

National Partner Strengthen and Adapt Programme: Year 3 Update



What is the National Partner Strengthen and Adapt programme?

The purpose of the Strengthen and Adapt programme is to build the capacity, capability, and resilience of selected national partner organisations and their delivery networks, so that they are best positioned to meet the needs of participants and athletes into the future.

Total of 34 partners involved across 4 waves

The Year 3 Insights focuses on waves 1 and 2 progress.

A principled approach

The programme operates on a set of clearly defined principles and in the spirit of partnership, collaboration, and respect between Sport NZ, High Performance Sport NZ and the participating partners.



Partner-centric
Partners themselves determine where change is needed.



Walking alongside
A flexible and supportive approach enables partners to identify, plan and deliver their change.



Strengthening and adapting
Creating a system more effectively meeting the needs of participants and athletes.

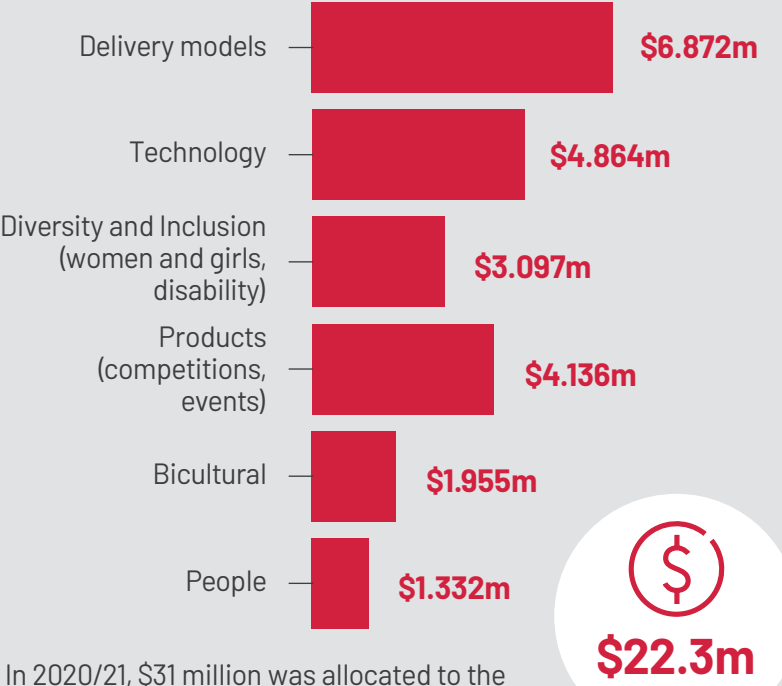


Beyond business as usual
The programme is for transformational, ambitious projects, not routine delivery.



Future-focused
Understanding and planning for the environmental changes ahead.

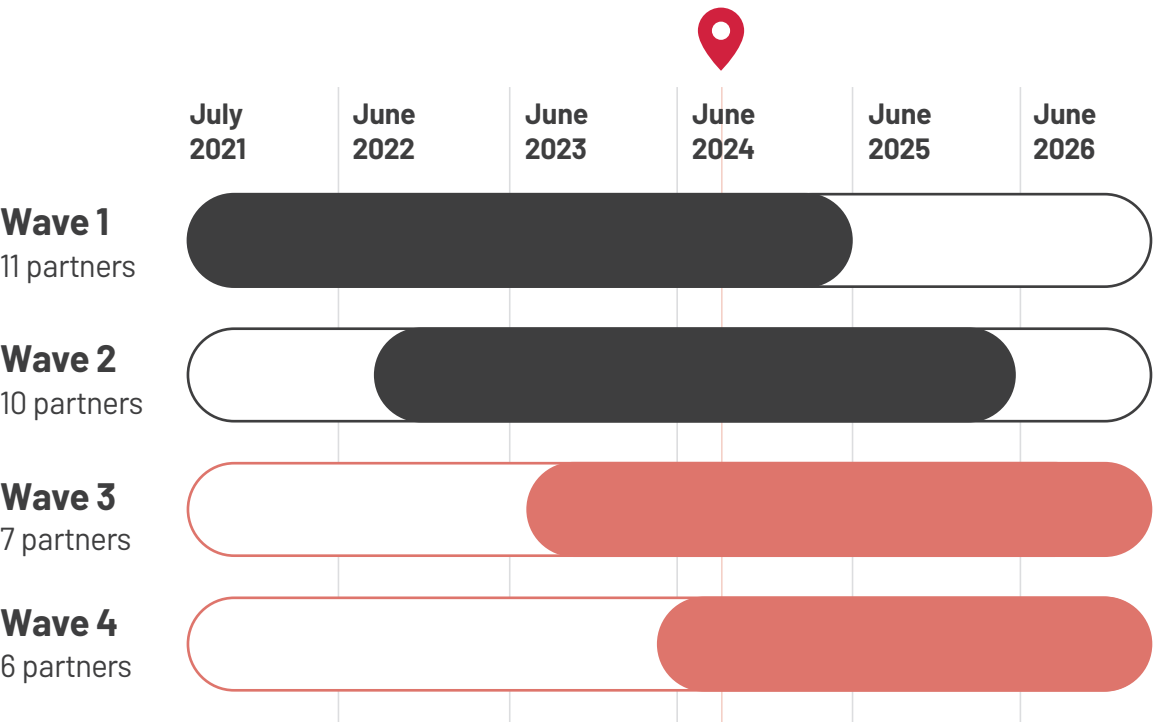
Investment across change project areas



In 2020/21, \$31 million was allocated to the Strengthen and Adapt programme as part of the Sport NZ Recovery Package.

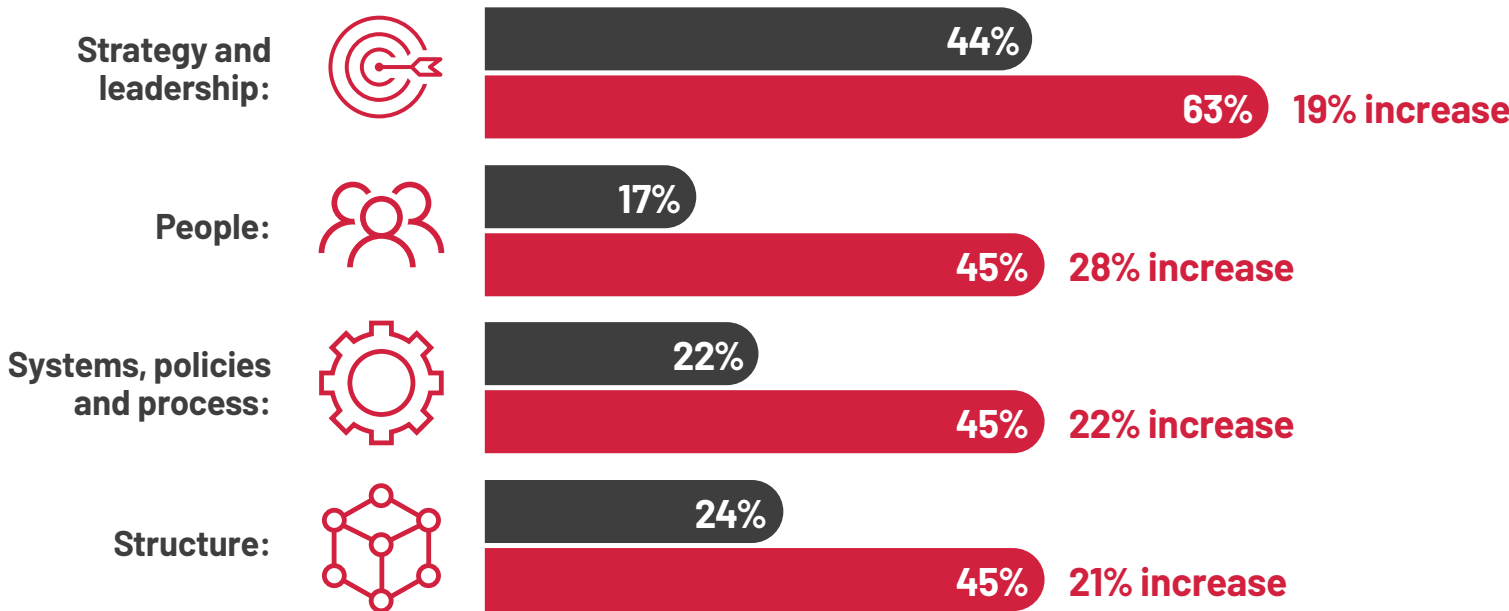
Programme implementation by wave

The programme was rolled out in phases, with groups of partners starting their projects in waves. This allowed for testing methods and learning from each phase.



Progress of waves 1 and 2 against programme-level outcomes

Partners rated and described improvements in all the areas of organisational functioning being looked at. These improvements were compared, in September 2024, with baseline data taken at the beginning of each wave. The most significant progress was observed in the 'people' outcome area, which experienced a 28% increase.



*average score across all 15 partners for outcome area

■ Baseline ■ September 2024 (n=69 ratings from 15 partners)

Progress of waves 1 and 2 progress against project-specific outcomes

Partners' change projects align with one of six themes

1.



Delivery models
Unify and optimise delivery models to enhance alignment, sustainability, and community engagement via partnerships and shared services to ensure effective resource use.
Investment allocation: 11 completed, 4 live
Outcomes: 8 achieved, 5 progressing, 2 partial

2.



Technology
Implement and optimise CRM systems, digital engagement, and online accessibility to better connect with stakeholders, streamline membership engagement, and support revenue growth.
Investment allocation: 5 completed, 3 live
Outcomes: 7 progressing, 1 partial

3.



Products
Varied range of new or enhanced organised sport products and offerings that are innovative, scalable and designed to meet the specific needs of current and future participant groups.
Investment allocation: 3 completed, 5 live
Outcomes: 4 achieved, 4 progressing

4.



Diversity and inclusion
Initiatives supporting girls, women and disabled athletes that create new roles, leadership development, and programmes that foster inclusion and change perceptions.
Investment allocation: 4 completed, 1 live
Outcomes: 4 achieved, 1 progressing

5.



People
Establish new governance and regional roles to support growth, with dedicated roles enhancing coach and community development across key regions.
Investment allocation: 2 completed, 1 live
Outcomes: 2 achieved, 1 progressing

6.



Bicultural
Enhance bicultural capability, foster Māori participation, and embed bicultural practices across networks and partnerships.
Investment allocation: 2 completed, 3 live
Outcomes: 2 achieved, 3 progressing

While a programme has received full investment, it may still have outcomes that need to be achieved.

An important success factor was creating an effective learning environment

“ They [Sport NZ] give partners the space to be able to do the things they need to do ... there was that flexibility to try different things. ”

Partner

Learning – real change takes time

The Strengthen and Adapt programme is helping to build organisational capacity. Partners have gained valuable insights into change management and have formed better connections. This is leading to a stronger culture of making decisions based on evidence and accountability.

The following key factors are crucial in driving meaningful change across the project themes:

Meaningful change needs patience, persistence, and ongoing engagement to build strong relationships.

Thorough preparation, iterative processes, and regional customisation require significant time and effort.

Managing and allocating resources effectively is critical but challenging. Having the right leader with the necessary skills is equally important.

Adopting a new technology can be challenging, with scoping and training often being underestimated. Flexible project management is essential to address technical issues as they arise.

Successful product development relies on user testing, continuous iteration, and effective resource management.

Cultural sensitivity and early community involvement are vital for ensuring success in bi-cultural projects.

Workforce development, leadership and teamwork, and diversity are key drivers of change. Volunteers add a unique and valuable dynamic.

Change management skills, strong leadership, and the right mindset are invaluable assets, enabling partners to create lasting value beyond S&A.

To learn more about the Strengthen and Adapt programme, scan the QR code.

