

# NWT SPAR Framework

March 29, 2019

## Purpose of the SPAR Framework

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' (MACA) vision is: *Responsible, responsive community governments, citizens and youth in safe and vibrant communities*. Under the MACA goal of "Vibrant, healthy communities" MACA seeks to achieve a Territory where:

*Healthy, active people contribute to the quality of life in our communities. Initiatives that are relevant to the cultures of the North and are focused on healthy lifestyles and positive choices strengthen the fabric of our communities. An active volunteer sector creates a sense of belonging and pride leading to community well-being.*

The Sport, Recreation and Youth (SRY) Division within MACA is responsible for achieving the objectives related to this goal, supporting other goals within MACA and for supporting the Minister Responsible for Youth in the discharge of his/her duties.

In March 2018 the Government of Northwest Territories passed the new *Western Canada Lotteries Act*. The Act, which established the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund, will come into force on April 1, 2019. It gives control of the Western Canada Lotteries Program to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA).

The Government of the Northwest Territories has endorsed three national policies /frameworks pertaining to sport, physical activity and recreation<sup>1</sup>, and plans to align its own SPAR Framework with those national initiatives.

The GNWT's Mandate for 2016-2019 (Revised) contains commitments for which the Sport, Recreation and Youth Division has lead responsibility, including establishing a Physical Activity Strategy, which will be included in the SPAR Framework.

The NWT SPAR Framework will provide cohesive direction to the work of both Sport, Recreation and Youth Division and sector partners in light of these directions. The SPAR Framework, once finalized, will guide program and funding decisions.

The SPAR Framework is a government framework which the Territorial and Regional Organizations (TROs) and Territorial Sport Organizations (TSOs) have had an opportunity to influence with their input.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Canadian Sport Policy (2012), Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015), and A Common Vision for Increasing Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada: Let's Get Moving (2018)*.

After the Minister has approved the final SPAR Framework, MACA will develop an evaluation framework to determine the extent to which the ways in which the government is implementing the Framework is achieving what are the intended outcomes.

## **Current Delivery of Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Programs in Northwest Territories**

Volunteers and dedicated staff are a key component of the SPAR delivery system in the Northwest Territories (NWT).

SPAR programming and services are provided through a collective effort of Government (Territorial, Indigenous, Municipal), non-government organizations (Territorial, Regional and sport / program specific) and educational authorities who work together to support active healthy lifestyle opportunities for residents. The Government of Canada also provides funding support.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), through MACA is responsible for policy, funding and some direct programming. MACA's Sport, Recreation and Youth Division include a headquarters team of seven staff primarily responsible for policy and program management and a regional team of ten (two in each regional centre) who worked directly with community governments, schools and others to provide advice and assistance on sport, physical activity and recreation. Regional staff report directly to Regional Superintendents to ensure coordination of all MACA programming to communities.

Outside of the GNWT, three territorial and one regional organization (TROs) offer funding and deliver numerous programs. TROs have common goals related to developing capacity in active healthy lifestyles through sport, physical activity and recreation program participation. The Sport North Federation (SNF), the Mackenzie Recreation Association<sup>2</sup> (MRA), the NWT Recreation and Parks Association (NWTRPA), and the Aboriginal Sport Circle of the NWT (ASCNWT) deliver forms of sport and recreation programming. Territorial Sport Organizations (TSO) exist for most sports. Each of these organizations has its own mission/vision and each reports to an independent board of directors. The primary source of funding for these organizations is through MACA (directly or indirectly through the proceeds of the Western Canada Lottery Program).

At the community level, most recreation facilities (arenas, ball diamonds, etc.) are owned, maintained, programmed and staffed by community governments. In almost all communities, a recreation coordinator (and in larger communities, other recreation staff) are employed to operate facilities and offer programs. Volunteer groups in each community are also an important part of the leadership in programming.

Schools are one of the main sources of programming for sport, physical activity and recreation initiatives. Teachers and other education staff are a critical part of the system. All communities (usually at the school) have a gymnasium or community hall used for programming purposes. Most communities do not have a trained physical education teacher.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Mackenzie Recreation Association serves the communities in the Dehcho, South Slave and North Slave Regions. The Department and the NWT Sport and Recreation Council provide similar services to the Beaufort, Delta and Sahtu regions in lieu of a similar organization in that area.

## **Main Providers of Programs and Services**

There are four main providers of Programs and Services:

- a. Community Governments (Municipalities and Bands) own and provide most the services from community recreation facilities (arenas, pools, community halls and some gyms)
- b. Schools provide many of the school gymnasium-based afterschool and evening / weekend programs either directly or by providing volunteers with access. Many of the volunteers are teachers.
- c. TROs and TSOs all provide programming services at various levels. Many also provide financial support to (a) and (b) for their initiatives
- d. Volunteer groups (sport clubs, Friendship Centres, Youth Centres and others) all provide a range of services

## **Workshops – November 2018, February 2019**

*A workshop was held in November 2018 to develop an outline of the NWT SPAR Framework. Participants included staff from Sport, Recreation and Youth Division, MACA, NWT Sport and Recreation Council, representatives of the TROs (NWT Recreation and Parks Association - NWTRPA, Aboriginal Sport Circle NWT, Sport North Federation, Mackenzie Recreation Association) and communities from the Beaufort, Delta and Sahtu regions.*

*Subsequently, the four sector organizations noted above decided to use a facilitated process in February 2019 to develop a collective response to MACA on the framework draft. MACA participated fully in this process, as did the NWT Sport and Recreation Council. The results of their work is summarized in a report.<sup>3</sup>*

*The following draft SPAR Framework is an amalgamation of the work done in November 2018, and February 2019.*

## **1. Vision Statement**

A Vision statement characterizes where the NWT intends to go with sport, physical activity and recreation – our preferred future. It describes what SRY Division as well as the TROs and TSOs aspire to accomplish in the sector, with a time horizon of about 10 years. A vision should create an emotional pull and should attract people to identify with it. A vision acts as a magnetic north and aligns diverse directions.

### **Vision Statement:**

**A healthy Northwest Territories through accessible and meaningful sport, physical activity and recreation.**

The thinking behind this statement is that the people of NWT will become healthy by participating fully in sport, physical activity and recreation. As well, the opportunities for participation must allow all NWT residents access to participate and be active for life. And opportunities for participation should be developed in response to community need, thereby being meaningful to the residents of the communities.

## **2. Mandate**

The Mandate is the legal authority for an organization or government to act and is usually based in legislation, or for an organization, in its articles of incorporation.

---

<sup>3</sup> Roxane Poulin Consulting: *NWT Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation SPAR Framework: Report on revised themes and goals*. March 2019.

The mandate for the sport, physical activity and recreation sector should address all areas where sport, physical activity and recreation is offered and for whom participation in sport, physical activity and recreation can result in achievement of well-being.

Northerners of all ages include children and youth, elders, persons with a disability, persons with mental illness and addictions, and those living in poverty.

**Mandate:**

**The mandate of the NWT sport, physical activity and recreation sector is to promote social, physical and emotional well-being of Northerners of all ages.**

**Well-being will be promoted by providing Northerners with sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities that develop healthy lifestyles; by building youth capacity and community leadership; and by fostering healthy families.**

**Key to delivery of these services is a strong partnership with and enhanced capacity of the territorial and regional organizations that facilitate delivery of sport, physical activity and recreation.**

### 3. Principles

Principles are statements of belief governing behaviour and guide decision-making on program design, funding, delivery and evaluation.

Principles guide decision making of both program funders and program deliverer, for example, they may form part of a funding program requirement, that funding proposals demonstrate an effort to meet the principles. As another example, program deliverers would ideally consider these principles in program design and delivery.

Principles form a clear, concise and shared meaning of beliefs, priorities, and direction. With these principles, every participant/player in the sport, physical activity and recreation sector understands and therefore can contribute to the sector, in that context.

The following principles will guide sport, physical activity and recreation in NWT:

- a) Physical literacy developed and nurtured over the life span** – Physical literacy is the foundation for an active lifestyle and is a life-long journey. Greater physical literacy results in more opportunities for physical activity and a healthier lifestyle.

Physical literacy is cyclical. Each component leads to the next, and then feeds back on itself. Skills and competence lead to confidence, and confidence creates the motivation and enjoyment to stay active. When people stay active, their skills and competence increase,

and they become even more confident and motivated. This cycle is shown in the illustration below.<sup>4</sup>



- b) **Community-focused** – The delivery of sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities has a community focus, incorporates Northern approaches, recognizes tradition and is inclusive. Programs and services delivered in communities are innovative, adaptive and meaningful to their participants.
- c) **Quality** – All programs and services are ethical, designed to increase the good, safe experiences that participants have with sport, physical activity and recreation programming and decrease the bad, unsafe experiences. Good, quality, ethical programming is technically sound and demonstrates respect for participants.
- d) **Collaborative** – Sport, physical activity and recreation is built on collaboration with other sectors and partners and is fostered through partnerships that are transparent and sustainable. Resources, knowledge, and information are shared among sector partners and between sector partners and government.

---

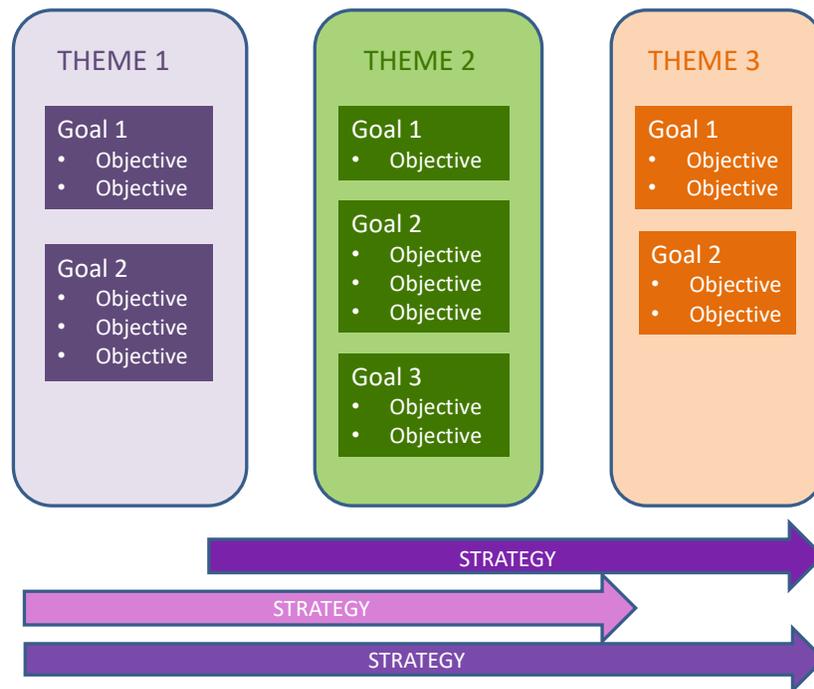
<sup>4</sup> Sport for Life Society: [Aboriginal Communities Active for Life](#) (2017) p. 9

- e) **Effective** - Monitoring and evaluation of programs and policies support improvement and accountability. An evaluation framework supports continuous improvement so that programs and policies can achieve their intended outcomes.

## 4. Themes

**THEMES** describe the broad *thematic aspects* of the Framework based on the mandate as described above. **GOALS** are a description of *high-level outcomes* the NWT sport, physical activity and recreation sector are striving to achieve in each thematic area. An outcome can be thought of as the result or change we want to see happen from our efforts. **OBJECTIVES** are more specific, measurable and relevant *target outcomes* that will allow us to determine whether we are making progress towards our goals.

**STRATEGIES** describe the broad *approaches* we will take to achieve the goals (the “how”). From strategies, we can determine what **ACTIONS** are needed by one or more group to implement the strategy.<sup>5</sup>



There are eight themes. Each is followed by points that explain and expand on the theme.

<sup>5</sup> Poulin Consulting Report (ibid)

## **THEME 1: Capacity building**

The SPAR Framework will support:

- The participation of SPAR professionals and volunteers in the planning and development of the sector.
- Cooperation between and information sharing among sector partners so that there is effective use of resources.
- Active engagement with all segments of society to support SPAR
- The delivery of youth development and capacity building initiatives in a way that supports and respects the needs of the family and the community.

## **THEME 2: Places and spaces**

The SPAR Framework will support:

- The development of supportive and sustainable physical environments that allow for SPAR activities,
- The removal of barriers so that regular physical activity can be a daily part of our lives.
- The development of environments where disadvantaged members of our communities are welcomed and offered emotional, physical and cultural supports

## **THEME 3: Sector leadership and advocacy**

The SPAR Framework will support:

- The right to participate in sport, physical activity and recreation in an environment that is safe, welcoming, inclusive, ethical and respectful, and one that protects the dignity, rights and health of all participants.
- Sport, physical activity and recreation that is free from harassment, abuse, unethical behaviour, and discrimination, regardless of sex, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion, language, age, sexual orientation, ability, or any other basis.
- Initiatives that strive to ensure and sustain a safe, welcoming, inclusive, and respectful environment that is free from harassment, abuse, and discrimination.

## **THEME 4: Participation and inclusion**

The SPAR Framework will support:

- An environment that welcomes and supports the participation of all NWT residents in sport, physical activity and recreation according to their needs and interests
- The identification of and actions that improve access to and the benefits of sport, physical activity and recreation experiences

- The development of recreational leadership capacity in individuals, communities and non-government organizations that supports participation and inclusion
- Community input and the development of community leadership so that programming is community driven and meets needs of community

## **THEME 5: Community and user focus**

The SPAR Framework will support:

- A community and user centered focus on policy and program development.
- The development of communities through SPAR consistent with the Sport for Development goal of the Canadian Sport Policy

## **THEME 6: Sector collaboration**

The SPAR Framework will support:

- Cooperation between and information sharing among sector partners so that there is effective use of resources
- The participation of SPAR professionals and volunteers in the planning and development of the sector.

## **THEME 7: Implementation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action**

The SPAR Framework will support:

- Implementation of the spirit and intent of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Incorporation of Indigenous languages, culture and traditional knowledge within the sport, physical activity and recreation sector.
- Offering programs and services in traditional languages and consistent with the [“Aboriginal Long-term Participant Development Pathway”](#).

## **THEME 8: Alignment with national policies or frameworks for sport, physical activity and recreation**

The SPAR Framework will also support implementation of the goals and strategies consistent with Northern contexts in:

- The Canadian Sport Policy
- The Framework for Recreation in Canada
- A Common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: Let's Get Moving

## 6. Goals

Themes are what the SRY Division and the sector wants to focus on to achieve the Vision for NWT in recreation, sport and physical activities. Goals describe what high-level outcomes the Division and the sector want to achieve within each of these thematic areas.

Goals represent broad statements of intention of what needs to be accomplished within each Theme. Goals are compatible with the Principles, are acceptable and understandable, and progress towards achieving the Vision. Objectives represent more specific actions for accomplishment of a task.

### THEME 1: Capacity building

*Goals:*

- a. Define and develop the SPAR profession in the NWT.
- b. Build a community of competent, connected and supported NWT SPAR professionals.
- c. Enable competent and effective SPAR organizations at the territorial and community level.
- d. Support and develop SPAR volunteers in all communities of the NWT.

### THEME 2: Places and spaces

*Goals:*

- a. Promote best practices that optimize the way places and spaces are designed, built and used to promote structured and unstructured sport, physical activity and recreation.
- b. Support communities to renew and maintain sport and recreation infrastructure to meet community needs and interests.
- c. Champion the development and maintenance of parks, protected areas, trails and outdoor play areas (e.g. playgrounds, beaches)

### THEME 3: Sector leadership and advocacy

### *Goals:*

- a. Improve public understanding of the benefits of participating in sport, physical activity and recreation.
- b. Support the child's right to play.
- c. Lead and support efforts to ensure residents of the NWT have access to sport, physical activity and recreation that is safe and free of abuse, harassment and discrimination.
- d. Inform and influence policy and decision-making in the NWT and contribute to evidence-based approaches.
- e. Improve interagency (cross-sector) collaboration on issues that impact the health and well-being of NWT residents and communities.
- f. Align and collaborate with other community and GNWT initiatives that support the SPAR framework.

## **THEME 4: Participation and inclusion**

### *Goals:*

- a. Grow the levels of participation by NWT residents in sport, recreation and physical activity throughout the life-course in a variety of environments.
- b. Reduce sedentary behaviour through sports, physical activity and recreation.
- c. Enable the personal development of NWT residents through participation in sports, physical activity and recreation.
- d. Provide NWT residents with the opportunity to improve and measure their performance in competition in a safe and ethical manner.
- e. Improve access to, and participation in recreation and sport programs for underserved populations and individuals who face barriers to participation (e.g. economically disadvantaged, sexual orientation and identities, disabilities and special needs, women and girls etc.)

## **THEME 5: Community and user focus**

### *Goals:*

- a. Support program development and delivery that reflects and responds to the unique needs, interests and capacity of each community.
- b. Build community through sport, physical activity and recreation.
- c. Make the SPAR sector easier for all users to access and navigate.

## **THEME 6: Sector Collaboration**

### *Goals:*

- a. Build a more effective and efficient sector by reducing duplication and competition among SPAR partners and increasing coordination and collaboration.
- b. Develop a culture of monitoring and evaluation within the sector that allows us to identify and apply lessons learned through experience.

## **THEME 7: Implementation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action**

### *Goals:*

- a. Provide public education that tells the stories of Indigenous athletes in history
- b. Take action to ensure long-term Indigenous athlete development and growth including elite Indigenous athlete development programs
- c. Support the North American Indigenous Games including providing funding for hosting, team preparation and travel
- d. Work with the federal government to ensure that national policies that promote sport, recreation and physical activity and build capacity in the sport system, are inclusive of Indigenous peoples
- e. In collaboration with the federal government, establish stable funding and access to, community sport programs reflecting Indigenous peoples' diverse cultures and traditional sport activities
- f. Advance decolonization and reconciliation through recreation and sport programs

## **THEME 8: Alignment with national policies or frameworks for sport, physical activity and recreation**

### *Goals:*

- a. Prioritize the design of spaces and places to increase recreational physical activity and utilitarian physical activity opportunities across all settings (e.g., communities, schools, public spaces, green spaces) while also increasing accessibility of existing facilities, venues and infrastructure
- b. Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and help to build strong, caring communities.
- c. NWT athletes have the opportunity to systematically improve and measure their performance against others in competition in a safe and ethical manner

- d. NWT athletes are systematically achieving results at the highest levels of international competition through fair and ethical means
- e. Sport is used as a tool for social and economic development, and the promotion of positive values at home and abroad