



Winning Plays 2024

The Gender Equity Playbook Report



FEMMES ET SPORT AU CANADA
CANADIAN WOMEN & SPORT

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Introduction

Sport can bring out our best as individuals and communities, but only when girls, women, and gender-diverse people have equitable opportunities to engage in safe and quality sport.

Many sport leaders are motivated to bring gender equity to life, but struggle to understand root causes of inequity, lack clarity in what to prioritize, and find it difficult to apply available guidance to their organization.

The Gender Equity Playbook is a game-changing resource that enables sport leaders and organizations to create lasting impact. By examining policies, processes, and programs through an intersectional gender lens, leaders can identify and dismantle the barriers that have hindered progress.

With support from the Government of Canada, Canadian Women & Sport refreshed the Playbook in 2023 to integrate the latest evidence and tailor the program to tackle challenges faced by Provincial and Territorial Sport Organizations. We piloted the program with 5 organizations before rolling out in 2024 to 50 sport organizations in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories, Ontario, and Nova Scotia.

Winning Plays 2024 reveals the impact of the Playbook, provides a snapshot of the current state of gender equity within Canadian sport organizations, and celebrates early success.

3 Stages

The Gender Equity Playbook

Stage 1: Prepare

Leaders complete the Gender Equity LENS e-learning module and answer our Needs Assessment to determine where their organization should focus in the Playbook.

Stage 2: Reflect

Organizations are paired with expert consultants, who lead them through our Gender Equity Assessment to produce the organization's Summary and Reflection Report.

Stage 3: Act

Organizations are guided to identify priorities and key next steps through the Action Toolkit. Each organization receives resources to support them to advance gender equity.

Overview

56 Sport Organizations

- British Columbia
- Northwest Territories
- Saskatchewan
- Ontario
- Nova Scotia

136 Sport Leaders

including senior staff leaders, technical and performance staff, and board members.

93% of Sport Leaders

reported increased gender equity knowledge, motivation, and skills because of participating.



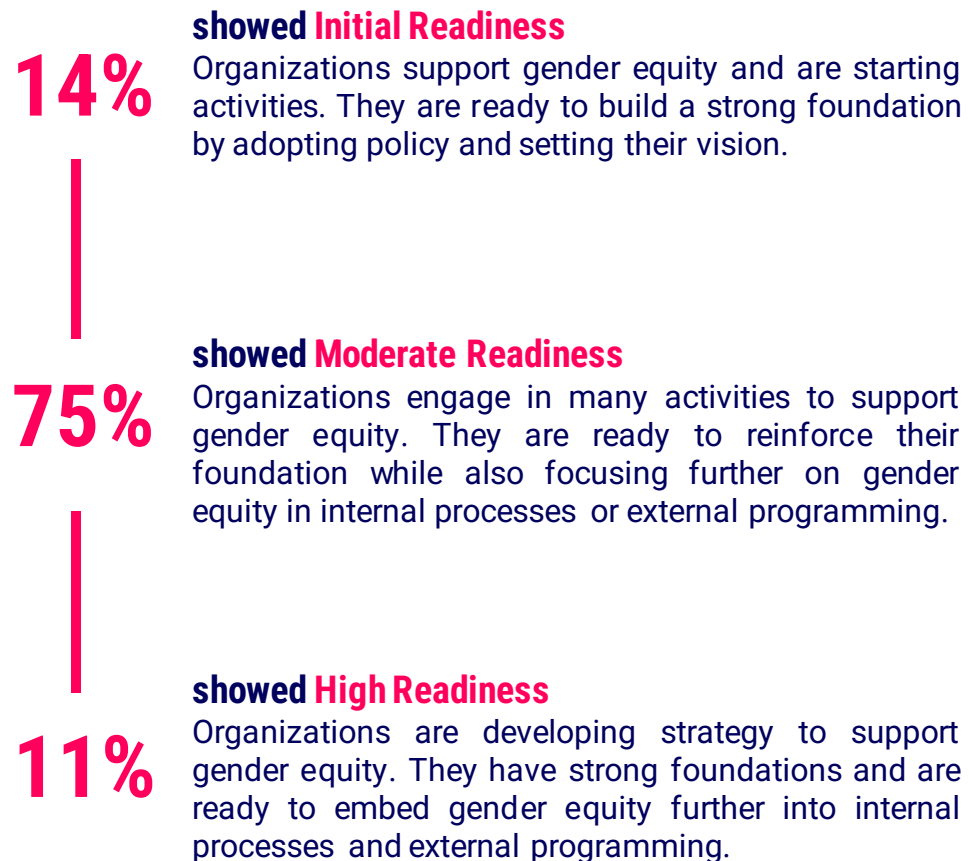
Key Insights

Prior to Engaging in the Playbook

Sport organizations in Canada are at different stages of their gender equity journeys. Some are just getting started in this work, while others are ready to build on strong foundations.

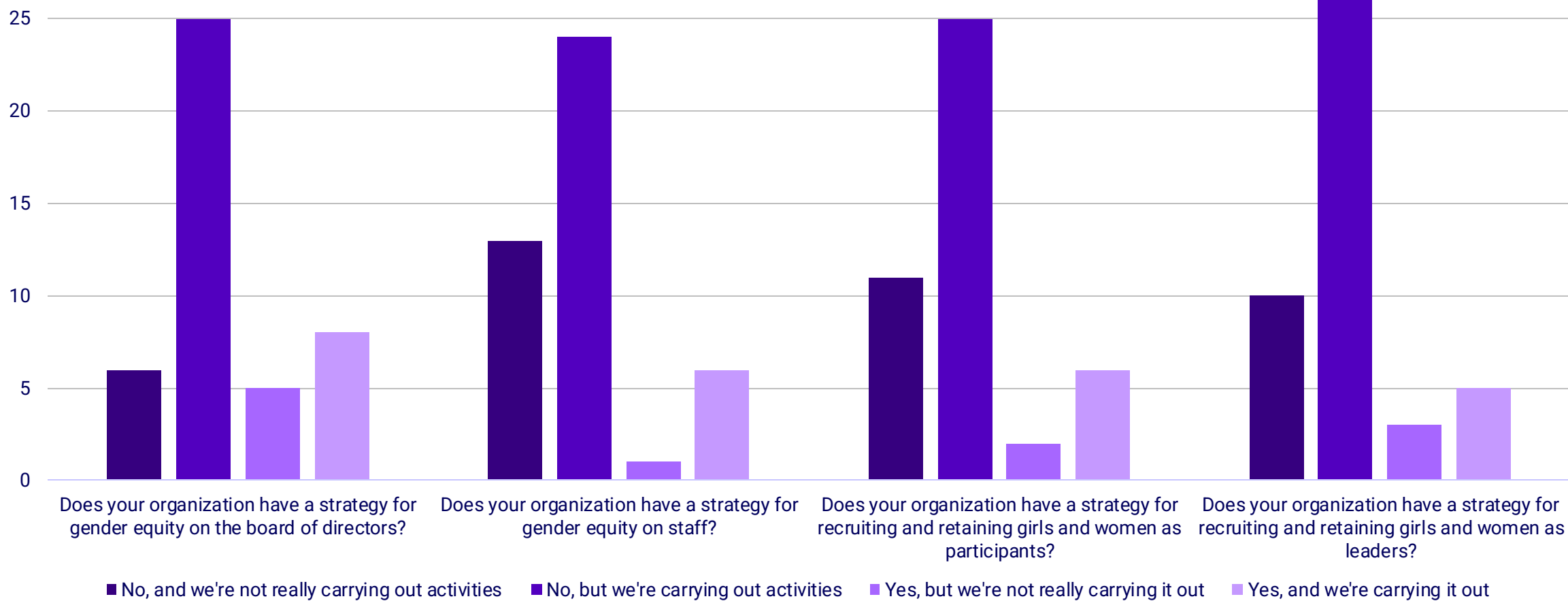
Our Needs Assessment helps identify where each participating organization is starting from. Results showed that sport organizations ranged from initial to high readiness to engage in gender equity work.

Among Participating Organizations



Key Insights

Prior to Engaging in the Playbook



Key Insights

As a Result of Engaging in the Playbook

Key actions planned by participating organizations included:

- Formalizing gender equity priorities in [policy](#) and strategic frameworks.
- Developing and regularly updating policy implementation plans.
- Implementing [gender equity training](#) for board and staff members.
- Increasing capacity to measure and track demographic information of key stakeholders, including activity leaders and participants.





Understanding Barriers to Keep Moving Forward

Participating organizations identified **current barriers and key resources** required to continue advancing gender equity in sport.

- Financial constraints remain a recurring challenge across organizations in all regions. Accessing sustained funding to support gender equity initiatives is critical to lasting progress.
- Difficulty creating buy-in means champions need expert resources and would benefit from connection to a broader network of those leading equity initiatives throughout their region.
- Engagement and outreach activities are not always tailored to local communities or reflective of geographic constraints. Leveraging online tools to close this gap remains an opportunity.

Early Evidence of Impact

3-Months After Participating

Follow-up interviews with 11 organizations reveal early evidence of impact:

- 82% have begun implementing action plans.
- Key changes included applying a [gender equity lens](#) to all decisions and integrating gender equity priorities into organizational strategy.
- Existing [tools, resources, and supports](#) have proved beneficial.
- Organizations emphasized the need for sustained funding to support initiatives.



Key Insights: British Columbia

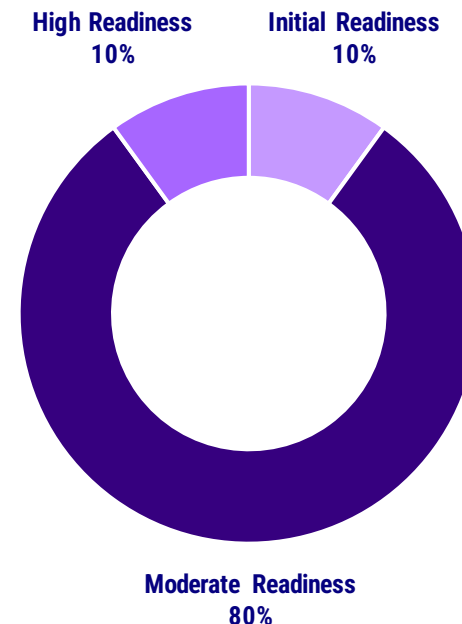
Prior to Engaging in the Playbook

The participating organizations in British Columbia showed **moderate readiness** to engage. Foundational elements were in place and the organizations were ready to embed gender equity further into internal and external programs and processes.

Understanding Barriers

Current barriers and challenges among organizations in this region included:

- Resource and capacity constraints including funding and time.
- Limited buy-in from key stakeholders such as facilities.
- Lack of clarity and guidance in best practices and policies.



Key Insights: British Columbia

As a Result of Participating in the Playbook

Key actions planned by the organizations in British Columbia included:

- Seeking out gender equity champions for leadership roles.
- Increasing capacity to measure and track demographic information of key stakeholders, including activity leaders and participants.
- Developing an inclusive definition of gender equity that includes those who experience oppression in sport due to their gender and that recognizes the difference between equality and equity.

Driving Progress

Sport partners and funders play a key role in supporting organizations to build momentum and advance gender equity across sport. Organizations in this region would benefit from:

- [Policy](#) and [terms of reference](#) templates.
- Funding to support diversity, equity, and inclusion committees.
- Connection to a broader network of those leading diversity initiatives throughout British Columbia.
- Support for setting gender equity targets (e.g., for boards of directors).



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We really liked how The Playbook went from a general overview to specific initiatives and goal setting focused on improving equity and inclusion.
- Sport Leader, British Columbia

Key Insights: Northwest Territories

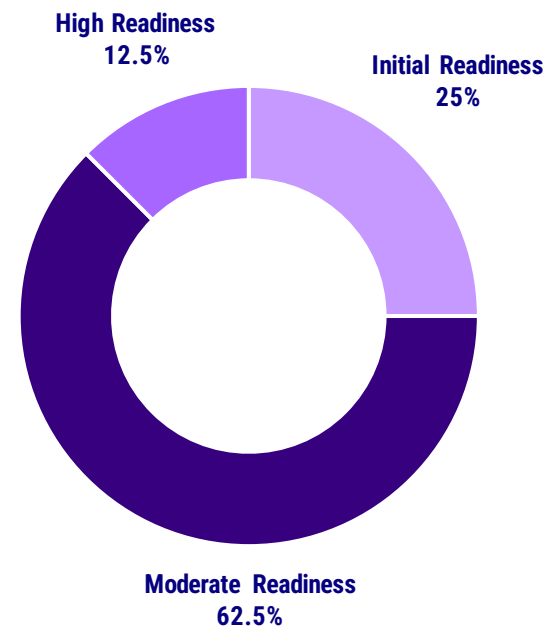
Prior to Engaging in the Playbook

The participating organizations in the Northwest Territories showed **initial to moderate readiness** to engage. Organizations were ready or beginning to establish foundational elements before embedding gender equity further into internal and external programs and processes.

Understanding Barriers

Current barriers and challenges among organizations in this region included:

- Resource and capacity constraints including volunteer-based boards with extensive responsibilities.
- Limited number of current participants to seek feedback from.
- Fatigue and potential resistance from membership to the continuous emphasis on safer sport and equity.



Key Insights: Northwest Territories

As a Result of Participating in the Playbook

Key actions planned by the organizations in Northwest Territories included:

- Developing and implementing [gender equity training](#) for board and staff members.
- Integrating gender equity considerations into recruitment, selection, and hiring processes.
- Implementing engagement surveys to better understand experiences of stakeholders throughout the organization and inform program development.

Driving Progress

Sport partners and funders play a key role in supporting organizations to build momentum and advance gender equity across sport. Organizations in this region would benefit from:

- Access to expert consultants and gender equity [resources](#).
- Survey and analysis tools to measure and understand needs of key stakeholders.
- Relationships with national and provincial/territorial sport organizations, community leaders, and funding partners to support gender equity initiatives.



The conversations our group had were very insightful. The Gender Equity Playbook allowed us to open up our policies and processes and have honest conversations about them.

- Sport Leader, Northwest Territories



Key Insights: Saskatchewan

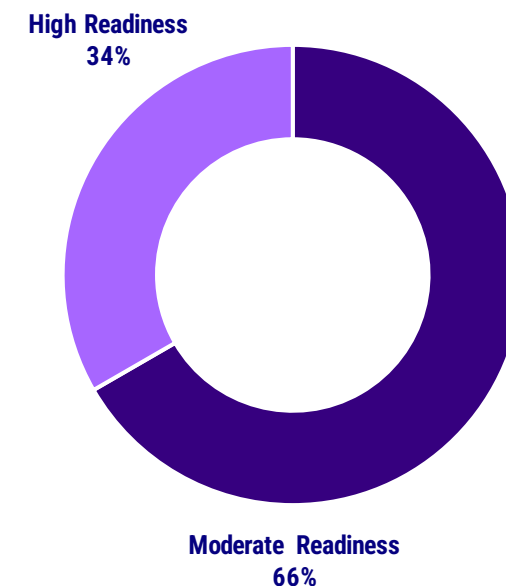
Prior to Engaging in the Playbook

The participating organizations in Saskatchewan showed **moderate to high readiness** to engage. Foundational elements were in place and the organizations were beginning to embed gender equity further into internal and external programs and processes.

Understanding Barriers

Current barriers and challenges among organizations in this region included:

- Resistance or lack of interest in integrating gender equity in provincial system and structures.
- Resource and capacity constraints including volunteer-based boards with extensive responsibilities.
- Lack of funding to provide and sustain training.



Key Insights: Saskatchewan

As a Result of Participating in the Playbook

Key actions planned by the organizations in Saskatchewan included:

- Developing a link between organizational goals and gender equity, diversity, and inclusion priorities.
- Providing opportunities and support for girls, women, and gender-diverse individuals in coaching and officiating roles through networks and mentorship.
- Collecting and reviewing demographic data for coaches, officials, and classifiers to identify and understand the opportunities in recruitment and retention.

Driving Progress

Sport partners and funders play a key role in supporting organizations to build momentum and advance gender equity across sport. Organizations in this region would benefit from:

- Access to expert consultants and gender equity [resources](#).
- Funding for gender equity training programs and outreach activities.
- Online tools to facilitate remote participation and reduce geographic barriers.



““””

We found this program and your staff/experts to be very knowledgeable and easy to work with. I looked forward to every meeting and I'm excited to embed these changes and policies into our organization.

- Sport Leader, Saskatchewan

Key Insights: Ontario

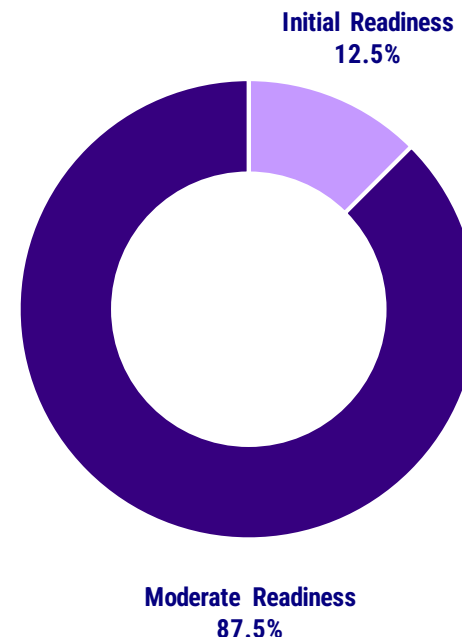
Prior to Engaging in the Playbook

The participating organizations in Ontario showed **moderate readiness** to engage. Foundational elements were in place and the organizations were ready to embed gender equity further into internal and external programs and processes.

Understanding Barriers

Current barriers and challenges among organizations in this region included:

- Resistance or lack of interest to changing traditional ways of delivering sport.
- Resource and capacity constraints including volunteer-based boards with extensive responsibilities.
- Lack of funding to provide and sustain training and policy development and renewal.



Key Insights: Ontario

As a Result of Participating in the Playbook

Key actions planned by the organizations in Ontario included:

- Formalizing organizational commitments in policy by adopting comprehensive policy suites.
- Increasing knowledge of key gender equity and inclusion concepts by mandating training for leaders on staff and the board.
- Regularly reviewing language and imagery in communications to ensure cultural relevance and appropriate representation.

Driving Progress

Sport partners and funders play a key role in supporting organizations to build momentum and advance gender equity across sport. Organizations in this region would benefit from:

- Access to expert consultants to support with strategy and [policy development](#) and renewal.
- Survey and analysis tools to measure and understand needs of key stakeholders.
- Funding to support training programs and policy implementation, perhaps through partnership with other provincial sport organizations.



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Coaches have been approaching us to thank the organization for acting as an ally and champion and creating change in the sport.

- Sport Leader, Ontario

Key Insights: Nova Scotia

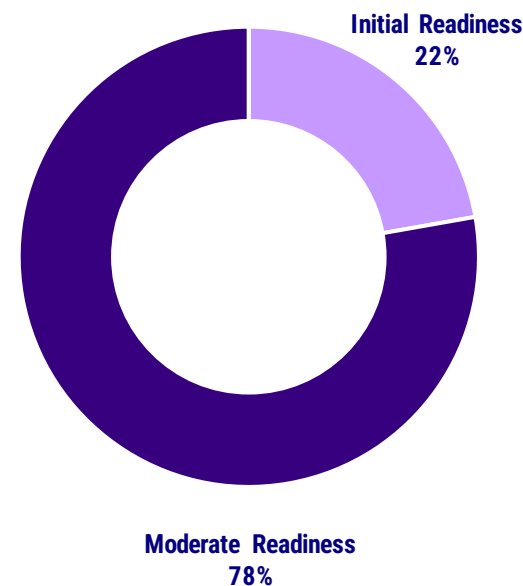
Prior to Engaging in the Playbook

The participating organizations in Nova Scotia showed **initial to moderate readiness** to engage. Organizations were ready to or beginning to establish foundational elements before embedding gender equity further into internal and external programs and processes.

Understanding Barriers

Current barriers and challenges among organizations in this region included:

- Resource and capacity constraints including funding and time.
- Difficulty in effectively engaging remote or rural areas.
- Creating buy-in for gender equity training and new initiatives.



Key Insights: Nova Scotia

As a Result of Participating in the Playbook

Key actions planned by the organizations in Nova Scotia included:

- Formalizing organizational commitments in policy by adopting comprehensive policy suites.
- Adapting and customizing outreach activities to respect cultural nuances, languages, and social realities of different participants.
- Providing opportunities and support for girls, women, and gender-diverse individuals in coaching and officiating roles through networks and mentorship.

Driving Progress

Sport partners and funders play a key role in supporting organizations to build momentum and advance gender equity across the sport. Organizations in this region would benefit from:

- Access to expert consultants to support with strategy and [policy development](#) and renewal.
- Funding to support workshop delivery and training programs and the development of training pathways.
- Online tools to facilitate remote participation and reduce geographic barriers.



Since participating in the Playbook, gender equity has been full embraced and supported by our team.

- Sport Leader, Nova Scotia





Conclusion

Advancing gender equity within the Canadian sport system is an ongoing process and requires commitment from sport leaders at every level to disrupt the status quo.

We **celebrate the real and impactful change** driven by provincial and territorial sport organizations who participated in the Playbook. Their motivation and dedication is evidence of tremendous progress.





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