applied to each stakeholder. All the maps, grids, and diagrams that are introduced are useful when working with the various

stakeholders, implementing a project, or initiating change. They can help the NOC to develop project proposals that are likely to garner significant stakeholder support. But it is still important to also maintain a focus on stakeholders during project implementation.

**Toolbox: Strategy Map**

This is a graphical illustration of the NOC’s strategy, showing a logical, cause-and-effect connection between strategic objectives.

Tab. 6: Strategy Development and Implementation Table


Stakeholder	NOC's perspective		Stakeholder's power			NOC's power	 <b>Strategy for engaging the stakeholder</b>	Controlling <small>(Person in charge of controlling if strategic actions are effective)</small>
	Interest/stake <small>(What is our benefit from this stakeholder? How can stakeholder contribute to project/us)</small>	Influence Channel <small>(What influence channels are open to stakeholder? What kind of power do we have over stakeholder?)</small>	Influence <small>(How much influence does the stakeholder have on the project/us?)</small>	Damage <small>(What damage/harm can be caused to us? On what is the power of the stakeholder based? Can stakeholder block the project?)</small>	Opposition <small>(With whom and in what issues is this stakeholder in opposition?)</small>	Interest <small>(what are the interests of the stakeholder – what is needed to win them)</small>		
Government <small>(contact person/ email/phone)</small>	100,000 Euro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sport attracts Youth</li> <li>Expert power</li> </ul>	very high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of 100,000 Euro is 30% of finance</li> <li>Reward power</li> <li>Cannot block</li> </ul>	No opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political influence</li> <li>Symbolic (become related to project)</li> </ul>	Involve government visibility in project, keep them informed, and have regular contact	CEO talks regularly with contact person
Media <small>(contact person/ email/phone)</small>	Visibility in TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide interesting stories/news</li> <li>Legal power as we have the rights</li> </ul>	medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No coverage in that media</li> <li>Coercive power</li> <li>Cannot block</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In opposition with other media</li> <li>We want a large audience; the media want exclusivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good stories</li> <li>Interest of viewers</li> <li>Symbolic (visibility through project)</li> </ul>	Work on delivering news/stories via a functioning media centre	Head of media department meets 3 times before project with stakeholder
IOC <small>(contact person/ email/phone)</small>	...							
Sponsors <small>(contact person/ email/phone)</small>								
...								

Table 6 includes a brief description of the strategy that should be implemented. These strategic actions (see black ring) should be developed and formulated with great care. It needs to be much more detailed than presented in the example. This

table helps managers and NOC board members to stay attuned to their stakeholders, and to think, act, and learn strategically. It also helps to keep the need for ongoing responsiveness clearly in mind.

### 3.4 Strategic Analysis and Action Plan Development (SWOT)

SWOT is the acronym for **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats. Up to here, we have primarily looked at the “inside” of an NOC, and the external influencing forces of the NOC’s environment, in relative isolation from each other. In this section, we will combine the two areas. Thus, we examine the interactions that occur between the environment and the NOC, and obtain indications of how an NOC can

proceed strategically in order to react adequately to environmental changes.

A SWOT analysis is a tool that assesses the NOC’s internal and external environments, and should be part of an NOC’s strategic planning process. In addition, a SWOT analysis can be done for an NOC project, a place (e.g., to locate an Olympic training centre), or even a person (e.g., to find a new social media manager).

#### Toolbox: SWOT Analysis

The SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis helps with both strategic planning and decision-making, providing a “360-degree” view of the NOC’s position and its interaction forces regarding the environment. In this way, the NOC can develop strategic recommendations, which should be considered when developing a strategic plan. Strengths and weaknesses (S&W) refer to the internal analysis of the NOC. Opportunities and threats (O&T) are a result of the upcoming changes in the external environment.

#### **Strengths**

Strengths are those things that the NOC does well. Strengths are based on resources that the NOC controls, and they must be maintained and developed through good strategic management.

Strengths are a property of every NOC, and represent the answer to the question, “What do we do well?”, or “What is good about us/our Olympic actions?”. Strengths can be determined via an internal NOC analysis. For more information, consult subchapter 3.2, which addresses

strengths. Examples of strength include stakeholder support, good public image, satisfied sponsors, motivated staff with expertise, good government relationship, sustainable NOC premises, effective promotional strategy, or lack of competitors.

#### **Weaknesses**

Weaknesses are the things that the NOC performs poorly, and the resources it lacks for the projects and public value it wants to achieve. Those shortcomings can, and should, be corrected through better management.



Possibly every NOC can do some things poorly, or may focus on things that are not so beneficial or effective for its members. Weaknesses are particularly noteworthy if they prevent the NOC from achieving its mission. This might mean finances leaking unnecessarily, hidden agendas of some directors, giving a high work load to the staff, having a low level of professionalisation, having a lack of rooms, improperly targeting member federations or athletes, or losing money by not dealing well with the government, IOC, or sponsors. Weaknesses are harmful (or prevent benefit), and are related to how the NOC is managed. Therefore, weaknesses are a part of the internal analysis of the NOC.

### Opportunities

Opportunities are positive factors that are beyond the NOC's control, but can be used to its advantage.

Opportunities are a combination of different circumstances (from the external environment) at a given time, that can offer positive outcomes if they are properly adopted and used to good advantage. Indeed, the NOC cannot create opportunities. It can only choose how to position itself to

gain the maximum benefit from an opportunity that comes up. Examples of opportunities are new governmental sport investment programmes (introducing new programmes), a positive change in the public authorities with an increased value for sport (obtaining more financial support), or an increase in the awareness of the population that sport is healthy (bringing new sponsors).

### Threats

Threats are negative factors outside of the organisation's control, and must be rebuffed or blocked through good strategic management.

Threats refer to anything from the external environment, that could cause damage to the NOC. For example, other organisations might intrude on the NOC's sphere, such as athlete unions or competitors for sponsors. Because threats develop externally, there is nothing an NOC can do to stop them from materialising. Also, while the NOC cannot change the frequency of threats (or it might intentionally bring them about), each NOC can still choose how to approach and deal with such threats.

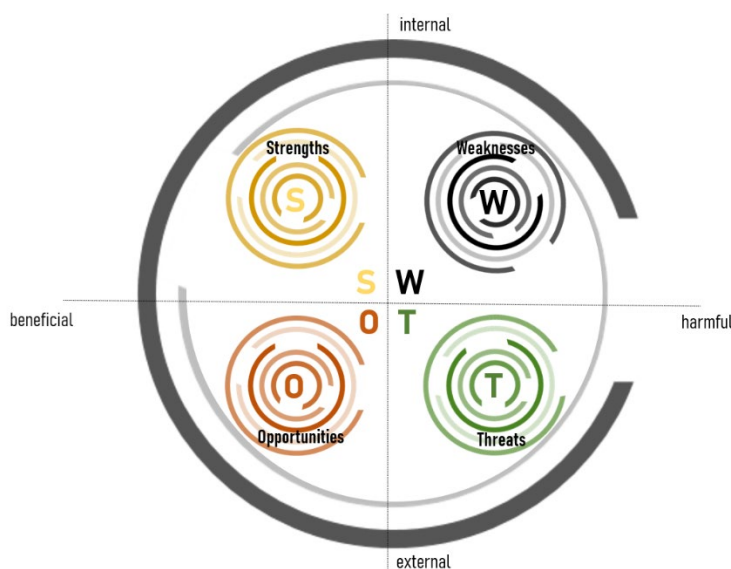


Fig. 28: SWOT Matrix for an NOC





<b>Environment</b>  <b>NOC</b>	 <b>Opportunities</b> (a combination of different circumstances at a given time offering a positive outcome)	 <b>Threats</b> (anything that could cause damage to the NOC)	external
 <b>Strengths</b> (things that the NOC does well, and the resources it controls)	<b>SO-Strategy</b> Use strengths to grasp opportunities	<b>ST-Strategy</b> Apply strengths to avert risks	
 <b>Weaknesses</b> (things that the NOC does poorly, and the resources, it lacks)	<b>WO-Strategy</b> Reduce weaknesses to exploit opportunities	<b>WT-Strategy</b> Reduce weaknesses to reduce risks	
internal			

Fig. 29: Strategies taken from SWOT Analysis

Figure 29 gives a rough overview of potential strategies that can be applied when strengths meet opportunities (SO-Strategy), or threats (ST-Strategy) and weaknesses meet threats (WT-Strategy) or opportunities (WO-Strategy).

***SO-Strategy: Using strengths to seize opportunities***

The SO-strategy is the ideal case. The NOC identifies opportunities that match the NOC's strengths. For example, existing knowledge in the area of environmentally friendly event hosting (strength) can be optimally aligned with the need towards greater environmental awareness of the population regarding the event hosting (opportunity).

***WO-Strategy: Reduce weaknesses to exploit opportunities***

The aim here is to try to seize how opportunities can be realised, despite internal

weaknesses. In this strategy, the NOC should consider which weaknesses need to be reduced and how that would be achieved, in order to be able to profit from external opportunities. In a fast-growing, innovative event environment (opportunity), for example, the missing support of regional government, and slow bidding processes (weakness) are great hindrances to attracting a sport event, but their impact can be reduced by entering into co-operation with the national government, and by developing a national event strategy (such as in Canada, the UK, or Denmark).

**Illustration: National Strategy to attract events**

Sport Event Denmark (SEDK) was established in 2008 with the aim to strengthen Denmark's position among the world's leading hosts of international major sport events. The need to define the overall direction of SEDK cemented its strategy for the period of 2019-2022. Further, SEDK establishes goals and prioritises development areas in close collaboration with experienced stakeholders.

The key framework conditions identified were:

- Internationally, only a few countries have established a similar national event organisation, yet some countries are already in the development phase (Germany, Switzerland, Austria, etc.).
- Despite a current lead, an increase in competition for major sport events is anticipated.
- Denmark has contributed significantly lower funds when compared internationally.
- Increasing costs of promoting and hosting major sport events.

SEDK demonstrated a success rate of 80% for its event-applications. Winning events:

year	number of events in Denmark	
2008	39	1. IOC Session and Olympic Congress 2009
2009	60	2. UEFA Congress 2009
2010	26	3. Taekwondo World Championships 2009
2011	31	4. Track Cycling World Championships 2010
2012	28	5. Women's Curling World Championships 2011
2013	24	6. BMX World Championships 2011
2014	14	7. UCI Road World Championships 2011
2015	38	8. European Dressage and Show Jumping Championships 2013
2016	28	9. Short Course Swimming European Championships 2013
2017	30	10. European Handball Championships 2014
2018	22	11. Half Marathon World Championships 2014
		12. BWF Badminton World Championships 2014
		13. Archery World Championships 2015
		14. Women's Handball World Championships 2015
		15. Ice Hockey World Championships 2018
		16. [...]
		17. Handball World Championships 2019

***ST-Strategy: Apply strengths to avert threats***

The ST-strategy means to use existing strengths to counter external risks. For example, stable and financially independent sport clubs and federations (strength) can be advantageous in countering pandemics, such as COVID-19 (threat).

***WT-Strategy: Reduce weaknesses to reduce threats***

The WT-strategy is the least favourable, and is about which threats the NOC must

avoid, at all costs, because the corresponding strengths are missing. The strategy, in this case, is to reduce weaknesses in order to mitigate risks. For example, if an NOC is not good at governance (weakness), and the population is increasingly sceptical and against the Olympic Games (threat), ways to improve governance should be considered. The NOC should also ponder over whether it may be necessary to give up bidding to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

### Workshop: Conducting a SWOT analysis

#### 1. Choose the right candidate

A SWOT analysis should be conducted by someone from your NOC, internally. This person may be someone who oversees internal departments. He/she may have direct access to personnel, projects, data, and research, and should be able to examine processes, workflows, and task management without showing bias.

#### 2. Start with the strengths

Begin with examining the NOC strengths or the 'S' in SWOT. These can be found by gathering data, specifically by examining results from previous projects. Additionally, the analyst will also interview staff, board members, as well as athletes to hear their perspectives. It is important to gather insight from staff, as they will have strong opinions on where NOC strengths lie. Then, identify how strengths can be increased or leveraged.

#### 3. Rank the strengths

Not every strength is equally dependent on your NOC's expectations. Rank the strengths by pinpointing your top three to five choices. Limit the list to focus on primary advantages, because it is difficult to maximise the potential of *every* strength on the list.

NOCs have limited funding and resources. Shortening the list of strengths can help to focus on what is important.

#### 4. Summarise findings

With your now concentrated list of strengths, you should highlight:

- What are the chosen strengths?
- Who do they affect?
- What are the potential benefits from those strengths?
- Why are these strengths in your chosen list of top items, above others?

#### 5. Repeat steps 2 – 4 for the rest of the analysis

Follow the above steps for each phase of the analysis. Replace strengths with weaknesses. Then focus on opportunities and threats.

Note: The questions in step 2 will differ:

- Weaknesses: Consider how they can be eliminated, reduced, or altered. If they cannot be removed, how can they be reduced? If they cannot be reduced, can they be converted to a strength or an opportunity?
- Opportunities: Assess how they can benefit the NOC, but also assess how they could become threats. Remember that opportunities are not real yet. In SWOT, opportunities are about acknowledging and utilising their benefits as they develop.
- Threats: Examine them to mitigate risk, and to prepare for any adverse impact.

#### 6. Develop strategic actions

Meet with a group of three to five persons and discuss the lists from steps 1-5. Then, combine the strengths/weaknesses with the opportunities/threats, and think about potential strategies which you could adopt and implement.

- Strategise strengths opportunities
- Strategise weaknesses opportunities
- Strategise strengths threats
- Strategise weaknesses threats

### 3.5 Strategic Risk Assessment and Risk Management

Risk and crisis management are different, but they are interrelated. Risk assessment enables the NOC to be a little more prepared for crises. Whether your NOC is in a sudden crisis, or in a situation that could have been anticipated, it is good practice to perform a risk assessment. In a risk assessment, the following four points are important to consider:

- What is the potential economic impact?
- What are the expected societal consequences?
- What is the potential loss of credibility, and devalued image and reputation?
- What is the degree of probability (low or high) of the above points happening?

Crisis management is the identification and effective response of an NOC to threats, in order to mitigate any adverse impacts on

the NOC and its stakeholders (you can read about crisis management in chapter 6). Individuals, organisations, stakeholders, and industries can all be affected by crises. As the global COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the different societies around the world, the need for NOCs and NFs to react to, adapt to, and address a multitude of existing crises becomes increasingly imperative. In essence, COVID-19 in itself has been a crisis that the entire global and Olympic sport industry was struggling with, had to deal with, and had to overcome (see case study on COVID-19 and NOC in subchapter 6.3.2).

Risk (management) is “the proactive process that involves assessing all possible risks to events and their stakeholders by strategically avoiding, preventing, reducing, diffusing, reallocating, legalising and building/managing relationships to minimise identified risks”.

#### Toolbox: Risk Analysis

One common approach to risk analysis is impact-probability assessment, which aims to estimate the range of possible impacts of an event or a trend on the NOC. On this basis, a risk register and strategies are developed, but they must be renewed regularly.

If you would like to learn more about the different types of risks, such as environmental, financial, good governance, infrastructure, etc., please read our *Guidebook*

All management of an NOC have the responsibility of taking well-judged, sensible risks to develop the organisation. However, to ensure that those risks are, indeed, well-judged and sensible, an NOC must ensure that its general procedures include the need for risk management. According to Robinson, risk management procedures may follow these three steps:

1. Assessment of risks facing the NOC, including the identification of key risks

2. Risk management strategies
3. Periodic review of the programme

#### 3.5.1 Assessment of Risks Facing the NOC

One common approach to risk management is impact-probability assessment. The aim is to estimate the range of possible impacts of an event or a trend on the NOC.

**Consequences/Impact for NOC**


























	Negligible (minor problem, easily handled by normal day to day processes)	Minor (some disruption possible)	Moderate (significant time and resources required)	Major (operations severely damaged)	Catastrophic (NOC survival is at risk)
<b>Watch out!</b> (> 90% chance)	 High	 High	 Extreme	 Extreme	 Extreme
<b>Likely</b> (50-90% chance)	 Moderate	 High	 High	 Extreme	 Extreme
<b>Moderate</b> (10-49% chance)	 Low	 Moderate	 High	 Extreme	 Extreme
<b>Unlikely</b> (3-9% chance)	 Low	 Low	 Moderate	 High	 Extreme
<b>Very Unlikely</b> (<3% chance)	 Low	 Low	 Moderate	 High	 High

Fig. 30: Risk Assessment Grid

Quantifying risk involves multiplying the likelihood (or frequency) of the risk event occurring, by the extent of its potential impact: Risk = Likelihood × Impact.

**3.5.2 Risk Management Strategies**

There are different ways to work with risks. Managing risk involves selecting tools to prevent or minimise each individual risk, by reducing its likelihood or its impact.

Leopkey and Parent introduced five risk management strategies. These mitigate the risks affecting an NOC:

1. **Reduction:** Many risks can be reduced simply by being aware of them. Better planning, clear business objectives, training, staff deployment, controlling, test events, communication, and using previous experience are good. Often, a change of operating style can reduce a risk.
2. **Avoidance:** Other risks can be avoided if you are aware of a risk area. This includes the fact that it would be better to not start projects that appear too risky. Overall, this limits the number of options you have in your strategic decisions. Avoidance of “catastrophic” risks should be undertaken.
3. **Redistribution:** This strategy demands that you transfer the risk or responsibility for the risk to another person/institution outside of the NOC.
4. **Dissemination:** Here, the NOC spreads the risk by becoming less dependent on one stakeholder, or sharing the risk with the stakeholder or other entities. NOCs can also create backups, in case they

are needed for any incident, thus reducing the consequences.

5. **Prevention:** Similar to avoidance, an NOC can aim to prevent a risk by setting up rules and regulations to educate the concerned party, which places the risks back on them. This strategy does not always work, as certain damages (e.g., reputation loss) can also occur when regulations are set up. Another way to prevent this is a substitution of the risky entity/person (e.g., not picking a risky sponsor, but rather picking another less-risky sponsor). Finally, the NOC can prohibit actions that involve too much risk. For example, there may be travel restrictions to dangerous countries, or risky investments for the available NOC budget. Prevention can

also be achieved by way of contracts. The NOC can severely decrease the potential damage by having the right insurances or having contracts/agreements. For example, in many countries, officials are insured against liability for injuries that occur to athletes under their responsibility, and most NOCs that stage events (Youth Olympic Day, etc.) insure themselves against injury to participants and spectators.

By using the strategies to control the risk, the assessment will show a different risk situation. The NOC can either aim to reduce the probability that an incident will occur, or the NOC can reduce the potential consequences that the incidence has over it.

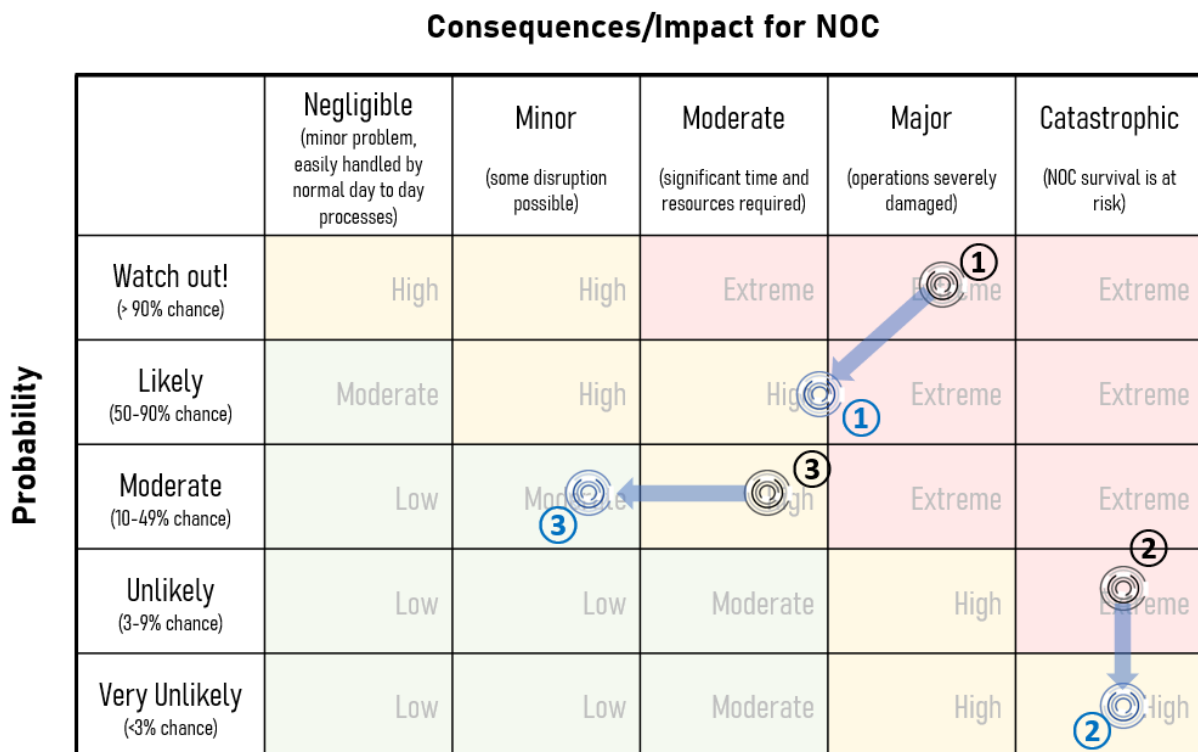


Fig. 31: Risk Assessment Grid Before and After Taking Action

To visualise the actions undertaken, and the monitoring process behind the action, Robinson suggests to develop a risk register.

Tab. 7: Risk Register for an NOC

Risk	Probability of risk	Consequence/ Impact	Overall risk	Action undertaken	Monitor	Responsibility	Further action	Date of reassessment
① Covid-19 affects sponsor payment	Almost	Major	Extreme	Offer local VIP arrangements	Sponsor workshop	Head of marketing	Report to board before Paris 2024	September 2023
② Loss of government support post-Covid	Unlikely	Catastrophic	Extreme	Promotion of importance of sport in post-Covid world	Regular talks to government representative	President	Report to board at next meeting	End of year
③ Loss of director high-performance sport	Moderate	Moderate	High	Increase of salary, more responsibility	Communication with director	Head of HR	Review HR salary plans	After next Olympic Games

### 3.5.3 Review of the Risk Programme

Setting dates for risk reassessment is important. As the environment and stakeholders change, risk will also change. Successful action and risk strategies also change former risks. Therefore, risk management is a process that needs constant evaluation and renewal.

Robinson demands that, as with all aspects of governance, the process of risk management should be transparent and communicated throughout the NOC. This is in

line with Agenda 2020+5's demand for credibility. Trust in the NOC can be built by including an acknowledgement of the board's responsibilities in the annual report. Additionally, the nature of the process that was followed, along with a confirmation of the systems in place to control areas of major risk, should be included. This allows all stakeholders to be comfortable with the risk management of the NOC, and can help eventually strengthen relationships.

#### Workshop: Risk Management at NOCs

1. Identification of risks: Meet with your board members and management, and have appropriate conversations with external consultants and auditors. Conduct a brainstorming session to identify risk areas.
2. Understand the probability of the occurrence and the impact of risks: Quantify risks by placing them in the risk assessment grid.
3. Understand the degree of severity of a risk. It can be economic, societal, or reputational: Aim to put a "price" on each consequence. The price can be any resource (money, time, relations, reputation, etc.). Then calculate the risk.
4. Work on a risk strategy: For each risk, consider how you would control issues to avoid the risk. Discuss how you would set up a "control procedure", and then set a date for a review.
5. Control: Dedicate a responsible person to each risk area. This person is in charge of observing the risk development, initiating further action, or calling for a meeting. The person in charge must control the date of review.
6. Develop a "risk register" with all the data received from steps 2-5 for your NOC board, in order to keep the members informed.

Another part about risk management, regarding organisational change, will be discussed in detail in subchapter 4.4. In Chapter 6, we will have a closer look at crises and crisis management.



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# Chapter 4

## Implementation and Change Management

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The Difficulties in Implementing Change

4.2

The Different Kinds of Change

4.3

Why does Change Fail?

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## Chapter 4

# Implementation and Change Management

### 4.1 The Difficulties in Implementing Change

This subchapter deals with the management of implementation of change at an NOC, or more generally speaking, the management of change within organisations. Change can either be based on a new strategy, or it may not be strategic at all. Planned change within organisations can be difficult because it often does not achieve all its goals. It also leads to unintended consequences (Merton, 1936) and collateral damage to a certain extent. Books on strategy often cite a lack of implementation of strategy as the reason behind the failure of strategies. Some NOC managers admit that, despite the launch of the new strategy and the introduction of new structures (e.g., the NOC's way of dealing with member organisations), people unconsciously reverted to the old behaviour patterns after a short period of time. Others report that new strategies failed due to resistance from parts of their own organisation. These unintended consequences of implementation attempts are also called resistance to change. Change is, therefore, difficult to achieve. The implementation of change, or change management, attempts to deal with this difficulty in order to effectively achieve the desired conditions of change. Adapting to the ever-faster changing environment (see subchapter 3.3) is one of the most important prerequisites for lasting success for organisations, particularly for NOCs.

### 4.2 The Different Kinds of Change

For a better understanding of change, and for better change management, it is necessary to be clear about the kind of desired change. This involves many different approaches and research results, some of which have been briefly explained here.

#### 4.2.1 Unplanned Change vs. Planned Change

Change is a universal phenomenon; however, not every change is the result of intentional behaviour, or even an elaborate plan. Change management is always connoted with the planned change, while unplanned change eludes conscious planning and, thus, any form of management. Nevertheless, it is an important factor for organisations, and many organisational structures were not planned, but rather, were a result of the processes of institutionalisation.

#### 4.2.2 Small Change vs. Big Change

How big is the change? The problem of change grows with the magnitude of change. Small things are rather easy and quick to implement and, in that case, an NOC does not need large-scale implementation management. Small changes (also called incremental changes) are aimed at solving problems with small, systematic steps that provoke change over time. By using an incremental change procedure, an NOC can reduce risk, and focus on improving the system that is in place, rather

than starting from scratch and creating a new system.

However, a “big change” (Taffinder, 1998) is generally considered to be a very fundamental restructuring of an NOC. In for-profit organisations, this often involves a change in the business area but for NFs, changing the core product (its own sport)

into other fields is rather absurd. Even if an NOC looks for new goals, e.g., youth attraction, digitalisation, or sustainability, it will not give up its core, i.e., the support of and successful participation in the Olympic Games.

#### Illustration: Turkish NOC (TOC) Uses Incremental Change

Following the implementation of its 2012-2016 Strategic Plan, which produced good results in many areas, including a new athletes' commission, stronger cooperation with athletes, clean sport initiatives, women in sport activities, as well as development, restructuring, general organisational efficiency, and enhancement of the TOC structures and office, TOC is currently developing a new strategic initiative; not a plan with a set end-date, but rather a road map. It will be a rolling strategy that will be monitored and adjusted annually.

#### 4.2.3 Self-induced Change vs. Coercive Change

Who starts the change? There is a big difference between change desired by and implemented by oneself and change imposed by a third party. Even though the definition of non-profit organisations assumes complete autonomy, the reality is different. Although NOCs are autonomous from the state and from the IOC, de facto strong dependencies do exist. When the NOCs' umbrella organisation (the IOC) issues new rules in its Olympic Charter, they must change in order to ensure compliance. Moreover, a change in laws on

accounting and state assertion are good examples of coercive change in organisations (see subchapter 1.3). This type of change is also considered a cause of the great similarity (isomorphism) that organisations in the same field often exhibit.

Coercive change is inevitable, whereby one is forced to implement it with no alternative. Although this method entails maximum implementation power, the collateral damage and the unintended consequences of coercive change also tend to grow to a maximum.

### Case Study: Italian Government Forces CONI to Change

The Italian government decided to restructure its sport supporting system (CONI) that was previously in charge of the coordination of high-performance sports. However, upon losing this task, the majority of its resources and staff also vanished. In other words, CONI was put in a pressure situation to shrink in size (more details in chapter 2).

A separate government-controlled organisation was set-up to distribute funds to the country's national governing bodies. This organisation, an Italian Government-controlled sports agency called "Sport e Salute" - or "Sport and Health" - has reduced CONI's role to only handling preparation for the Olympic Games.

The IOC raised an issue with the impact of the Italian Parliament approving plans to set up a Government-controlled organisation which would distribute funds to the country's national governing bodies. The preservation of CONI's autonomy, a basic foundation of the Olympic Charter, is the key issue at stake for the IOC. An IOC letter expressly noted Article 27.9 of the Olympic Charter as stating: "The IOC Executive Committee can take the most appropriate decisions for the protection of the Olympic Movement in the country of an NOC, including the suspension or withdrawal of the recognition of such NOC if the constitution, the law or other rules in the nation are in question."

The letter also reflected the NOC's autonomous responsibility in the determination and control of the rules of sport, the definition of the structure and the governance of their organisations. CONI were reminded that NOCs should "resist pressures of any kind, including, but not limited to, political, legal, religious or economic pressures that could prevent them from fulfilling the Olympic Charter."

The Italian Sports Minister, Vincenzo Spadafora (5 September 2019-13 February 2021), wrote to the IOC, insisting that CONI would still have "autonomy" should the law be passed. However, it was feared that Italy would face a flag and national anthem ban for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics due to the introduction of a controversial sports law, which undermined CONI's position as the governing body of sports in the country. The Italian Government's Cabinet approved a decree that safeguarded CONI, whereby the decision eliminated any doubt, and resolved the problem of CONI's independence.

Refer to subchapter 1.3, and the autonomy of sport illustration, for further background.

Questions to think about:

1. Can the government of your country do the same to your NOC?
2. What could be the reason why your government may take away resources and obligations from you?
3. How can you set up a better relationship with your government to lobby for your good work (see also the public affairs guidelines of the RINGS Project)
4. What can be done to prevent an entity from "being changed", instead of driving forward your own active change?

Self-induced change, which is voluntary and based on a plan, emanates from members or the board of the organisation. Although the fact of undertaking a self-induced change reduces the chance of implementation, the organisation must be aware of collateral damage and unintended consequences (see case study above). Other factors play an important role here, especially leadership.

#### 4.2.4 Autocratic Leadership vs. Democratic Leadership

Here, we take a look at the classic distinction between authoritarian (autocratic) and participative (democratic) leadership styles, based on Lewin.

- Autocratic style: the leader expects obedience from his/her employees, and it is always the leader who decides what to do, which translated to leading without hearing the employees' voices.



- Democratic style: the decision-making process closely involves the employees, even though the leader still plays an important role in the process, as a moderator. The leader is still in charge and takes complete responsibility, which translates to leading while listening to the employees' voices.

As a rule, leaders often exhibit a mix of these two poles of leadership style, despite being closer to one pole than the other. The more the style of a leader leans towards one pole, the more the advantages and disadvantages of the style are apparent.

Both styles have their advantages and disadvantages, especially when it comes to successful change management. The authoritarian style implicitly assumes that the manager has a more or less perfect plan that only needs to be enforced. It is also assumed that the planning decisions are perfect in principle, because everyone assumes that the manager certainly knows everything. However, we must recall here that some cultures appreciate an authoritarian style of leadership more than others. The typical change management of this style is the "thrown grenade" approach (Kirsch et al., 1979), wherein the order to change comes down out of nowhere, like a "thrown grenade", from the top echelon of the organisation, and the employees have no choice but to follow the orders. Such methods have the advantage of being very fast in deciding and issuing the command. But the employees are not asked what they would want, or what they would think is good practice. Hence, this method's problematic implementation is a significant disadvantage. This results in the profound demotivation of the employees, as they may feel blindsided, they do not understand the reason for the change, and they often have better but unheard ideas. The change can

fail due to the lack of commitment of the employees, as well as the more or less open attempts to stop it or sabotage it (Resistance to Change). The authoritarian style of leadership is based on power, and this can legally lie with the superiors through the employment contract, which is also referred to as legal power or domination (Herrschaft in German, see subchapter 3.3.2). However, it can also be based on an illegal means of power, i.e., means that are not covered by the employment contract, e.g., blackmail. The takeaway here is that illegal means of power always lead to behavioural resistance.

The democratic leadership approach involves employees in the decision-making process, whereby they are explicitly asked what they would wish for. Implicitly, the approach assumes that managers do not know everything, and that employees who spend 40 hours a week dealing with their tasks have detailed knowledge that their bosses do not possess. Japanese management often works with quality circles, whereby workers and administrators are asked in regular group meetings ("circles") how the work could be improved. The approach involves leadership with eye-level relationships, and employees are not treated disrespectfully, but are rather appreciated as experts. Hierarchy, however, is usually preserved, and only in very self-directing groups do radical approaches disappear, as noted by Drucker (1993). The change management of the participative approach is based on consensus. The extent to which it is used is also related to culture (see subchapter 2.5), and establishing it is lengthy and difficult (especially when important interests might be negatively affected).

### Illustration: Resistance to Change - Slovak Olympic Committee

The Slovak Olympic Committee, which was established in 2012, first witnessed an attempt to be transformed into an umbrella sports organisation in 2016. Considerable effort went into projecting the structure of the Sport Movement in this change. It was based on good practice examples from other NOCs, with the benchmark being the DOSB.

However, the plan did not work, as the members did not vote in favour of this transformation.

Again in 2016, Anton Siekel was elected as the new president of the NOC. He succeeded the former president of 17 years, Frantisek Chmelar, and the envisioned the transformation of the NOC into an organisation that would unify all sports and athletes. With this goal in mind since November 2016, all efforts have been aimed at strengthening the position of the Slovak Olympic and Sports Committee (SOSC) in the Sports Movement and in public affairs. The SOSC has become more involved in the working groups at various ministries, and the dialogue between government representatives and the SOSC representatives has become more active.

In the time leading up to the annual General Assembly - which was due to vote on new statutes aiming at transforming the NOC into an umbrella sports organisation (December 2018) - active dialogue was conducted with the members of the Sports Movement (SOSC members as well as the sports confederation members). During the meetings, the new statutes were discussed, all the questions from the Sport Movement were answered, and relevant remarks were included in the new document. The proposed change of statutes and the changes within the organisation of the Sport Movement following the transformation were not as dramatic as originally planned in 2012, and the new statutes granting the SOSC the status of being an umbrella sport organisation were finally approved by the members of the General Assembly.

The SOSC believes that this transformation was successful as a result of the time invested in discussions with all relevant stakeholders, and because the change that occurred was subtler, as opposed to the drastic change that had been planned in 2012. The most important outcome was that the SOSC became an umbrella sport organisation, paving the way for the process of slow centralisation and change to continue. The SOSC, after becoming an umbrella Sport Organisation, also took over the role and duties of the former Slovak Sport Confederation, which ceased to exist in 2019.

#### 4.2.5 Reasonable Change vs. Incomprehensible Change

Participative management tends to make major change successful. This is not only due to self-commitment through consent, but also due to the fact that participating in drafting the content of the change automatically makes it comprehensible. This subchapter is about making the content side of change processes clear. People will likely only follow plans that they perceive to be rational (i.e., content that makes sense). The only exception is change that is demanded by charismatic leadership, in which case, people will follow the charismatic leader no matter where he or she leads them. This is true as long as the charisma holds; otherwise, anything that cannot be understood will lead

to doubt, rejection, disregard, or even sabotage. Hence, it is very important to communicate in a clear and transparent way (see subchapter 4.4.5).

#### 4.2.6 Chance vs. Pressure Situation

What is the motivation to change? There is a typology to understand why NPOs adopt structures (e.g., a paid management in an NPO) and why they do not. A puzzling example is that organisations which are similar in almost all internal and external characteristics, sometimes hire paid sports managers, and other times, they do not. This is the same with NOCs that are in very similar settings, but one NOC implements a new structure and the other does not, which makes a big difference for implementing a new structure, regarding

whether it is an opportunity or a pressure situation. It is noteworthy that, in most cases, there is no total coercive situation where there is no objective chance not to

change, because change is still within the autonomy of the NOC.

A chance situation is characterised by the fact that the change is driven by a reward, and is therefore associated with a positive sanction, but without change, there is no threat of a disadvantage either. For example, if an NOC establishes a scientific commission to provide academic advice on strategic decisions, the commission provides the chance (opportunity) to make better decisions (positive sanction). However, if the NOC does not establish such a commission, then it need not expect any

disadvantages or need not fear any penalties (negative sanction) either.

The pressure situation, on the other hand, demands change, without which there is a threat of punishment, i.e., negative sanctions. For example, if an IF changes the clothing standards for its sport, the NOCs have no choice but to change their clothing accordingly, or they will be sanctioned. Their punishment can range from a fine to exclusion from competitions. The point is that, in a pressure situation, there is a greater degree of chance (opportunity) to change, and that is also the reason why a crisis is often imperative as a trigger so that big changes can occur (refer to sub-chapter 4.4.2).

if the NOC situation does not change	expected negative sanction	
	yes	no
expected positive sanction	yes	chance situation
	no	chance-supported pressure situation
	pressure situation	no action-needed situation

Fig. 32: Chance - Pressure - Typology of Change

### 4.3 Why does Change Fail?

Organisations cannot act by themselves. Only people can do so in the name of a particular organisation. It is clear that bad plans result in failure, but why is it that good plans may also fail? The answer to this question can be found in human behaviour. Normally, a plan is evaluated by its rationality, but rationality itself has many different perspectives.

#### 4.3.1 System vs. Partial Rationality

What is rational for an NOC as a whole may not necessarily be rational for one part of

an NOC, because each of its separate parts (the NOC's various departments, or simply its employees) may have completely varying interests. Therefore, the reason for resistance to change can often be identified as the result of violated interests. Plans for change tend to affect the distribution of power, the prestige of departments and people, or the distribution of resources within an organisation, and people will defend their interests and try to bring down the transformation plan or change if doing so is in their own interests. From this perspective, planned change is a struggle over power and interests.

#### Fact: Behaviour of Departments with Regards to a Budget Cut

In many NOCs, goals are set for both elite sports (Olympic medals) and grassroots sports (sports for all). As a rule, there are departments within the NOC for this purpose. If there is a budget cut, there will be a distribution fight between the departments. As a rule, one department will often only consider its own interests, and ignore the overall success of the NOC.

Organisations often exhibit behavioural structures that Veblen calls “vested interests”. In this case, the satisfaction of interests is so well established that any change is seen as a form of great injustice, leading to the corresponding harsh reactions when those interests are disturbed. For example, if the president of the NOC is in office for a very long time, then this would likely hinder any chance of bringing about a drastic change (during that period in office).

#### Recommendation: Belgian NOC Implements Term Limits

In 2017, the Belgian NOC (BOIC) introduced a limit on the number of mandates for board members. The current mandate lasts four years, with the possibility of only three renewals, which means that the maximum possible term period is 16 years. This includes all board positions. In addition to this limitation, the NOC has asked all board members to provide information on their relevant mandates. This overview has been published on the website of the NOC, thus providing a good and transparent overview of the different mandates as well as the current mandates within the NOC.

#### 4.3.2 Habits are Hard to Break

The fight for one's own claims to power, prestige and resources, even against the rational requirements of the system, is ultimately based on a partial as well as a personal rationality. As such, habits would seem to be irrational from the

perspectives of others. Hence, in the early stages of power, a particular habit would be in the interests of the acting person, but after the situation/environment changes, the habit may seem irrational to others. Remarkably, people may prefer sticking to their old behavioural patterns, and this fact



must be taken into account when you want to change your NOC, especially when the change in the organisational needs will also generate a change in the behavioural patterns of the people involved.

**Illustrations: Stick to the Old Pattern**

**Non-sport illustration**

A good example of falling back into old behavioural patterns is the development of computer keyboards. Looking at your computer keyboard, you would probably think that the letters are organised in the best pattern to enable you to write quickly, but that is not really the case, thanks to the strong ingrained habits of users. You will now be asking yourself “Why is that so?”. The answer is that, when the typewriter was invented and patented in the 1800s, it was not possible to type very fast, as the mechanical keys would not return to their position quickly. Attempting to type fast would lead to the keys getting against each other in the process of returning to their original position. Therefore, the letters on the keyboard were positioned in such a way that it would likely prevent the keys from sticking, but that design made typing difficult (the QWERTY keyboard style was invented in the 1870s). Gradually, the design of the typewriters improved and a return spring pulled the keys back more quickly when typing, thus leading to a faster typing speed. At that moment, inventors could arrange the letters on the keyboard in an optimal way to write fast. In fact, such keyboards were even launched in the market, but no one bought them because people had become accustomed to the old suboptimal keyboard design of the original typewriter invention. The takeaway here is that it is extremely difficult for humans to forget their old behaviours, even if the new behaviours seem more pragmatic.

**Sport illustration**

In sports, a good example of the above is the International Boxing Federation (IBF) and its governance reform, which was being thwarted by the IBF's members sticking to their old patterns. The IOC suspended recognition of the IBF (formerly AIBA, Association Internationale de Boxe Amateur) in May 2020, following long-standing concerns regarding finance, governance, ethics, refereeing, and judging. An IOC monitoring group continues to report back to the organisation, since no progress has been made by the IBF. IOC President Thomas Bach admitted that the Executive Committee remains concerned with the lack of progress made by the IBF over the reform process. He said: “We have received the report of the monitoring group [...] I can summarise that we are very worried about the lack of progress with regard to the governance reforms of AIBA [...] There is talk of Presidential elections, but we do not see any progress about these governance reforms which are very important.” (Pavitt, 2020). In fact, the IBF was only approved to be in the programme for Paris 2024 in April 2022, and is yet to make it to the approval shortlist for the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, as it continues to stick to its old behavioural patterns.

### Workshop: Analysis and Change of Habits

How do you identify habits that disrupt the change process? This workshop is ideal for the heads of departments.

1. → Write down all necessary behavioural changes you expect to see.

Example: Requests from NFs to the NOC have so far been treated in the same way as requests from citizens to public authorities. That is, the NOC staff treat others in a very distant way, expecting the applicants to do everything in the correct way, and those staff are certainly not aiming to be proactive by providing support. Hence, the quality of service to NFs has to be improved immediately. Therefore, applications from NFs should be welcomed and supported.

2. → Introducing the required behavioural change.

Typically, when the change process needs a different behaviour, and when it is well explained, staff will adapt to that new behaviour. The behaviour will indeed change, but only after a short period of time, after which step 3 will be needed.

3. → Conscious observation after three weeks.

When a behavioural change is required, the new behaviour persists for about two weeks, after which, it may fall back into the old ways.

4. → If the new behaviour does not persist as required, actions against the poor “habits” are necessary.

Since we can assume that the employees do not exhibit the old behaviour out of bad intentions, no form of punishment should be used, but rather, there should be workshops or even rewards when better behaviour is manifested. It is important to explain the necessity of the new behaviour, which should occur at regular intervals.

In case a change of behaviour is not achieved, special training sessions can be initiated in the form of a continuing education event, e.g., role playing scenarios would be suitable here. In particular, the benefits of the new behaviour can be demonstrated by familiarising employees with the role they should take. Role play can give deep insights, because people are forced to change their personal perspectives, and they learn how the situation feels and appears from the perspectives of others.

### 4.3.3 Stability vs. Flexibility – a Dream Re-visited

The most commonly reported disadvantage of bureaucracy is its lack of flexibility.

The dream of the flexible organisation is old, but extremely topical. The changes in

the NOC environment have accelerated; thus, the flexible organisation is increasingly becoming an ideal (see subchapter 1.4), which is currently reflected in the popularity of the so-called agile management.

**Fact: Agile Management**

Agile (project) management is an iterative approach (as it involves several incremental steps) to delivering a project until the goal is reached. Such approaches are used to promote speed and adaptability, but agile management is not recommended for all projects. The clear benefit of iteration is that you can adjust the situation as you go along, and you do not need to adhere to linear pre-project planning. Additionally, you can release benefits throughout the process, rather than solely at the end of a project.

The concept of agile management originally stems from software development, which is not only a long and complex business field, but also suffers extremely from the changing wishes of the clients during the development process. The old-fashioned bureaucratic project planning style, where the goal would be fixed but time and resources were kept flexible, turned out to be simply too inflexible.

With agile management, the goal becomes more flexible, but time and money often remain fixed. There are also fixed rhythms (e.g., two weeks are set out for the project completion), and within these time units, with fixed budgets, the focus is then on fast but realistic work results. In this way, new customer wishes can be incorporated into a two-week cycle; thus, agile management is flexible, despite it being fixed in its rhythms and budgets. Work is undertaken in team structures (with the aim being maximum transparency) which distribute their tasks independently, and also determine the path to the goal. Each team member is informed about the goal and the way to achieve it at all times.

Many organisations call themselves agile, but do not actually use agile concepts. It is ironic that flexible management only works best because it has rigid rules.

**Case Study: Agile Management at the DOSB**

In 2019, the board of the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) explained the new agile management system to its members as follows: “We are on the way to making the DOSB more agile than before. We started in the High-Performance Sport Division (GBL) based on the recommendations of Kienbaum Consulting as a result of the “task efficiency analysis” of GBL that we conducted in 2018. Among other things, agile working increases internal efficiency, enables a flexible and quick response to complex requests, makes better use of the potential and expertise of the employees, optimises the service for our members, and fundamentally contributes to improved communication and cooperation between all stakeholders involved. In order to prepare and further accompany the process, we have set up a steering group which, with the support of an external consultant, developed the image of the future organisational structure in the GBL”.

As part of this new system, the departmental structure was dissolved on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and transferred to a more dynamic, network-like structure of competence groups and, in addition, a significantly more agile style of working was introduced.

**Case Study Questions:**

1. → Consider the structure of your NOC. Where would it make sense to have more flexible department structures?
2. Identify, within your NOC, the project areas where the goal should not be bound to a rigid project plan, but rather should be more flexible.

Lewin recognised the special importance of group formation in change processes, whereby groups are more willing to change and are more flexible than individuals. These results should be considered when planning a major change in an NOC.

The study anticipated the golden rules for organisational change, that were commonly adopted later:

- active participation, involvement, and full information;

- the social group as an important medium for change;
- change process in groups causes less anxiety and is completed faster on average;
- cooperation promotes readiness to change because there is a greater willingness to take risks in groups (the so-called “risk shift”, Schneider, 1975, 227).

Lewin also discovered that change processes occur in a cyclical way, and after a change has occurred, those involved and affected by it would then need a period of calm (stabilisation phase) before the next change.

Even though Lewin’s ideas were well perceived, triggering a fad in management science (such as “Organisational Development”), the results were sobering in the long run. In reality, things are not as simple because the cooperation of people in organisations presupposes many things, and is also conflict-prone.

If you would like to learn more about Organisational Development, please read our *Guidebook*.

#### Fact: Too Much Pressure to Change

In 2022, NOCs and IFs faced a significant amount of challenges and pressures to adopt, take care of, or even change. New and frequent challenges were observed in almost all organisational departments. Not all changes provided opportunities for sports organisations, because most of them were just costly and needed to be considered just to avoid threats. To name just a few here, challenges included safeguarding athletes, breakaway leagues (privately organised), doping, match fixing, gender equity, racism, refugees, and pandemics (see more challenges in subchapter 1.4).

Peters and Waterman identified the importance of organisational cultures as a success factor (see subchapter 2.5.3). However, it is possible to influence organisational cultures and therefore, the president and the NOC board should work on their NOC’s culture accordingly. But they should be aware that this is only possible to a limited extent, and their connection with an organisation’s success is very complex. Pettigrew et al. were able to demonstrate that organisational cultures have a strong influence on an organisation’s ability to change. Studies on change in sports organisations found similar results.

Peters and Waterman state that particularly strong organisational cultures are

advantageous. In this context, the stronger a culture is,

- the deeper rooted that culture will be among the members (degree of anchoring),
- the more widespread the culture will be - i.e., no strong subcultures are developed (degree of diffusion), and
- the stronger the development of the conciseness and the scope of the culture will be

The advantage of a strong organisational culture is the provision of opportunities for all members to share a vision, to see themselves as a team and therefore, to cooperate, instead of working in opposition among themselves. In addition, strong cultures also



lead to strong assumptions about the world. This can be an absolute strength for an NOC in terms of morality, e.g., incorruptibility. On the other hand, it can also become an absolute weakness. A good example is the Olympic torch relay, which became an iconic event of the Olympic Games. But it was not ideal in times of a pandemic, because its very merit of bringing the Games to the people became a disadvantage in this case. During the initial stages of the Olympic Games, their programme was flexible, and each Olympic organiser would incorporate sports that they found appealing (flexibility). Then, in 1912, the programme was standardised (rigidity) and made ever more expansive. While it was possible to expand the programme, changing whatever already exists was quite a problem, and this is another relevant example of the negative side of a strong culture.

#### 4.3.4 The Role of Time

Time plays an important role in organisational change, but there are caveats: organisations do not change via a simple command, because change is not a matter of one point of transformation, but is rather a complex process, and what may seem right at one point in time may be harmful at another. Therefore, there are many models of change, cutting the change process into phases. Lewin developed the most simplistic of phase models imaginable: Unfreeze - Change - Freeze. The phase model emphasises the process character of

innovations in organisations, while distinguishing between four typical phases:

1. Evaluation phase: the time of initial considerations and planning.
2. Initiation phase: the time of concrete planning and resource procurement. It is characterised by high ideals and visions.
3. Implementation phase: the time to realise the plans. It is accompanied by open conflicts and a reduction of demands and expectations.
4. Routinisation phase: the time when change slowly becomes the norm.

Hage and Aiken obtained their model through empirical observation. In particular, it shows a switch in leadership; whereas in the initiation phase, leadership is more participative, in the implementation phase, it changes to an authoritarian style, and includes certain tricks and deceptions, notwithstanding the open use of non-legitimised power.

To our knowledge, the best developed model, which contains the four steps is noted above. Successful change processes are characterised by participation in this model, which requires the willingness of the NOC board to share, or even give up, essential parts of their power.

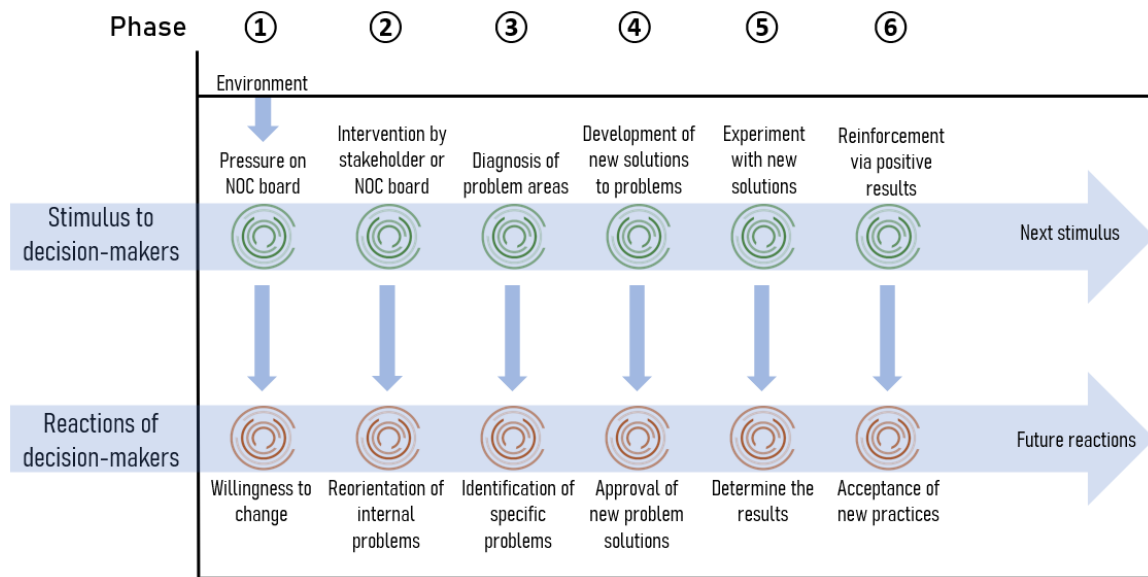


Fig. 33: Phases of Change Process

Figure 33 illustrates the order of phases in the NOC’s change process. This is only an overview, and the entire change process will be explained in subchapter 4.4.

**Recommendation: Management Behaviour in the Change Process**

Different (management) behaviour is needed in different phases of change. Moreover, one should distinguish between empirical observation (how people should actually act) and management concepts (how people should act in order to be successful). One can learn a lot from empirical observations of what goes wrong in a change process, in order to make that change better. Therefore, each change process will train you to make your NOC stronger in your next attempt to change.

**4.4 Steps for Successful Change Management**

There are many approaches for successful change management. Here, we present a model that we have developed by merging various established approaches. This merged model is used for sport organisations, but it is now extended to fit Olympic Sport Organisations. Subchapter

4.4.1 explains phase 5 (red Ring) “Change and Monitor”, which is the implementation of a strategic plan, or any other change initiative. The eight steps of the model have been introduced in the following section.

**Toolbox: Change Management Model**

This 8-step-model helps to deeply change departments or the entire NOC and move from a current state to a defined target state.

#### 4.4.1 Step 1: Be Aware of the Situation and Plan the Change

It is fundamental to accept that the NOC must first analyse the situation, and then plan the change in order to achieve its goals.

It is important to make clear why the NOC desires a change, and how much energy the change is worth. If the initiators, who are often the NOC president, board members or senior management, actually do not want the change themselves, then how can they successfully convince the staff to accept the change? Even if the change does not seem worth much to the staff, they will certainly not fight against implementing something that takes many resources. There are three obvious scenarios to consider here:

**Scenario 1:** The change is seen as urgently necessary, and the measures taken are absolutely correct. These are good preconditions, and one can directly start planning for the next steps.

**Scenario 2:** The change is not seen as necessary, but is rather considered useful and, accordingly, the measures are seen as absolutely correct. These are still good preconditions and one can start directly with the planning for the next steps. One should consider, however, that such changes, which will be driven solely by opportunities, are by far more difficult to implement than changes induced by inevitable environmental conditions. Here, change must be driven forward with much more energy and prudence.

**Scenario 3:** The change is forced upon you from either the outside or the inside (coercive change), and the measures are seen as a step backwards, or even as a personal insult. These are very bad conditions and, basically, there are three ways to react in

such situations: Leave it, love it, or change it. See more about that in our guidebook.

You cannot promote change if you do not support the desire for that change intellectually and emotionally. Since the emotional factors can hinder the rational factors, the most important step is to deal with your negative feelings. Only once you cope with the situation emotionally can you find your way to deal with the unwanted aspects of that situation. If you manage to take the situation for granted, you can try to get the best out of the change. Basically, you have to manage to get into the *Love it* mode. Then, you can start to plan and tackle the next steps.

#### 4.4.2 Step 2: Establish a Sense of Urgency

Change needs energy. The strongest source of energy for change is a crisis (refer to chapter 6). The greater the threat, the easier it will be for change to occur. In any crisis situation, continuing the plan you currently have is not always a good alternative, because it may likely lead to disaster. The Covid-19 pandemic is a good example to consider here: In most sport organisations, there has been a longstanding resistance to new forms of work (such as working from home), and new technologies (like Zoom), both of which had to be adopted quickly because of the pandemic (see more in subchapter 6.3.2).

Threats can be long-term, such as the constant change of society and the loss of belief in Olympic values. These changes are a threat to all NOCs as they may incur devastating consequences, but it only provides little energy for change, since it seems that we can still react tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow. In addition, its signs are initially barely visible and, therefore, difficult to imagine, and the threat remains present on an abstract level. But threats can also

come as a shock, with the inevitability of reacting immediately. However, such situations actually generate a tremendous amount of energy for change. A good example of this is that the knowledge of the long-term threat of indulging in corrupt practices does not make an NOC official change his/her behaviour, but the NOC can always decide to stop the behaviour of the guilty parties, tomorrow or the day after, despite the threat remaining present in an abstract form. Only when the police are arresting officials (e.g., officials at Rio Olympic Games 2016) and impacting pressure, does the crisis become concrete, thus bringing about change to initiate mechanisms against corruption. The takeaway here is that the crisis needs to be identified and concretely presented to everyone in order to accumulate enough energy to initiate change. Further, the energy that is needed for any change to occur is only generated when the crisis is perceived, and therefore, the organisational change or the start of a project is urgently needed.

Therefore, the NOC needs to establish a “sense of urgency”, which also points out how important the aspect of communication is in the process of change (see subchapter 4.4.5). This requirement is easy to meet if there is a concrete and clearly visible crisis, but difficult to meet if the crisis remains abstract and endures in that form over the long-term. In that case, one may aim to develop concrete dramatic crisis scenarios that are based on small signs, but such attempts can become ethically problematic. That could imply that when such explained danger is a lie, which has been used to initiate change.

#### 4.4.3 Step 3: Building a Coalition to Conduce the Change

The idea of NOC presidents who can influence and control everything with one command is persistent, but false, because if this were the truth, there would be no need for change management. But the failure in many of the change processes makes it clear that this is not the case. Even if only one person wants to change his or her own behaviour, such as putting an end to their corruptive practices, they are influenced by other members/staff. For example, it would be particularly difficult to end corruption (taking advantage of situations) if all colleagues continued to use their position for personal benefits, and it would be easier if they were all strictly compliant with anti-corruption policies. In sport organisations, an acute problem of change is based on requiring others to also change.

A big change in an NOC will always create groups that will gain power, resources, or prestige, and other groups that will lose these attributes. Therefore, there are almost always as many opponents as there are advocates for change. This often results in a battle for the opinions of those who are not affected; thus, winning them over as allies beforehand has a great advantage. In fact, because NOCs are non-profit organisations, they are particularly affected by such events, since they have democratic decision-making structures, which means that many are involved in decisions regarding change, but they are influencing the decisions from the outside (e.g., NOC member federations). It is the majority groups who have the deciding power, rather than solely the president, the NOC board, or the executive managers. This illustrates why big changes are not a one-man show and why allies are needed. More importantly, this shows that big

changes are all about key people. Rogers showed that it is important to be the first to adopt an innovation. He also noted that, to be successful, you will need many influential opinion leaders who support the change, and the more outsiders there are to first adopt the change, it is less likely to work successfully. For example, if a new dress code is introduced in an NOC, and people with high prestige (charismatic or legal power) implement it immediately, the chances of successful overall implementation will be high. If, on the other hand, only staff with lower prestige wear the new clothes, then the chances of success will be low. The strategy to be followed for winning alliances is similar to the explanation provided in subchapter 3.3. regarding how to find “common issues”.

A major change in an NOC has many consequences. For example, creating a new department can bring in new stakeholders, which means that if an NOC starts working on “environment and sport”, then environmental protection groups will become more important. However, in this scenario, it may become more difficult to work with

a sponsor from a mineral oil or petroleum exploration company. Therefore, it is worthwhile to constantly update the stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3).

In addition to actual allies, it is useful to recruit change experts (so-called change agents) and receive appropriate training. Such experts are usually external consultants, which is an advantage, because they are not hindered in their work by the NOC’s internal interests, and they will surely have a fresh perspective on the NOC. In addition, their assessments are considered to be neutral expert knowledge and can, therefore, be less questionable than internal assessments, which are seen as part of a coalition. However, as external experts, they will actually lack insider knowledge, especially concerning the specifics of the organisational culture. Therefore, it can also make sense to recruit internal people as change agents. Sometimes, it is also possible to balance the advantages and disadvantages of external and internal staff, by recruiting a mixed team.

**Fact Box: Change Agent**

A change agent is a person who supports the NOC’s transformation (or assists in major projects) by putting the onus on organisational development, improvement, and effectiveness. A change agent can be from within the NOC, or hired from outside, to help the NOC in implementing changes for adapting to the changing environment (such as athletes’ voices, or governmental changes). An internal change agent has the necessary internal knowledge (such as an NOC executive or director), whereas an external change agent has the liberty to bring in different perspectives and challenge the existing NOC structure (or project structure).

#### Best Practice: Essential points to be considered as a change agent

1. → Identify your allies: Find those persons who support your project in your NOC. Make these so-called allies understand the dynamics of the change initiative, its importance, and its impact on the NOC staff or, generally, on the NOC's development. The best approach may be to observe whether these staff members have a substantial standing in your NOC, and the power to influence others. If they start by advocating on your behalf, then half of your battle is already won. Moreover, staff have more confidence in their colleagues than in a person who is entrusted with an NOC change initiative. When such a colleague speaks, no one will ignore them, but instead they will listen, and they will surely try to understand why that colleague is in favour of the idea/project.

2. → Co-create the vision: The change agent should have a vision, and it is essential that the change/project highlights that vision. You must also ensure that the NOC board appreciates your efforts. If necessary, co-create your vision with everyone, so that they feel that their contribution is essential to whatever changes the change agent is driving forward. When everyone has a share in the input, they will always aim to give their best, so that the output supports the change. Be consistent, clear, and precise in your communication of the vision, so that you can tackle any resistance which may obstruct the pathway to success.

3. → Get everyone on the same page: Now is the time to get everyone else on board. Ask other employees to offer feedback, so that you can realise your shortcomings and make necessary changes accordingly.

4. → Create a track record: Create a change plan, because you have enough support, and you also have the required confidence of others in your vision. Remember that the change must have a good timing. Not everyone will wait months to see the effect that the change initiative has on others. Change needs successful execution in order to build momentum among the staff and members and to mitigate any potential resistance.

Remember, change is not an easy process, nor is being an effective change agent an easy job. Change agents are persons who would likely have the least number of allies and friends at the onset, but the most successful change agents are those who overcome difficulties and find ways and means to implement change initiatives, while making them worthwhile.

#### 4.4.4 Step 4: Winning People's Hearts Inside and Outside the NOC

People can be convinced intellectually, but that does not mean that they will make efforts for and engage with the change. Real commitment is only created when people's hearts are also won. However, this occurs through visions (defining a new destination) rather than through plans (designing the roadmap to reach that destination). Therefore, a special vision for change must be developed. This can be achieved in a similar way as to strategy development (see subchapter 2.3).

The crucial factor here is that the vision can serve many goals and interests at the

same time. It is necessary that the vision does not only suit all essential stakeholders (see subchapter 3.3 for alignment of stakeholders), but also has an emotionalising and motivating effect on others. In commercial enterprises, this involves the clients, the shareholders, and the employees and in NOCs with a focus on competitive sports, this changes in accordance with the following groups:

- Are the interests of the *IOC tangled*? Is the vision compatible with IOC's interests?
- Are the interests of the *members* of the NOC or the *athletes* affected? Does the vision promise to improve their situation?
- Are the interests of the *sponsors and public authorities* addressed?

Both would wish to present themselves through the promotion of sports in order to be noticeable, and would hope for a positive image transfer through sporting success.

- Are the interests of the *elected board members* involved? They aim to win power, influence, or prestige, and would wish to avoid any losses.
- Are the interests of *paid employees* touched upon? For them, too, it is a matter of power, influence, and prestige, but in addition, there are issues of working conditions (salary, offices, promotions, etc.).
- Are the *interests of the media* involved? Consider whether a press conference would be useful. Perhaps interviews with individual journalists would be better. Alternatively, a press release may be adequate to inform and involve the media as well as the public.

Satisfying all stakeholders equally is an extremely difficult act. This is also due to the fact that the improved influence of elected members comes at the expense of paid staff, and vice versa. However, certain losses are acceptable if benefits are gained elsewhere. Thus, visions of NOCs in the field of high-performance sports can always be based on the prospect of greater sporting success. This is the “common issue” among all stakeholders. It becomes far more difficult when NOCs target other activities, such as Olympic education, or sport for all.

#### 4.4.5 Step 5: Communicate the Change

Communication is essential in every process of management, but it is especially crucial in change management. It is an important tool in all phases of change processes. Your style of communication may

provoke certain emotions with a greater influence on people’s opinions and decisions, rather than arguments. Beside this, despite the possibility of change to bring positive developments, and its great potential to improve a situation, most people do not like change, so much so that they may even resist it. Thus, what may rationally seem logical and right, does not necessarily always feel good, emotionally. Well-known habits and established routines provide feelings of safety and certainty. But these feelings of familiarity can disappear, or, even worse, they may be replaced by the opposite emotions (irritation, insecurity, and uncertainty) due to change. Consequently, change processes are usually associated with strong emotions in either direction and, in many situations of transformation, these are mainly negative emotions. That is why it is important to include the emotional dimension in change management, alongside the many objective and functional tools and strategies. Therefore, this subchapter focuses on the meaning of emotions, and demonstrates how communication helps to overcome negative emotions and resistance to change, thus reinforcing positive emotions in change processes.

#### *Emotional Phases of Change and How to Deal with them from a Communicative Perspective*

Change curves are frequently used in management literature, albeit always a little differently each time, to illustrate the emotional phases of change processes. Figure 34 shows one example of a change curve. In essence, change processes in organisations usually mean saying goodbye to something familiar and beloved and can thus be associated with grief and regret. Hence, the curve in Fig. 34 is intended to

illustrate the various emotional phases within the change process. It shows that the process of dealing with change is related to various emotions felt by a person, and their willingness to perform, their motivation, morale, and competence also fluctuate depending on their emotional

state. Here, we briefly look at the different emotional phases and explore how communication can be harnessed to minimise backlash, and foster acceptance to change in your NOC.

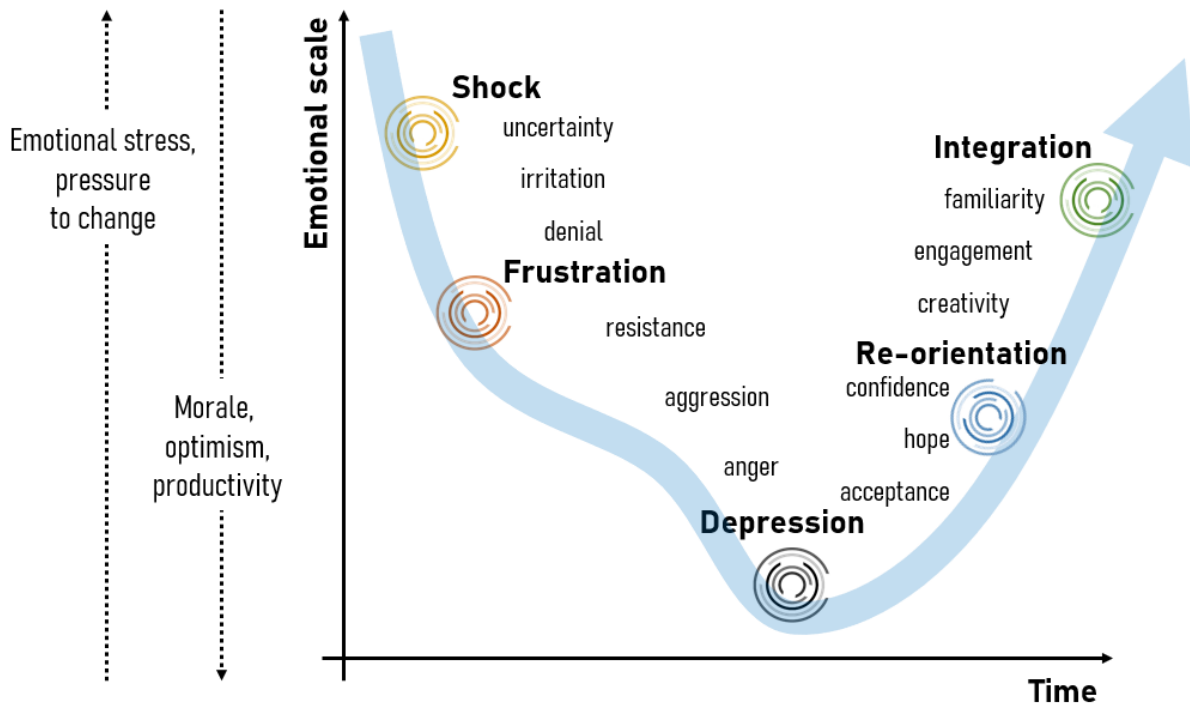


Fig. 34: Change Curve

As long as nothing changes in our lives, we can assume that we will generally stay in our comfort zone, within which, we are familiar with procedures, and we can assess our skills and competences well. If we now (involuntarily) have to leave our comfort zone, as is often the case with change, this can create stress. We may feel shocked, irritated, and frightened, because we do not know exactly what is coming next. Consequently, this can lead to the denial of the new situation. We may wish to stay cocooned within the security of whatever we are accustomed to, and we may not necessarily wish to accept this new reality, which could trigger various negative emotions within us.

This phase of uncertainty and irritation can be successfully overcome by using clear words, by holding a vision, and by explaining how the pathway to the future will likely be. The need for the change should be clearly communicated, along with the goals, visions, and missions (see subchapter 2.3). Potential difficulties and impact on stakeholders should also be addressed. It is often recommended that an authorised person with great responsibility in the process of change, should provide the information (which must be anything but the change agent itself). Successful communication can be achieved through information events, newsletters, intranet, etc. Aim at preventing your personnel from



receiving information from third parties or from external sources, such as mass media, as this could cause a loss of trust, dramatically reducing the employees' willingness to accept change. Thus, ensuring transparency through the communication of information is a crucial step at the beginning of change processes, so as to prepare stakeholders in readiness for change.

The period after the "first shock" is usually characterised by frustration and anger, and can be disillusioning. People begin to realise that the changes are now being implemented, and may try to resist them. If there is no adequate justification (i.e., an urgent sense – see step 2, 4.4.2) for the

change, they will argue against it, and also try to fight it off.

In this phase, it is about the exchange and dialogue with the people who are involved in the change. The change agent should build alliances, and aim to get everyone on board. It is also essential to find out the reasons for the resistance among the staff, by conducting personal employee dialogue or workshops with methods like "world café" (a structured conversational process involving the sharing of knowledge), in which stakeholders actively participate and discuss crucial issues.

#### Workshop: Dialogue in a World Café

The World Café methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue. There are different formats available on the internet, and you should adapt the format of your choice to the situation, and the size of the group involved.

1. **Setting:** Create a comfortable NOC-related environment (such as a café), where there should be four/five chairs at each table (optimally).
2. **Welcome and Introduction:** The host begins with an introduction to the World Café process, setting the context (the organisational change or a project) and putting participants at ease (as they may be nervous and frustrated).
3. **Small-Group Rounds:** The process begins with the first of three or more twenty-minute rounds of conversation for small groups of four (with a maximum of five) people seated around a table. At the end of the twenty minutes, each member of the group moves to a different table. They may or may not choose to leave one person as the "table host" for the next round, who welcomes the next group, and briefly fills them in on what happened in the previous round.
4. **Questions:** each round is prefaced with a question that is specially crafted for the specific context and desired purpose of the World Café. The same questions can be used for more than one round, or they may build upon each other, to narrow the scope of the conversation, or to guide its direction.

Questions that can be focused on in the group discussions can be:

- What is particularly important for any involved stakeholders?
  - What interests, needs, or concerns do they have?
  - What alternatives do those who are involved see for themselves?
  - What do they think should be done to solve the problem in a way as to ensure the satisfaction of all stakeholders?
5. **Harvest:** After the discussion in small groups (and/or in between rounds, as needed), individuals are invited to share insights or other results from their conversations with the rest of the large group. These results are reflected visually in a variety of ways, most often using graphic recordings at the front of the room.

In general, being an active part of the change, and having the possibility to bring in one's own thoughts and ideas, might reduce resistance, frustration, and anger. Thus, communication can be a catalyst in detecting and reducing resistance.

At some point, it becomes clear that it is hopeless to fight against the change. This is when the mood is at rock bottom, because the motivation and energy against change are also dashed to the ground. This phase is described as the "valley of tears", because it is the most emotionally difficult point in the change process.

Having reached this emotional low ebb, it would be useful to look at the past events one last time, before finally moving on. There is always a positive energy in what has been achieved so far. This energy is useful for everything that comes next. An essential element of change communication here is to say a last "goodbye" to the old, and then say "hello" to the new. This can take the form of a ritual; for instance, a meeting of all employees (or include the most important), or even a farewell party, in which the achievements are honoured once again. By saying goodbye and letting go of the old in the past, doors are surely opened for the new in a potentially bright future.

Now, it is time for a new beginning, and for a reorientation, because people have accepted the changed situation, their original scepticism having turned into hope. They aim to cope with the new situation, and become involved. People learn to find their way in the new situation, and they aim to see that the effort has been worthwhile, which will potentially create positive feelings.

The processes of change are now being implemented with increasing speed.

Therefore, it is important to let the staff participate in the process. Employees should have the opportunity to experiment and to develop new routines in order to become familiar with the new situation, and to engage with it. The sooner they learn to cope with the new situation and processes, the sooner positive feelings will arise. New developments should be reflected upon, and the steps for the coming weeks or months should be discussed. Perhaps a working group could be formed for this purpose. Additionally, reporting about the progress and successes, and sharing relevant information (e.g., via a newsletter, information events, or workshops) with the involved stakeholders are crucial steps towards increasing the motivation among stakeholders, for the further course of the change process. Positive feedback and encouragement are important communication tools with which to strengthen commitment.

The greater the acceptance among individuals and in the group as a whole, the better the change can be fully implemented, and new processes and procedures can be integrated into everyday life. Additionally, in this last phase, it is important to be informed about, and to exchange, processes, challenges, and successes. Furthermore, the achievements and the way to reach them should be comprehensively appreciated. By communicating that the goal has been achieved by everyone working together, this strengthens the solidarity and team spirit of an organisation.

### ***How to Communicate Successfully***

Let us have a closer look at some basic facts of communication, and rules an NOC should follow to effectively communicate with its stakeholders, to improve the change management or project process.

### Communication Processes in a Nutshell

Figure 35 visualises what communication scholars call Lasswell's communication model. It reads as follows: "Who says What, in Which channel, to Whom, and with What effect?". Here, we will apply the model to

communication in change management, to explain the most important issues in a simplified way.

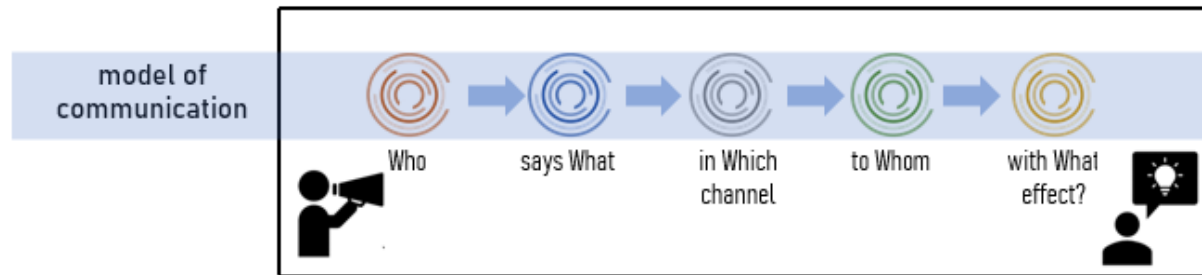


Fig. 35: Lasswell's Model of Communication

*Who?* describes the communicator, i.e., the person who communicates the information. It is necessary for the decision makers (usually the NOC executive management) to use clear and comprehensible words to communicate with everyone, especially at the beginning of a change project, when the degree of uncertainty is at its greatest. It is recommended that communication involve the highest possible level of hierarchy, and the NOC president should preferably deliver the message. This top-down communication approach highlights the importance and seriousness of the change that needs to be managed in the near future (i.e., the sense of urgency). Further, it represents strong leadership and appreciation for the employees. Alternatively, cascade communication (passing information from one level to another) is also considered appropriate. In this type of communication, the most important issues are first sent asymmetrically from the top of the NOC to everyone (e.g., via plenary meetings or other internal channels). Then, middle management can personally inform their teams about further details. This is

especially important, both for teams or units that are particularly affected by change. Looking at the three Cs of effective communication (Credibility, Control, and Charisma), and notes that, whether or not a message is accepted depends largely on the audience's perception of the spokesperson. If someone has a high status, is considered an expert, and is perceived as being honest and competent, then they can be said to have a high degree of credibility. Further, a spokesperson with the power to command or to *control* has a persuasive effect. This includes having the power to make decisions, the authority and scrutiny to explore and control the situation, and the ability to determine the consequences of the situation. Lastly, *charisma* could also be an important characteristic of an effective communicator. A speaker who expresses familiarity towards a person, who is admired for their achievements, or has certain similarities with another respected person, can generally be very convincing. This, in turn, goes hand in hand with trustworthiness and credibility.

“*What?*” refers to the message itself. Timely and simultaneous information of all the persons involved demonstrates appreciation, and creates a better foundation to discuss possible problems in a constructive way. This can also prevent rumours from spreading before everyone is properly informed. This should be in the interests of full disclosure, especially in the initial phase of the change, where honest and clear words are important for transparency, to reduce resistance, or to discuss concerns together. It is important to explain clearly and succinctly why everything cannot simply continue as it is, what risks can occur, what needs to be done differently in the future, and what role stakeholders will play in this change. Further, it is equally important to communicate successes, and as quickly as possible, thus providing positive feedback to increase motivation among the staff.

“*In which channel?*” refers to the means by which you convey the message. Personal conversation is the most important communication channel, as it enables dialogue and generates spontaneous questioning and explanations, which could, in turn, prevent misunderstandings. In addition, personal conversation creates trust, because it signals that time and patience have been invested to explain the situation. However, personal interviews with all stakeholders may not always be possible (due to time - and work-related restrictions for both parties). In this case, the most important stakeholders should be prioritised and/or

other channels, such as video messages or video conferences, could be used to choose a means of communication that is comparable to personal conversations. However, there are many other useful channels, such as intranet, newsletter, etc.

“*To whom?*” includes the target group that we wish to reach out to. Target group-oriented communication can be seen as a success factor. Let us briefly clarify what is meant by target group-oriented communication. Change processes are often very complex and affect many different stakeholders in different ways; therefore, different information is relevant for each stakeholder. That is why, in addition to identifying central stakeholders (see subchapter 3.3.2), it is equally important to consider who needs to receive information, and also what information should be provided. Further, since some stakeholders are more involved than others and/or have different positions (e.g., trainee, department head, athletes, the media), the choice of language style or particular words and phrases is also crucial. Depending on the target group, it may be necessary to properly convince the members by using the appropriate technical vocabulary, or presenting complicated facts in a very simple way, so that they can be easily understood. For a target group-oriented or tailored communication, a *communication concept* would be helpful and, as such, is presented in an exemplary way in the next section.

#### Toolbox: Communication Concept

This tool helps to define which target groups are to be addressed, with which (media) channels, at what precise time, or in what window of time, and with what objectives, to reach the NOC's goals.

**“With what effect?”:** Ideally, communication creates an open-minded atmosphere which allows a constructive exchange with stakeholders. If you reach the target group with the adequate channel and with the relevant information, in an appropriate way, there is a good chance that you will quickly overcome the phase of resistance (see Fig. 34) and the changes will be accepted quickly. In the worst-case scenario, your information could fall on deaf ears, which would make the implementation of changes extremely difficult; except that, a well-engineered *communications concept* can prevent this (see communication concept below).

### Communication Concept

A communication concept defines which target groups are to be addressed, with which (media) channels, at what precise time, or in what window of time, and with

what objectives, to reach the goals. Thus, a communication concept reflects central elements, with which we are already familiar through Lasswell’s model of communication.

In simple terms, the communication concept represents a plan for communicative actions.

The following questions, as recommended by Stolzenberg and Herberle, could be addressed in a workshop with employees of your NOC, to identify key information about target groups or stakeholders, their needs and concerns, as well as the aims of communication, and appropriate channels with which to achieve those aims.

#### Workshop: Communication of Important Issues to Relevant Stakeholders Based on a Communication Concept

Think of a current topic or issue affecting your NOC. Answer the following questions, as they are important to initiate actual communication afterwards.

##### Target groups

- Which stakeholders are affected by the change? (see subchapter 3.3.2)
- To what extent are they affected by the change? (e.g., very strongly vs. marginally, or not at all)
- How do they see the change? (e.g., opportunity vs. threat)
- What reaction should we expect? (e.g., support vs. resistance)
- How relevant are the stakeholders for the successful implementation of any change? (e.g., very important vs. not at all important)

##### Current issues and concerns

- Which issues are essential for the respective target group?
- Which open points need to be clarified urgently?
- What concerns do the respective target groups have, or what do they perceive as disadvantageous and negative?

- What opportunities and advantages can arise for the respective target group, or what do they perceive as positive?
- What should be achieved through communication with the target groups? What messages should be communicated to the target groups?

#### Communication channels / media

- Which communication channels are available? (e.g., face-to-face meetings, workshops, media such as newsletters, video-conferences, etc.)
- Are individual or personal meetings with the target groups possible or, alternatively, should there be a cascade communication to inform the target groups?
- Which means of communication is suitable for a specific need or situation?
- What disadvantages or limitations could a medium possibly have with regards to communicating the message?
- What acceptance does a particular means of communication have with a target group?

#### Schedule

- When should what be communicated?
- Who should be informed, and When (in the first instance)?
- What milestones are planned for the change project?
- At what intervals should information be provided?
- What is the best frequency for communication?

After a communication concept has been prepared, and the key questions have been answered (see workshop above), a communication plan can be written, i.e., a (time) plan illustrating who is informed when, about what, and how. This ensures a structured approach that takes all important stakeholders into account, and enables communication goals to be achieved as successfully as possible.

To make your message(s) more vivid: Imagine that due to a scandal involving a Caucasian NOC sports director (e.g., racist remarks against a coloured athlete), her contract is to be terminated prematurely. The crucial point here is, “Who?” is informed, at “What time?”, and through

“Which channel?”, so as not to damage the reputation of the NOC, or lose important partners (e.g., Olympic sponsors). It is never good – but it happens often – when the people concerned first learn of the information from the media, and not first-hand through personal conversations. Therefore, think carefully about the order in which you inform the relevant stakeholders about your plans. Often, there are many stakeholders involved, so it is very important to identify the target group that is strongly affected by the issue(s), as a first step. Further, especially when it comes to scandals, quick action is essential to keep the situation under control (as best you can).

Tab. 8: Communication Plan of a Hypothetical Problem of an NOC

Target group/ stakeholder	Issues and concerns	Aims of communication	Communication Channel	Schedule
NOC Sport Director	Racist comments by the NOC Sport Director that cannot be tolerated and will damage the reputation of the NOC if she continues to work in her position	Contract termination	Face-to-face talk, personal meeting (e.g., NOC president)	One-time. The sport director is the first person to talk to and inform
Team / Athletes / Staff	Emotional reactions of those concerned, uncertainty about future conditions, new staffing, etc.	Transparency, discuss concerns	Meetings with the staff or alternatively top-down communication (e.g., CEO, head of department, coach, etc.)	One-time. Should be informed before external stakeholders are informed
Media	Critical questions from journalists, accusations, further investigative questions that put the association in a bad light	Protect the image and values of the NOC, control what information is released to the public. Demonstrate actions	Press conferences, personal interviews with journalists, press release (e.g., CEO, PR-Manager/publicist)	One-time. After the internal stakeholders are informed
Public	Negative reactions from the public, lack of understanding from the public, fear of losing sponsorship contracts	Protect the image and values of the NOC	Press conferences, mass media, social media, press release (e.g. CEO, coach, PR-Manager/publicist)	One-time. After all other stakeholders are informed

### Discourse on miscommunication

It is not always guaranteed that the communicator's message will reach the recipient in the same way. It is not uncommon for misunderstandings to occur. The model of Schulz von Thun (2011) depicts that *every* message has four aspects, although the emphasis is often on one of the aspects, and might be quite different from the emphasis on another message.

Therefore, a message of communication is sent with one to four aspects, as well as received with one to four aspects (Fig. 36). In other words, the communicator (also called sender) could talk with the intention of using one side (out of four possible sides), and the receiver may listen to one – not necessarily the same – side (again, out of the four possibilities).

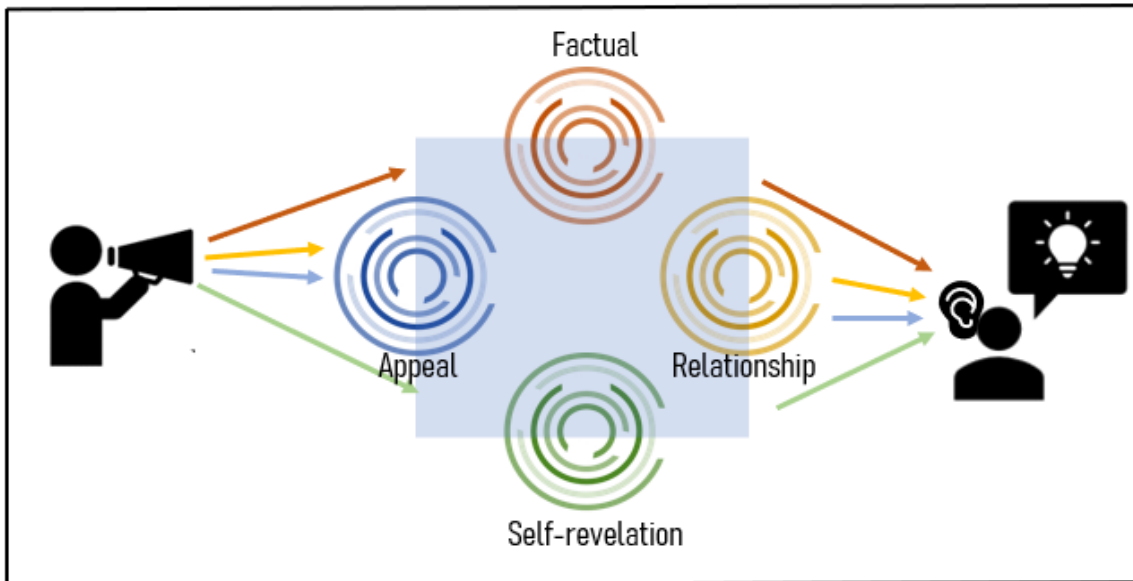


Fig. 36: Four-Sides Model of Communication

The model shows that the process of sending information has four sides and, in turn, the receiver also looks at the same information from four sides.

1. Factual information: Matter of fact information, or objective information (e.g., data, facts)
2. Appeal: Desire, advice, instructions, commands that the sender is seeking
3. Relationship: Information on the relationship between sender and receiver, how they get along, and what they think of each other (i.e., how one perceives the other)
4. Self-revelation: Implicit information (conscious or intended) about the sender, e.g., his/her motives, values, emotions, likes/dislikes, social status through mannerisms, etc.




**Workshop: Better Communicator - Check-in & Check-back**


So, how do you become a better communicator with your NOC teams, your direct reports, your board members, your stakeholders, and with the IOC? How do you quickly learn whether your communication is effective, and your message has come across as you intended?

Use the Check-in & Check-back approach. It leads to more effective communication, while being respectful towards you and your communication partner.

Check-in: Think


Communicator/Sender (  ):

1. What is my intention?
2. What information DO I want to send?


Receiver (  ) (*someone of your team may play the receiver*):

1. Which ear am I listening through (left or right)?
2. What information might the NOC (or a person) be sending?
3. How else (in what other way) could I understand this message?

Check-back: Validate

Sender (  ):

1. Make the intention of the message explicit (and concise)! (e.g., "I'd like you to do something for my project")
2. Ask what your partner heard (and understood) of what you said, and what they make of the conversation (how they perceived the information) (e.g., after the brief chat, or within a meeting check-point of what people will do)

Receiver (  ) – Discuss with the Sender whether or not you correctly understand the information:

1. "So, do you mean...?"
2. "So, do you want me/us to...?"
3. "I/we want to make sure we're on the same page."

**Intercultural Communication**

Your culture can influence the behaviour and thinking patterns in your NOC. Hofstede describes six cultural dimensions that can be used to characterise work-relevant values and attitudes of different countries. These are 1. High vs. low power distance, 2. Individualism vs. collectivism, 3. High vs. low uncertainty avoidance, 4. Masculinity vs. femininity, 5. Long-term vs.

short-term orientation, and 6. Indulgence vs. restraints.

In this section, we present an example of power distance in more detail. Employees of a country with a low degree of power distance (e.g., Austria, Denmark), would expect to be involved in decisions, while also considering it normal to disagree with the supervisor. In contrast, employees of a country with a high degree of power

distance (e.g., Russia) would expect the supervisor to give them clear instructions, and it would be highly unusual for them to speak out against the supervisor. As a result, the same way of communicating, even using the same words, is perceived very differently in different countries, in terms of the competence of the leadership. Thus, different expectations of leadership styles in different countries underline the fact that successful communication always depends on the communication culture of the respective country. Hofstede opines that, besides these dimensions, another important aspect concerns the use and the power of language, and the level of context. For instance, in northern European and Anglo-Saxon countries, people prefer a direct and straightforward style communication. Their way of speaking is often

characterised by specific examples, and can be focussed on individual goals. Thus, in countries such as Germany, Sweden, or the Netherlands, the initial word is the message, and few further contexts are needed (also called linear active communication). In contrast, in Italy or Spain, for example, people usually communicate, not just with their words, but rather in an intensely personal and compassionate (and impassioned) manner. People share their experiences and personal backgrounds, and therefore, it is more about the relationships they have with each other (therefore, their communication is multi-active; Hence, it is not just about the spoken word, but also about facial expressions, gestures, and the relationships among people. In other words, context beyond the words can also be important.

#### Recommendation: Culture and Communication

What do we learn from the cultural differences that are explained above? You should take these cultural characteristics into account to tailor your communication perfectly to the requirement, and to communicate more successfully. For example, you should be aware of your choice of medium, that you will use for communicating. In multi-active cultures, for instance, video conferences seem to be more suitable than simple telephone calls or e-mails, in keeping with the communication culture. Furthermore, depending on the cultural background of your NOC or country, you should individually consider different strategies on how to address changes, deal with generated dynamics, and implement future developments.

#### 4.4.6 Step 6: The Organisation Must Fit the Plan

Change in an organisation can fail if the new structures do not fit to the old structures. In other words, if a new work unit or department has new tasks that force it to work harder and longer than before, the powers of the persons involved are insufficient when they are based on the old structures. There must be a newly calibrated fit of new duties, their power, and their available resources.

In times of change, more competencies are often needed. If these competencies are

missing, then employees do not feel responsible for the change; indeed, empowerment is needed in such scenarios. However, an NOC should also consider that change can also lead to “de-powerment”. This is when competencies are no longer needed; hence, staff can no longer control the working processes. This usually leads to demotivation of the staff and resistance towards the intended change.

It is easier to successfully implement a change if you leave existing structures in place, and establish the new processes via

a new work unit or department, or even establish them entirely in the external environment, as a new organisation. For example, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was involved in creating the International Testing Agency (ITA), which is now in charge of services that were previously provided by the WADA (but to a lower service level). Expanding existing services is always easier than cutting back or downsizing, because that would lead to distribution struggles.

However, the easier variant, which is expansion, is often not possible to implement for cost reasons. Therefore, it ends up

being the problematic second variant with considerable cutbacks. This usually leads to a resistance to change and open conflicts, severe loss of motivation, etc. Crises can help break the resistance to change, as everyone realises that more problems will occur without the change. In sport, the replacement of a very important player in the semi-finals of a World Cup, due to too many yellow cards being shown in their disfavour, is accepted only to prevent worse potential scenarios (i.e., disqualification from the finals). This example is useful to consider the context of cutbacks and significant changes in organisations.

#### **Illustration: Modern Pentathlon and its 5<sup>th</sup> Discipline**

For many years, there was a discussion about the Modern Pentathlon dropping horse-riding as the 5<sup>th</sup> discipline. The Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) did not want to change, as the sport was invented by Pierre de Coubertin, and most athletes loved their sport; and it was also due to horse-riding in itself. The “crisis” came in 2021 after the Tokyo Olympic Games, when the IOC increased pressure on the UIPM to no longer include the sport in the Olympic Programme, when horses are still in the sport. UIPM took the pressure as opportunity and changed the 5<sup>th</sup> discipline into an obstacle run. This change needed upskilling of coaches, referees, etc., but it also caused de-powerment for those who were in charge of horse-riding. The “crisis” of being potentially taken out of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games certainly helped to overcome the resistance to change, as everyone quickly realised that more problems would certainly occur without the necessary change being driven forward.

#### **4.4.7 Step 7: Change in Organisation means Change in People’s Behaviour**

It is difficult for humans to change their well-established habits, but it will work if people experience the success that is involved in successful changes. Therefore, special attention must be paid to people experiencing the success in the course of change. One suggestion could be to organise short-term successes (as a

celebration) that should be planted and communicated in advance. It should be kept in mind that profound transformation takes time, and any step-by-step procedure towards success is important for keeping and maintaining the motivation levels. The takeaway here is that plans often have milestones, which can be celebrated when reached.

#### Illustration: Gender Equity at the Lithuanian NOC

In 2015, the Lithuanian NOC became aware of a lack of female members on the NOC Executive Board. An action plan on how to increase the number of women was written up and driven forward by the NOC president. After seven years of constant work and consistent enforcement, the NOC Executive Board is now (in 2022) composed of almost 40% women, and the current LNOC president and IOC member is Ms. Daina Gudzinevičiūtė. It was a result of intensive work taken up by the “equality commission”, which was specifically established for that purpose.

The following illustration can be used as a recommendation for a fictive plan, with which to celebrate successive and successful implanting of noteworthy milestones.

Put up a dashboard that shows the current gender distribution of your NOC board, staff, Olympic Team, etc. Then, mark the ultimate goal as an equal distribution between the actual mark and the final mark, where you can set consecutive milestones (e.g., for each 5% increase); and whenever a milestone is reached, there must definitely be a celebration to mark that particular success.

There is a useful maxim: “Practise what you preach!”, which means that all attempts to change human behaviour may work poorly, if the key people/decision makers themselves do not overtly practise the behaviour that others would expect of them. Benefit-seeking executives will not be able to convince other staff to not seek the potential benefits of those executives (by gift taking, or bonus payments, or bribery), because the new behaviour must be exemplified by the decision makers and leaders.

#### 4.4.8 Step 8: Anchoring the Change Permanently

Change in an organisation, especially when accompanied by behavioural change, can be met by the danger of people falling back into old ways rooted in former structures. Therefore, authors such as Kotter (1997) call for embedding change in the culture of the organisation, to ensure long-term change. However, this is difficult to implement. The problem is that you cannot simply control or even programme organisational culture. You can set impulses, and then, you can only aim to influence those impulses. This is usually achieved through symbols and rituals.

Symbols give change an identity, and remind everyone of the change. The IOC wants to transform itself to master the future. They have summarised 15 changes in the Roadmap for Agenda 2020+5. Change encompasses many issues and is ultimately quite complex. The title “Agenda 2020+5” itself sums up the complex

transformation. The title is ultimately a symbol for the complex undertaking, which thus becomes manageable. Rituals are even more powerful. They combine the symbolic with a formalised action, which would then always be repeated according to precise rules. These repetitions carve the inner symbolism increasingly deeper into the consciousness. We know this from the rituals of the Olympic Games, such as the opening ceremony and the award ceremonies. In particular, the Olympic Oath ritual continues to remind all athletes of the code of the Games. These principles can also be used to anchor the change within an NOC. Thus, the contents of the change can be summarised in a symbol, and supported by rituals. This can be undertaken by using a graphic symbol or an appropriate title. For example, if an NOC wants to put athletes at the centre of their activities instead of their bureaucratic rules, celebrating an Athletes’ Day can serve as a firm and constant reminder of that intent.

## Literature of Chapter 4

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# Chapter 5

## Controlling in Strategic Management

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Control, Controlling, and Evaluation of Change Process

5.2

Balanced Scorecard

5.3

Kanban Board – a Method of Agile Working





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## Chapter 5

# Controlling in Strategic Management

### 5.1 Control, Controlling, and Evaluation of Change Process

Control management is important to making sure processes and projects are running effectively and efficient within NOCs. Tightly controlled management processes have to be planned as they do not happen by accident. Controlling is needed ongoing as long as a project is running, they basically never complete.

Many strategic transformation approaches and large projects fail for one simple reason: they are never truly implemented. It is not only essential to plan their implementation precisely, but one must also designate the persons responsible as well

as the techniques to be used to measure the level of implementation. This should ideally be considered during the planning phase itself. Otherwise, those approaches remain nothing more than good resolutions, similar to those made on New Year’s Eve, which are then possibly forgotten and never brought to life. Therefore, some form of operative controlling is necessary.

On the other hand, an NOC begins a long-term change process through change management or updated mission statements, with the aim to bring about innovation, thus addressing changes in the NOC environment. The NOC usually embraces this change to stay on track, and to strive for long-term success, all of which requires strategic controlling.

Hence, we have to differentiate between strategic controlling and operative controlling, both of which are necessary for strategic management.

	Strategic Controlling	Operative Controlling
<b>Goal</b>	Long-term innovation and prosperity of NOC	Efficiency of projects, achievement of subgoals, working on the Mission
<b>Controlling goal</b>	Securing future potential for success	Efficiency of the processes and projects
<b>Time horizon</b>	Long-term (5-10 years)	Usually related to the project period or one year
<b>Dimension</b>	Strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/risks	Costs, output of project
<b>Width</b>	NOC and environment	NOC
<b>Predominant orientation and sources of information</b>	Primarily external	Primarily internal
<b>Main Tasks</b>	Analysis of future stakeholder relations	Information supply Provide planning and Support for decision-making
<b>Degree of uncertainty</b>	High	Low
<b>Type of Information</b>	Predominantly qualitative	Predominantly quantitative
<b>Question</b>	"Doing the right things"	"Doing things in the right way"
<b>Example</b>	Here, the NOC controls its change process, makes decisions on larger projects, aims to reduce weaknesses, or applies any demands from the IOC.	Here the NOC controls the ongoing projects and achievement of set goals and processes. It ensures that they run efficiently and satisfy the board.

Tab. 9: Strategic and operative controlling at NOCs



Only a strategically well thought out concept can be the basis for successful operative NOC management. However, securing NOC success and funding is not possible without any operative action and its controlling. Hence, it is necessary to integrate operative and strategic controlling with interlinked control loops.

The task of the “controller” – better described as an executive director in charge – is to support the management process of

- goal setting,
- planning, and
- regulation of the organisational processes.

Thus, “Controllers”, in this sense, are jointly responsible for the achievement of the NOC objectives. They supervise the NOC’s efficiency and the achievement of the subgoals as formulated in the mission. However, in their role as controllers, they do not supervise target management.

Controlling can also be seen as a concept of results-oriented management, which consists of four subtasks: Planning; Control goal achievement; Acquisition and supply of information; and Control of all sub-tasks.

Thus, controlling can also be seen as overall coordination, and is understood here as the alignment or linking of single actions or individual decisions, with respect to achieving the overall goal of the NOC. The need for coordination ultimately arises from the fact that each action or decision directly, or indirectly, influences the achievement of the goal of at least one other action or decision.

The main task of the Controller is to coordinate the data collection process, first through the acquisition of the essential

NOC or project relevant data, followed by the compilation, processing, presentation, and ultimately, the provision of interpretation aids and impulses to the decision-making executive board or directors.

Further, the Controller must develop measuring systems and work with them, because in order to control, you first have to measure where you are.

Depending on the strategy, the type and scope of the implemented projects, or the change goal, the implementation of this control can vary from being either very simple to very complex. The simplest variant is to set a deadline for the implementation of the new strategy, or the achievement of the transformation goal. However, in that case, we must contemplate the following questions:

- Have the agreed steps been carried out according to the plan?
- Was the plan sufficiently good to achieve the targets?
- Has the person responsible done his/her job adequately?

This is the simple version of a check. Modern management has developed more complex control systems that go far beyond this. The classic attempt is to control organisations with the help of key performance indicators, such as Return on Investment (ROI), or better, Social Return on Investment (SROI).

**Toolbox: Social Return on Investment (SROI)**  
SROI is a tool used for communicating the benefits of an NOC’s non-profit projects, such as a community project. It either demonstrates the financial and social benefits of the entire NOC, or focuses solely on one project, while highlighting the project’s public costs.

### Fact: Social Return on Investment (SROI)

According to Lawlor et al. (2009), SROI “captures social value by translating outcomes into financial values.” The idea is based on Return on Investment (ROI), a performance measure used by investors, which calculates the rate of revenues received for every Euro invested in an item or activity. SROI is similar to ROI, but shows the double bottom line: the financial impact AND the social impact of your NOC’s work. SROI helps you to determine the missed benefits (opportunity cost) of what would happen if your NOC did not exist. The simple formula is that SROI is the sum of tangible and intangible value to the community minus the public money invested. However, it remains difficult to monetarise tangible and intangible social values, as they have no price. Nevertheless, indirect measurements can be taken, such as the economic value of one Olympic Gold Medal, which is at least the money invested in the high-performance system of this athlete – however, that is not the same as its social value.

Overall effectiveness is considered to be vital for NOCs. Thus, its goals must be controlled, in terms of whether (or not), or to what extent, they are reached. Therefore, indicators are needed to help monitor and control an NOC’s projects/activities. To do so, we introduce useful tools, such as the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) (subchapter 5.2) in the following subchapters. The Kanban method (subchapter 5.3) will be presented as a tool that helps to control the delivery of tasks.

Modern NOCs focus on strategic management and control over current and long-term goals. A good goal description (subchapter 2.3) plays a corrective role in the NOC’s success with regards to the appropriate use of scarce resources. However, the Olympic environment is constantly changing and thus, the question is whether (or not) all goals are always kept in focus.

## 5.2 Balanced Scorecard

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) of Kaplan and Norton is a holistic system of (key) performance indicators, which serves to design, implement, and control strategies.

### Toolbox: Balanced Scorecard (BSC)

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) translates the vision and strategy of an NOC into goals and (key) performance indicators, and it can make strategic action visible and controllable by evaluating them.

. The basis of a BSC is the clear transformation of an NOC vision and strategy into a well-defined bundle of qualitative and quantitative goals and key figures, with the help of a balancing system for controlling and measuring performance based on four perspectives.

**Illustration: Olympic Agenda 2020 and its 40 goals**

Adopted by the IOC in 2014, Olympic Agenda 2020 is a set of 40 detailed recommendations – they can be considered as goals – whose overarching goal was to safeguard the Olympic values and strengthen the role of sport in society. Identified and collated through a collaborative and consultative process, involving Olympic Movement stakeholders and external experts, they were driven by the understanding that the world was evolving rapidly, and that the Olympic Movement had the opportunity to be an agent of change.

In the period since its adoption (December 2014), Olympic Agenda 2020 has had a profound impact on the Olympic Movement, resulting in large transformations. Each recommendation was controlled for its implementation. Qualitative performance indicators were often used, such as whether a project was started in order to achieve the particular goal.

Even though no BSC was used, the IOC acted in a similar way. A selection of the perceived goals can be seen in the following. Here, we can read the actions that are taken towards the future achievement of the goals that are set up in Agenda 2020:

- The IOC has completely reformed the way the Olympic Games are awarded, with the introduction of the two Future Host Commissions, Winter and Summer, making the whole procedure more cooperative and targeted.
- More than 100,000 Olympic Athletes, elite athletes, and their entourage members have signed up to Athlete365, a multi-lingual one-stop shop and a dedicated platform offering specially tailored programmes and resources in six languages.
- A Safeguarding Framework, which includes an education component, a safeguarding officer and a reporting process, has been implemented as part of the Prevention of Harassment and Abuse in Sport (PHAS) initiative.
- Engagement with the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport (IPACS) has resulted in development of the first initiative of its kind to prevent corruption in sport.
- Memoranda of understanding have been signed with INTERPOL, whereby the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are fostering cooperation with governments on sports credibility.
- All the Olympic sports IFs have declared that they comply with the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions (OM Code PMC).
- The independence of the IOC's Ethics Commission has been reinforced.
- An IOC Annual Report, including a financial report, has been published according to the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).
- The IOC has created the IOC Refugee Olympic Team.
- The IOC has manifested that it will make the Olympic Games and Olympic Winter Games climate positive from 2030 onwards.
- The IOC is now a carbon-neutral organisation, and has committed to becoming a climate-positive organisation by 2024.
- Gender parity of athletes is expected to be achieved at Olympic Games Paris 2024.
- A digital strategy has been put in place, beginning with the launch in 2016 of the Olympic Channel, a platform using the "Always-on" marketing approach, to connect the Olympic Movement with the wider public.
- Agenda 2020 reforms have deepened the confidence and trust that the commercial partners are placing in the IOC, resulting in financial stability, and the revenues from The Olympic Partners (TOP) have tripled.

The IOC constantly reported on the number of and the type of goals/recommendations that were taken into action or achieved. For working with such a large Agenda, it may also be recommendable to use Kanban (subchapter 5.3).

For NOCs, the four proposed perspectives that shall be considered are shown in Fig. 37. However, when developing an individual scorecard, additional perspectives can be added, such as that of a particular stakeholder or national sporting success.

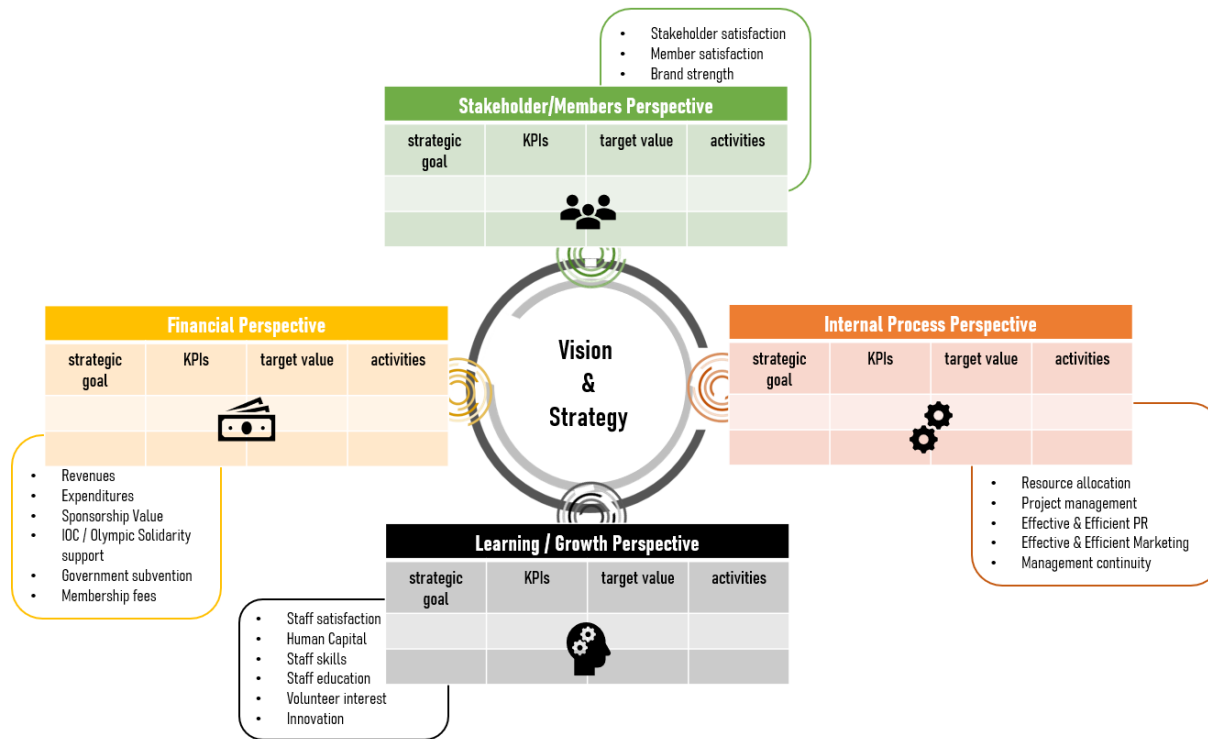


Fig. 37: Perspectives of a Potential NOC Balanced Scorecard

**Stakeholder and Members perspective:** The mission is to achieve the vision by delivering value, and by doing this, satisfying the stakeholders and members. As a member-driven, non-profit organisation, the NOC must prioritise delivering value to its members. Since stakeholders have often been closely related to the NOC by its projects, it is also important to consider and satisfy stakeholders' interests.

**Financial perspective:** The mission is to deliver value to the members and stakeholders by using all available financial resources. The more money that is available, the more or larger the projects will be, thus facilitating and achieving the NOC's goals. Thus, the financial perspective is closely linked to the stakeholder/member perspective.

**Internal process perspective:** The mission is to promote effectiveness and efficiency in all NOC processes. Professionalisation, good governance, digitalisation, management skills, and goal-oriented resource allocation are all needed here. This perspective is supportive of the financial perspective because internal processes and well-skilled staff support the maximisation of finances.

**Learning and growth perspective:** The mission is to manifest the NOC's vision by sustaining innovation and change capabilities through continuous improvement and preparing for future challenges. Thus, the staff must be trained and qualified, and volunteers must support this process. This perspective facilitates the perspective of the internal processes.

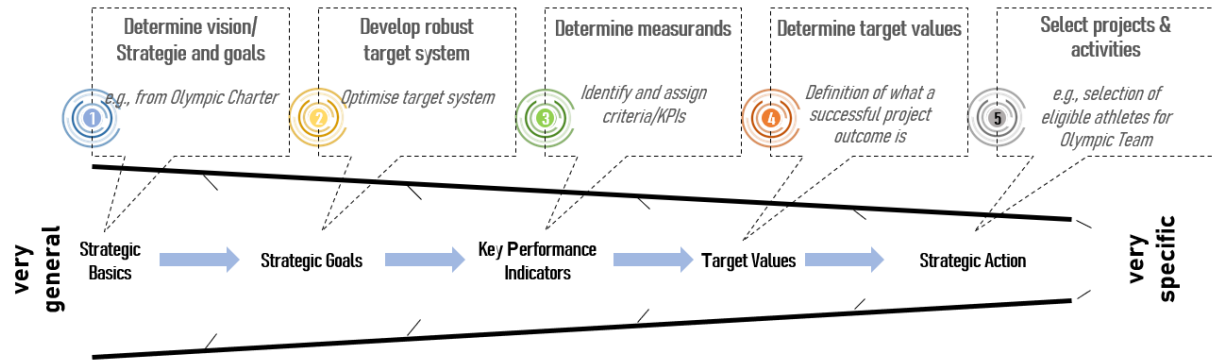


Fig. 38: Setting Up the Balanced Scorecard from Goal to Action

Figure 38 illustrates the necessary steps to develop a Balanced scorecard. The vision must be broken down into a target system (sub-goals). These must be translated into measurable indicators. If an indicator describes a target well, it is called a key performance indicator (KPI). Often, several KPIs are needed to measure if a target is met. Then, it must be decided which minimum values a KPI should reach. Usually, this is determined by the NOC Executive Board, together with the Secretary

General/CEO, and respective area directors. They define the expected outcome, e.g., how many pupils should be educated, how many medals should be won, or how much money should be distributed to member federations. This certainly becomes more difficult when social projects are evaluated or intangible targets are formulated (e.g., improvement of image, safeguarding athletes). The strategic action plan is translated into tasks to initiate projects that are sufficiently effective to reach the expected outcome.

### Workshop: Developing a Balanced Scorecard for NOCs

Preparation: The time required to develop the BSC will be significantly reduced if elements such as strategy and vision already exist. The workshop shall last for one day. The maximum number of participants should be 10. You need a white-board and a flip-chart.

Make sure you have a wide-ranging stakeholder group participating in the workshop. Success depends on being able to create a shared understanding of each scorecard dimension. The participants shall have pre-existing knowledge, or should acquire upfront information, about:

- NOC mission statement and any strategic plan and vision.
- Key financial data of the NOC (and where the finances stem from).
- Current structure and operations of the NOC.
- Qualification level and expertise of all (leading) employees.
- Current stakeholder and member satisfaction level with NOC.

Workshop:

1. Define the context in which your NOC operates (e.g., high performance sport, sport development, grassroots sport, etc.). Then, explain how it has developed and, in turn, elaborate upon the respective purpose/mission of each unit. In other words, consider it in the timeframe of yesterday, today, and tomorrow (using the strategic tools that have already been described, such as SWOT, PESTEL+M, etc.).
2. Establish or confirm your NOC's vision.
3. Identify the four or more perspectives for measurements, that are clear and understandable for everyone in your NOC. The BSC, introduced above, uses four perspectives: financial, internal, learning/growth, and stakeholder/member. Others may be added for strategic reasons, e.g., sporting success.
4. Break the vision down according to each perspective, and formulate overall strategic aims. Use the template (see further down) as a guide.
5. Identify the critical success factors. Collect measures/figures to identify the success of the (several) projects, in attaining the reality of your vision.
6. Develop realisable measures with which to evaluate those key performance factors. Carefully consider the interactions between the measures. Also, try to identify any potential knock-on effects of the measures. Remember that you can only see what you measure. Indicators that are far too inaccurate, or simply inappropriate, can mislead your evaluation. Make sure that all of your strategic measures are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely). Consider applying the reliable maxim of "what you can't measure, you can't improve".
7. Analyse the measures as a whole, to ensure that they provide a 'balanced' picture. All perspectives of your stakeholders should be taken into account. Also, consider that measures shall be in each of your (four) perspectives.
8. Create a comprehensive, top-level scorecard. Then, create more detailed cards, translating strategy into real day-to-day tasks/projects.
9. Formulate target values for every measure used. To what extent should each criterion be fulfilled to provide satisfaction?
10. Develop an action plan to achieve the goals and strategy that have been set. Prioritisation should be the key here. Before diving into the action plan, run a sanity check, to make sure all of the suggested measures align with the strategic plan.
11. Develop a strategic action plan for all of your activities. That will illustrate how important each action is. By reflecting on the importance of each action, you can prioritise actions accordingly.



Figure 39 provides a working template for breaking down the vision in the four perspectives, and then in an action plan. Additional perspectives can be added if necessary (e.g., position in medal table).

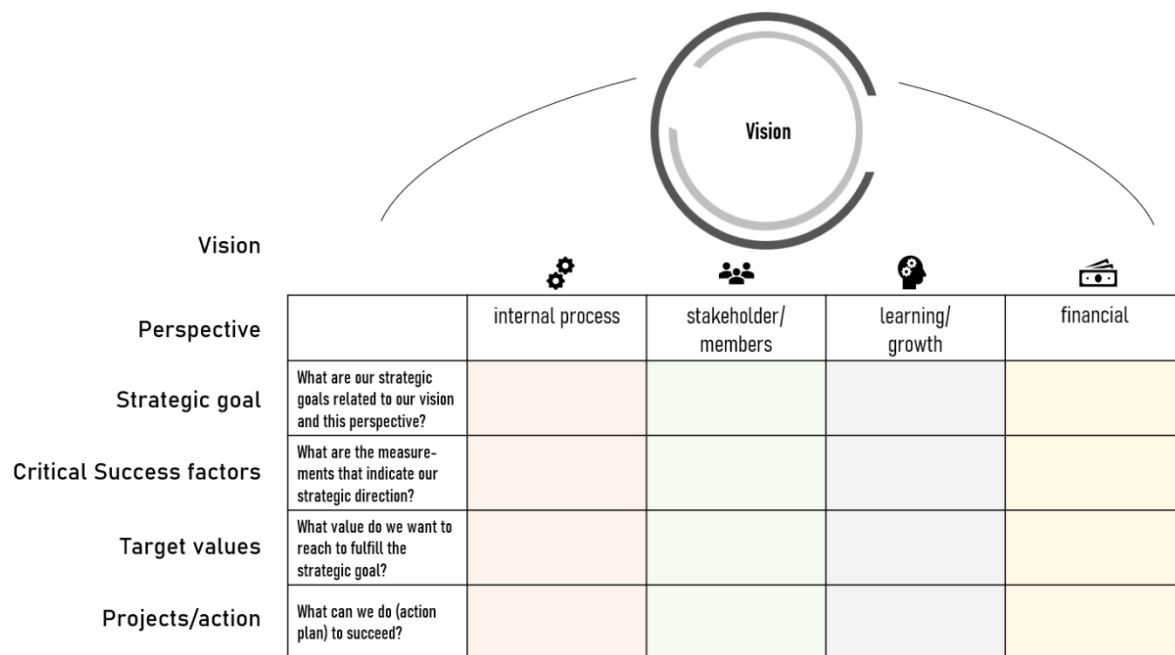


Fig. 39: Template to Develop a Balanced Scorecard

Finally, it is useful to develop a strategy map. This is a graphic that shows a logical cause-and-effect connection between strategic objectives. The objectives are shown in circles in the figure below. The map can be used to quickly communicate how value is created by your NOC.

Most importantly, the development of a strategy map forces the NOC board

members, and the involved stakeholders, to agree on what they are aiming to accomplish, and in very simple terms. It is also a benefit that every staff member can see how he/she contributes to the achievement of the NOC's objectives.

The example below demonstrates how an NOC might organise its strategic objectives across the four BSC perspectives.

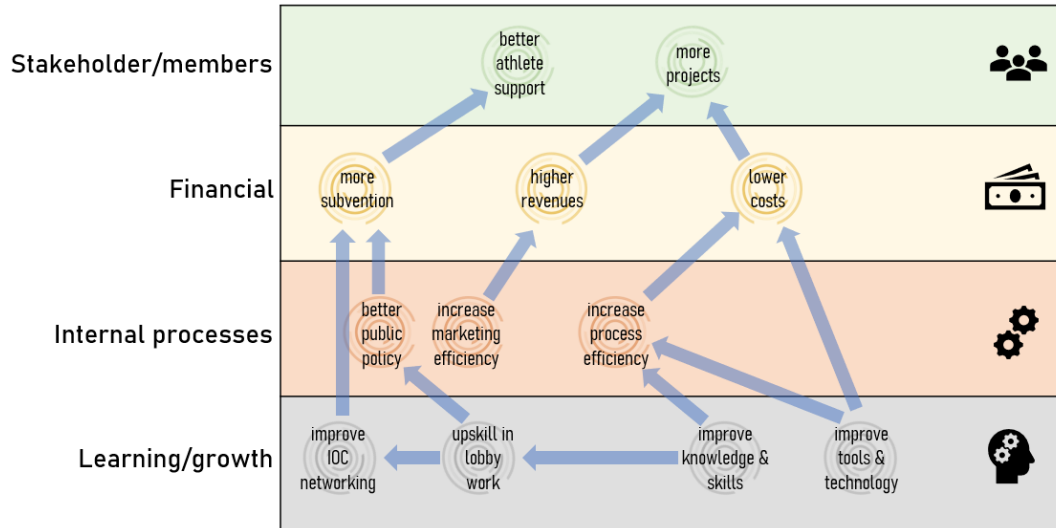


Fig. 40: Strategy Map for a Hypothetical NOC

The blue arrows show the cause-and-effect relationship between the objectives (written inside circles). By following the path of the arrows, everyone can see how the objectives in the lower-positioned perspectives drive the success of the higher-positioned perspectives (the position of each perspective is defined by the NOC). These causal relationships are central to the idea of strategic planning and management with a BSC. Fig. 40 illustrates how

one sub-goal influences another sub-goal (blue arrow).

In practice, it helps to establish a traffic light system, where green means that a particular target is (almost) reached, yellow means that the target is only partly reached, and red means that the target is not reached at all. Figure 41 explains the method by using a traffic light system, to show how well (to what degree) a particular sub-goal is reached.

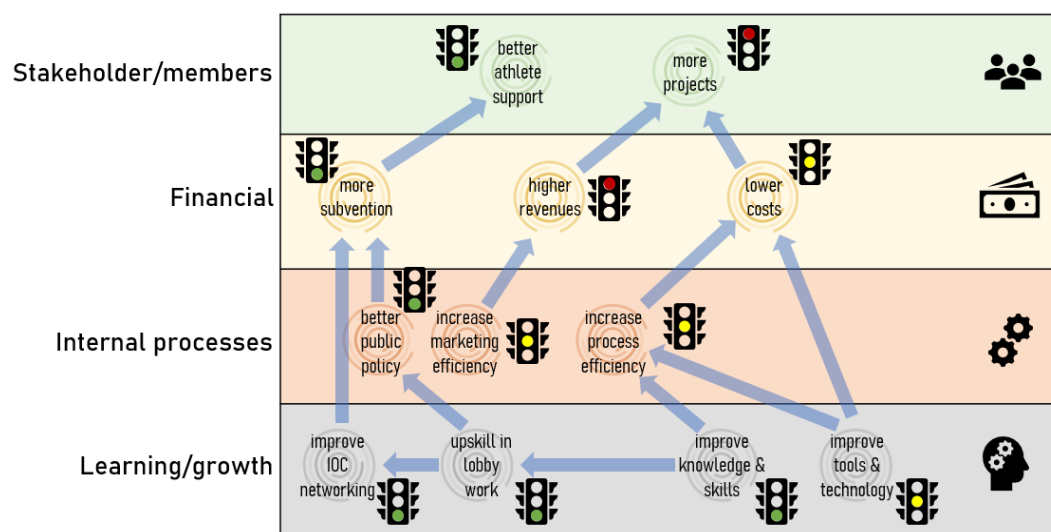


Fig. 41: Strategy Map with a Traffic Light System for a Hypothetical NOC

If objectives in the lower-level are not met, it will consequently have a damaging impact on the success of the upper levels. Therefore, the lower-level objectives are “early warning KPIs”, in case they do not meet the target values. For example, if the technology is not advanced enough, that will affect process efficiency, and increase costs. Both will end in having fewer projects with which to achieve your vision. The “early warning” here is that you see deficits in technology and efficiency affecting your projects in their earlier stages (illustrated

by the yellow signal on the traffic lights). Another example is, if you improve skills in lobby work, it will lead to better public policy which, in turn, will lead to more subvention from the government and, finally, more money can be used to better support the athletes (stakeholder) (illustrated by the green signal on the traffic lights).

A recent study conducted on Polish national sport associations has shown that the application of the BSC may have a positive impact on management processes in the sport organisations.

#### Illustration: Greek Sport Organisation uses BSC

##### Introduction

Contemporary non-profit sport organisations have been developed in multifaceted organisations, which confront several performance challenges. These challenges exert significant pressures from all types of stakeholders, such as the state, customers, athletes, etc. In the case of public non-profit sport organisations, the main challenge was to establish a managerial system which could meet the varying needs and expectations of citizens and other state authorities, while sustaining an adequate level of service quality (O’Boyle & Hassan, 2014). Especially in Greece, public sport organisations operate under a strict financial environment, which allows no deviations from budgetary levels, thus exerting even more pressure on managers to balance financial outcomes, and improve the quality of services and operations within those constraints. Consequently, public sport organisations need to progress from a simple administrative operation towards an accountable performance-based management approach.

##### Results for Greece

The results indicated that the citizens of Papagos-Cholargos perceive sport services to be of enhanced quality when compared with the previous years. In addition, the staff improved its skills and abilities by participating in training seminars. Besides, the implementation of the BSC method on the municipal sport organisation of Papagos-Cholargos municipality (the regional unit is North Athens) can set the basis for an effective performance management, in general, thus enhancing its future sustainability.

## 5.3 Kanban Board – a Method of Agile Working

### 5.3.1 Basics of Kanban

With the Kanban method, you can manage work effectively. The Kanban method can be used in a very individual way, such as organising your personal work, but also for the entire organisation – which is the focus of this subchapter.

#### Toolbox: Kanban Board

This is a method with which to define, manage, improve, and control processes.

Using the Kanban method means applying a holistic way of thinking about all NOC projects, with a focus on improving the outcome(s) (i.e., achieving the project mission(s)), for your members and stakeholders. Kanban is widely known for usage within teams, to relieve overburdening, and to maintain control over the work/projects undertaken by the team. It is an effective organisational development tool. Applications can be, for example, related to the services that are needed to send a team to the Olympic Games, or the development of content for an NOC website.

The Kanban method can be used for any team, and for individuals as well. It can be applied to

- the change management process for the Executive Board members,
- the project management overview for the NOC president's office,
- the project management for the team of a single NOC department,
- the to-do-list management of a small sub-team (two to four persons), or even
- the to do-list management for an individual.

Above all, Kanban is able to visualise the work of persons, and how that work moves

through the workflow. This enables an NOC president, board, or team to control the many tasks of the change process, or to reach goals or sub-targets through the various projects of an NOC.

By using the Kanban method, the teams that are responsible for the NOC activities will develop an adaptive capability, over time, to respond better and faster to changes in your stakeholders' and members' needs and expectations. It is different from one (organisational) culture to the next, whether a necessary Kanban may be more rigid, more detailed, or simply roughly delineated.

### 5.3.2 How the Kanban Method Works

The Kanban method uses a “Kanban Board” or its digital version (e.g., Trello, KanBo) as its centre. Common to all Kanban Boards is the act of pulling work/tasks from left to right through the board. On the left side, new tasks enter the board. When they exit on the right side, value is delivered to the project or, ultimately, to the members/stakeholders. Figure 42 illustrates a Kanban Board and hypothetical tasks.

### KANBAN Board

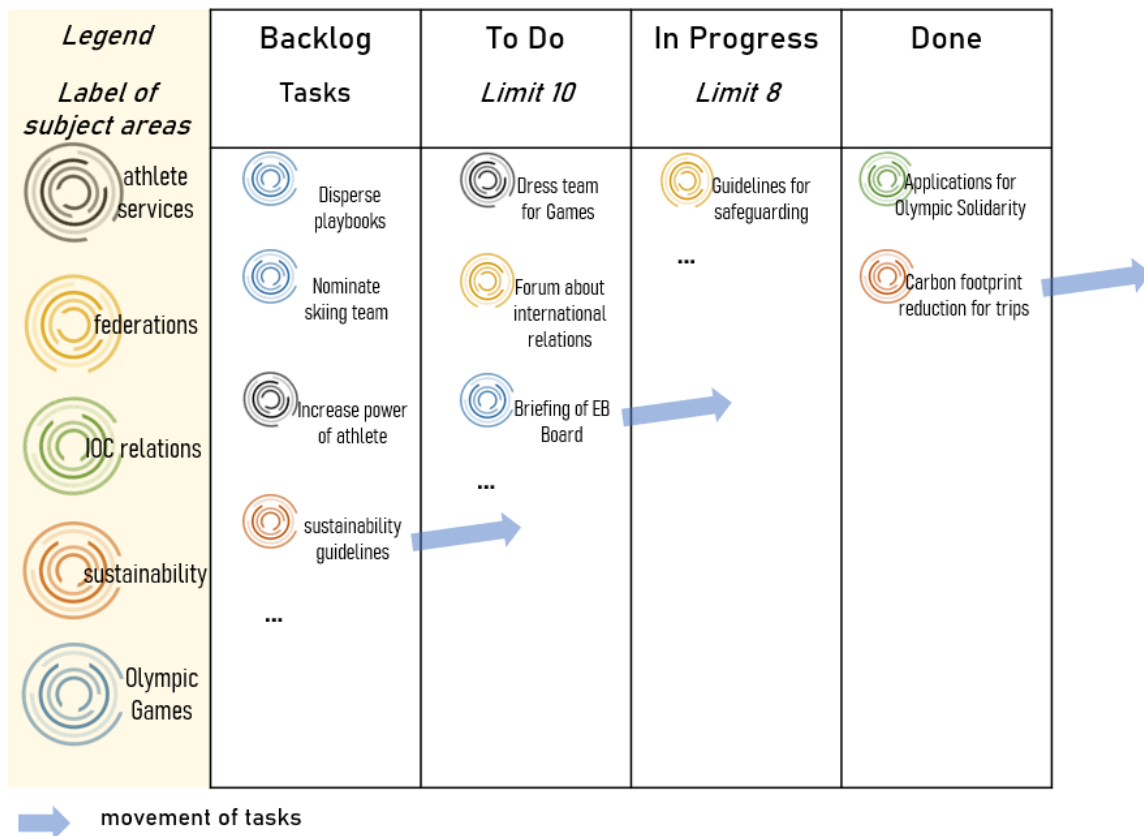


Fig. 42: Exemplary Use of Kanban Method for an NOC

Each project or subject area is assigned a label (colour code in Fig. 42). The label can also be worded based on the subject areas which the NOC addresses in its change process, strategic plan, or in its Agenda (such as IOC Agenda 2020). Subject areas are broken down into tasks (work items), and each task is written on a (paper) card, a so-called Kanban (the Japanese word for “card” or “ticket”). The delivery of a task shall have a completion time window of between four to 16 hours of workload. If the tasks are too large, then the workflow will stop. If the tasks are too small, then it will be too time consuming to update the Kanban Board, and in this case, the board will have to be really large in size.

Besides an NOC official/director who feeds tasks into the Kanban, i.e., an “agile coach”, is needed to work on the board. After

breaking a project into its logical sub-tasks, they are put into the “backlog” column. Then, the agile coach will work on the board, coordinating the tasks and their flow throughout the chart. Regularly (every day would be best), there should be a “Kanban meeting” (max. 15 min) where the team meets to discuss the progress, move tasks on the board, and discusses any case(s) of blockage of free passage. Here, the tasks move from the “to do” column to the “in progress” column, and finally into the “done” column. The agile coach adds new tasks in, after a particular task has been moved out. Only when a task is finished can it leave the board.

The principles of the Kanban method are:

1. Pull is preferred over push. The work that needs to be done in a project is pulled by a staff member,

or the agile coach, who places new tasks in the “to do” column, after other tasks have left that column. In accordance with the size of the team, there is a limited number of tasks in each column. The purpose of limiting the number of tasks is to cap the amount of work that is allowed to enter the system. It is an important rule to reduce any delay resulting in last-minute pressure. Additionally, it creates a continuous flow of work via the pull principle, in which drawing or pulling work only occurs if there is sufficient capacity. A virtual pull signal is generated when the column limit is not fully utilised. While work on the board moves to the right side, pull signals move to the left side (Kanban University, 2021). This regulates the number of tasks each staff member has to do, and no task stays in the same column for too long. A task that is not taken up for a long period of time is blocking the workflow, and will need to be discussed in the next “Kanban meeting”.

2. Transparency by visualisation. As everyone has access to the board (this works best digitally), everyone in the team can see the progress of each project.
3. Easy communication. Each task is written down and contains all important information about the work step.

The overall target is to keep all staff working without overdoing any work pressure that may be affecting them.

The number of Kanban Boards that are needed in an NOC depends on where the method is used. It can be used internally

for teams, or it can be an overall steering instrument that is used by the Executive Board to coordinate an agenda or an entire NOC change process.

The number of columns in the Kanban Board is flexible. Each column needs to contribute to the progress of the work. The simplest Kanban Board consists of columns labelled “to do”, “in progress”, or “done” (see Fig. 42). After working with this method, additional columns may be added, e.g., one for “blocked tasks”, one for “waiting for external information”, one for “very urgent with deadline”, or for tasks that are stuck for too long in the “in progress” column, which could also be labelled as a column for “re-think priority”. The Kanban Board should reflect upon the NOC’s specific workflow. The possibilities may vary greatly and, therefore, each Kanban system and each Kanban Board is unique (Kanban University, 2021).

It is important to describe each task in detail and with deadlines. The description should also contain the expected result from the task. Depending on what the Kanban Board is used for, tasks should be completed in a certain period of time (usually five to ten days) in order to qualify for removal from the board. Tasks that have no time pressure to be finished often stay longer in the “backlog” column.

To install the Kanban system at an NOC, a feedback loop is required. Continuous improvement is one of the important components of the Kanban method. Feedback can be given at meetings. Thus, improvement is enabled by daily (Kanban meetings), weekly (meetings to decide the new tasks that need to enter the board), and quarterly feedback loops (here, the executive board will meet to discuss the project changes, new projects, and inspect the completed work).

**Workshop: Introducing Kanban to your Staff and Explaining how it Works**

Build a team of leaders to lead their respective Kanban team. Depending on the content of the Kanban, you need to involve all leaders who will be using Kanban to control and coordinate the work.

Preparation: Only a small amount of equipment is needed for the introduction of Kanban: a large, white surface such as a whiteboard, a blackboard, or a pin board (our Kanban Board). You may also use a digital board. You need cards on which the tasks can be written down. Use sticky tape for the width of the columns.

1. Define workflow: Now, you need to determine the work steps into which the Kanban Board can be divided. The board is divided into several "lanes" or columns. Each column represents a work step in your workflow or project. Start the easy way, and add something only if you think you need it: BACKLOG / TO DO / DOING / PROGRESS / DONE.
2. Define tasks: Let us stick to the classic model with the three columns: "to do", "doing", "done". First, all tasks of a project should be written down on cards. Each task is recorded on its own card and stuck/pinned in the "to do" column (far left side). If you formulate the tasks too granularly, you will lose the overview in the abundance of cards. If the tasks are too large, they will be in progress for days, or even weeks, making you feel that nothing is progressing. Rule: A task should be completed within a maximum period of two days.
3. Meetings: Communication and agreements within the team are two of the most important elements of agile working, and contribute significantly to success. In the Kanban method, the so-called "Kanban meetings" (daily 15-minute meetings) are needed. The goal of a meeting is that all team members will exchange information about how they have progressed since the last meeting, and what the next steps are. In addition, they should be used to clarify open questions, and to discuss the desired results of the individual tasks.

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# Chapter 6

## Crises and Crisis Management

6.1

Types of Crises

6.2

Prediction and Prevention of Crises

6.3

Crisis Management



## Chapter 6

### Crises and Crisis Management

Whether your NOC is in an unexpected crisis, or in a situation of multiple crises that could have been anticipated, it is good to perform a risk assessment (see subchapter 3.5). If the crisis is acute, there is rarely time for a good and well-planned thorough preparation.

In cases where a crisis is expected, you have the opportunity to be a little more prepared, and risk assessments help to identify crises quicker. Some organisations have templates for managing crises, including a template for crisis communication.

#### Illustration: Belgian Olympic and Interfederal Committee (BOIC) Crisis Communication

The BOIC works together with a communication consultancy (Akkanto) to conduct a risk assessment and to prepare its crisis communication in relation to the Olympic Games. This cooperation includes:

1. a handbook with specific guidelines and procedures for crisis management for the specific situations in relation to the Games and Team Belgium
2. an exercise with the staff/delegation
3. a prepared Q&A form for different subjects for crisis communication (including facts and figures, statements, etc.)
4. the appointment of a responsible crisis communication manager.
5. The information on crisis management and communication is also included in the Code of Conduct for Athletes and for other members of the delegation.

In any case, it is a strategically important move to consider which situations are particularly critical for an NOC.

#### 6.1 Types of Crises

A crisis is an imbalance of an organisation, resulting from serious failure to achieve the organisational goal (effectiveness failure), or an external threat which negatively affects the NOC's image, its finances, or performance. Unlike risks, crises refer to unexpected and unplanned threats. The process by which such events or threats are effectively managed and dealt with is called crisis management.

A crisis can be defined as “the frame that publics use to interpret an event” Coombs and Holladay. Thus, an organisation's reputation is a valuable asset among stakeholders, because of which, reputational threats must be avoided at all costs. Besides, a bad reputation makes it much more difficult to get stakeholders aligned and working with your NOC in projects. When crises do befall an NOC, stakeholders typically re-evaluate the favourability of that NOC's reputation, prompting the

NOC to strategically engage in reputation repair.

Since the perception of being in or facing a crisis is based on the interpretation of an incident, crises “are in the eye of the beholder”, which means that the event can be perceived differently by different observers. For example, some would see an “Olympic crisis” (Hoberman, 1986), while others would see a promising future for Olympism.

Before looking at how to react to or handle a crisis, we must become aware of the fact that crises are categorised into different types. Brown-Devlin and Brown created a list of distinct clusters of crises, to which we added another cluster:

1. Outside forces crisis
2. Stakeholder/individual crisis
3. Rules violation crisis
4. Organisational mismanagement crisis

If you would like to learn more about the different types of crisis, please read our *Guidebook*.

## 6.2 Prediction and Prevention of Crises

Crises can have different causes and take different forms. In order to be prepared for a potential crisis, an important distinction must be made between predictable and unpredictable crises. Even though nobody knows what the future holds, or which crises may occur, it is possible to anticipate some crises and read their early

development signs, in order to predict the probability of a crisis occurring (related to this is risk management, discussed in subchapter 3.5). One idea of strategic management is to anticipate crises and to avoid them by taking appropriate measures. For example, the product/project life cycle tool, stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3), the balanced scorecard (subchapter 5.2), or portfolio analysis (subchapter 3.2.3), all provide indicators of when the NOC needs to work on any potential switch to new projects, work with stakeholders, etc., because the previous project targets are reaching their end or they become outdated.

While preparing for a crisis, we can differentiate three types of crises:

1. **Predictable and likely crises:** These types of crises activate preventive action, because imminent crises are foreseeable and highly probable, which is typically how strategic management is effectively used. It is important to implement measures to reduce the occurrence of such crises.
2. **Predictable but unlikely crises:** These types of crises are not taken seriously. Their occurrence is so unlikely that prevention is usually considered to be a waste of time and resources.
3. **Unpredictable crises:** These types of crises are unforeseeable and occur unexpectedly.

Figure 43 roughly illustrates the responsibilities that an NOC should focus on in a crisis situation.

**Predictability of crises**













	predictable	predictable but unlikely	unpredictable
Crisis responsibility of the NOC	non (external)  intermediate	 secure goals	 secure goals
	low (environmental/individual)  damage reduction	 intermediate	 secure goals
	moderate (rule violation)  damage reduction	 damage reduction	 intermediate
	high (mismanagement)  damage reduction	 damage reduction	 damage reduction

Fig. 43: Crisis Responsibility Related to Crises Predictability

When it comes to a crisis that is highlighted by red fields (Fig. 43), the NOC faces severe damage to its reputation and may lose stakeholder support, their alignment to projects, or the project finances. The suggestion here is to control the damage and then reduce or limit it (we call that damage reduction or damage limitation). It is

absolutely necessary to start crisis management in such scenarios. When it comes to a crisis highlighted by yellow fields, the NOC should aim to keep achieving its goals, and also aim at regaining its reputation. When it comes to a crisis highlighted by green fields, although the NOC would be in danger of not meeting its goals anymore, its reputation would not be affected.

**Case Study: IOC Crisis due to Mismanagement**

Background information:

Due to an increasing number of candidatures for hosting the Olympics during the mid-1980s, the cities in question attempted to influence the IOC members in ways that were ethically questionable. A fairly significant number of IOC members accepted favours from the cities, or even made demands for such favours, in their own interests or those of their entourage, regarding valuable gifts of all kinds, study grants, free package holidays, airline tickets, paid internships and jobs, or even direct cash payments. These practices were revealed and made public in the media in 1986, on the occasion of the election of the 1992 Olympic cities.

The battle for the 1992 Games provided an almost virgin terrain for lobbying groups of all kinds, and led to a significant waste of resources. During this period, invitations to visit the cities began to be issued to IOC members. Such invitations often in-volved lavish expenditure. As a result, the IOC decided to impose its first set of rules on candidate cities and its own members in 1987; the possibility of holding receptions was restricted and the value of gifts was limited to US\$200 (i.e., the so-called "Hodler rules"). Some bidding cities reported violations, either confidentially or publicly (by means of press articles or publications). The IOC bore the revelations in mind to a limited extent, and progressively reinforced the "Hodler rules", while never penalising a city or a member, despite several debates on the subject within the IOC Executive Board. Finally, in December 1998, the practices were suddenly and widely exposed in the media, becoming the subject of a worldwide scandal that led to a major crisis within the IOC.

#### The IOC crisis

The cause of the IOC crisis was the publication of the fact that those in charge of the 2002 Salt Lake City candidature had given a study grant to the daughter of an IOC member. Marc Hodler (1918-2006), an IOC member, seized the opportunity to make astounding statements to the international media. Beyond the ethical aspect, the deeply held reasons that led to Hodler's statements were linked to his multiple functions within world sport: he was in charge of ensuring that the candidate cities followed the relevant rules, and was also the head coordinator within the IOC for the Salt Lake City Games, and a member of the Sion (Swiss) candidature for the 2006 Winter Games, to be attributed seven months later in June 1999. Hodler's words led to the creation of no less than four enquiry commissions to investigate the attribution of the 2002 Winter Games: the IOC, the Salt Lake City OCOG, the United States Olympic Committee, and the United States Congress, respectively. Investigation procedures were also engaged in relation to Sydney 2000, Nagano 1998, and, following a battle over the owner-ship of the archives, to Atlanta 1996.

#### The meaningful decisions taken

The various enquiry commissions reached the conclusion that the "Hodler Rules" had been infringed on multiple occasions. Around 30 IOC members in office (out of 104 in 1998), were implicated to varying degrees. Four of them resigned of their own accord, six were dismissed following a special IOC Session in March 1999, ten were officially reprimanded with varying degrees of severity, and around ten were questioned by the media but escaped any form of action by the IOC.

In parallel, the IOC began to study structural reforms that led to new rules being issued in December 1999. It was decided that the pre-selection would be carried out by the IOC Executive Board, on the basis of a technical report that was drawn up by a working group from the IOC Administration and its experts. Moreover, the NOCs were required to ensure that the cities within their jurisdiction wishing to put forward a candidature had genuine potential for organising the Olympic Games. Visits by IOC members to the candidate cities, and visits by representatives of the said cities to the members, are no longer permitted. Contacts between cities and members during meetings on neutral territory are subject to tight controls. International communication activities are strictly curtailed. The new procedure for attributing Games is better than those procedures that preceded it. Nevertheless, this does not guarantee an end to corruption or methods used to influence votes.

#### Questions to discuss:

1. What kind of crisis is illustrated here? How large was the crisis responsibility of the IOC?
2. How predictable was the crisis? Were any "red flags" visible?
3. What measures did the IOC take, and have they been sufficient to pre-empt similar future crises of a similar nature?
4. How is your NOC awarding any kind of resources to your stakeholders? Reflect upon good governance

In practice, it is challenging to categorise one crisis into a particular field, as shown in Fig. 43, because the level of crisis responsibility is determined by the crisis

### 6.3 Crisis Management

Crisis management is nothing but management during a severe threat. Ansell and Boin define crisis management as “the set of preparatory and response activities aimed at the containment of the threat and its consequences”. To manage a crisis, the same rules as in “normal” times apply, and the same methods and tools can be used. However, the crisis situation has special features that management must address. This implies that crisis management does not begin with improvised spontaneous actions that are reminiscent of “driving on sight”, which means to (dangerously) check for obstacles on a random basis with no proper forward planning, or “muddling through” (i.e., flexible negotiation practices).

Note that nearly every crisis response has both, an operative and a strategic

history and the prior reputation of the NOC. Additionally, it is not easy to determine the predictability of a crisis, as that also depends on the activities of monitoring the environment/stakeholders of all NOCs. dimension. On the operative dimension, there are a) first responders, b) operators to control the crisis, and c) system experts (they may come from outside the NOC). System experts are professionals who are trained to deal with accidents, and emergencies. On the strategic dimension, there is the NOC board with the president as political leader, who carries the ultimate responsibility for the outcome of the crisis.

#### 6.3.1 Management for Crises with NOC Responsibility

Crises management has five phases, and each of them suggests activities that the NOC can undertake in order to be better prepared.

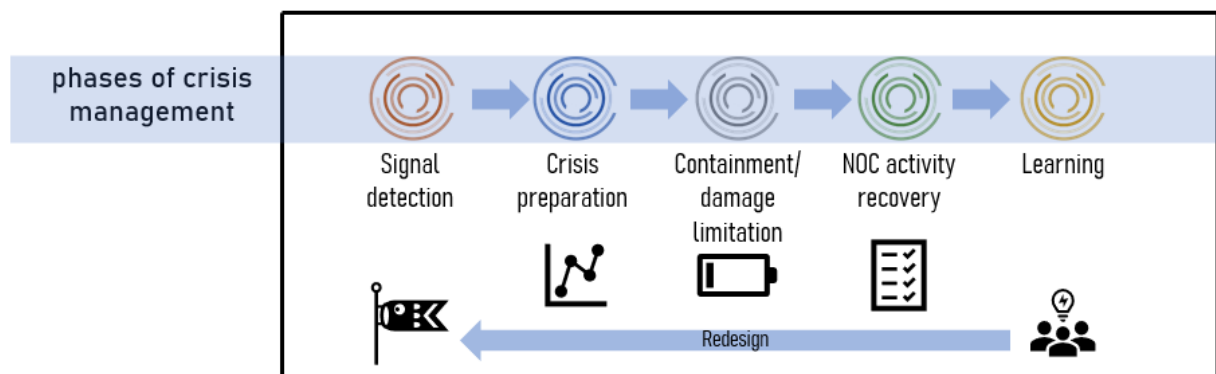


Fig. 44: Crisis Management Model

#### Toolbox: Crisis Management Model

This model has five phases, and each of them suggests activities that the NOC can undertake to be better prepared for a crisis.



**Phase 1 – Signal detection:** In this phase, small but significant indicators of an impending crisis begin to appear in an NOC setting. For example, employees complain about the management style at the NOC executive board, or they raise concerns regarding the integrity of human rights in countries hosting the Olympic Games. The recommendation here is that each NOC should regularly look out for “red flags” in its team, organisation, member federations, stakeholders, and environment.

**Phase 2 – Crises preparation:** This refers to a systematic planning that prepares the NOC to manage a crisis situation. To do so, the NOC must answer the question: What is the crisis? What exactly threatens (the existence of) the NOC? Have we already come across any “red flags”, or can we still see them? As inferred above, the severity of crises may depend upon individual perception, hence the answers to the questions may be disputed. In this phase, it is wise to plan steps which the NOC can take if any crises should occur. Contingency plans typically include formal written statements of critical personnel, resources, and actions to be allocated during a crisis situation.

In each crisis (or put in a better way: Before any crisis at all), the NOC needs to think about certain questions: What must be changed? What options do we have? This is not yet about evaluating solutions, but rather it is about exploring possible solutions. As shown in the SWOT analysis (subchapter 3.4), NOCs should work on their WT-strategy, which is likely the most vulnerable part of an NOC, as crises can easily occur here. To recall, when a weakness of an NOC meets threats caused by a change of the environment, then, that is a WT.

**Phase 3 – Containment:** This phase involves the attempt to limit the impact of the crisis situation to prevent further escalation and losses, both financial and reputational. To do this, it is necessary to clarify a number of aspects:

- **Current capabilities:** What resources are currently and potentially available? In addition to the financial means, the NOC should aim to first use the skills and knowledge of its employees before considering to hire expensive external consultants.
- **Stakeholders:** Which stakeholders are important for your NOC in a crisis? What political support can your NOC obtain (e.g., from public authorities, politicians, IOC, EOC, etc.)? A stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3) can be conducted here, but it should have a different focus, and questions like: Who can help my NOC in a crisis? Who is also affected? Who or what might attack the NOC? The alignment with your position is important, as well as the power a stakeholder has on those causing the crises.

Communicating with internal and external stakeholders on how the NOC is handling the crisis event, and how resources or the network of stakeholders are secured, are important factors in this phase.

The main questions here are: What are the suitable ways out of the crises? Which of those ways would be most advantageous? Which of those ways would be least damaging? There is certainly no single and simple answer, but it is good to separate the generation of ideas, and allow the widest possible collection of solutions.

However, effective execution of the following recommendation may help a “response network” to produce the best possible actions, that could limit the impact of crises. Such networks are stakeholders that are

interdependent, and all are affected by the crises. Their outcomes of joint emergency response can be seen as “a product of the attributes of the network” (Hossain & Kuti, 2010, 764).

**Recommendation: Actions to Limit the Impact of a Crisis**

According to Ansell and Boin (2019), strategic crisis management means orchestrating and facilitating a joint response to an urgent threat. Their recommendations to limit the impact of crises are:

1. Sense-making: Organising the process through which the NOC board (strategic crisis managers) arrive at a shared understanding of the evolving threat and its consequences. This requires the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information about the unfolding threat and its consequences.
2. Critical decision-making: Making strategic decisions that are effective and legitimate (while avoiding those that are operative), both in the short and the long run. A crisis does not allow for unethical behaviour.
3. Coordinating within the NOC: This means facilitating the implementation of planned actions and strategic decisions, by motivating actors in the “response networks” to work together and perform their tasks (in an effective and legitimate way). An emergency response network involves the interdependent relations among organisations. Here, the information flow (reflecting the truth), its intensity, and the network density (not too great in number, but mainly all those affected are included), are all important factors to be considered.
4. Meaning-making: This means explaining the following to everyone involved
  - a) what is going on,
  - b) what is being done to remedy the situation,
  - c) what is being done to limit the consequences; and then
  - d) offering actionable advice to move forward.

**Phase 4 – Recovery:** The NOC begins to enact procedures to resume normal business activity in the recovery phase. Such efforts include long- and short-term recovery plans to bring the NOC back to its “business-as-usual” (BAU) mode.

**Phase 5 – Learning:** Here, it is important to take the lessons learned from any experiences of a crisis. NOC must critically review and reflect upon its own compliance and response processes that are applied, in order to avoid similar crises in the future. In any case, if any crises should occur again, then the NOC should supervise that they are handled appropriately. Hutchins et al. state that this phase requires the NOC to engage in critical reflection on the

crisis experience. The NOC should analyse the impact of the crisis on central and ancillary system processes, and then adapt behaviours and systems to improve crisis management practices. It may be recommended that a third-party or investigative entity, which can see the entire situation from an unbiased and global perspective, should provide a report on the crises and the actions of the NOC. Mitroff advises organisations to engage in “no-fault learning” (that is, not blaming any particular individual(s) for the crisis event), except in the case(s) of criminal behaviour and liability, but rather organisations should use systemic factors to analyse the cause of the crisis event.

Since crisis decisions are often accompanied by major changes (i.e., re-design of NOC crisis management), the knowledge and methods of implementation management should be used. In addition, leadership should address the special psychological challenges in times of crises. Both the crisis itself and its defensive measures often frighten stakeholders and staff. For example, regarding COVID-19, people have as much fear of the disease, as they do of vaccination against it. Therefore, communicating the exact situation of the organisation in the crisis is as important as explaining the measures to be adopted against the crisis, in an understandable way. This is not only about rationality because, above all, it really is all about people's sensitivities and emotions.

### 6.3.2 Management for Crises without NOC Responsibility

Some crises are unpredictable and come out of nowhere as a shock to the NOC. They are also called "ad hoc crises" (Burmam et al., 2005, 5ff.). Unpredictable crises from outside the NOC are manifold, e.g., severe financial cuts from government, lottery funding stops, the Olympic Games get postponed, global financial crises (see illustration below), (civil) wars, or the COVID-19 pandemic (see the case study below).

The following long-term case study looks into the crises management of 19 European NOCs and how they coped with the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Case Study: COVID-19 Crisis and the Management of NOCs

After a large number of sports venues were closed worldwide, during the first wave of the pandemic in the spring of 2020 and training operations came to a standstill, competitive events – the foremost being the Tokyo Olympic Games – were postponed, while many other events were cancelled. Consequently, the COVID-19 pandemic also had a major impact on sports organisations whose employees were required to make decisions in times of great uncertainty, and under fundamentally changed circumstances, that could be decisive for the existence of their organisation. This also included the European NOCs, whose achievement of goals was hindered by the changed framework conditions of the organisational environment. Consequently, goals such as the promotion of sport, the transmission of values, the dissemination of the Olympic Idea and Olympic values, the promotion of sports' societal development, or the promotion of social exchange through sport, could not be achieved due to the strong measures in force to protect against infection, and the associated closure of sports venues and prohibitions on assemblies. In addition, the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games resulted in a lack of financial resources, which are highly relevant for achieving the goals and securing the existence of many NOCs.

We address the question of how the European NOCs can continue to act in a purposeful and functional manner, while taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world of sport, as well as on the organisation itself, and its individual organisational environment. Therefore, we show how strategies are developed in the European NOCs, and which actions prove to be most helpful in their development. As a result, we present our model for an ideal strategy development process, with concrete strategy development steps and recommended measures within the steps, that can be used as a guideline for all European NOCs. The knowledge gained can now be used by the NOCs to act better, more quickly, and more efficiently in crisis situations.

Of the 50 European NOCs, 19 participated in the survey. Figures mentioned in brackets in the part on ideal strategy process below indicate the percentages of NOCs that have implemented that particular step.

Ideal strategy development process (based on Lanzer et al., 2020)

Prerequisite: Having good internal and external relationships

The research findings have outlined that internal and external relationships are the basic prerequisite for being able to act quickly and effectively in crisis situations, as an NOC. This is what the 19 surveyed NOCs have indicated. Good external relationships with all Olympic stakeholders, including clear communication, and a regulated exchange of information with fixed contacts, is of crucial importance to remain capable of acting in acute crises situations. It is imperative that the growing need to interact and cooperate with institutions is respected. This includes, for example, the relationship with the government, member organisations, athletes, sponsors, or the media. In particular, the NOC's relationship with state authorities can be of outstanding importance. NOCs that usually maintain a good relationship with their particular government were taken into account when determining the COVID-19 restrictions, and were informed at an early stage. Since there are enormous differences in terms of the national relevance and value of an NOC, and its integration into the state system, the values of sport and the benefits of the organisation should always be manifested to the government, in order to secure sufficient responsibility and authority. Such a relationship of trust must be built over the long-term and regardless of the crisis scenario, and NOCs would be well advised to cultivate their contacts and strengthen relationships early on. When it comes to internal relationships, it has become clear that cross-departmental collaboration within the NOC is imperative to act quickly, efficiently, and effectively as an overall organisation. The fundamental strategic direction of the NOC must come from the NOC board, and not from individual departments. Strategies must be developed holistically and across departments. Accordingly, establishing clear and stringent communication and collaboration within the Committee's departments is essential to surviving an acute crisis situation. This includes ensuring that the organisational plans, such as the roadmap of the organisation, which will be mentioned later, are accessible to all employees, so that they can be internalised.

#### 1. Reviewing & reprioritising of goals

In the first step, the organisation's goals are reviewed (84%) and, if necessary, they are adapted to the organisational environment that has changed due to the crisis, so that they can be used as a basis for decisions on how to proceed strategically. The fundamental goals of the organisation are not changed (74%), but rather they are reprioritised (79%). The reprioritisation of goals was focused on supporting the top athletes, supporting children and youth, and teaching the Olympic values. In addition, the public was encouraged to exercise.

#### 2. Adaptation of projects & activities

The second step is to adapt projects and activities in the context of the crisis (95%). Consequently, projects and events that could not take place due to contact restrictions had to be cancelled, rescheduled, or modified. In addition, new gaps for action(s) were identified. In this regard, it was very useful to have an overview of all ongoing projects and activities, which was accessible to any employee (84%).

#### 3. Renewing strategies

In the third step, the environment that has been changed by the crisis, is captured and evaluated in detail. Here, the COVID-19 pandemic and its financial and structural impact must be identified as an acute risk factor. An institutionalised meeting in which moods, tendencies, developments, and trends are observed, has proven its worth in capturing and evaluating the effects of the pandemic for 63% of the NOCs. This should take place at regular intervals, and it is important that all key decision-makers in the NOC should attend the meeting or, at least be informed of its findings. This is followed by a SWOT-Analysis (53%) to renew the strategic planning and identify new strategic fields of action. The organisation's strategic fields of action are derived by combining relevant influencing factors from the opportunities/risks and strengths/weaknesses matrix, and then they are evaluated in terms of their relevance (68%). The third step of the process

ends with the selection of those strategic fields of action that are decisive for the goals that were set up in the first step, in the context of the current crisis situation. In all significant decisions, the organisation should act in a holistic and cross-departmental manner, and always seek the advice of scientific researchers to assess pandemic impacts, and then base decisions on the findings. Of all the NOCs, 84% found it helpful to seek advice from experts for certain decision-making processes. During the COVID-19 crisis, all NOCs (100%) found it useful to consult the advice of the scientific community, especially medical experts and virologists, before taking significant decisions. Decisions are, therefore, made in a participatory and systematic manner, by considering all consequences.

#### 4. Capturing the digital space as a strategic field of action

When it comes to the strategic fields of action, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the digital space and its management have proven particularly effective for 95% of the NOCs. Here, concrete options for action can be digitally reproduced, such as the mapping of the physical events and projects that have been eliminated, to continue to be able to guarantee the achievement of the organisational goals. Digital communication tools and platforms are particularly suitable for maintaining the exchange of information with all relevant stakeholders, such as employees, athletes, member associations, and politicians. In terms of communication, NOCs were increasingly interacting with their target groups via digital channels. Internal and external communication (with member organisations) took place through digital meetings. Above all, the installation of digital communication platforms (that are legally acceptable considering COVID-19 movement and contact restrictions) has been particularly successful in achieving organisational goals, such as taking care of the top athletes and imparting the Olympic values, despite COVID-19-related contact restrictions. Over the course of the crisis, various NOCs modernised their digital infrastructure so that, in some cases, all essential work processes could be fully mapped digitally. Those organisations that already had sufficient digital infrastructure in place at the outbreak of the crisis were able to adapt more rapidly to working from their home office, and everything was immediately functional under the new circumstances of the pandemic. Digitalisation of the overall organisation is helpful in surviving a crisis situation, and in reaching its target groups during that period. It is imperative to take into account the current technological change. In this case, the crisis even acts as a catalyst for the technological change, in an ever-changing technological modernity.

#### 5. Drawing up a strategic roadmap

In the fifth step, the fields of action and options should be presented in a strategic roadmap, which is designed for a four-year period. This road map should also be accessible by all employees (58%). Each measure includes a fixed point in time, or a period of time, and the corresponding availability of resources. The roadmap is to be understood as a dynamic process, and it will be constantly reviewed and adapted to cope with the dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic (84%).

#### 6. Constantly adjusting strategies

Of course, this type of strategic management should also be exercised independently of the crisis scenario. Due to the continuously changing organisational environment, organisations should constantly, and proactively, adapt to changing conditions, in order to remain competitive even when confronted by potential crisis scenarios. As mentioned earlier, crises can accelerate change; hence, acting strategically was helpful for 58% of NOCs in the study.

Questions to discuss:

1. What measures did your NOC take to overcome the COVID-19 challenges?
2. Which of these steps did your NOC implement; and why were the other steps not implemented?
3. To what extent was your NOC able to use the COVID-19 crisis to change the NOC?

Christophe Dubi, the Olympic Games executive director at the IOC, worked on one of the biggest change-management cases in history, which is the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In August 2022, Dubi reflected on the events and identified the main lessons learned (Klaue 2022):

#### **In Crisis, Leadership Means Making Tough Decisions**

Strong decisions, especially when they are taken in challenging circumstances, inspire trust and a spirit of collaboration all the way through the ecosystem. This “stronger together” spirit was essential to our success, as was Japan’s commitment to and vision for the Games.

#### **Communication Is an Act of Management**

Projects such as ours demand the highest transparency and a constant cadence of communication and engagement across all audiences. If you do not constantly explain what you are doing and how you address issues and what the public benefit of the project is, then you can get in serious trouble.

#### **Constraint Allows You to Prioritise Your True Needs**

In Tokyo, we had to be forensic in our search for efficiencies. We learned that when you have to find ways and means to make things simpler, then you will find them.

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