

SPORT CANADA

INVESTING IN SPORT PARTICIPATION

2004 - 2008

A DISCUSSION PAPER

Canada



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I - INTRODUCTION

In endorsing the *Canadian Sport Policy* in 2002, the federal government expanded its scope of activities in order to include increasing the participation of Canadians in sport. The February 2003 Federal Budget allocated \$45 million over five years to Sport Canada for sport participation: \$5 million for 2003/04, and \$10 million per year for the following four fiscal years until 2007/08.

This paper is about sport participation, and not physical activity taken in its more global meaning. Sport involves physical activity and requires learning and training specific motor skills for the purpose of participating in a competition or contest in a regulated and structured context (e.g., leagues).

This discussion paper has two objectives:

- 1) The first objective is to describe current Sport Canada programs and initiatives in sport participation, mainly the *Sport Participation Development Program (SPDP)* and sport participation initiatives funded under the *Federal-Provincial/Territorial bilateral agreements*. These projects, accounted for a major part of Sport Canada's \$5 Million participation budget in fiscal 2002-2003, and we are committed to supporting them on a multi-year basis.

In section II of this paper we will ask the reader to reflect on *how* to improve or enhance the SPDP and the bilateral initiatives process in future.

- 2) The second objective is to share Sport Canada's current thinking on strategic objectives and priorities that would guide its new activities in sport participation for the period 2004-2008. These new activities would be supported by the additional sum of \$5 M starting in fiscal year 2004-2005. Strategic considerations include such things as target groups, priority settings for sport participation, advancing the importance of sport participation and expanding the knowledge base on sport participation.

In section III the reader will be invited to comment on these proposed strategic objective and priorities. *What* other priorities, if any, could or should be considered, keeping in mind available resources? *How* to implement identified priorities?

Feedback on this discussion paper will help Sport Canada decide on how to best invest its resources in sport participation for the 2004-2008 period.

II- 2003-2004 SPORT CANADA INITIATIVES IN SPORT PARTICIPATION

2003-2004 was a transition year in Sport's Canada expanded mandate in sport participation. In this fiscal year, Sport Canada made a multi-year commitment towards the following initiatives:

i) Sport Participation Development Program (SPDP)

Eligibility

The SPDP is open to NSOs that have met the full requirements of Sport Canada's Sport Funding Accountability Framework (SFAF). Sport Canada is currently considering expanding eligibility for the SPDP in 2004-05 to Multi Sport/multi Service Organizations (MSOs).

Objective

The SPDP's objective is to support National Sport Organizations (NSOs) in their efforts to increase ongoing participation, recruit new participants and reduce dropout rates, preferably in collaboration with partners, such as, community clubs, municipalities, educational institutions, provincial and multi-sport organizations and corporate sponsors.

Funding

SPDP projects are supported on a cost-shared basis by NSOs and Sport Canada. It is recognized that new participation initiatives may need several years to reach maximum effectiveness and support is awarded on a multi-year basis.

Evaluation criteria

Preference is given to projects that target one or several of the following groups: children and youth, including those from under-represented groups, such as, girls and young women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with a disability, visible minorities, youth at risk, and the economically disadvantaged.

Projects must be, or designed to become, national in scope, must collaboratively involve the NSO's provincial/territorial counterparts, show potential to measurably increase participation, respect the sport's Participant Development Model, and employ an effective monitoring and evaluation process.

The SPDP started as a pilot project in 2002-2003 when fifteen projects were supported. Overall, SPDP projects were active in most regions across Canada, including the Territories and the Atlantic region. In 2002-2003 reported participation rates indicated that approximately 250,000 children benefited from SPDP projects. As well, there was also an increase in the number of qualified teachers and instructors. Where a follow-up was completed with participants, the majority reported a positive experience with the program and that it was their first experience with that given sport.

In 2003-2004, the SPDP continued supporting the previous year's projects, and another 15 NSOs' projects were added to the program. The complete SPDP Contribution Guidelines and a

brief description of all 30 SPDP projects currently funded is available on Sport Canada's web site at: www.pch.gc.ca/progs/sc/psc-spc/psdps-spdp_e.cfm

QUESTIONS

- 1. In addition to NSOs and, possibly MSOs, should the SPDP be opened up to new NGOs (ex: Girl Scouts) that may be interested in increasing participation in sport?**
- 2. Is the SPDP, with its current criteria and cost-share requirement, an appropriate vehicle to attract potential new partners in increasing participation in sport?**

ii) Federal-Provincial/Territorial Bilateral Agreements

Under this initiative, Sport Canada contributes to projects on a “matching” basis with P/T Governments. F-P/T bilateral agreements were initiated in 2002-2003, as pilot projects, in accordance with the *F-P/T Priorities for Collaborative Action 2002-2005*, which recommended that governments “negotiate bilateral government agreements to advance the Canadian Sport Policy”. These agreements are also consistent with the new *Physical Activity and Sport Act* provisions for federal contributions.

F-P/T bilateral agreements were first signed in 2002-03 with the governments of Nova Scotia, NWT and Nunavut. In 2003-04 the program was formally expanded and agreements have been signed or are being developed with all P/T governments. Although F-P/T bilateral agreements are not restricted to sport participation projects, the vast majority of projects submitted by P/Ts fall in that category.

To be considered for funding, P/T proposals must meet a number of pre-requisites:

- *Sport Focus*
The objectives of the proposal must be consistent with Canadian Heritage's mandate for sport. Initiatives related to physical activity require the participation of, and contribution from, Health Canada.
- *Action Orientated*
The proposal must be program-oriented and not research.
- *Shared Government Contributions*
The contribution of the federal government to the project must be at least matched by the contribution of the provincial/territorial government.
- *Sustainability*
There must be a commitment of future funding partners, at the initiation of the project, to ensure the sustainability of the project at the completion of federal funding.

QUESTION

- 1. Are there other pre-requisites that P/T bilateral proposals should meet to be considered for funding by Sport Canada?**

Additional criteria used to evaluate the various proposals include:

- *Consistency and marginal impact of funding*
The proposal's contribution to furthering the goals of the *Canadian Sport Policy* and the specific actions in the *F-P/T Priorities for Collaborative Action 2002-2005*.
- *Viability*
The feasibility of the proposal, as revealed by a business plan, and the plans for monitoring and evaluation.
- *Transferability*
The value and applicability of the proposal as a best practice for other P/T governments to emulate in the context of the *Canadian Sport Policy*.

QUESTION

1. Can you think of other criteria that should or could be used to further evaluate the relative merits of P/T bilateral proposals?

Appendix A provides a list of sport participation projects currently supported by F-P/T bilateral agreements.

iii) Other 2003-04 initiatives

- In addition to the SPDP and bilateral initiatives, Sport Canada has been exploring a potential partnerships with NGOs and a private sector sponsor to support sport participation for poor children and youth.
- Sport Canada will be setting aside annually a small percentage of its participation funds to support information on sport participation levels.

III – 2004-2008 PROPOSED STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND PRIORITIES

i) Context

In May 2002, following a year of consultation with the Canadian sport community, the federal, provincial and territorial governments endorsed the *Canadian Sport Policy* (CSP). This unique document in the history of Canadian sport identified sport participation as one of four key priority areas for governmental action, along with excellence, capacity and interaction.

At the same time that the CSP was being completed, a new *Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport* was being developed to replace the 1961 *Fitness and Amateur Sport Act*. The *Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport* includes “increased participation in the practice of sport” as one of the sport policy objectives for the Government of Canada.

Together, the CSP and the Physical Activity and Sport Act reshaped the federal government's objectives in sport, notably by adding the priority area of participation. The collaborative work of

the sport community with the federal, provincial, and territorial governments on the CSP produced a common goal for sport participation in Canada:

It is a Goal of the Canadian Sport Policy that by 2012...

A significantly higher proportion of Canadians from all segments of society are involved in quality sports activities at all levels and in all forms of participation.

The above-mentioned statement provides all governments with an overarching goal that will be further defined by setting targets and indicators, and by establishing collaborative actions to increase participation in sport. This work is being accomplished according to the *F-P/T Priorities for Collaborative Action –2003-2005*, which is the CSP's rolling action plan.

Furthermore, each government was expected to develop objectives, priorities and initiatives that would define its individual role and contribution in achieving the CSP goals. Therefore, based on the consultations that led to the CSP and the Physical Activity and Sport Act, Sport Canada has begun to define a set of proposed strategic objective and priorities in sport participation, which we submit for your comments.

ii) Proposed Strategic Objective

The CSP Goal of Enhanced Participation encompasses all sport participants, from children to seniors, from recreational sport participants to athletes at all levels. To achieve this goal will certainly require the combined efforts of many partners, some of which may focus on specific target populations.

In setting its strategic objective for 2004-2008, Sport Canada considered two basic options:

- to spread its efforts and resources to increase participation among all segments of the Canadian population;
- Or
- to focus on a particular segment of the population, with the possibility of considering other population targets post 2008.

The latter more focused option was considered a better way to achieve effective results at a national level from available resources. Consequently, the following 2004-2008 Strategic Objective was adopted:

Sport Canada
Proposed 2004-2008 Strategic Objective for Participation

“To increase the number of children and youth participating in sport”

This is a general statement of intent that will be further refined with target objectives and indicators to be defined by the F-P/T Work Group #1 (Note: Under the terms of the *F-P/T Priorities for Collaborative Action –2003-2005*, Work Group #1 is to identify barriers that inhibit participation in sport and establish targets, indicators and F-P/T collaborative actions to address those barriers for all target populations, including children and youth).

It should also be noted that to date, no attempt has been made to identify an age range for the term “children and youth”. However, all SPDP projects have been targeted at children and youth of primary and high school age, with the exception of one project, which targeted university students.

iii) Rationale

Sport Canada’s proposed 2004-2008 strategic objective for participation reflects a general concern among governments and within the sport community over the growing inactivity among children and youth. Scientific evidence shows that a large proportion of Canadian children and youth are not meeting the minimum recommendations for physical activity, and that the prevalence of obesity has increased five-fold among Canadian children over the previous two decades while the number of overweight children has more than doubled in the same period of time. Unless this trend is reversed, it could produce in the next 10 to 15 years from now a generation of inactive adults, with many afflicted by ailments caused by inactivity. Inasmuch as sport offers important avenues to physical activity to children and youth, it must and can be an important part of the fight against physical inactivity.

At the 2000-2001 Regional Sport Consultations and at the ensuing National Summit on Sport in April 2001, the reduction or elimination of physical education and sport from the education system was identified as a key concern.

At the same time that this issue was being identified, health reports pointed to an increase in inactivity-related ailments, such as Type II diabetes and cardiovascular disease, previously rarely seen among children and youth. The medical profession expressed concern over this situation which some qualified as of “epidemic proportion”.

In September 2002, F-P/T Ministers of health agreed to develop a pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy (HLS) that would emphasize, in its first phase, nutrition, physical activity, and their

relation to healthy weights. The HLS has identified children and youth and Aboriginal Peoples as priority targets.

In 2003, F-P/T Ministers responsible for sport, fitness and recreation and the federal Minister of Health set as a target to increase physical activity by 10 percentage points in each province and territory by 2010. Furthermore, Ministers agreed to focus efforts on increasing activity among children and youth, and other less active groups (e.g. Aboriginal Peoples, women and girls, low income individuals, persons with a disability and older Canadians).

Sport participation, whether organized or spontaneously practiced, is often the only physical activity of choice for many children and youth. Sport Canada believes that, as a first order of priority, focusing our collective efforts on sport participation for children and youth, particularly in the school setting, would be the most effective way to improve levels of sport participation across the country. We also believe that increases in physical activity by school age children and youth will have, within 10 to 15 years, a beneficial impact on levels of participation among adults as well, for the following reasons:

Developing positive attitudes and habits towards sport participation

Inactive children are more likely to remain inactive in their adult years. It is easier to develop positive attitudes and habits towards sport participation at a younger age, than it is later in life. Research also suggests that participating in organized sport in childhood, for example through sport club participation, tends to be more predictive of adulthood physical activity than other factors, such as estimates of total physical activity in youth (*Scientific Report on Physical Activity Levels, Sport Participation and Physical Fitness of Canadian Children and Youth, 2001*). Given that “lack of interest” has been identified among adults as a key barrier to sport participation, shaping an interest in sport participation early in life makes great sense.

Long-term health benefits

In general, physically active children are healthier than non-active ones. Research shows that the risk of developing certain ailments later in life, such as, diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis, can be reduced through regular physical activity in childhood and adolescence. Healthier children will become healthier adults.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Do you agree with the proposed 2004-2008 strategic objective, given the resources available at this time, or should other population segments be considered?**
- 2. What age bracket should “children and youth” refer to?**
- 3. Describe your vision of what should be achieved by 2008.**

iv) Proposed Strategic Priorities

To achieve its proposed strategic objective in the area of sport participation, Sport Canada has defined a set of potential strategic priorities. The proposed priorities are closely aligned with the 2003-04 federal budget directives, as well as with other priorities reflected by F-P/T Ministers' decisions on physical activity and healthy living. In selecting these priorities, Sport Canada drew upon key documents, such as the *Canadian Sport Policy* and the *F-P/T Action Plan for Collaborative Action*, the new *Physical Activity and Sport Act*, and other reference documents, including:

- *2001-2002 Annual Report of the Advisory Committee to the Secretary of State (Amateur Sport)*, and the report of its Consultative Working Group on Participation (*Reducing Inactivity in Canada – Recommendations for the Development of Participation in Sport and Physical Activity*)
- *1998 Report of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee on the Study of Sport in Canada by the Standing Committee of Canadian Heritage (a.k.a. the "Mills' Subcommittee Report")*
- *Reports from the Regional Consultations* that led to the *Canadian Sport Policy*

Sport Canada
2004-2008 Proposed Strategic Priorities for sport participation

- 1. Increase the practice of sport in schools**
- 2. Enhance community-based sport programs**
- 3. Strengthen sport participation opportunities for targeted groups**
- 4. Advance the importance of sport participation**
- 5. Expand the body of knowledge about sport participation**

These priorities are further described below, along with questions relating to each.

QUESTIONS

- 1. Do you agree with the proposed list of strategic priorities? Are there too many or not enough? How would you rank these priorities in terms of their relative importance? What priorities, if any, would you drop? What others, if any, would you add?**
- 2. What policies, programs and partnerships do you think would lead to the accomplishment of those priorities?**

1. Increase the practice of sport in schools

In recognition that education is an exclusive jurisdiction of provincial and territorial governments, Sport Canada would collaborate on a bilateral basis with P/T governments to enhance the delivery of sport activities in the school environment. It should be noted that successful examples of F-P/T collaboration in education exist in other domains than sport, notably in the federal Official Languages program. Sport Canada would also work with partners in the sport and physical activity communities to build bridges between the sport, education and health systems.

QUESTIONS: The federal government has no jurisdiction in education. What mechanism or partnership would you recommend for Sport Canada to have an influence on the inclusion of sport in schools? Should we prioritize sport participation in elementary or secondary schools, or both equally?

2. Enhance community based sport programs

Most sport participation in Canada takes place at the community level, in municipal or private clubs, in community leagues and in sport and recreation facilities. Through the SPDP, in partnerships with NSOs, Sport Canada has begun to support projects taking place at the community level. However, Sport Canada could also work with other current or new partners in that area, in order to achieve certain goals, such as:

- enlarging choices of sport programming being offered by local sport organizations
- supporting sport programs in rural communities
- making family sport activities more accessible
- adapting sport programs to focus more on skill acquisition rather than on competition
- enhancing the quality of instruction through better coaches/instructors and Sport Participants Development Models, and...
- promoting an ethically sound and safe sport environment.

QUESTIONS: of the above-mentioned goals for enhancing community based sport, which ones are most important to strive for in 2004-2008? Are there other goals to consider? What process would you suggest to identify, share and promote promising practices and effective initiatives that enhance community-based sport?

3. Strengthen sport participation opportunities for targeted groups

To increase the number of children and youth participating in sport, Sport Canada would pay particular attention to projects aimed at increasing sport participation amongst children and youth from under-represented groups, such as girls and young women, Aboriginal Peoples, persons with a disability, youth at risk, visible minorities and the economically disadvantaged.

QUESTION: we have traditionally worked with sport/physical activity organizations to increase sport participation among certain under-represented target groups (ex: CAAWS, Aboriginal Sport Circle, the Canadian Paralympic Committee). Should we consider working with non-sport organizations that advocate on behalf of those populations, and if so how would we engage them/interest them in sport participation?

4. *Advance the importance of sport participation*

Sport Canada is currently collaborating with Health Canada to advance sport participation through the Healthy Living Strategy (see Website at:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/lifestyles/healthyliving/index.html>).

Sport Canada would also seek other partners within and outside governments to promote the personal and social benefits associated with sport participation, with a particular emphasis put on supporting effective promotional and social marketing programs that could be implemented in a school setting.

QUESTION: Would the promotion of sport best be undertaken through the Healthy Living Strategy and its plans for social marketing, or through other means?

5. *Expand the body of knowledge on sport participation*

As there remains a lack of timely socio-economic data on sport participation in Canada, Sport Canada will work with partners to measure the levels, benefits and impacts of sport participation on a regular basis. Sport Canada will also support research that contributes to an understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of - and barriers/solutions to - sport participation. Efforts would be made to ensure proper dissemination of research findings and best practices to the sport community.

QUESTIONS: what sport participation data are the most important to collect for the Canadian Sport System? What should be our most important area of research and data gathering, and why? (Ex: census data, socio-economic data, sport organizations' memberships, other?)

IV – CONCLUSION

Achieving our strategic objective and priorities by 2008 and the goal of Enhanced Participation of the Canadian Sport Policy by 2012 will be truly a challenging task, one that will require the collaboration of all stakeholders concerned. We believe that Sport Canada can play a leading role by focusing its resources, by strengthening and forging partnerships that deliver effective programs, and by gathering and disseminating information and knowledge. We hope that this document will generate discussion among all concerned stakeholders, and will provide us with important feedback on how to most effectively invest in sport participation over the next four years.

Please send your feedback by February 6, 2004 to:

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Summary of Federal-Provincial/Territorial Bilateral Agreements Funded to Date

(Note: While bilateral agreements are being developed with all provinces and territories, only the following have been finalized. These agreements are three years in length. “Total Project Cost” and the “Federal contribution” represent amounts for the full three years of the agreements).

Province/Territory	Total Project Cost	Federal contribution	Brief Project Description
Alberta	\$1,200,000	\$600,000	Assist under-represented groups, including girls and women, Aboriginal people, economically disadvantaged persons, and persons with disabilities, to experience the benefits of participating in sport. Programs supported include Go Girl: Introduction to Sport Programs; FunTeam Alberta; Indigenous Sport Council: Run, Jump, Throw and Sport Camps; Path to 2010: Wheelchair Curling and Sledge Hockey; and Leadership Development Programs.
British Columbia	\$1,200,000	\$600,000	Increase the number of Aboriginal athletes performing at the elite level and to encourage Aboriginal youth in general to be more physically active. The program will build on existing club infrastructure, and will strengthen athletic skills through regional and provincial training camps, effective coaching and sport medicine services. The program's long-term goal is to develop a stronger provincial team representing British Columbia at the North American Indigenous Games, the Canada Games, and beyond.
Manitoba	\$1,200,000	\$600,000	Improve access to sport and recreation for the communities and people who do not now have the access they should. Aboriginal and new immigrant populations, as well as northern, remote, and inner urban communities, will benefit from the initiative. The aim is to ensure a sustained growth in sport participation and recreation by coordinating the energy and resources of the Manitoba's sport, fitness, and recreation sectors, governments, community organizations, and the private sector. Targeted projects will be identified over the next several months and will include traditional and non-traditional sport and recreation areas.

New Brunswick	\$720,000	\$360,000	The Active Community School Sport project is based on a school-community approach to sport development. It expands on the New Brunswick School Communities in ACTION program, which assists schools in maintaining a variety of physical activity opportunities through community partnerships. Through these initiatives, students increase their awareness of the benefits of sport and regular physical activity, and increased participation in sport programs builds active and healthy communities. The Active Community School Sport project will also enhance skill development for participants through specialized and certified instructors.
Nova Scotia	\$1,000,000	\$450,000	The Sport Futures Leadership program will work with sport organizations around Nova Scotia to boost sport participation and improve the long-term health of the general population. Sport experts will work with select provincial sport organizations to ensure that community sport programs are technically, ethically, and developmentally sound, thus able to build and maintain participation.
Nunavut	\$840,000	\$420,000	Support for the Nunavut Youth Olympic Academy, Aim High, Coaching Certification, Community Sport Development, and Aboriginal Coaching Resource Development. These programs will strengthen the northern sport system by promoting sport participation, supporting athletic excellence, and stimulating pride. The programs also address the unique challenges faced by northern communities in the area of sport development.
North West Territories	\$1,020,000	\$510,000	Involve a higher number of people living in the Territories in quality sport activities at all levels and in all forms of participation. Foster an environment where more athletes, coaches, and officials from the Territories can achieve their desired level of excellence. Cooperation and collaboration in sport management will be strengthened amongst governments, sport organizations, community members, and interested stakeholders.

Prince Edward Island	\$1,200,000	\$600,000	Support for the Multi-Sport Executive Director Program, the Volunteer Development Program, the Regional Sport Council Pilot Program, Girls and Women in Sport Initiative, Active Healthy School Community Initiative, Aboriginal Sport Initiative, Values-Based Awareness Program, and Initiatives for Disadvantaged Populations. The funding aims to eliminate inequities in the sport system, increase the participation of girls and women in sport, and increase participation in sport in schools and community programs within disadvantaged populations. The funding will also help increase the number of Aboriginal athletes, coaches, and officials in sport by building bridges between Aboriginal communities and existing sport organizations.
Saskatchewan	\$1,200,000	\$600,000	Targets kindergarten, elementary and high school students, along with Aboriginal sport leaders, through four complementary components. The first component, the Canada Games Day program, encourages elementary schoolchildren to participate in and learn skills associated with the sports of the Canada Summer Games. The second component, Saskatchewan Sport Match, gives students from Grades 7 to 12 opportunities to identify new sports that suit their individual strengths. The third component, Aboriginal Excellence, is designed to raise the performance levels of Aboriginal athletes, coaches, officials, and volunteers. The fourth component, Aboriginal Games Management Mentoring will address Aboriginal issues related to the 2005 Games, and enhance Aboriginal involvement in all levels of planning and hosting the Games.
Yukon	\$480,000	\$240,000	Make sport more accessible, in particular Aboriginal youth, women, and girls. Establish training and skill development programs that encourage and support sport participation, with particular attention to Aboriginal youth, women, and girls. Through the Best Ever program, athletes and coaches will benefit from more access to the best training and competitive opportunities available as they prepare for the 2007 Canada Winter Games. Strengthen the volunteer base and support training for recreation leaders.