



CPRA ACPL

**THE CANADIAN PARKS AND
RECREATION ASSOCIATION**

**Gender Equity and
Recreational Sport
Project**



- In 2018, the Government of Canada announced a target to achieve gender equity in sport at every level by 2035.
- Support included funding for innovative practices to promote women and girls' participation in sport.
- This CPRA project is funded by **Sport Canada**, as part of this 2018 goal.
- Project includes an educational webinar series, community grants program, cross-Canada workshops, scale up of High Five, and the “tool kits”
- The **overall goal** of the combined initiatives is to increase the recruitment and retention of women and girls in sport in Canada.



Overview of the Gender Equity and Recreational Sport Project

1. Develop tools to enhance facilities use practices

Recreation service providers across Canada will have increased knowledge regarding how to best deliver programs and services that ensure equitable opportunities for facility access.

2. Develop tools to advance female-friendly facilities

Architects, planners, designers and recreation programmers will have an increased understanding and knowledge about gender equitable facility elements that are valued by girls, women and non-binary people in order to participate in physically active recreation programs.



Project Objectives

Facility Use and Design Toolkits

- A significant barrier for participation and retention of girls, women and non-binary individuals in sport is access to sport facilities in their communities.
 - Tools will support a systematic shift in the way municipalities (and other recreation organizations such as Ys, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.) assign sport facility (via education, training, knowledge development) to ensure gender equitable sports programs.
- Another barrier to girls, women and non-binary individuals' participation and retention in sport is the design and maintenance of the facilities in a way that they value.
 - Tools developed will support professionals who design and maintain sport facilities. These tools will assist these professional to consider their alignment with female inclusive principles.



Advisory Group Member Organizations



- Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
- Canadian Women and Sport
- Dialog Designs
- Griffith University, Brisbane
- HCMA Architecture + Design
- JF Group
- Recreation Nova Scotia
- Six Nations Parks & Recreation
- Sport Nova Scotia
- Tucker-Reid & Associates
- University of Calgary
- University of Toronto
- Vancouver Parks Board
- Western University
- Westshore Parks and Recreation

Phases of the Project

□ Phase 1 (February – September 2020)

- Environmental Scan / Web search →
- Literature Review
- Key Informant Interviews
 - Advisory Committee Meeting #1 (Oct.)

□ Phase 2 (October – December 2020) →

- Survey of recreation professionals
 - Advisory Committee Meeting #2 (Jan.)
 - ✓ Final decision on tool(s)

□ Phase 3 (January, 2021 – March, 2022)

- Tool development
- Workshops (pilot test – Fall, 2021)
- Full dissemination (Sept, 2021 – Mar, 2022)

Phase 1

- 39 Key Informant Interviews
- Literature Review
 - 58 articles
- Web Search
 - 90+ resources

Phase 2

- 252 surveys (Eng and Fr)



Web Search

- Included grey literature & relevant, existing resources
- International in scope (English only)
- Reciprocal recommendations with KIs & Lit Review
- Accumulated results circulated in advance
- No rigorous assessment undertaken (used reputable sources)

Literature Review Summary



- **Language Limit**
- Only literature published in English was included.

- **Number of Reviewers / Data Abstractors**
- Title and abstract review, full-text review and data abstraction was completed by one researcher.

- **Quality Assessment of Evidence**
- There was no formal quality assessment of the evidence.

- **Reference Lists Scanned**
- Reference lists of included studies were scanned for additional literature.

Literature Review Summary

- The development of this document included a systematic search of the published and grey literature and sources identified through key informant interviews. Seven main themes were identified:

- Human Resources
- Programming
- Culture
- Financial Resources
- Infrastructure
- Intersectionality
- Capacity Building



Web Search Results

- More found on programs/practices than facility design.
- Many resources that highlight aspects of this work have been produced.
 - There is an opportunity to streamline and coordinate efforts, and make best use of what currently exists.
- Work underway in some provinces/territories and nationally on gender-balanced leadership provides an opportunity for knowledge exchange
 - e.g. Alberta Women in Sport Leadership Impact Program - Community of Practice
- Not much is available regarding the effectiveness of approaches.
- GE approaches appear to be more common in sport settings.
 - There is an opportunity to address gender equity in the recreation

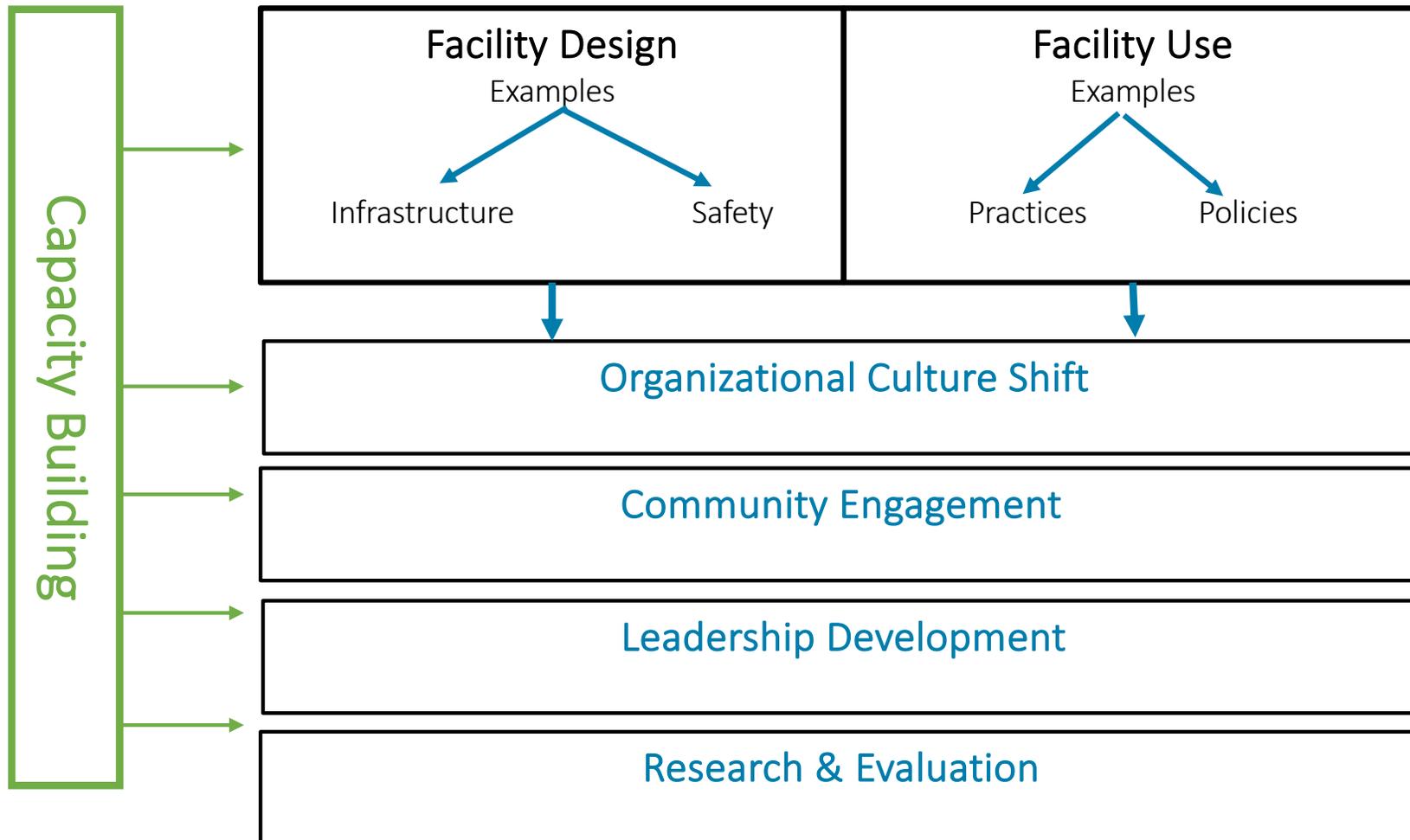
Key Informant Interviews

- Selected based on mix across Researchers, Architects/Designers, Recreation Professionals as well as geographical representation
- “Snowball” format – those interviewed suggested others with 39 conducted overall
- Summary of Questions:
 - What is currently underway?
 - Who else should we talk to?
 - What are the challenges/barriers to addressing GE?
 - What should be included in a resource (e.g., Toolkit)
 - Effective dissemination tactics



Findings from KIIs & Lit Review

7 Themes



*Some address **WHAT** should or should not happen while others are more focused on **HOW** to change the situation.*

Survey to Front-line Rec Professionals

- Draft version piloted, English and French
- Launched on Nov. 17th; closed Dec. 8th
- Distributed initially through P/T Recreation Associations and other CPRA direct contacts (NGOs, government)
 - “Pass it along” request within their networks and organizations
 - Promoted via other presentations
 - Promoted via Gender Equity Web site (no direct uptake from here) and through CPRA’s social media channels
- **Respondents:**
 - 252 front line recreation practitioners (mostly staff) from across Canada (approximately 75% English)
 - Reached through multiple networks
 - Most (63%) work in municipal recreation with a balance of small/large and rural/urban areas.
 - No significant differences between French & English responses.

Survey Findings (1) Allocation of Time and Space

- Majority base decisions on historical practice.
- 80% report that gender does not play a role in time and space allocation.
- Inclusion practices were widespread with intersectionality across many areas of diversity being common.
- Challenges in addressing gender equity (multiple responses allowed). Top responses include:
 - Lack of knowledge re: what women, girls and gender diverse people want (have not asked or have not had requests)
 - There is no policy on which to base decisions
 - Lack of financial resources

Survey Findings (2)

Design

- Few survey respondents had experience in this area
- Designing inclusive and practical washrooms and changerooms was the most critical feature in creating a welcoming, safe and effective environment (designated / universal)
- Designing spaces for multi-purposes was second
- Included:
 - the placement of equipment in a weight room
 - Training of staff & volunteers *“to understand the differences of sex and gender”*
 - Safety in parking areas and routes to/at public transportation



Survey Findings (3) Practices

- In terms of practices:
 - 75% never, seldom or sometimes address gender equity from a facility use perspective
 - 73% never, seldom or sometimes address gender equity from a facility design perspective
 - 66% never, seldom or sometimes understand the community to inform decisions related to facility use and design
 - 66% never, seldom or sometimes work to ensure girls, women and gender diverse people are in leadership roles
 - 53% often or always recruit staff and volunteers who reflect the diversity of the community

Survey Findings (4)

Themes re: Challenges Encountered

- 19 suggestions provided (drawn from KII's) from which to choose plus the opportunity for "Other"
- 9 themes emerged
 - No existing **policy** on this / Haven't addressed this at all
 - Lack of **childcare**
 - Already doing this, or trying
 - Lack of staff diversity &/or **expertise**
 - **Lack of time/priority** to address
 - Lack of **champions**
 - G,W,GDP have not asked for changes & **we have not asked**
 - Decisions are based on **tradition / history**
 - Lack of **financial resources** to address / no incentives

Survey Findings (5)

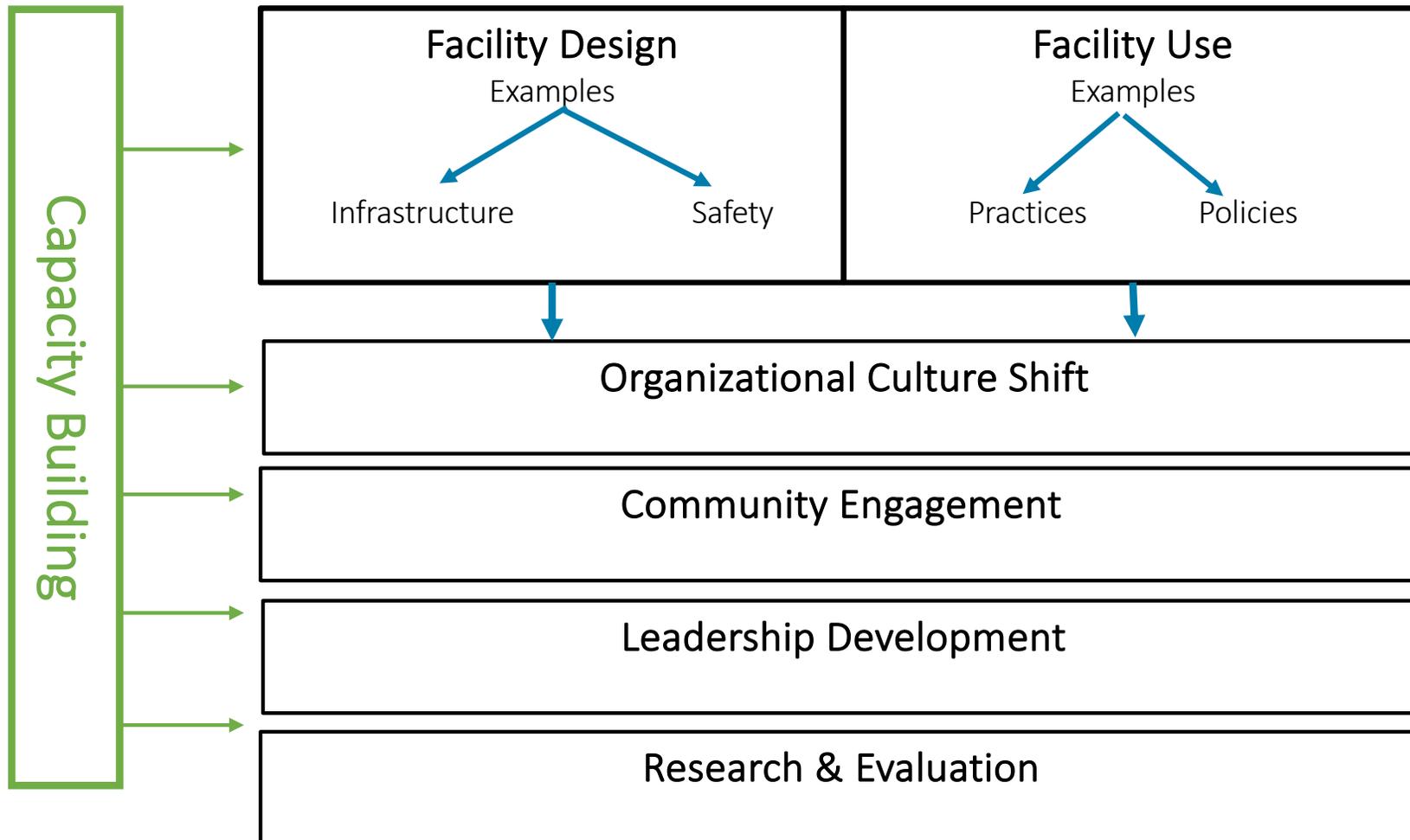
Supports Needed to Increase Participation



- Grant Funds 77.6
 - Resources such as a toolkit 62.7
 - Training 61.7
 - Templates / examples 55.3
 - Networking with peers 54.3
 - Coaching / mentoring 46.8
 - Other (please specify) 16.0
-
- *Specifically noted was assistance with influencing leaders & decision-makers in providing leadership in this area

Findings from All Sources

7 Themes



*Some address **WHAT** should or should not happen while others are more focused on **HOW** to change the situation.*

Findings from all Sources (1)

Organizational Culture Shift

Formula/Tradition/Greatest revenue
Gender doesn't play a role / Lack of expertise
Lack of child care
Needs of the community unknown
Lack of diversity in staff

Findings from all Sources (2)

Community Engagement

Needs of women, girls, gender diverse people unknown
(didn't ask)

Women, girls, gender diverse people did not ask

Intersectionality

Findings from all Sources (3)

Leadership Development

History/resistance to change
Policy
Tradition / allocation formulas
Lack of diversity in staff and/or expertise
Lack of champions
Need to influence decision makers/advocacy
Lack of women in leadership positions

Findings from all Sources (4)

Research and Evaluation

Needs of women, girls, gender diverse people unknown
(didn't ask)
Organizational readiness/interest
Resources (financial, human)

Focus for the Future

- Primary focus of the resource/tool: **CAPACITY BUILDING**
- It is clear that in order to understand “**what**” to do (e.g. program, design), it is critical to understand the importance of the issue, the needs of the community, and how to influence policy- and decision-makers
- Based on the interviews and survey responses, there seems to be a need to provide people with the “**how**”: How to gather empirical and other evidence; how to use different methods to determine the needs of the community; how to influence leaders and decision-makers; how to create policy
- As a result of having these skills, and carrying out the activities, the “**what**” can be determined and implemented.
- Consider the idea of completing an organizational assessment. Based on their stage of readiness/current situation, we can determine:
 - What currently exists that can support them
 - Tools needed
 - Type of approach

Capacity Building (1)



- An organization's ability to adopt change depends on its capacity.
- Crosses all the other themes
- Understanding community's diversity & developing policies of inclusion is key
- Several barriers identified to building capacity
- Research
 - The success of capacity building depends on a thorough assessment of capacity needs, the appropriate selection of strategies to address those needs, and organizational readiness to build capacity and sustain it for a prolonged period of time.
 - Organizational capacity in terms of human (staff & volunteers) and financial resources may be particularly important when implementing participation-focused membership development programs.

Capacity Building (2)



- The capacity needed to embrace facility design & programming to support gender equity needs to begin with heightened awareness and knowledge about the situation, needs & solutions in decision makers and all staff. Knowledge about the concept of gender equity and its importance.
- Heightened awareness & knowledge also needs to be built in to users to gain their support for anticipated changes.
- Capacity to understand the needs, interests and fears of girls & women who are not participating was mentioned repeatedly.
- Enhanced capacity is needed to market opportunities to unreached markets effectively (e.g., not using fit, confident people)
- Community Sport Capacity Scale recommended as a potential model
- Capacity to implement strategic directions/priorities (e.g., gender equity emphasis) when it is challenging to just meet programming demands (even more challenging during COVID)

Activities



Training

Readiness Ruler
Leadership Development
(assessing best way to deliver)
Organizational Culture Shift
Community Engagement
Facility design
Evaluation



Online Toolkit



Marketing and Communications



Community of Practice (new grant?)