

SUMMARY REPORT

Canadian Sport Policy Renewal

Round Table on Sport and Aboriginal Peoples

Sport Canada

Montreal, Quebec – July 15 2011

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
What We Have Heard So Far	3
General Questions	3
e-Survey Questions	6
Conclusion	11
Round Table Participants	12

The views expressed herein are those raised by the participants at the meeting and do not necessarily reflect those of Sport Canada or the Government of Canada.

Introduction

Certain segments of the population face challenges related to their ability to participate in sport and, once involved, to their ability to successfully pursue the opportunities that exist within sport. In the process to renew the Canadian Sport Policy (CSP), Sport Canada hosted round tables to capture the policy issues specific to sport for women and girls, persons with a disability, Aboriginal Peoples, and Canada's increasing diverse ethnocultural communities.

Sport Canada worked with leaders within each population to identify eight to 10 representatives for each round table with the requisite knowledge and experience to contribute to the discussion. It was explained to participants that, although they may have participated in other CSP consultations or completed the online survey, the purpose of the round table was to focus on the issues specific to their population that they believed needed to be considered in the development of the next iteration of the CSP. This report outlines the results of the round table on sport for Aboriginal Peoples hosted in Montreal on July 15, 2011. The participants are listed at the end of this report.

What We Have Heard So Far

Participants expressed concern about the initial results from the CSP consultations, particularly the results for the e-Survey question on under-represented groups that suggest that equity policies are no longer an area requiring attention. The concern expressed was that these results would influence the direction of the new policy. It was suggested that an evidence-based approach, that would show that certain groups continue to face barriers to participation, should be used as a more reliable basis to determine policy direction. One participant noted that the Assembly of First Nations IndigenACTION consultations may provide additional insight which may be useful for the CSP renewal process. The perception from the input to the CSP renewal to date suggests that the needs of Aboriginal sport have been sufficiently addressed. While acknowledging that some headway has been made, the Aboriginal sport community is not satisfied with the progress. For example, it was pointed out that once the FPTSC Aboriginal work group completed its report, the work group participants were left with the impression that the work was done and Aboriginal sport disappeared from the FPTSC agenda. Participants also expressed concern that an "open-door policy", where generic sport programming is considered accessible to all and barrier-free, may be resurfacing.

General Questions

Participants were provided with the following general questions designed to stimulate feedback on the renewal of the CSP:

1. Looking back on the 2002 CSP, were issues concerning Aboriginal Peoples adequately reflected? If not, how could the 2012 policy be enhanced to better reflect those issues?
2. What are the key policy issues that affect Aboriginal people in sport and that the CSP needs to address? What should be included in the new policy that would help the sport objectives of the Aboriginal community to be achieved?
3. What would be the main element(s) of the CSP that would have the most impact on the participation of Aboriginal Peoples in sport?
4. What is needed in the CSP to maximize the impact of the Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' participation in sport?
5. How can the concept of inclusiveness be more strongly articulated in the CSP and build on or link to existing documents such as the Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport?

Rather than answering the questions individually, the group entered into a discussion that addressed the questions, for the most part, in their entirety.

Participants believe that the needs and issues of Aboriginal Peoples were not adequately reflected in the 2002 CSP. Although it was recognized that the 2002 CSP is a high level policy, despite a mention of Aboriginal Peoples, none of the objectives that F-P/T governments committed to pursue in the policy addressed the challenges of Aboriginal Peoples. It was noted that it is as important to address the implementation plan as it is the development of the policy. It would also be important to build in accountability measures for the policy's implementation. The feeling among participants was that the previous policy had no "teeth". The CSP should identify gaps and needs for Aboriginal sport and direct action to address them. The policy should reinforce that government support for Aboriginal sport should be based on community-identified needs, not government priorities which may have a different focus. It was noted that it is difficult to relate to the national policy at the local level.

The new CSP should acknowledge the unique identity of Aboriginal Peoples, what Aboriginal Peoples can contribute to Canadian sport using an "asset-based" approach, and make a clear commitment to action. The CSP can support sport for Aboriginal Peoples by reflecting Aboriginal culture and realities, cross-cultural issues between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Peoples, and an understanding of the motivation behind the interest of Aboriginal Peoples in sport. If the CSP is a factor in driving F-P/T action, then the CSP needs to reflect support for Aboriginal sport. If the new policy doesn't reflect the needs and issues of Aboriginal sport, then it will not be relevant to the Aboriginal population. It would be helpful to explain the role of the policy and its intended impact on organizations. It could be made clear that achieving the policy's

objectives, particularly for Aboriginal sport, requires buy-in and accountability at the lower levels of the sport system, not only at the higher levels. It was acknowledged that grassroots level sport is beneficial to individuals and communities.

There is a need to address the lack of sport and recreation facilities in urban areas for Aboriginal Peoples. Concrete recommendations for infrastructure are needed and could be informed by models from other communities, e.g., the network of Jewish Community Centers. Insufficient qualified human resources are another issue within Aboriginal sport. It was noted that, in addressing the issues in sport for Aboriginal Peoples, it would be important to recognize that the barriers extend beyond a lack of resources and gaps and weaknesses in the sport system. Aboriginal Peoples are also affected by issues of identity and historical trauma.

One focus of the CSP should be sport as prevention. Culture and sport are powerful tools for growth and development. Sport can be a life saver for Aboriginal Peoples, not just a contributor to health. For this reason, it would be particularly important for the new CSP to resonate with a growing Aboriginal youth population who often feel alienated from society.

The focus of Aboriginal sport is largely on participation and multisport games. The nature of Aboriginal games generates confusion amongst mainstream sport organizations on the role of these games and whether or not they are promoting participation or excellence.

It was recommended that the policy make use of the double-helix model that portrays the mainstream sport system and the Aboriginal sport system as two similar, parallel systems that are intertwined with linkages and cross-over points along the entire continuum. This is a way to portray the reality of Aboriginal sport and may help to allay any fears within mainstream sport.

Participants noted a lack of provincial policies to align with the CSP. It was suggested that some P/T governments did not pursue the objectives of the CSP. For example, some jurisdictions have focused their efforts on physical activity. Since P/Ts are not required to adopt the federal *Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport*, there is a need for Aboriginal sport policies at the P/T level; otherwise, there are no means for the Aboriginal sport community to leverage P/T government action. These policies should be developed with Aboriginal Peoples and reflect their needs with both parties being held accountable for implementation. It was pointed out that there are different degrees of implementation among the provinces and territories. For example, Yukon has seen positive results from the dedication of a full-time government employee to Aboriginal sport, full funding for the Territorial Aboriginal sport organization, and through advocacy by senior sport officials to their Minister for support.

P/T Aboriginal Sport Bodies (PTASBs) are thought to be critical to the coordination and delivery of programs and services and this perspective needs to be reflected in CSP. The

challenge has been that PTASBs are often expected to provide leadership but are not provided with sufficient core funding to exercise that leadership. It was recognized that Aboriginal sport organizations experience challenges associated with the capacity within the Aboriginal sport community. It is important for F-P/T governments to recognize these challenges and continue to find ways to support Aboriginal sport regardless of the current health of Aboriginal sport bodies. Challenges within Aboriginal sport organizations should not become a bottle-neck for ongoing public support of Aboriginal sport development.

The policy should continue to reinforce partnerships. For example, Friendship Centres are an untapped resource that can reach urban Aboriginal youth and that can network and work in partnership with local sport organizations. It would also be beneficial to capitalize on partnerships with all the national Aboriginal political organizations. Buy-in from the political Aboriginal organizations can maximize the impact of the policy and its objectives. The CSP is a tool that can be used to encourage organizations and government to work together. Responsibility for health and physical activity are spread over many jurisdictions and collaboration is needed to achieve shared objectives. It was recommended that the CSP be adopted as a federal policy that would guide other departments beyond Canadian Heritage. For example, the CSP could influence or be reflected in other federal initiatives such as the Urban Aboriginal Strategy led by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

Baseline data on participation levels of Aboriginal Peoples is lacking so there is a need to look at alternate means to collect data, e.g., through longitudinal studies and through governments requiring funded sport organizations to collect membership data through a process of self-identification. Sufficient resources should be dedicated for research which is community-based to ensure the validity of the data being collected. Engaging Aboriginal People in the design and delivery of research and data collection will improve the quality of results and help allay any suspicions within the community.

e-Survey Questions

The remainder of the round table was spent answering certain questions from the e-Survey that were identified as being particularly worthy of a response from the perspective of Aboriginal Peoples and that were subsequently modified for that purpose.

1. What are the reasons for your interest in promoting the participation of Aboriginal Peoples in sport?
 - Sport is a positive vehicle for human social development
 - Offering opportunities for our people (young and old) to have fun
 - Benefits community and cultural pride
 - Benefits the individual which in turn benefits the community
 - Improve the Canadian sport system by including Aboriginal Peoples

- AFN's political priority of Aboriginal sport development is in recognition of its positive influences
- Value of sport to building personal life skills and other benefits
- Contributes to allowing more Aboriginal people to achieve their potential
- Means to strengthen personal self identity and health
- Contribute to the feeling of being valued within Canadian society as a First Nations person
- Sport can provide support to people who have not had access to social justice

What are the most important challenges affecting efforts to promote and increase Aboriginal Peoples' participation in sport?

- Lack of collaboration amongst sport bodies, organisation, governments, and leaders to create and support a common vision for Aboriginal sport
- Exercise and empower Aboriginal persons to be independent, and not rely on others to pay for services
- Funding for infrastructure and building capacity
- System discrimination, lack of political will and a general misunderstanding of Aboriginal Peoples amongst the public
- Lack of funding and sustained funding which affects capacity, material resources, infrastructure, etc.
- Capacity issues – lack of trained practitioners, especially at community level, and well trained and qualified coaches
- Lack of facilities / infrastructure
- NSOs and MSOs lack of willingness to change their systems to be inclusive

2. How do you define a quality sport experience?

- involvement is valued
- fair, equitable, safe environment
- free of racism and discrimination
- opportunity to travel
- fun
- everybody is a winner
- achieve personal potential
- fair, well-trained, and prepared coach
- positive parental involvement
- child care support
- organizations have enough resources in place to welcome/support all participants
- holistic/culturally relevant
- culture is an integral (i.e., relevant) element of the sport experience – element of pride, not in a token way

4. Why should efforts be made to increase the participation of specific population groups sport?

- Social responsibility
- To ensure equity and access
- There is a lower probability of action being taken to assist under-represented groups because “open door policies” do not take into account the needs of all populations and only serve to marginalize those populations from sport
- Asset Perspective → these specific populations have a lot of contribute so the sport system will be better for it
- Opportunity to address social and health issues
- Because they are part of Canadian society
- We value them
- Focused attention on under represented groups who traditionally don't have access to sport is important because of the positive potential that sport offers for social development
- Have a richer sport system (culturally and socially)
- Untapped potential exists among populations who historically have not had the same access
- Because of the positive potential to address social and health issues
- Aboriginal Peoples in mainstream sport are often overlooked or must endure stereotypes, e.g., in hockey that the Aboriginal kid is a fighter and not a skilled player
- It's about opportunities. Aboriginal athletes don't get the same opportunities due to geography and the associated travel. Top level athletes often have to move away from home so they can participate
- Cultural aspects are strong. Athletes who go to the city get confused. It's very challenging for adolescents. No choice for drafts. They have hard time and face adversity
- How :
 - Identify Aboriginal Peoples as a target group in Canadian Sport Policy
 - Set clear objectives across FPT governments on how to increase participation through needs identified by Aboriginal people
 - Resulting in targeted and long term funding

8. Following is a list of program and service areas that have been identified to assess Canada's sport development delivery system.

1. Identify the top 5 priorities for each
2. Identify the top 3 areas (in order of priority) in which programming is currently sufficient and/or appropriate?
3. Identify the top 3 areas (in order of priority) in which programming is currently insufficient and/or inappropriate?

Sport Development Delivery System			
Areas	Top 5	Top 3 sufficient*	Top 3 insufficient
Coaches/instructors	2	2	
Officials		3	
Facilities/Equipment	4		2
School sport system	5		3
Parasport development.			
Training/Employment			
International events		1	
Equity policies	1		1
Organizational capacity	3		3
Research			

*four of nine participants indicated that none of the areas had sufficient programming

10. Please list the most important resources that sport organizations need to fully achieve their potential in delivering sport programs and services for Aboriginal Peoples.

- Cash → to travel, train, and wages (hire people to do sport)
- People → coaches, administrations, staff, etc.
- PSOs and coaching
- PTASBs, collaborative partnerships across fields, e.g., health, education, justice
- Something that allows them to encourage dialogue between people in sport, e.g., the aboriginal coaching manual is an example that offers an introduction/framework for that dialogue. These discussions would go along way in changing/ facilitating understanding for a more inclusive/positive sport space. It could be part of a community development manual for example.
- Human resources - Staff and volunteers to deliver programs
- Infrastructure – facilities to support programs for Aboriginal people
- Ability to create opportunities for Aboriginal athletes and coaches to connect with and participate on mainstream teams
- Important to create specific material for Aboriginal people – modify mainstream material (e.g., the Aboriginal Coaching Manual)
- Cultural sensitivity – need to create opportunity for staff and volunteers to gain a greater understanding of Aboriginal Peoples and their issues/challenges
- Funding to deliver programs
- Need to bring Aboriginal Peoples to the table to partner in the development of sport programs to address cultural issues, help promote the opportunities, and to understand their needs

11. Do Aboriginal sport organization have the human resource capacity (with regard to governance, professional development, recruitment of staff, retention, etc.) to meet

- NO!
- Need PTASBs with baseline funding and healthy staffing of qualified people. This is critical because other opportunities, e.g., other funding partnerships, are tied to core funding
- Funding to support volunteers - recruitment, screening, training, out-of-pocket expenses, combating burnout
- Training for non-Aboriginal staff/volunteers who work with Aboriginal sport
- Support for volunteers, including funds to support Board of Directors training, travel, meetings, etc.
- Sustained funding (core capacity) to maintain operations
- Lack of training – don't have capacity to deliver programs
- Good/experienced people are drawn into other areas
- Governance capacity issues – move towards recruiting Board of Directors based on required competencies

14. Do you think sport should be used intentionally for community-building process?

- Yes – in reality it already is
- Prevention is inline with holistic views
- Health is imbedded in sport
- Aboriginal Coaching Manual is good example as it talks about nutrition, racism, culture, protocol, etc. and not just coaching
- Need to teach and understand Indigenous performance psychology
- Sport is a community building exercise
- Infrastructure/employment opportunities created
- Coaching training and development
- Staffing → training, employment opportunities
- Volunteerism → honour them at end of season with community celebrations
- Competition and partnerships with neighbouring communities to expand access to programs and facilities
- Maximize use of infrastructure through a multitude of events
- Sport enhances mental, emotional, physical
- Role models, coaches, staffing, building capacity
- Athlete development - friendships enhanced and fostered through sharing
- yes as an objective but not necessarily a separate pillar
- how – need to work with other departments
- be careful not to be patronizing i.e., not deficit-focused (trying to make you better)
- objective is healthy vibrant communities; sport is one vehicle

15. Canadians are involved in a wide range of international activities related to sport. In which areas should Canada continue to focus:

- Participating in international competitions and events
 - Contributing to the governance of international sport bodies
 - Hosting international sporting events
 - Fighting doping in sport
 - Promoting quality sport for disadvantaged or underrepresented groups
 - Advancing sport for social development abroad
 - Other?
-
- Before we embark on international activities we should first get our own backyard in order
 - exchanges on Aboriginal sport – learning Aboriginal international best practices
 - need for international event for elite Aboriginal athletes (e.g., World Indigenous Games); this is a long-term objective, not ready yet
 - draw on Canadian hosting expertise to increase capacity of NAIG

Conclusion

The CSP needs to specifically address the involvement of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples in sport. The policy should explain the current and historical circumstances affecting Aboriginal Peoples to improve understanding and break down fear and misunderstanding. The positive benefits of greater Aboriginal involvement in sport to the sport system and to Aboriginal Peoples and their communities should be highlighted. Objectives need to be included that support Aboriginal participation in sport and the human, organizational and facility infrastructure required. Recognition and respect for the unique identity and culture of Aboriginal Peoples needs to be reinforced. For the policy to be effective in advancing sport for Aboriginal Peoples, there needs to be greater collaboration both vertically and horizontally within the sport system and with other sectors such as health and Aboriginal Affairs. Commitments to Aboriginal sport in the CSP would be strengthened by P/T Aboriginal sport policies that were aligned with the federal *Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport*. Strategies for improving opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples to participate and excel in sport must be developed in partnership with Aboriginal Peoples so as to reflect their identified needs.

Round Table Participants

Sport Canada would like to thank the following people who took time from their busy schedules to bring their significant passion, experience and knowledge to this round table:

- Rick Brant, British Columbia Aboriginal Sport Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council
- Janice Forsyth, International Centre for Olympic Studies, University of Western Ontario
- Waneek Horn Miller, Assembly of First Nations IndigenACTION, former Olympic athlete
- Charly Kelly, First Nation/Community Recreation Consultant, Department of Community Services, Government of Yukon
- Lynn Lavallee, Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario
- Tex Marshall, Mi'kmaw Sport Council of Nova Scotia
- Alex Nelson, Aboriginal Sport Circle Elder, Aboriginal Sports and Recreation Association of BC, North American Indigenous Games Council
- Musqwaunquot Rice, National Association of Friendship Centres
- Mel Whitesell, Manitoba Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Council