

**AGITOS**

Foundation

Developing Sport,  
Changing Lives



The Agitos Foundation

# In review

2012-2015



Foundation

Developing Sport,  
Changing Lives





Dear readers,

It is with great pride that I present to you the Agitos Foundation: In review, a summary of all of the ground-breaking work the development arm of the International Paralympic Committee has done since its official launch at the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

It is quite unbelievable to see the reach and impact that the Agitos Foundation has had on the Paralympic Movement in just such a short period of time.

It was established to help the IPC achieve its vision: *To enable para-athletes to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world* and aspiration: *To make for a more inclusive society for people with an impairment through para-sport.*

I believe that it has made a massive contribution to reaching these goals, with thousands of people touched, trained and educated by its activities; just a few examples of which are presented in this review.

What I hope it shows you is the potential that exists in countries all around the world to develop para-sport from the grassroots up.

It is a testament to the commitment of our Members, particularly in developing nations, who are often volunteers yet have dedicated themselves to delivering some truly inspiring outcomes. The results have also been achieved with the help of various partners from the world of international development, sport and Paralympic Games Organising Committees.

We must continue this work but in order to do so, we need to grow the Agitos Foundation and expand its reach.

Next year in 2016, the Agitos Foundation will build on its work in the areas of grants, capacity building and raising awareness of

the Paralympic Movement, and will also begin to develop in the areas of partnerships, research and networking.

I believe this new strategy will ensure that it remains the world's leading organisation for developing para-sport.

As an IPC Member, new or potential partner or observer, I hope that you will support the Agitos Foundation in its invaluable work in securing the future of the Paralympic Movement around the globe.

I will leave you with a quote from Ugandan Charles Okwanga, who stepped on a landmine on his way to school in 1996 and took up wheelchair basketball with the help of an Agitos Foundation project. For me, his words summarise the huge impact para-sport can have both personally and on communities and societies, and represents what the Agitos Foundation is all about."

"I just believe I am not disabled. There are certain things I can't do because of my impairment just like there are many things I can do with my impairment that others can't do.

"People in my community look at me differently; they consider me special and important. Now I can go back to school and achieve my dream of becoming a social worker, to give back to my community and improve the situations of people with impairments."

*Philip Craven*

Sir Philip Craven MBE,  
IPC President





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# Grant Support Programme

## Overview

First launched in 2013, the Grant Support Programme (GSP) has been one of the most successful projects implemented by the Agitos Foundation.

Every year, EUR 650,000 is set aside for National Paralympic Committees (NPCs), International Federations (IFs), International Organisations of Sports for the Disabled (IOSDs) and Regional Organisations (ROs) – the IPC membership – to apply for support.

With nearly EUR two million supporting 93 projects from 35 NPCs, four ROs, 15 IFs and three IOSDs over the three editions so far, thousands of people have been exposed to and involved in the Paralympic Movement from grassroots development programmes right through to National Paralympic Days.

Over the years the GSP has evolved and focus areas for each edition were introduced, ensuring that funding is concentrated into areas within para-sport that are in greatest need of development and support, broadly based around athlete development, raising awareness of the Paralympic Movement and sport development.

The first edition in 2013 supported 31 projects in countries such as El Salvador, Colombia, Rwanda, Mongolia, Ethiopia, Serbia and Iran.

It has proved to be a revolution in the way the IPC delivers para-sport development.

Having learnt from 2013, the second edition of the GSP in 2014 introduced focus areas such as Paralympic Movement awareness, athlete education and development, sport technical education for coaches, classifiers and technical officials, capacity building and leadership.

Funding was given to 29 IPC members for projects involving talent identification, classification and grassroots development, festivals of para-sport and multi-sport competitions.

The latest programme, launched in 2015, saw 64 organisations making applications for funding. Of those, 32 were accepted.

The quality, creativity and reach of applications is increasing with every new edition, as the GSP not only helps applicant organisations with funding, but also contributes to the increasing professionalisation of the Paralympic Movement around the world.



# Athlete development



## Rwanda Grant Support Programme 2013

The Rwandan Paralympic Committee is aiming to send more athletes than ever before to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, thanks to support received from the first edition of the GSP.

In a major boost for sport in the country, 31 coaches have been trained in para-athletics, some of which are staff members in centres for children with impairments. This increased the number of participants in those centres to 1,350 and more than doubled participation in a national competition in the capital Kigali from 60 to 128 people.

Of those 128, 20 have been talent-spotted for further training towards international competitions.

One of the reported 900 athletes to benefit from the GSP is Josphine Ngabire. She lost her right arm when she was four-years-old during the war in the Northern Province of Rwanda in 1997. "Now my life is different than before I joined the programme," Ngabire said. "I am more confident and I feel included in society. Before I was feeling isolated and not participating in any community event. Now, since I joined this programme I have dreams."

Ngabire, who hopes to compete at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, believes that sport has had a transformative effect on her life.

"The way of participating in sport competition changed much of my life in this short time of period," she said. "My sociability with others increased and I am no longer thinking much on my disability as before. I met other persons with more severe disability than mine."

Ten classifiers have been trained and are reported to be facilitating the classification of the 900 athletes by the end of 2016, there is a new partnership with the Rwandan Athletics Federation and an increase in the NPC Membership.

The grant has also helped the Rwandan Paralympic Committee to recruit a permanent member of staff and distribute sports equipment to local clubs, as well as develop para-sport in new and more remote areas of the country.

Celestin Nzeyimana, President of the NPC explained: "Over the years we've seen a diverse range of athletes take part in athletics. In 2003, the first five athletes participated in the All Africa Games of Abuja, Nigeria, and in 2004 Rwanda sent two wildcard athletes to the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games.

"At London 2012 we have seen that Rwanda has the potential to have many athletes compete at a high level."

Rwanda sent 15 athletes to London 2012 who competed in athletics, powerlifting and sitting volleyball, but it is the ability to invest in people and organise training camps that has made the most difference in Rwanda.

"The first difference was seen during the training camp where some athletes realised their talent in athletics and dreamed to become Paralympians in the future," Nzeyimana said. "They are excited to take part in the programme and be included in pathways towards major events in 2015 and 2016."



## El Salvador Grant Support Programme 2013

In 2013 the National Paralympic Committee of El Salvador launched their Paralympic Schools Project, an initiative to increase access to para-sport in the country.

A series of workshops with the participation of 75 aspiring athletes were developed, leading to the identification of 14 potential stars across El Salvador.

The aim was not only to find future Paralympians, but to give new opportunities to children and young people with impairments to practice a sport, giving them tools to live a healthy, balanced life and represent the Paralympic Movement.

Carlos Alberto Cortez Cabeza, one of the talented youngsters identified in the project, was like any other 17-year-old from Atiquizaya City.

He is the youngest of three brothers and lives the same life as any other teenager from the countryside would.

However, Cortez Cabeza became an S11 swimmer for his country through the Paralympic Schools Project.

"I never felt different from others, I adapted to my environment and my blindness does not affect me," he said. "I was about six years old when my sister took me to the river without anyone knowing. My parents did not even know because they worked all day.

"I started to float in the water and then I thought it was swimming, at least not drowning yet."

One day, that casual hobby became an ambition.

"A teacher approached me and guided me. I ended up competing for the first time in 2011, at the CODICADER [El Consejo del Istmo Centroamericano de Deportes y Recreación] Games in athletics, but then due to logistical issues my training stopped.

"But when the opportunity arose, I entered into the Paralympic Schools Project where they selected me and now I specialise in swimming."

Through the project Cortez Cabeza qualified for the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games where he reached the finals, only just missing out on a place at Rio 2016.





## Mongolia Grant Support Programme 2014

The Mongolian NPC is celebrating the long-term success of its first National Paralympic Day, after 500 participants from across the country gathered for a wide-ranging showcase of para-sport in Ulaanbaatar.

The event named “Together We Can” was held to celebrate the International Paralympic Committee’s 25 year anniversary and was a result of the NPC’s involvement with the GSP, as well as other Agitos Foundation activities.

Those in attendance included leaders from the Paralympic Movement in Mongolia and students from secondary schools for children with impairments. Beijing 2008 Paralympic archery champion Dambadondog Baatarjav raised the NPC flag together with six other top Paralympic athletes.

After Nyamkuu Davaa, NPC President, opened the celebrations at the Sport Palace, a number of performers with impairments wowed spectators beneath the red, green and blue colours of the Paralympic logo, the Agitos. A visually impaired piano player, an intellectually impaired circus performer and a hearing impaired dancer all showed their talents.

Para-sports such as archery, athletics, judo, shooting, sitting volleyball, goalball, table tennis, swimming, powerlifting, taekwondo, cross-country skiing and wheelchair dance sport were all showcased at the day by their federations.

The scale of the event enabled the NPC to reach a large national audience, with activities and information about the history of the Paralympic Movement broadcast on television.

Mr. Tsogsaikhan, an attendee and anti-doping adviser in Mongolia, who himself has an impairment, said: “I am a disabled person and my diagnosis is cerebral palsy. I have always been thinking that I am different. For the first time I watched so many disabled people, enjoying this wonderful event. When I saw the Paralympic athletes’ performances I was ashamed. Those athletes were so powerful and I was very inspired. Now, I think I am not different and I need to believe in myself, that I can do it. My life can change for the best. I am very grateful that I participated in the first National Paralympic Day in Mongolia.”

The success of the event marked another step in Mongolia’s quest to get para-sport into the mainstream, after its athletes left the Incheon 2014 Asian Para Games with 12 medals to leave them 17th in the medals table out of 42 countries.



## IPC Powerlifting Grant Support Programme 2013

IPC Powerlifting’s dedicated anti-doping campaign reached more than 850 athletes and team officials. This smashed the original target of 500 when the project was launched in October 2013, and reached its climax at the 2014 IPC Powerlifting World Championships in Dubai, UAE.

Historically powerlifting has experienced a series of anti-doping rule violations and everyone agreed that something had to be done to tackle the issue, which was mainly the result of poor education.

Raise the Bar – Say No! to Doping’s fundamental aim was to reach out to athletes and their support networks at international competitions, giving them the opportunity to speak with and learn from experts with years of anti-doping knowledge and experience through seminars.

Jon Amos, Chairperson of IPC Powerlifting’s Sport Technical Committee said: “The numbers of teams and people that we had through the doors of the seminars has been extremely encouraging.

“We hope that they have benefitted from what they have learnt so that in the long-term we can further reduce the numbers of athletes who dope, proving that we are taking the issue seriously and setting the standard high within our sport. We are totally committed and dedicated to this aim.”

At the 2014 World Championships, 364 athletes, coaches, doctors and support personnel from 50 different countries attend-

ed dedicated sessions across just two days. They then had the opportunity to take a quiz on what they had learnt and show their support for the campaign by having their picture taken in front of banners and through branded merchandise.

The competition venue was also branded, including the competition bench.

Sergio Durand, Secretary General of the Mexican Paralympic Committee, took part in one of the seminars: “The athletes told me that they found the seminars so useful.

“Education is important in all sports, not just in powerlifting. There are some athletes who want to take advantage but there are some who just need education, so it is absolutely crucial that they, as well as their coaches, have the opportunity to learn.”

Egypt’s Sherif Othman, who won the men’s up to 54kg world title with four successive world record lifts, had this message for up-and-coming powerlifters: “A good lifter is pure. When an athlete competes pure, he is a good sport. For me sport is only sport, no ‘I beat you, you beat me’.

“No! If you beat me, I say ‘fair enough’.”

Education seminars were also run at the 2013 IPC Powerlifting Asian Open Championships in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the IPC Powerlifting Brazilian Invitational Championships in Fortaleza, Brazil, and at the IPC Powerlifting Hungarian Open Championships in Eger, Hungary, as well as a pilot project run at the 2013 IPC Powerlifting European Open Championships in Aleksin, Russia, in May 2013.

Raise the Bar – Say No! to Doping continued into 2014 and in 2015, no violations were recorded at major Championships as of October 2015.



## International Tennis Federation Grant Support Programme 2014

The future of wheelchair tennis in the Caribbean shines brighter after the International Tennis Federation (ITF) held workshops in Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti and Cuba.

Meetings across the region were guided by wheelchair tennis experts and coaches aiming, among other things, at encouraging more athletes to take up the sport.

Wheelchair tennis is now growing more in the area, not only nationally, but also internationally. School activity programmes are running and national competitions have already taken place.

Players however are also starting to become involved in international level, and apart from taking part in regional camps, they are planning to perform in international competitions too.

Aspiring Cuban Andres De la Cruz and Alexei Perez, who have access to a series of national competitions, participated in a regional development camp with El Salvador and Guatemala. They competed at the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games for the first time.

Mercedes Gonzalez Amade has recently started practicing the sport in Cuba: “For the time being, I am the only woman in the capital practicing the sport, but I know others will soon be joining me. Through the sport, I try to give my all and train my body and mind, proving to myself that nothing is too difficult when you have willpower. This is a new sport for our region and very few people practice it.”

In Cuba ex-Davis Cup player Juan Pino joined part of the activity, enabling the involvement of some of the country’s most famous tennis players.

Haiti also held its first wheelchair tennis competition in Cap Haitien, to coincide with a tennis festival. “Wheelchair accessibility laws are not on the forefront for most Haitians,” Lynn Bender Midwest Section volunteer and Wheelchair Tennis sub-committee Vice-chairperson said. “I informed them of the different opportunities for integration and how to continue to make their site more accessible as they consider future expansions and programming. I worked with two men who improved so much in three short days, and it was amazing to see their progress with just some basic education and training.”

Since January 2015, Trinidad and Tobago have started a school programme and have begun to involve former players as ambassadors. Moreover, there is a junior player who attended the Cruyff Foundation Americas Junior Camp. This was first time that there has been representation from the Caribbean at the camp, with currently around 50 players actively training.

“We have only just started to scratch the surface of wheelchair tennis as a sport here in Trinidad and Tobago,” Francine Look-Hong, a wheelchair tennis co-ordinator, said.

During all sessions, discussions were held between tennis federations and NPCs about key areas of support, plans for the future and their own role and involvement.

The project proves the importance to include both federations and NPCs in activity and ensures that there is an understanding of the sport’s structure.

The inclusion of schools and rehabilitation centres in the development of the programme also means that potential athletes can be identified early.

Wheelchair tennis is now a more recognised para-sport in the Caribbean, with its growth secured for years to come.





# Grant Support Programme



93 projects

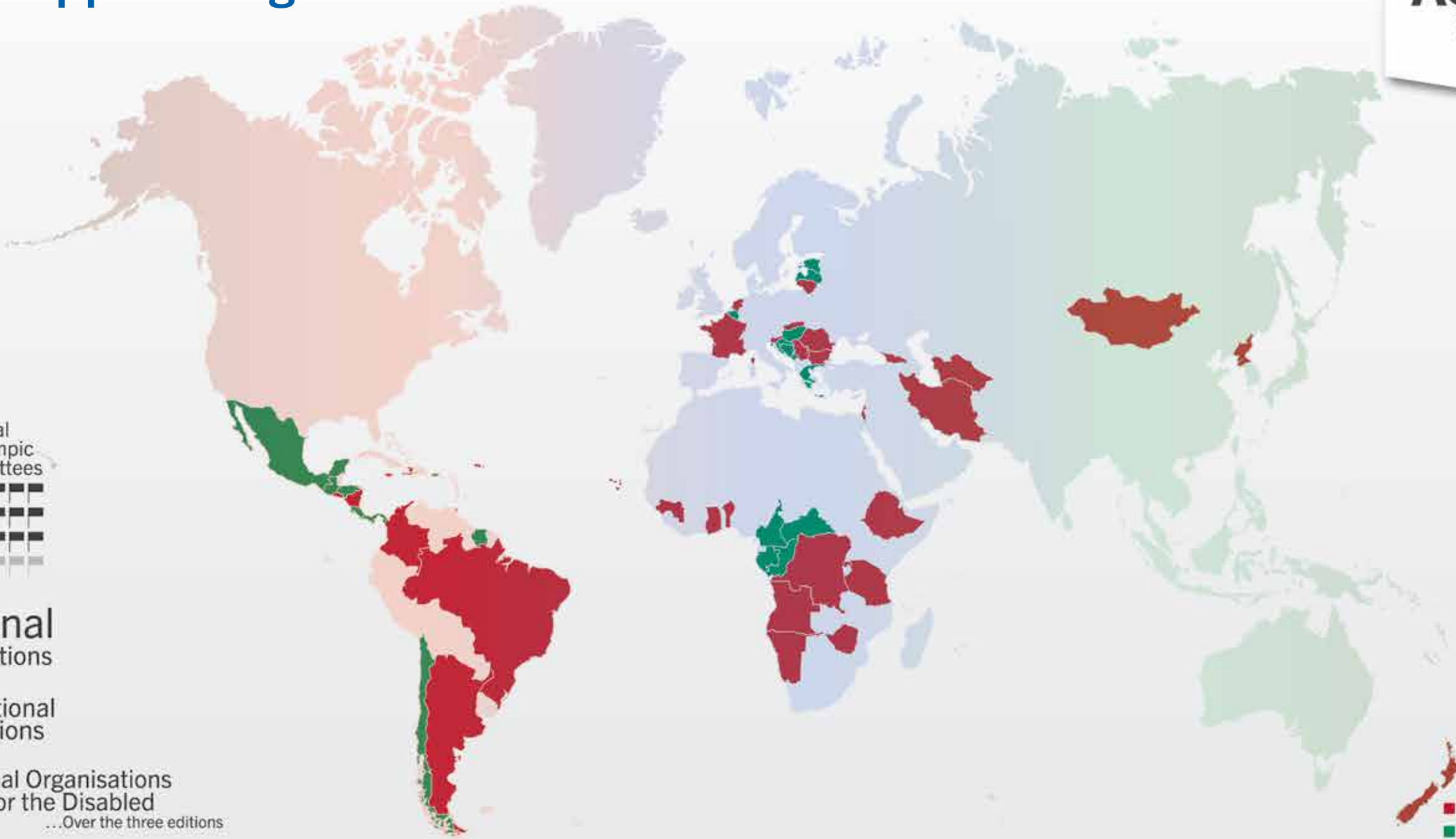
Nearly 2 million Euros invested

35 National Paralympic Committees

4 Regional Organisations

15 International Federations

3 International Organisations of Sports for the Disabled  
...Over the three editions



By region

North America	16
South America	21
Europe	16
Asia	9
Africa	4
Oceania	27 (covering more than one region)

■ Individual National Paralympic Committee  
■ Partnership between more than one National Paralympic Committee

Grant Support Programme 2013 reached 23,694 people

Grant Support Programme 2014 reached 93,283 people

Grant Support Programme 2015 will reach...?

2013

2014

2015





# Organisational Capacity Programme

## Overview

The Organisational Capacity Programme (OCP), supported by the IPC Academy, aims to empower NPCs with the knowledge, support and motivation to spread the Paralympic Movement across their nations. The two year training programme ensures active, positive and continuing development of new athletes as we move towards the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games and beyond. It equips key NPC staff and volunteers, as well as National Federations and local stakeholders with the skills and knowledge in critical working areas of NPC operations including athlete development, branding, administration, Games preparation, fundraising, and stakeholder relationships.

The OCP also feeds the Grant Support Programme with organisations successfully securing funding by putting into practice what they have learnt. So far, 920 people from 39 NPCs in five regions have been involved. This includes Benin, who went on to secure GSP support for three National Paralympic Days and Serbia, who hosted a winter sport development camp for Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania. The OCP began in 2014 and will conclude in 2016, by which time those involved will have attended an initial training workshop and gone on to deliver at least four of their own workshops within their own countries.





## Puerto Rico

As a result of the OCP, the Puerto Rico Paralympic Committee has successfully improved their relationship with the national government. Puerto Rico have used the programme to provide three training workshops attended by nearly 50 people. The workshops included members of the NPC, National Federations, coaches and managers, bringing everyone together to ensure a common voice about para-sport in the country.

Dr. German Perez Rodriguez, the Vice President of the NPC, noted how in particular the government's approach has changed since the NPC took part in the OCP.

"One of the most important points is that it has established a better relationship with government authorities. They have co-sponsored trainings and receive the results of evaluations.

"We have achieved a good and strong strategic alliance with government agencies, including the Department of Recreation and Sports, which is the entity that governs the sports organisations." The NPC have also begun alliances with important institutions; the State Council on Disability Development, which opens bids for innovative proposals that impact people with developmental impairments, and the Institute of Deficiency in Development, University of Puerto Rico.

Rodriguez continued: "Moreover, the National Federations feel more committed to the functions of the Paralympic Committee. Similarly, we have better and more enthusiastic coaches. Both managers and coaches can talk to achieve better ownership of the Paralympic Movement".

In addition to the relationship-building, they are also working hard to develop their sports programme. Following a national qualification event in the city of Mayaguez, which was also achieved as a result of training received through the OCP, 29 athletes travelled to the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games. That was the biggest delegation since the first edition in 1999, with athletes competing in athletics, wheelchair basketball, goalball, judo, tennis, table tennis, archery and swimming resulting in two bronze medals.

Moreover, for the first time since 1999, the 'National Paralympic Games' was held in partnership with the Municipality of Vega Baja, who provided sports facilities for free. This will now take place annually. The NPC is also planning to introduce a schools programme that aims to identify young para-athletes and are establishing a national para-athletics federation.

## Serbia

A new para-swimming association has been developed in Serbia alongside closer collaboration in para-archery thanks to training and support received through the OCP.

In the first workshop, 15 members of the Serbian NPC, athletes and volunteers were gathered by the Programme Lead, Bojan Jacimovic, in Belgrade to be introduced to the OCP and its aims. "Having in mind that we have participants with different expertise and different levels of experience I presented all areas," Jacimovic said. "My aim was to introduce the full spectrum of issues regarding Paralympic organisations in order to raise the awareness of the participants about the complexity of the Paralympic Movement and about the opportunities for improvement for our Movement and for their organisations."

It was at this meeting that an agreement was reached to start bringing together swimming clubs who run para-swimming programmes under one national organisation. Since then, several centres of excellence have been established and para-swimming has grown. There are now three clubs in Nis, Kragujavac and Novisad, in addition to Belgrade, with a total of 70 athletes. Alongside swimming, the Serbian NPC also worked with the national archery association to arrange international classification for 16 athletes. At the 2015 World Archery Para Championships, two athletes reached the qualifying standard for a Paralympic Games for the first time in the history of the Paralympic Movement in Serbia, and will be eligible to compete at Rio 2016.

In addition to development with National Federations, the second OCP workshop resulted in attendees beginning to consider a strategic plan for the NPC and how para-sport could be integrated into the Strategy of Serbian Sport Development 2014-18. It included government representatives from the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs.





## Sierra Leone

Those involved in para-sport in Sierra Leone refused to let the outbreak of Ebola stop them from pushing forward with their plans to develop, gathering in the capital Free-town for a workshop at the height of the outbreak in November 2014.

They were brought together by Unisa Deen Kargbo who is the programme lead for the OCP.

The group of nine, which included people from the NPC, athletes and administrators, used the time to pen a strategic plan.

They were also given presentations on the Paralympic brand and Games and the best ways to organise themselves with the resources they have.

The collective considered the next steps in taking the NPC to greater heights through the OCP.

“I am going to have a one day interactive session to present the draft strategic plan and a budget to support the activities on it,” Kargbo said. “I have also informed that, come next year when Ebola shall have been a thing of the past, we shall introduce Paralympic Day to raise awareness on disabled sports.”

Kargbo also reported that the Sport Ministry have restated their commitment to para-sport in Sierra Leone, after the NPC were drafted in to a national programme to help the country recover from the impact of Ebola.





# Organisational Capacity Programme

**920**

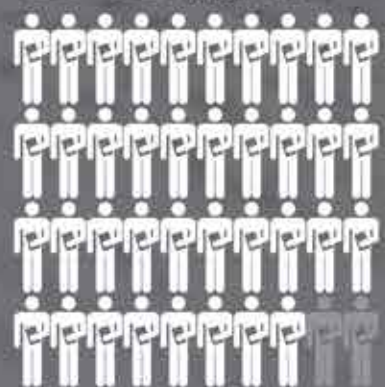
PARTICIPANTS in  
workshops so far



**39** National  
Paralympic  
Committees



**38** Programme  
Leads  
trained



**5** Regions



**156**  
WORKSHOPS

will have been delivered in 39 countries by the end of 2016





# Road to the Paralympic Games

## Overview

In order to maximise resources and impact, the Agitos Foundation has created partnerships with Games Organising Committees such as the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games and Pyeongchang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

The partnerships seek to strengthen capacity in countries and regions through training, education and awareness, athlete development, coaching and classification.

The aim is to enhance the legacy of the Games well beyond the conclusion of each event by bringing experts, coaches, ath-

letes, administrators and the public together in the years before.

Training camps held in Brazil, Mexico and Colombia involved a series of athletes, classifiers, coaches and sport managers from the Americas and the Caribbean, with success stories including athletes winning medals at Toronto 2015 and qualifying for Rio 2016.

Whilst planning for PyeongChang 2018's programme is still underway, the Organising Committee has committed to increase opportunities and performance of South Korean athletes around the world and promote the participation of more countries in the next Paralympic Winter Games within the country.



## Road to TO2015: Agitos Foundation Sessions

As part of the legacy of the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games, taking place one year before Latin America's first Paralympic Games, the Toronto 2015 Organising Committee partnered with the Agitos Foundation to deliver a series of workshops.

A total of 120 classifiers, coaches and sport managers were trained from countries across the Americas and the Caribbean. As part of the "Road to TO2015: Agitos Foundation Sessions" a number of delegates, many of whom were new to para-sport and were specially selected from more than a hundred applications, took part in coaching courses for athletics, swimming and goalball.

The remaining participants took part in classification workshops for swimming, athletics and visually impaired sports. The first workshops took place in Bogota, Colombia, followed by the Il Caixa Loterias Athletics and Swimming Open at the Olympic Training and Research Centre in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Sessions in Mexico City concluded the training.

Puerto Rico's Lourdes Vega, one of the participants who went through the swimming coaching course in Mexico, said: "Going to Mexico for the programme was crucial for me.

"At that time I only had two para-swimmers and my experience was in able-bodied sport. After the workshop I could engage two new swimmers who reached the MQS [minimum qualification standard] for Toronto 2015 last June.

"The course in Mexico was the seed of all this."

Darwin Baez, one of the four swimmers Vega coached, won a bronze medal in the 50m freestyle S12 in Toronto.

The Puerto Rico goalball team also secured a historic first-time qualification, after their head coach Pedro Alvarado participated in the Road TO2015: Agitos Foundation Sessions.

Approximately 1,600 athletes from 28 National Paralympic Committees competed in 15 sports at the Toronto 2015 Parapan Am Games from 7-15 August 2015. All sport competitions at the Games were qualifiers for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.



Swimming coach Lourdes Vega participated in the Road TO2015: Agitos Foundation Sessions, helping her to coach Darwin Baez to bronze in the 50m freestyle S12 at Toronto 2015.





## Road to Rio 2016: Agitos Foundation Sessions

Following the huge success of the Toronto 2015 edition, the Road to Rio 2016: Agitos Foundation Sessions aim to further capitalise on the opportunity to develop para-sport in the Americas.

They are taking place in partnership with the Rio 2016 Organising Committee and the Brazilian Paralympic Committee.

The Road to Rio 2016: Agitos Foundation Sessions will conclude in January 2016 and are being run by leading experts. The first workshops in Sao Paulo were targeted at visual impairment classifiers, athletes, coaches and sport managers from the Americas region.

Wade Franklin, a coach from Trinidad and Tobago who took part in the athletics coaching course, said: "This was a great opportunity for me to learn from the best athletics coaches and exchange learnings with my colleagues of the Americas."

"My goal is to reach the gold medal in Rio 2016 with Akeem Stewart [javelin and discus]. I want to thank the Agitos Foundation for helping out to reach our dreams."

Franklin's protégé Stewart went on to win double gold at Toronto 2015 in discus and javelin F44.

Freddy Geovanni coached Darwin Castro and guide Sebastian Rosero to the first athletics medal for Ecuador at a Parapan American Games after attending the Road to Rio 2016: Agitos Foundation Sessions.

Speaking ahead of Toronto 2015, Geovanni was completely unaware of what impact the training would have - and that it would

lead to a bronze medal in the 5,000m T11 and qualification for Rio 2016.

"This is great for them and also for me because I'm getting to know new techniques and specific exercises thanks to the Brazilian coaches," Geovanni said. "This is going to be very helpful for us in Toronto, Rio is still a dream for us but we will work hard to be there".

The next Road to Rio 2016: Agitos Foundation Sessions conclude in January 2016.



*Akeem Stewart won two gold medals at the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games, and is coached by Road to Rio 2016: Agitos Foundation Sessions participant Wade Franklin.*



## PyeongChang 2018: Actualising the Dream project

The PyeongChang Organising Committee for the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games has launched a new project which aims to develop Paralympic winter sports and athletes and raise awareness of issues regarding people with an impairment.

The 'Actualising the Dream' project was part of PyeongChang's bid for the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games and is a first for any Organising Committee.

As part of the project, the PyeongChang Organising Committee has developed 13 programmes under four different streams. All aim to raise public awareness of the Games, increase participation in para-sport, grow the profile of the Paralympic Movement and leave a lasting legacy.

Over the coming years, PyeongChang 2018 will work closely with the IPC and Korean Paralympic Committee (KPC) in various programmes aimed at enhancing the performance of South Korean Paralympians and promoting the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

This will include hosting a number of international competitions, staging an International Paralympic Day and expanding the scope of the existing Dream Programme.

"I am delighted that the Actualising the Dream project will go some way to making for a stronger national team for the 2018 Games," said IPC President Sir Philip Craven who attended the project's launch in Seol, Korea in July 2014.

"Through hosting a range of competitions across all winter sports, expanding the athlete pool, raising the profile of Paralympic athletes, and educating millions of people across all age groups about the Paralympic Movement, I am certain Actualising the Dream will fulfil its objectives and leave a lasting and sustainable legacy."

"The athletes this project will create and develop will go on to not just become proud Paralympians, but agents for social change. By becoming ambassadors for the Paralympic Movement, they will spearhead attitudinal change, making for a more inclusive society."

The PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games will take place between 9-18 March 2018.



# Partnerships

## Overview

The Agitos Foundation has been working with a large number of sport and development organisations and the IPC membership in order to expand its reach across the world. Charitable organisations, non-governmental organisations and National Federations often coordinate their support through

the Agitos Foundation, allowing athletes and para-sport development programmes to benefit from a wide range of expertise, education and training.

The partners are wide, varied and constantly changing. Only a few examples can be found on the following pages, but the Agitos Foundation is hugely grateful to all those who they have worked with since 2012.



## Wheelchair basketball in Uganda, China Council of Lions Clubs

Funding received from the China Council of Lions Clubs helped the introduction of the Uganda Paralympic Sports Development Project, an initiative that has led to wheelchair basketball becoming one of the country's fastest growing para-sports.

The support, which was made available through the Agitos Foundation in August 2013, has helped the Uganda National Paralympic Committee to develop their capacity and leadership and, as well as the Uganda Para-Athlete Association, has led to the establishment of the Uganda Wheelchair Basketball Association. Over 100 people in six clubs now practice athletics and wheelchair basketball, thanks to the distribution of eight racing wheelchairs and 14 chairs for basketball.

Charles Okwanga, 25, is one of those players. In 1996 he stepped on a landmine on his way to school, leading to the amputation of both of his legs. He thought his life was over but after hearing about a workshop taking place at the Gulu Sports Club nearly 10 years later, decided to give wheelchair basketball a try.

"After the landmine, my life and dreams were shattered," Okwanga said. "Before the landmine, I used to play football and I loved sports so much. When I heard about wheelchair basketball, I asked myself, 'How can a person like me play basketball?' But I thought 'wheelchair basketball, yes, I sit in a wheelchair maybe I can play.'



"It was my first time to play a sport after the landmine."

Okwanga now plays regularly for Gulu including at events such as Friday Night Lights, an off-season tournament that brings together players, fans, corporate bodies and the entire basketball fraternity. The competition brings in much needed income that is used for training and raises awareness of the sport across Uganda.

"At the beginning we were few but after a few months people started coming to watch us train," Okwanga said. "The game became popular and we were invited to play before a big crowd at International Women's Day, disability and other national celebrations like the peace day celebrations.

"We used to take the game to the community to demonstrate our abilities but nowadays people are attracted to come and watch us play."

Through systematic advocacy meetings and awareness campaigns, the Uganda National Paralympic Committee, through the Uganda Sports Development Project, presented a petition to parliament to enable affirmative action in physical education and sports.

The petition resulted in significant policy changes and a review of the national sports policy. Reportedly, as of May 2014 school sports competitions are inclusive and physical education is compulsory in all schools.

The government of Uganda also organises an annual event named the 'National Disability Gala' to celebrate the achievement of people with impairments, recognising special talents and the diversity of Uganda's people and to promote para-sports in the country.

"I just believe I am not disabled," Okwanga said. "There are certain things I can't do because of my impairment just like there are many things I can do with my impairment that others can't do.

"People in my community look at me differently; they consider me special and important. Now I can go back to school and achieve my dream of becoming a social worker, to give back to my community and improve the situations of people with impairments."



## European Youth Snow Circuit

This 18-month-long circuit included five camps for more than 50 youngsters with an impairment aged between 10-17. They were either trying winter sports for the first time, or were already on the road to their first competition.

The young athletes travelled around Europe together to venues in Spain, Slovenia, the Netherlands, Germany and Italy between January 2013 and April 2014, visiting slopes in each of their countries along the way.

Each camp concluded with an event under race conditions, and overall points trophies were awarded in sitting, standing and visually impaired classifications.

As well as training on the snow with professional coaches such as 10-time Paralympic champion skier Martin Braxenthaler, participants also took part in sessions on anti-doping, the media, nutrition, equipment and technology.

Several of the youngsters talked about their experiences on the circuit, including the Netherlands' Jeroen Kampschreur who discovered competitive spirit through the camps: "I learnt that I can be friends with the other skiers but they are my enemies too," he said.

Kampschreur and a group of fellow young Dutch skiers travelled to the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games to watch Paralympians

such as Austrians Markus Salcher and Claudia Loesch and France's Marie Bochet in action.

Salcher, Loesch and Bochet were all part of the very first youth snow circuit in 2007. They went on to win a total of nine alpine skiing medals including seven golds on the slopes of Rosa Khutor at Sochi 2014.

Inspired by their performances Germany's Bjorn Bhenke, the winner of the overall youth boy's sitting crown, said: "My biggest goal is the Paralympics in 2018 in PyeongChang, but first I'd like to have the qualification for Europe and World Cup races."

The 2013-14 IPC European Youth Snow Circuit was organised and implemented by IPC Alpine Skiing and financially supported by the European Commission, the Foundation for Global Sports Development, Atos, and the Agitos Foundation.

Delivery partners included the European Paralympic Committee, Play and Train, the Centre Vidm Cilj, the Netherlands Ski Federation, the German National Paralympic Committee and the Freewhite Ski Team.

As part of a legacy programme from the 2013 IPC Alpine Skiing World Championships in La Molina, Spain, Liski donated safety equipment for use at future youth camps and training at the same venue. Palkinto Tukku provided medals and trophies for the circuit.



## Supporting the United Nations

Part of the role of the Agitos Foundation is to support the IPC in its involvement with UN activities.

Various projects and celebrations every year help to achieve this, but most importantly the Agitos Foundation ensures the involvement of youngsters with impairments in the United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace Youth Leadership Camps.

The camps focus on empowering the leaders of tomorrow to deliver sport-based social programmes and invoke greater change in their communities.

During the camp participants are introduced to Paralympic sport and learn about key aspects of the Paralympic Movement, including its values and history.

Attendees are exposed to experiential learning, for which a unique curriculum is specifically developed, addressing themes such as health, gender, impairment, education and peace.

Through seminars, play-based activities, group discussions and an adapted practice of sports, the participants learn to maximise the transformative power of sport and play in order to change society.

Stories, projects and programmes run by the Agitos Foundation also help the IPC to celebrate important international UN days such as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace and International Day of Persons with Disabilities.





# WoMentoring

## Overview

WoMentoring was established in 2013 by the Agitos Foundation and the IPC's Women in Sport Committee to help IPC members reach the aim of having 30 per cent of all positions in their decision making structures held by women.

This goal was set out in a policy statement made at 2003 IPC General Assembly, which called on all entities belonging to the Paralympic Movement to deliver by 2009, but was not met.

WoMentoring was introduced to help, with an initial focus on Europe and in particular Eastern Europe.

At the launch event in Vienna, Austria, women with great leadership potential within the Paralympic Movement were paired up with successful women possessing wide professional experience and leadership skills. All mentors belonged to a European National Paralympic Committee or an NPC member association. The European Paralympic Committee Women in Sport Leadership Summit took place simultaneously, complementing the kick-off event and increase networking opportunities.

The WoMentoring Programme's mentors and mentees participated in sessions to establish goals, roles and expectations. At

the sessions selected mentors facilitated different topics that would support mentees' professional development in sports, and developed plans to take them forward.

Since the launch, mentors and mentees have been in regular contact and the mentees' plan is supported by short term further education, funded or facilitated by the Agitos Foundation. As a result, two out of three participants have gained additional responsibilities in the workplace and they have reported an increase in confidence, ability to influence and negotiate and resolve conflict.

The relationship between mentors and mentees has also been fruitful, with mentors introducing their mentees to others, thus widening their networks.

In February 2016, a wrap-up event will bring all mentors and mentees together again. This two-day gathering will provide the possibility to exchange successes and challenges, consider the support and interest of the mentees' organisations, and help to evaluate the programme's impact and make recommendations for future editions.

After the end of the programme, the mentee-mentor relationship will continue to guide mentees during their professional development within the Paralympic Movement.





## The mentor and mentee perspective

Christine Nash and Eimear Breathnach

Christine Nash, Co-Deputy Head of Institute for Sport, Physical Education and Health Sciences at the University of Edinburgh, mentors Eimear Breathnach, a former para-table tennis player working on a new career in sport.

“Mentoring is fascinating to be involved in! From not knowing, or knowing very little about someone else, you are expected to give and take advice, share aspirations and dreams and above all trust each other to be honest and objective. It can be a scary endeavour for both mentor and mentee. You learn a lot about someone else – for example, on a superficial level we both discovered our love of rugby and mutual support of Ireland.

“The WoMentoring programme is very important when you think about women in sport – we are under-represented at every level. How many women athletes, coaches or administrators get any publicity, and if they do, is it positive? The importance of role models cannot be stressed enough – more female role models are needed to motivate and inspire others.

“The WoMentoring programme is very important to promote and clarify the place of women in sport at all levels.

“We think it is crucial at a number of levels to promote the inclusion of women at every level and aspect of sporting endeavour.”

## On WoMentoring

Christine Nash

“I think that mentoring is a very powerful tool and the IPC are forward thinking in using mentoring as a development tool. As a mentor there is a great deal of responsibility for the success

of the mentoring relationship. I have realised how much regular communication forms the basis of the relationship and it is extremely important to organise and provide the necessary dialogue.”

Eimear Breathnach

“Prior to our first weekend in Vienna [the WoMentoring launch event] where I met all the other mentees and mentors, I was unsure as to what benefits the WoMentoring Programme could provide me with. But that is a far too narrow view of the programme. It is not about what I can get from the programme, it is about providing a group of women with the necessary skills to become involved in para-sport at organisational level and in return provide opportunities for other women to become involved. Unfortunately, I believe that women in sport need to excel over and above their male counterparts in order to be given the respect they deserve. Ideally there would be no requirement for a WoMentoring Programme but luckily for me there is. The programme has given me a structure, it has helped me to decide how I want to be involved in para-sport and is giving me the confidence to achieve my goals. Maybe it is the Celtic connection or more likely it is just the fact that my mentor is very proficient, but she has been able to take some very sketchy ideas from my head and structure them into a logical detailed plan for me to follow and achieve.”

Breathnach was recently appointed as Vice President of Paralympics Ireland and provided this update: “I had hoped that at the culmination of my plan to be in a position to be counted in para-sport and to encourage other women to take control of their destiny in sport.

“I have recently achieved part of that goal as I am now a Vice President of Paralympics Ireland.

“Hopefully my progress in para-sport will encourage other women to achieve their goals and succeed in sport.”

Tara Chisholm

Tara Chisholm is the coach of the Canadian women’s ice sledge hockey team and led them to second place in the first ever IPC Ice Sledge Hockey International Women’s Cup in November 2014.

“As a woman I have no country. As a woman my country is the whole world.” – Virginia Woolf

“Virginia Woolf’s statement means something much different now than it did when it was written as women were still fighting to become citizens within their countries.

“However, when I read this statement I also hear whisperings of an international movement that women, and specifically women within the International Paralympic Committee, are at the forefront of. We have come together to not only better our own countries, our own National Paralympic Committees, but to also share our knowledge to improve upon the opportunities for women in sport across the world.

“The WoMentoring programme that I am a part of as a mentee has allowed me to gain insight and knowledge from my mentor, one of the top female coach educators in the world. It gives me access to some of the most high-powered women the Paralympic Movement has to offer. Finally, it allows me a voice to be heard within my own male dominated sport of sledge hockey.

“When starting off with the programme, I was not sure what to expect. I imagined that because I was meeting with women at the top of their profession, whether it be in coaching, managing, officiating, etc., that I would have to fluff my tail feathers just to get noticed within the room.

“However, I soon came to realise that these women were not any different than I was. That they had openly extended hands to help me up to where they were within the sporting world and

make sure I could learn from some of the lessons they gained along the way.

“Barbara Daniels, my mentor, has got to know me far beyond my role as head coach of Canada’s National Women’s Sledge Hockey Team. Without outwardly saying it, I know she checks in on how I am doing within my personal life before we get into any coaching discussion. She has taught me the importance of asking good questions and thinking around the situation rather than accepting ‘it has never been done’ as the only answer.

“I am connected with a network of women from across the world who face many different challenges. With their creativity and ingenuity they have helped me not only to put my challenges in perspective, but also allowed me to push my boundaries of what I thought was possible. I think it is important to have female mentors as it is a reminder that they too were once in a position similar to your own.

“They faced many of the same challenges and were able to see a way through the challenges to where they are now.

“To have that support is priceless.”





# The future

The Agitos Foundation has been working towards the creation of a new outlook for the coming years.

This will ensure the continuation of the great work already achieved through the OCP, GSP and partnership programmes, but also expands its reach to cement its place as the world leader in para-sport development.

The new strategy has six pillars:

- **Grants** – Provide grant funding for partner led projects aimed at strengthening para-sport from grassroots to Paralympic success.
- **Capacity building** - Offer training and support to IPC members, enabling them to effectively deliver their operational and sporting objectives.
- **Awareness** – Work with the Paralympic Movement and our partners to raise the profile of para-sport through education programmes and by advocating for increased resources and recognition worldwide.
- **Partnerships**– Actively seek partnerships with organisations committed to advancing the future of para-sport.
- **Research** - Support research on para-sport, its development, importance and impact
- **Networking** – Plan to strengthen para-sport networks and promote information sharing through the Agitos Foundation network, an online knowledge bank and discussion platform.

In 2016 the Agitos Foundation will be rebranded and also take on a new governance structure designed to allow for its expanding work and resource base and foster a growing independence, while maintaining a clear tie to the IPC. The transition will include the creation of a Board of Trustees, an Ambassadors Programme and a Circle of Patrons. The Board of Trustees

will govern the Agitos Foundation, with the Ambassadors programme raising the profile and Patrons programme supporting fundraising activities.

Since its launch in 2012, the Agitos Foundation has been breaking new ground in para-sport by funding grassroots programmes, raising awareness and helping the IPC Membership to grow.

With its future outlook, new working principals and pillars, in 2016 the Agitos Foundation is looking forward to leading the future of para-sport.

Together with individuals and organisations, it will ensure the continued development of para-sport from grassroots to Paralympic success and inspire the world towards a more inclusive society.



A huge **thank you** to all of our partners from the world of sport and development, National Paralympic Committees, International Federations, Regional Organisations and International Organisations of Sports for the Disabled!

#YouAreTheMovement



# AGITOS

Foundation

Developing Sport,  
Changing Lives

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