

Think Tank Report

ADVANCEMENT OF
WOMEN AND GIRLS IN
SPORT AND RECREATION

September 2018

Think Tank Report

Advancement of Women and Girls in Sport and Recreation

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Think Tank Report

Advancement of Women and Girls in Sport and Recreation

A Call to Action

On June 12th 2018, the Sport and Recreation Branch of the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture hosted a Think Tank on Women and Girls in Sport and Recreation at the Killarney Lodge in Fredericton, NB. The purpose of the Think Tank was to bring together individuals and organizations to identify the way forward to increase women and girls' participation in all facets of sport and recreation in New Brunswick.

The session was designed as a “Call to Action” to all sectors to ensure a brighter future for the next generation of female athletes, coaches, administrators and lifelong participants. The objectives of the Think Tank were:

1. Define the issue
2. Gather input to guide the development of a Vision
3. Share existing New Brunswick success stories
4. Identify challenges and barriers to full participation
5. Generate ideas to develop the key strategic areas for action
6. Discuss roles and responsibilities throughout the system and identify key players to create a NB Women and Girls in sport and recreation network.

The organizing committee was fortunate to have Jennifer Bent Richard, Process Improvement Facilitator for the Government of New Brunswick, as the facilitator for the day. Jennifer led small and large group discussions towards a vision for New Brunswick, goal statements, the determination of key areas for action, and ways to collectively move forward.

In order to generate attention to this important gathering and create social media traffic, #NBWGW and #ActiveGirls were prominently displayed prior to and during the event. Key partners were active in sharing content to highlight the initiative.



Background

Significant improvements have been made for the advancement of women and girls' in sport and recreation; however, studies continue to demonstrate alarming statistics for girl's fitness levels and participation rates.

Federal and Provincial/Territorial (F-P/T) Ministers responsible for Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation (SPAR) identified "increased participating of women and girls (reducing the gender gap) in sport" as one of the priorities for the SPAR table. An F-P/T Work Group was established in Fall of 2016 with the mandate to provide recommendations on initiatives aimed at increasing participation of women and girls in all facets of sport.

In September 2017, a report on Women and Girls in Sport was submitted by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. The report included 16 recommendations which prompted a supportive response from the Government of Canada in January 2018. The 2018 Federal Budget outlined a target to achieve gender equality in sport at every level by 2035, and will invest an initial \$30 million over three years to support data and research and innovative practices to promote women and girls' participation in sport, and provide support to national sports organizations to promote the greater inclusion of women and girls in all facets of sport.

The funding will focus on increasing the representation and participation of women and girls in sport and physical activity through a five-point approach:

- 1. Increasing the representation of women in sport leadership positions;*
- 2. Delivering programming specifically for women and girls;*
- 3. Addressing gender-based violence in sport;*
- 4. Improving the availability of data and evidence-based research to better understand how women and girls experience sport; and*
- 5. Testing new approaches through experimentation and innovation to strengthen gender equality in sport.*

In New Brunswick, the under-representation of women and girls has been recognized, but there has been a lack of targeted efforts to address the issue. Although resources have been available through grants such as the Federal/Provincial Bilateral Agreement (Go NB), there has been no strategy on how to capitalize on this funding to ensure long term growth and success. With the recent federal announcements and renewed focus towards women and girls' participation, the Sport and Recreation Branch is committed to providing leadership and support towards the provision of opportunities for under-represented groups including women and girls. The Sport and Recreation Branch identified the Think Tank as an opportunity to gather representatives from various sectors to define the issues, to discuss the existing and desired future state, and determine the way forward towards the advancement of women and girls in sport and recreation in New Brunswick.

Attendees

The Sport and Recreation community collaborates regularly on various initiatives. For this event, we believed it was important to broaden the list of attendees to include leaders, partners and stakeholders from various sectors across New Brunswick. Although many of the attendees have had the opportunity to meet and share ideas in the sport and recreation network, this event was a unique opportunity for attendees from outside the sport and recreation community to provide their experience and ideas.

The following is a list of sectors and organizations who were in attendance. (A complete list of attendees can be found at Appendix-D).

- Government departments such as Education, Social Development, Tourism, Heritage and Culture, Social Development and the NB Women's Equity Branch.
- Universities and Kinesiology Faculties
- Multicultural Associations
- NB Medical Society
- Municipalities/Leisure Services Corporation
- Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation
- Sport New Brunswick
- YMCA Fredericton
- Canadian Tire Jumpstart
- Kidsport
- Physical Literacy NB
- A select group of Provincial Sport Organizations and club representatives
- Our Provincial partners such as Coach New Brunswick, Recreation NB, Communautés et Loisir N.-B.
- Canadian Sport Centre Atlantic
- NB Interscholastic Athletic Association
- USports & CCAA Athletic Directors
- USports & CCAA Coaches
- Women in Coaching Apprentice Program participants
- Société des Jeux de l'Acadie
- Comité Nationale des Jeux de la Francophonie 2021

The Department of Education was often identified as a partner which could play a key role in enhancing girls' participation. The Department of Health was also mentioned as potential resource. Moving forward, it should be recognized that these stakeholders should be considered in future discussions.

Setting the Stage

Pre-Reading Material:

Attendees were provided with pre-reading materials to prepare for the day which included the following:

- Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) Strategic Plan,
- Federal Government Response to the “WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SPORT” report (2017),
- New Brunswick Data, can be found in Appendix-A.
- On-line Survey, can be found in Appendix-B.

New Brunswick Landscape:

In order to provide our attendees with the current landscape of women and girls’ participation in sport and recreation in New Brunswick a brief presentation of the data currently available was presented by Steve Harris, Consultant for the Sport and Recreation Branch. Data included information available through Coach New Brunswick, Canadian Sport Center Atlantic, Recreation New Brunswick, Atlantic University Sports, and the Wellness Branch “School Wellness surveys”-

In summary, women and girls are under-represented in nearly all areas for which data is currently available. It was clear that there is a need to collect more detailed data in New Brunswick in order to identify gaps, establish benchmarks, and measure progress to make informed decisions on areas that require targeted efforts.

The day’s activities proceeded with a series of four panel presentations. The panelists provided great insight from their respective roles within the sport and recreation community. The general themes included the power of equitable and inclusive sport and recreation, current policies surrounding municipal facility access and the need for reviews, quality female coaches and leaders, and developing a culture of sport and recreation for girls and women as everyone’s responsibility.

Our organizing committee was very fortunate to have the following expert individuals as panelists for the Think Tank:



LORI JOHNSTONE
WELLNESS CONSULTANT

Articulated the differences between equality vs equity and the fact that not everyone will begin at the same start line therefore what are the tools and resources that can ensure we all get to the same finish line. Everyone has different experiences and the importance and need to utilize a gender lens in daily decision making, and utilizing sport and recreation as a way of transforming women’s position in society.



JOCELYN COHOON
DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND LEISURE, CITY OF MONCTON

Stated that there is more and more demand from female sport and recreation groups; however, current policies, programs, facility design, and availability often need to be reviewed through a gender lens. Lots of challenges around “grandfathered” arrangements, that favor male participation, which are currently being addressed. The need to adjust policies and programs has really come to the forefront in recent years. Communication and promotion of specialized female sport opportunities as well as equity in integrated participation is key.



ISABELLE CAYER
CAC SENIOR COACHING CONSULTANT

Shared compelling stories and examples on the need for female leaders and coaches and the power of mentorship opportunities. Coaches need skills beyond the technical aspects when offering programs for women and girls. Mentorship is a key area that was identified by the CAC as a gap that needed to be addressed and which resulted in the creation of a program and online resource that is available free of charge.



BETTY DERMER-NORRIS
MULTI-SPORT GAMES SPECIALLIST

Explained that in terms of building a culture of sport and recreation for our women in girls in the province, it was clear that we all have a role to play that begins at home and in our communities. Systemic barriers continue to exist at the National and International levels but the Canadian and International Olympic Committees are making efforts to address them. Mentorship plays a key role as it is important to have female coaches, leaders and role models to look up to.

Afternoon Workshop

1. Creating a Vision for New Brunswick

In considering a vision for the advancement of women and girls' participation in sport and recreation in New Brunswick groups at each table were asked to describe the ideal state of women and girls in sport and recreation for 2029. The goal of this activity was not to create the final vision statement for New Brunswick, but to identify emerging themes that will be used to determine the desired future of women and girls in sport and recreation. The following is a list of the themes that resulted from this exercise:

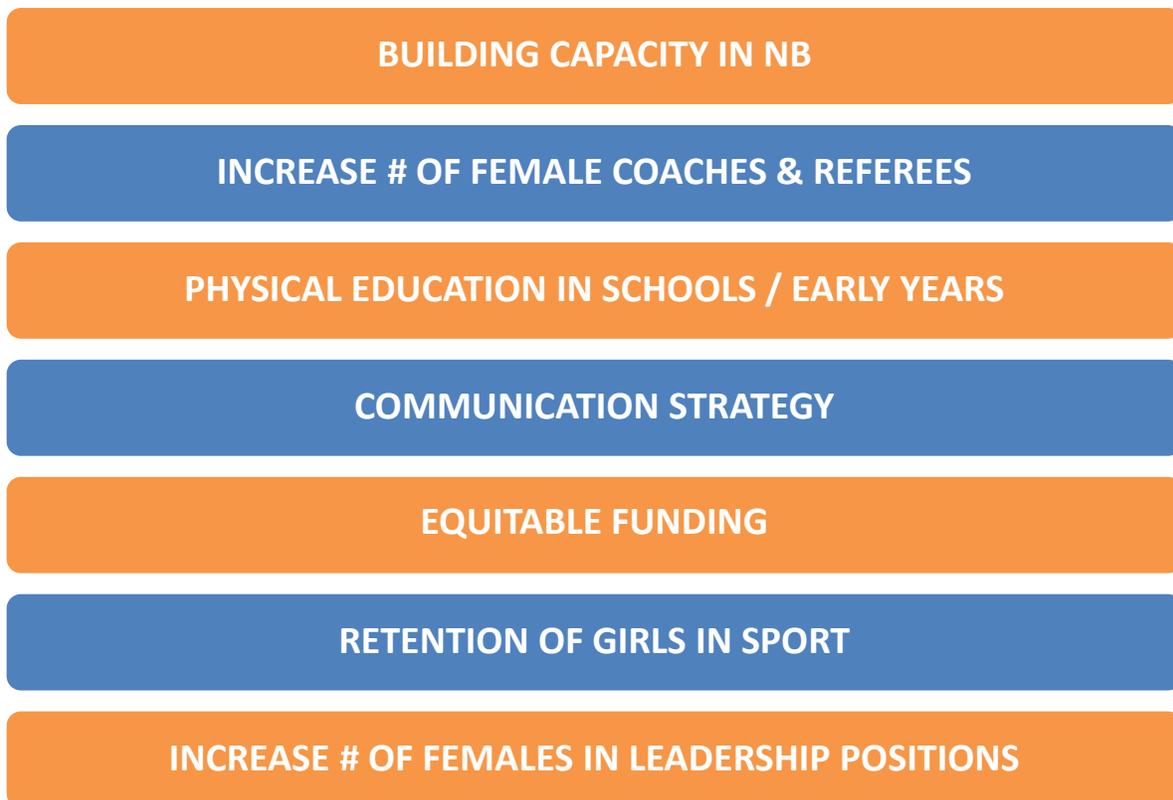


2. *Determining key areas for action*

In order to determine the key areas for action in New Brunswick, groups at each table were asked to review and discuss the three strategic pillars identified in the CAAWS Strategic Plan as well as the 16 recommendations from the House of Commons report. Participants then recommended the addition of three additional areas for action:

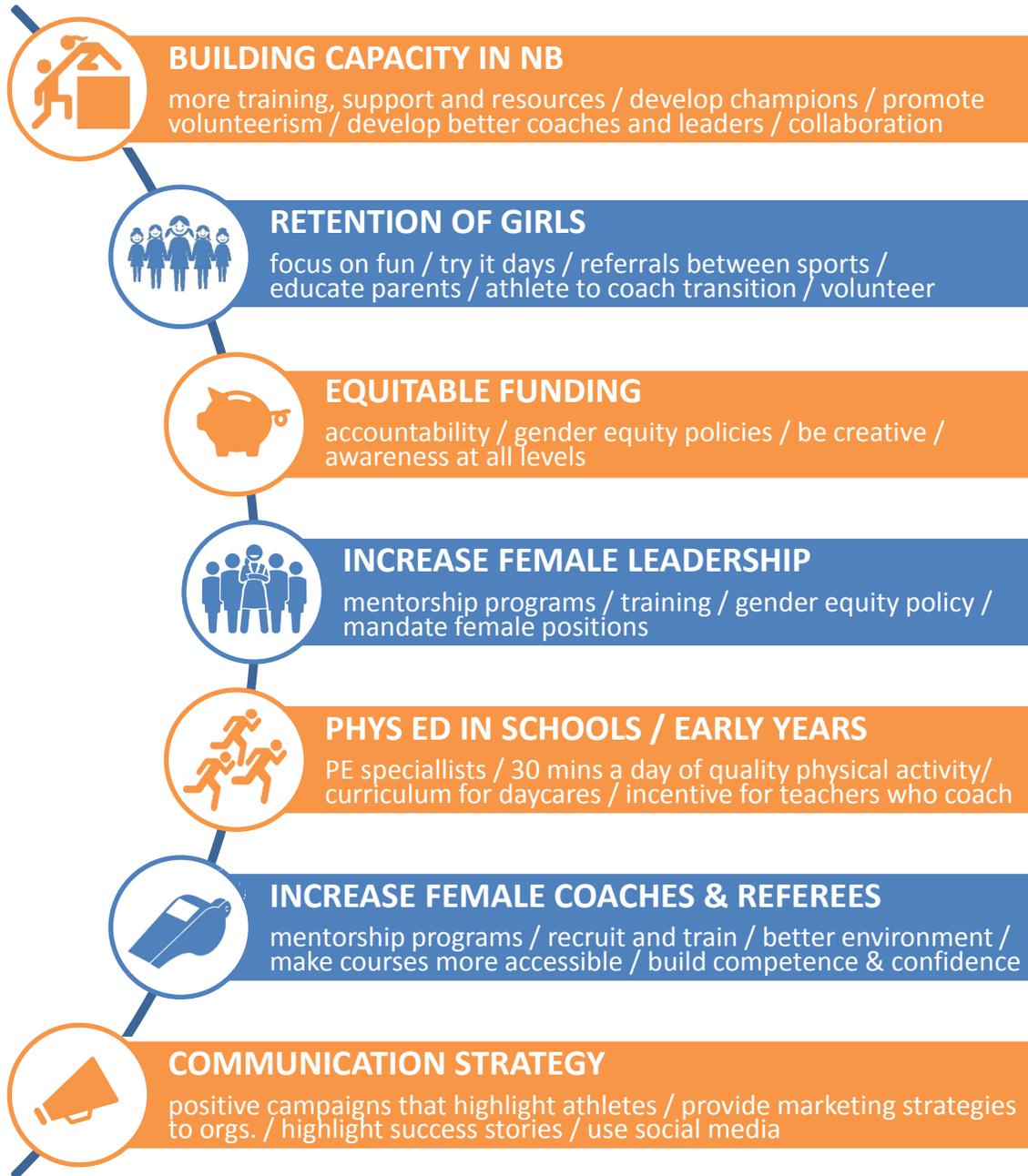
- Cross Collaboration
- Building Capacity in New Brunswick
- School/Early Years

A prioritization exercise of all actions took place which identified the following seven items as key areas for action. (A detailed summary of the prioritization exercise can be found in Appendix-C.)



3. Potential solutions

To further develop the key areas for action, individuals were asked to select one and brainstorm potential solutions. A summary of the solutions is listed below each key area:



4. Moving forward

After the identification of potential solutions for each key area, participants were asked to prioritize them and list the organizations who could play a role in actioning them. The following organizations are those who emerged as potential partners who could take the lead on most of the solutions identified.



Collaboration was highlighted several times as a necessary approach to achieve these solutions. It is evident that the creation of a network where people can share knowledge and problem-solve together will have much better chance of success than if organizations continue to work in silos.

Individual Commitment to Action

As a final activity for the day, participants were asked what immediate actions they could take either individually or in their respective organizations. The following are some of the actions that were provided:

“promote access for women on our board”

“expand the Kidsport program to continue eliminating financial barriers that are preventing women, girls & other under represented groups from joining sport”

“debrief ED on today’s discussions, develop a program that promotes immigrant women & girls to participate in Sports and Recreation”

“enhance, encourage and initiate opportunities for female varsity athletes to lead, coach and inspire young people in sport”

“promote the importance of positive environment for coaches and officials”

“challenge the NSO for changes”

“continue to educate university students about women and girls in recreation & sport and challenge them to be advocates, mentors, policy makers, coaches who will support women and girls”

“influence the influencers through emails, social media and meetings”

“challenge Ministers and Politicians”

“continue to make Elementary PE a priority in all discussions – 10 year Education Plan.”

“organize a “Try Day” to encourage youth to join/rejoin sports in the community”

“continue to improve girls only programs. Influence & help other organizations to do the same”

“create a subcommittee to focus on female participation and policies to implement”

“volunteer to coach when needed. Continue to serve on boards. Continue to support my daughters and their friends to participate in sport”

“continue to build capacity and resources for female leadership/coaching within our team”

“support the work of any governance structure and participate as a member of an initiative to move this forward”

“support sport orgs, training & facility rental”

“create and post club pathways”

Delegate Feedback

The Think Tank was attended by 61 delegates. Of the 36 attendees who submitted the Think Tank evaluation form, 86 per cent rated the effectiveness of the Think Tank as Very Effective or Exceedingly Effective. The following quotes are a sample collected from the evaluation forms as well as emails sent after the event:

“Congratulations for a thoughtful and successful event.”

“I honestly believe that the most important piece of the puzzle is elementary phys ed and introduction to sports and activities on a daily basis. [...] We need the depts. of education and health on board.”

“Great conversation, collaborative decision making & direction”

“Thank you also for an amazing event on Tuesday! It definitely highlighted the amount of work we have to do as an organization and I'm excited to see what comes out of it!”

“Long overdue. Great job”

“From the meeting I decided that I'll propose a change in the *** by-laws to incorporate gender equity wording. I'm looking forward to see what is produced from the meeting.”

“I'm excited to see the solutions and work that come from it”

“I thoroughly enjoyed re-engaging with many old acquaintances and meeting new faces. Congratulations on a successful day. Looking forward to hear about next steps/strategies.”

“Thank you for your leadership in organizing and facilitating a great discussion. Now time for Action!!!”

“include more discussions from Recreation”

“Great job! The conversations and topics have resonated with so many people [...]Let's keep the momentum going and please include me in your plans. I really want to contribute”

“Great to see so many passionate people working together: Now lets get to ACTION!”

“Think Tanks can be a challenge, today was effective & well done”

“I have been to a number of forums and think tanks in my 20 year career and this was, by far, the best. I had fun. I was engaged. I ate a donut without being shamed. So well done and a real privilege to have the chance to participate.[...] I hope to participate in more!”

“Great to bring many backgrounds together”

“Need to create long term action plan so that our efforts are not necessarily heard but can be assured”

“A lot to tackle in one day [...] need more time.”

“Excellent first start. Want to see this continue on a monthly or quarterly basis W ould like to be involved on next steps”

“More time/work needed to define actions/role”

Recommendations

Valuable information and feedback was collected during the Think Tank. This event was a unique opportunity to seek input from a broad sector and we must ensure that this information is used as building blocks for future action on the advancement of women and girls in sport and recreation.

The following recommendations were identified as immediate items for action:

1. Ensure that this report is used as a reference to guide any future discussions or actions for the advancement of women and girls in sport and recreation in New Brunswick
2. Establish a Women and Girls in Sport and Recreation Network by November 2018.
3. Request that the Network expand on the priority areas and establish a framework to accomplish the objectives

Closing remarks

The Sport and Recreation Branch is pleased to have brought a group of passionate individuals and organizations together for this initiative and it must be recognized that the advancement of women and girls in sport and recreation will be the direct result of a collaborative and engaged team approach.

The under-representation of women and girls in sport and recreation has been observed for decades, but actions to address the issue have been limited. Now is the time to tackle this challenge and the Think Tank has been a positive start.

The momentum is building and all stakeholders need to look at what they can do within their own organizations, yet collectively, we can do much more to create the systemic change that will stand the test of time. Change is not easy and takes hard work, but the benefits to women and girls, and society in general can be transformative.

Appendix-A: New Brunswick Data

Only **19%** of girls meet the guidelines of daily physical activity compared to **27%** for boys in K to 5

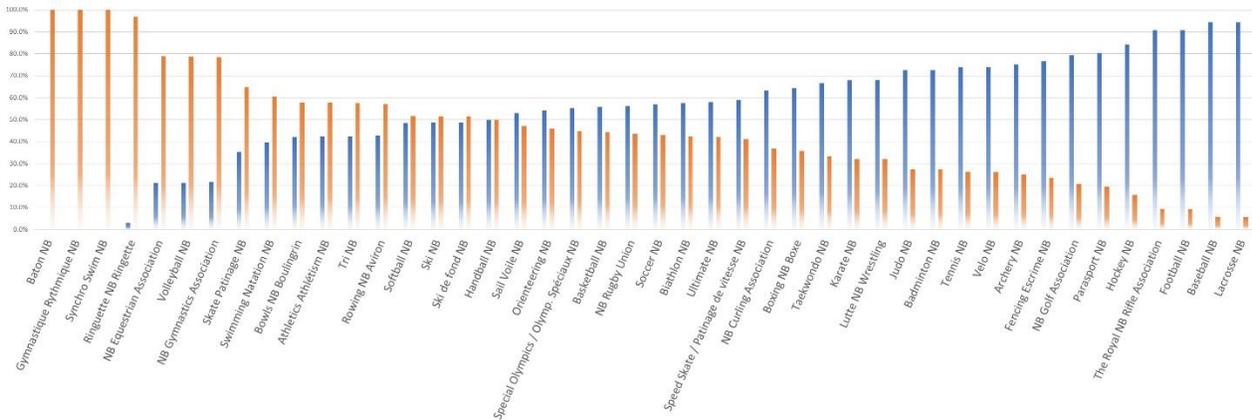
New Brunswick women and girls in sport & recreation

GRADE 6 TO 12

Only **16%** of girls meet the guideline on 60 minutes of Moderate or Vigorous Physical Activity compared to **22%** for boys

Only **23%** of girls participate on a sports team outside of school compared to **26%** for boys

Only **39%** of the 2017-2018 Provincial sport organization's membership is comprised of women & girls



WOMEN IN PSO/MSO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Female Male



PROVINCIAL SPORT ORGANIZATION WOMEN IN COACHING

Female Male



Women in Atlantic University Sport



References:

NB Elementary Student Wellness Survey (Grades k-5) 2016-2017; NB Student Wellness Survey (Grades 6-12) 2016-2017, Sport and Recreation Branch FM1 applications 2017-2018, Coaching Association of Canada (Locker information) 2017; Atlantic University Sport website (2018)

Appendix-C: Key Areas for action

The number of votes represents the tables out of 10 who voted for this area of action

PRIORITIZATION EXERCISE	
AREA FOR ACTION	VOTES
CAAWS 1 – Retain Girls (Aged 12-16) in Sport	7
CAAWS 2 – Increase Female Leadership in Sport	7
CAAWS 3 – Influence the Influencers	5
Recommendation 1 - The Committee recommends that Sport Canada review its Policy on Sport for Women and Girls to include measurable objectives and an accountability framework.	4
Recommendation 2 - The Committee recommends that the Department of Canadian Heritage make gender equality a core element in the negotiation of bilateral agreements with the provinces and territories on sport participation.	1
Recommendation 3 - The Committee recommends that, in order to ensure accountability and to track progress, the Government of Canada collect data on sport organizations receiving federal funding in respect of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • representation of women on boards of directors, • programming that serves the unique needs of women and other underrepresented groups and • apprenticeship and employment opportunities for women coaches, umpires and officials. 	4
Recommendation 4 - The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada use its funding into Canada’s sport system to benefit underrepresented groups in order to ensure that opportunities for girls and women are on par with those for boys and men.	7
Recommendation 5 - The Committee recommends that sport facility infrastructure funding be contingent on ensuring programs that encourage the participation of girls and women.	3
Recommendation 6 - The Committee recommends that Sport Canada add a gender equality requirement to its evaluation process for grant applications from sport organizations, that funding be tied to that requirement and that the sport organizations be required to provide data on this subject.	2
Recommendation 7 - The Committee recommends that the Department of Canadian Heritage take the lead and persuade the other signatories to the Canadian Sport Policy to establish targets for the participation of girls and women in sport.	2
Recommendation 8 - The Committee recommends that Sport Canada put appropriate measures in place to increase the number of girls and women serving as coaches and referees and look into providing coaching mentorship programs, such as shadowing, that would allow for recognition of prior learning.	9
Recommendation 9 - The Committee recommends that additional funding incentives be provided only to those sport organizations, that deliver equitable services and equitable leadership opportunities.	2

Appendix-C: Page 2

<p>Recommendation 10 - The Government of Canada, as a major funder of sports, enact three criteria for ongoing funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. significant representation of women on boards of directors, B. programming that serves the unique needs of women and other underrepresented groups, and C. higher numbers of apprenticeship and employment opportunities for women coaches. 	<p>A 3 B 3 C 6</p>
<p>Recommendation 11 - The Committee recommends that Sport Canada require national sport organizations and national multisport service organizations to ensure the equitable representation of women on their boards of directors and in executive positions.</p>	4
<p>Recommendation 12 - The Committee recommends that Sport Canada encourage national sport organizations to ensure that their provincial and territorial members are required to implement gender equality objectives in their governance structures.</p>	2
<p>Recommendation 13 - The Committee recommends that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission impose broadcast hours with respect to women's sports as part of the licence renewal of public and private television services that broadcast sports programs.</p>	1
<p>Recommendation 14 - The Committee recommends that Sport Canada enhance its communications strategy to encourage girls and women to engage in physical activity and celebrate the successes of Canadian female athletes.</p>	8
<p>Recommendation 15 - The Committee recommends that Sport Canada attract more international women and girls sporting events to Canada.</p>	2
<p>Recommendation 16 - The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada build on the initiatives to eradicate harassment and abuse from Canadian sport and continue to support activities that make sport safer and more accessible.</p>	5
<p>GROUP ADDITION: Cross Collaboration sectors</p>	5
<p>GROUP ADDITION: Building Capacity in NB</p>	9
<p>GROUP ADDITION: School/Early Years</p>	9

Appendix-D: List of Attendees

LIST OF ATTENDEES / LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS-ES

NAME	ORGANIZATION	NAME	ORGANIZATION
Alicia Isaac*	Aboriginal Apprentice Coach Program	Kyle Reade	Saint John Soccer Club
Allyson Ouellette	NB Interscholastic Athletic Association	Lauren Hale-Miller	UNBSJ Volleyball Coach
Althea Arsenault	Triathlon NB/ESIC	Linda Dalpé*	Advocate
Amélie Montour	Fédération des jeunes francophones du N.-B.	Lise Auffrey-Arsenault	Skate-Patinage NB
Anita Scott	Hockey NB	Lori Johnstone	Wellness Branch
Ashleigh Milani	Coach-Entraîneur NB	Manon Landry Ouellette	Coach-Entraîneur NB
Bari Gourley	Golf NB	Marisa Rojas	Multicultural Assoc. of Fredericton
Betty Dermer-Norris	Multi-Sport Games Specialist	Marta Belsh	FAST/Swim NB
Brittany Pye	Judo NB	Martine LeBlanc	Université de Moncton
Chantelle Hanley	Fredericton Rowing Club	Mary Ann Gallagher	Canadian Tire Jumpstart
Charlene Shannon-McCallum	UNB Faculty of Kinesiology	Mary Brosnan	RunNB / Athletics NB
Christine Powers-Tomsons	Sport & Recreation Branch	Meaghan Donahue Wies	Canadian Sport Centre Atlantic
Cynthia Stacey	UNB Kinesiology / Renaissance College	Megan Dobbin	Town of Sackville
Dana Purton Dickson	Fundy Recreation Professionals Association	Melissa Bates	New Brunswick Medical Society
Dominique Legault-Moore	Sport & Recreation Branch	Michael Eagles	St. Thomas University
Emma Hicks	Football NB	Michelle DeCoursey	Recreation NB
Hilary Pineau	KidSport/Sport NB	Monique Allain	Anglophone West School District
Isabelle Cayer	Coaching Association of Canada	Mylène Ouellet-LeBlanc	Société des Jeux de l'Acadie
Jamie Wolverton*	NB Sports Hall of Fame	Nicole McCarty	Women's Equality Branch
Jane Mckeown*	Special Olympics NB/ Velo NB.	Nicole Nader	New Brunswick Multicultural Council
Jason Dickson	YMCA	Pierre Arsenault*	Mount Allison University Athletics
Jason Peters*	Aboriginal Sport and Recreation New Brunswick	Robert Grégoire	Agent pédagogique - ÉDPE
Jean-Luc Benoit	Comité National Jeux de la Francophonie 2021	Ross Campbell*	NB Physical Education Society
Jeff LeBlanc	Sport & Recreation Branch	Rufus Nel	Abony Family Tennis Center
Jennifer Bent-Richard	Facilitator	Sabrina Durepos	Sport and Recreation Branch
Joanne Lamarche	City of Moncton - Leisure Services	Sarah Enright	Multicultural Assoc. of Fredericton
Jocelyn Cohoon	City of Moncton - Leisure Services	Sarah Hilworth	UNB Varsity Reds Women's Hockey
Jocelyne Mills	Women's Equality Branch	Scott MacAfee	Graphic Recorder / ESIC
John Richard	UNB Varsity Reds	Sheri Gallant	Soccer NB
Jonathan Crossland	UNB Varsity Reds Women's Soccer	Shona Thibodeau	Sport & Recreation Branch
Julie Bélanger	Ville de Dieppe / CLNB	Steve Harris	Sport & Recreation Branch
Kate McLean	Women's Equality Branch	Taylor Devlin	Physical Literacy NB
Kathryn Baird	City of Fredericton	Therese Rutishereka	Multicultural Assoc. of Fredericton

*Due to unforeseen circumstances, were unable to attend