



CANADIAN
WOMEN & SPORT

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF SPORT,
TOGETHER

Impact Report
2019-2020



TRANSFORMATIVE AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

is critical to the future of sport.

To build a thriving sport system in Canada, the perspectives and contributions of women and girls need to be given the attention they deserve. As leaders and decision makers, we must demonstrate through our actions that when women and girls embrace sport, they're embracing a space where they can feel supported, powerful, and safe.

The first half of 2020 has been challenging and illuminating. The COVID-19 pandemic represents catastrophic loss, but particularly for women, racialized people, and low-income communities. Black Lives Matter protests across the world are calling attention to systemic anti-black racism in policing and beyond. We must remain humble and diligent in our pursuit of equity and commit to carrying forward the energy from this moment.

At Canadian Women & Sport, we build better sport through gender equity. We support sport leaders and organizations to champion girls and women at every turn. We know that a more equitable sport system creates the conditions for girls and women to thrive and lead everywhere.

In this report, we share why this effort is so important and what we've been working on over the last year to make gender equity a reality.

With the support of our partners, we're continuing to inspire innovative work and build a better sport system for everyone. Our collective journey towards gender equity requires exceptional teamwork, dedication, and vision – and we're not there yet. There's a place for everyone in designing the future of sport.



Allison Sandmeyer Graves
CEO



Nathalie Cook
Board Chair



WE ASPIRE TO ACHIEVE EQUITY FOR WOMEN IN SOCIETY THROUGH THE **POWER OF SPORT.**

Canadian Women & Sport is dedicated to creating an equitable and inclusive Canadian sport and physical activity system that empowers girls and women—as active participants and leaders—within and through sport. With a focus on systemic change, we partner with sport organizations, governments, and leaders to challenge the status quo and build better sport through gender equity.





WHAT DOES **SPORT PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP** LOOK LIKE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN CANADA?

The Rally Report, produced in partnership with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities and with research completed by IMI International, explores current Canadian trends in sport participation with a specific focus on the target groups of girls ages 6–18.

[Find more research and recommendations in the report.](#)



AS OF
JANUARY 2020...



as many as

62%

of Canadian girls are not participating in any kind of sport at all

1 in 3

girls who start out in sport will drop out in adolescence, compared to 1 in 10 boys in the same period.

Women represent only

3%

of head coaches for men's and **24%** of head coaches for women's U Sports and CCAA teams.

39%

of board members at Canadian National and Multisport Organizations and Sport Institutes are women. There are **8** organizations that either have no women or only **1** woman at the board table.

CANADIAN WOMEN & SPORT CONFRONTS THESE CHALLENGES IN **THREE KEY WAYS:**

1

We help sport organizations and sport leaders understand how to **retain girls in sport** by building safe and welcoming environments for them to play and compete.

2

We work with sport boards and leaders to **advance more women into leadership positions** in the sport sector.

3

We work with government, media, corporate partners, and other influencers, shaping **sport culture and policy** to create an equitable playing field.



IN OUR 2019–2020 FISCAL YEAR, WE:

Engaged almost **3000 leaders** through our workshops, webinars, and events, helping them to better understand barriers to gender equity and gain new skills to create change;

Ran an average of **8 workshops per month** across Canada on topics ranging from leadership development to coaching girls to building inclusive sport spaces for LGBTQ2IS+ participants;

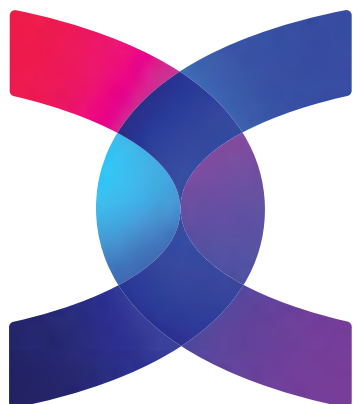
Trained **over 40 new Canadian Women & Sport facilitators** to champion gender equity in their communities;

Collaborated with **over 100 organizations** to develop new policies, practices, and programs that support a sector-wide shift towards gender equity;

Welcomed almost **150,000 visitors to our website** to explore our gender equity resources and learning opportunities;

Introduced **7 new initiatives** and resources, putting turn-key tools and solutions into the hands of sport leaders and decision makers.

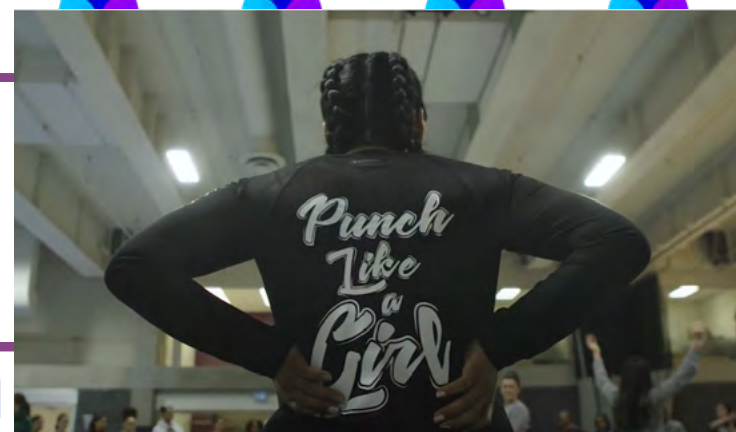




After almost forty years as CAAWS, we became
CANADIAN WOMEN & SPORT
in February of 2020.

WE REINVIGORATED OUR MISSION
with a new name and a new look, elevating
our brand and our website to match.

Our belief in the power of equity and inclusion drives us to keep pushing forward. [Watch our manifesto video](#) and check out www.womenandsport.ca to see more of what Canadian Women & Sport is all about.





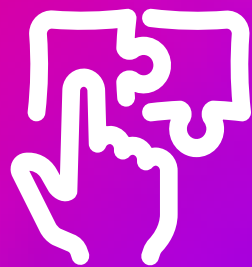
BUILDING CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

We help sport organizations build the skills and knowledge they need to effectively address inequities and realize the benefits of gender equity.

Our resources and learning opportunities help sport leaders understand what's at stake and how they can use their influence to create better sport for everyone.



BASED ON OUR WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS...



95%

of survey respondents reported learning new things about gender equity and related topics.

94%

of survey respondents reported learning new skills.

96%

of survey respondents said the information and skills they learned were valuable for their work.

98%

of respondents were somewhat or very confident that they would be able to implement new ideas.



43% of adolescent girls self-reported that the quality of sport was a barrier to their participation. Survey responses indicated that **POSITIVE ROLE MODELS, QUALITY COACHING, and A FOCUS ON DESIGNING SPORT FOR GIRLS** are needed to improve overall sport quality.

Canadian Women & Sport,
The Rally Report, (2020).

Since 2004, Canadian Women & Sport has awarded **\$235,000 IN GRANTS** **THROUGH OUR WISE FUND** to support innovative programming for women and girls.

Lack of funding is consistently identified by sport leaders as a top barrier to improving gender equity and quality of sport. The [WISE Fund](#) program helps address this gap.

This year, almost 300 sport organizations across the country applied for funding to advance gender equity in Canadian sport. With the support of Sport Canada and our review committees, we awarded 30 WISE Fund grants of \$2500 each to organizations representing almost every province and territory.



STORIES FROM WISE FUND RECIPIENTS:

“We’ve seen how when you bring like-minded people together especially in this case, we’re talking Indigenous girls... it helps them build that confidence that they need. The one thing that stands out to me is how many girls are actually saying they are Indigenous now. They’re seeing it’s not something to be ashamed of. **IT’S SOMETHING THEY CAN SHARE AND SHOWCASE.**”

Cherlyn Billy

Founder of Storm Selects Lacrosse.



Photo: Storm Selects Lacrosse

Storm Selects works with a team of Indigenous girls to grow the game of lacrosse in British Columbia and to develop future leaders and role models. They received a WISE Fund grant in 2017.

STORIES FROM WISE FUND RECIPIENTS:

“From seeing how this symposium affected the girls that I went with and myself and how we were empowered in both sports and leadership, I think it’s very important to encourage these kinds of things for young girls from an early age and continuing in their young adulthood. It was awesome to see the different types of amazing women doing great in their respective career fields.
IT JUST OPENED DOORS THAT I DIDN’T NECESSARILY KNOW WERE THERE.”

Rachel Ajibolade

*participant in the Ontario Basketball Association’s
all-girls high school education symposium*



Photo: Ontario Basketball Association

The Ontario Basketball Association received a WISE Fund grant in 2015 to support the symposium.



Organizations are as much as **158% MORE LIKELY TO UNDERSTAND TARGET AUDIENCE** when they have at least one member who represents their target's gender, race, age, sexual orientation, or culture.

Center for Talent Innovation, Innovation, Diversity, and Market Growth, (2013).

In 2019, we started building our **GENDER EQUITY PLAYBOOK** – a full-service program that supports sport leaders to strengthen their organizations by making more equitable decisions.

In 2020, we'll be launching the Playbook with three brand new services piloted by six Canadian national and multi-sport service organizations:

- › our new **e-learning module**, Gender Equity LENS, designed to give sport leaders the framework they need to bring a gender lens to their everyday decision-making;
- › our custom gender equity **assessment program**; and,
- › our **action planning** consultation service.

The Gender Equity Playbook Assessment Program was developed in partnership with Ryerson University's Diversity Institute and Ryerson University's Future of Sport Lab.

The Playbook was piloted by Alpine Canada, Athletics Canada, Rowing Canada, Canada Snowboard, Sport for Life, and Baseball Canada. We are grateful to Sport Canada for their support of the Gender Equity Playbook.



Photo: Trae Nguyen

STORIES FROM OUR PILOT PARTNERS:

“ENSURING GENDER EQUITY ACROSS ALL AREAS OF OUR ORGANIZATION IS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR US and we see this as an excellent opportunity to get a transparent overview of where Canada Snowboard currently is at in regard to ensuring equitable opportunities for women in Snowboarding. As a pilot NSO, we are really stoked to be able to collaborate with Canadian Women & Sport to have input into the development of the Gender Equity Playbook.”

Dustin Heise

Executive Director, Canada Snowboard

“In our 100th year as Canada’s ski racing organization, Alpine Canada can look back to the past where gender equity in the coaching ranks was non-existent. Today, at the entry levels of coaching, the gender split is getting very equitable but **THERE IS STILL MUCH MORE WORK STILL AHEAD OF US AT OTHER COACHING LEVELS.** It is exciting to have the support of Canadian Women & Sport both with this pilot and in all the topics they support.”

Brien Perry

Director, Domestic Sport, Alpine Canada

This year we led consultations with
14 ORGANIZATIONS,
including Softball Canada, the Town
of Aurora, the Ontario University
Athletics, to help them build their
gender equity strategies.

“Working through this project has been exciting and the Town has received so much positive feedback on proactively taking steps to address gender equity. As well, we have started discussions with potential partners to take promotion of women and girls in sport to a new level in this community.

**IT IS ALL EXCITING AND ENERGIZING
DURING THIS UNPRECEDENTED TIME.”**

Erin Hamilton
Town of Aurora



In 2019, we kicked off our **EQUITY IN COACHING PROJECT** – a collaboration between **Canadian Women & Sport** and the **Coaching Association of Canada**.

Senior leaders told us in a Canada-wide survey that they wanted to better understand effective practices to recruit, retain, and advance women coaches and support in embedding gender equity into strategic and operational planning.

We developed a training program and hosted workshops with 15 National Sport Organizations to help them better understand barriers for women in coaching and implement an action plan to level the playing field. This year, we'll be developing a new resource based on this training.

80% of the workshop participants said that the information they gained through the workshop was very valuable to their work.





A focus on gender equity from a holistic organizational perspective can **REDUCE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH GENDER EQUITY** among volunteers, coaches, and key stakeholder groups.

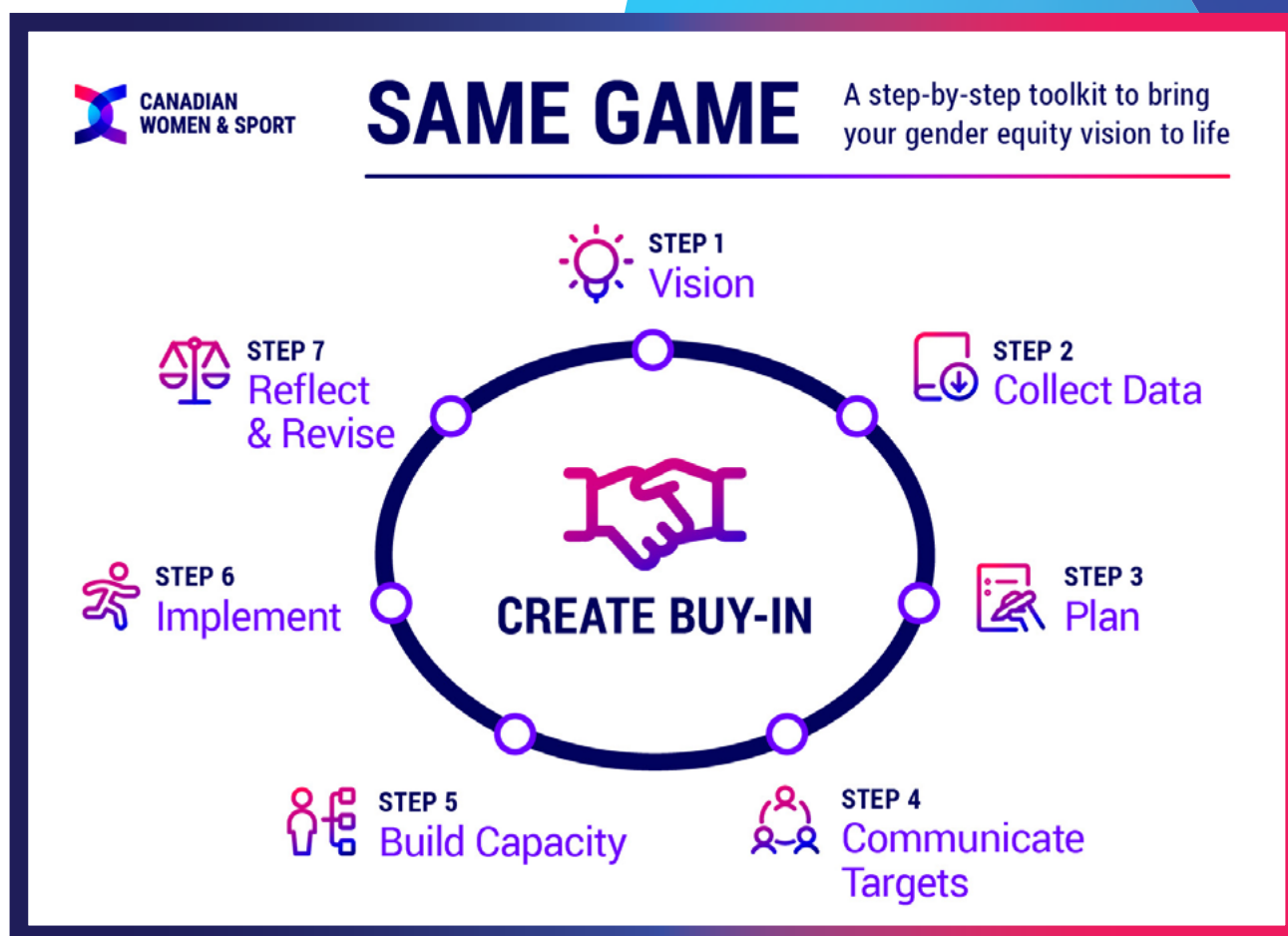
Wicker & Breuer, 2013

Since 2017, we've been working with Ontario Soccer and the Ontario Basketball Association to develop a **STEP-BY-STEP TOOLKIT** to help sport clubs develop a gender equity vision and bring it to life by connecting it to overall organizational priorities.

The result is **Same Game**, a 7-step process with supporting resources that was evaluated and validated by Dr. Shannon Kerwin and her research team in the Department of Sport Management at Brock University.

Same Game has already provided the guidance to help 17 soccer and basketball clubs in Ontario define gender equity goals that bring value to their sport for all involved. In 2020, we'll be launching a free online toolkit that any sport organization can use to do the same.

We are grateful to Women and Gender Equality Canada for their support of the Same Game project.



STORIES FROM OUR SAME GAME PARTNERS:

“The Same Game project really helped us with a framework that we needed to bring all these grand ideas together. **FOR US THE IMPACT HAS BEEN TREMENDOUS.** We have more [women] that are coaching now, girls that are hopefully more engaged, and those are things we’ll continue to feel for years down the road.”

Sara Orrell

General Manager, Guelph Soccer

“The model really showed us that we have so much more that we could be doing. **IT’S MORE THAN JUST WRITING A NICE POLICY.** It’s about actually implementing something that’s going to provide innate value to your athletes. [Same Game] gave us actual tangible resources on how we could be doing that.”

Erin Macaulay

Events and Program Manager, Oshawa Kicks Soccer Club



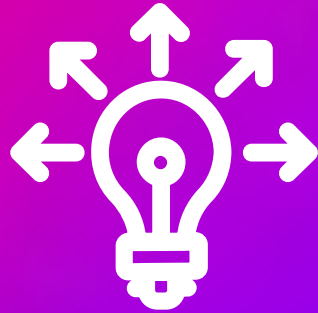
BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND CHAMPIONS

Building strong networks and sharing best practices between organizations and sectors are crucial to our collective success in equity projects.

Our programs and events connect people and help them imagine what's possible when gender equity works. When our allies and champions are confident speaking up and taking action, we can create change beyond what we could accomplish on our own.



BASED ON OUR WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS...



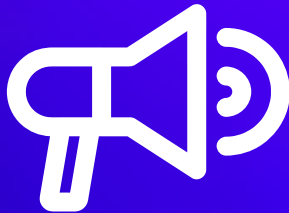
97%

of respondents planned to promote the ideas they learned during Canadian Women & Sport events in their networks.



100%

of respondents agree that gender equity should be a strategic priority across the sport sector.



100%

of participants who attended our webinars planned to promote Canadian Women & Sport sessions to their peers.



At our International Women's Day Event, we invited Canadian sport leaders to reflect on how they could use their power and influence to **CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE** in the lives of women and girls in sport.



Our panelists were (L to R): **Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah**, Executive Director at The Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity, **Maya McDonald**, facilitator and community educator, **Sally Dimachki**, Manager, Investment Readiness Program, Canadian Women's Foundation, and **Karen O'Neill**, CEO, Canadian Paralympic Committee.

We asked each of our International Women's Day guests to make a commitment to advancing equity in sport.

HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID:

I COMMIT...

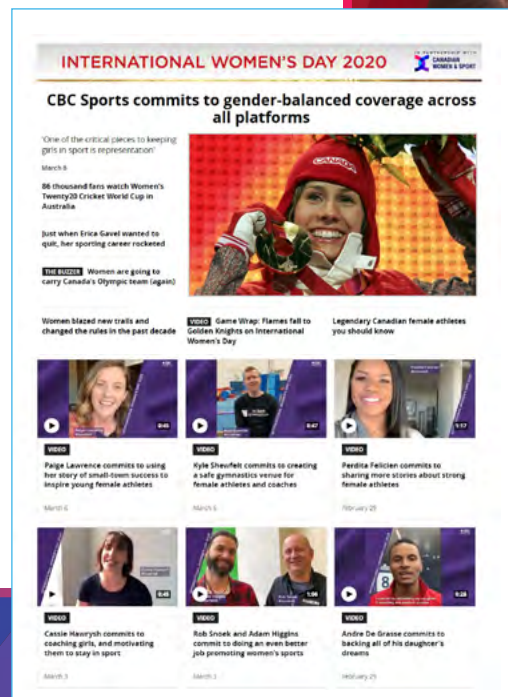
- › to leading by example and staying true to my values.
- › to bringing visibility to barriers impacting marginalized communities.
- › to working on community education about the importance of gender equity.
- › to starting small and doing something (however little) each day.
- › to being an example to younger generations.
- › to ongoing and continuous learning.



WE PARTNERED WITH CBC SPORTS TO LAUNCH A DIGITAL **#ICOMMIT** CAMPAIGN, ASKING SPORT LEADERS TO TELL US HOW THEY WOULD HELP KEEP GIRLS IN SPORT.

As part of this campaign, CBC Sports committed to gender-balanced coverage across all platforms.

Perdita Felicien, Jennifer Heil, Anastasia Bucsis, and Andre De Grasse were among the high-profile athletes who submitted video commitments that were shared on CBC Sports' International Women's Day [website](#).





89%

of national sport organizations in Canada believe gender equity is either **ESSENTIAL** or **VERY IMPORTANT** for their organization.

Canadian Women & Sport,
The Rally Report, (2020).

BUILDING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN SECTORS

Since 2017, we've been working with 19 organizations across Canada that support newcomers, helping them connect with community sport and engage newcomer women and girls in physical activity programming designed with their input. Here's what our project partners had to say:

"IT CERTAINLY OPENED MY EYES to the mosaic of Canadian society on my doorstep and the richness it brings if we embrace it. Moving forward, there is going to be more impetus for sport organizations to look to include newcomers. There are tremendous reciprocal benefits."

Spider Jones
Sport North



“[The women in our program] felt less isolated and happy to have an activity just for them. **I NOW REALLY KNOW THE REALITY** of newcomer women and I understand how unifying sport has been for them and how much they need it.”

Dominique Perrault
Femmes Relais

“[Our participants] met new friends and built a lot of connections through this group. **IT’S BEEN A REALLY GREAT PROGRAM FOR THESE WOMEN.** They love it. A handful of them are always asking, ‘what are we doing next?’”

Melissa Mitchell
Moosejaw Newcomer Welcome Centre



In June of 2019, we co-hosted two sessions at the
WOMEN DELIVER GLOBAL CONFERENCE
with Women Win and Eir Soccer.

L to R: Jennifer Heil, Sarah Murray,
Stephanie Talsma, Thais Olivetti,
Renuka Rathore, Waneek Horn-Miller,
Terri Temelini



We brought sport leaders from Canada, Turkey, India, Brazil, and the United States together to talk about gender equity and sport. Here's some of what they had to say:

"Sport can be a powerful tool to get girls where they deserve to be."

Thais Olivetti, co-founder and Executive Director of Empodera

"Sport gave me an opportunity to thrive rather than just survive."

Waneek Horn Miller, community advocate, sports commentator, Olympian

"Because of sport, girls have the leadership to make decisions for themselves and take opportunities to carve their own path."

Renuka Rathore, netball coach the Naz Foundation India Trust

"Sport has the power to change the gender equality agenda."

Sarah Murray, Executive Director, Women's Wilderness Institute, Former Executive Director (US), Women Win

We partner with sport organizations, governments, and leaders to build better sport through **GENDER EQUITY.**

This progress would not be possible without the support of our funders, partners, [Board of Directors](#), [Impact Research Committee](#), and staff.

Thank you to our funders and supporters for their contributions to this important work: Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, the Government of Ontario, IMI International, Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, Sport Canada, Ryerson University's Future of Sport Lab, and Women and Gender Equality Canada.

Funded by the
Government
of Canada

Canada



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

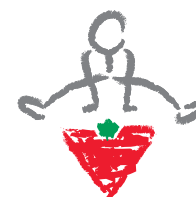
Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

Ontario



**Jumpstart
Bon départ**





THANK YOU

to our partners for their dedication and collaboration. When we support girls and women to reach their fullest potential within and through sport, our communities thrive.

Visit our website for a [full list of our partners](#).



WHAT'S NEXT FOR CANADIAN WOMEN & SPORT?

In 2021, we'll be celebrating our organization's 40th anniversary – and as we continue to grow, we continue to ask ourselves what the future of sport looks like for women and girls. We're determined to continue building a body of work that serves women and girls of all backgrounds and experiences, while still advocating for sport spaces that are inclusive for everyone.

We know that we must take an intersectional approach to gender equity, centering the voices and experiences of women and girls who have been systematically excluded from mainstream sport spaces.



We are excited to continue our journey as gender equity leaders and to share our progress, learning, and resources with you.
IN THE COMING YEAR, WE WILL:

- › Continue to **share the stories**, successes, and expertise of diverse women, girls, and nonbinary people in sport.
- › Produce a variety of virtual **workshops**, **webinars**, and **events** to help sport leaders connect and get inspired;
- › Launch new tools and services like Same Game and the Gender Equity Playbook;
- › Release new **resources** to promote gender equity in coaching and inclusion for newcomer women and girls in sport;
- › Continue to connect sport practitioners to the latest gender equity research through **webinars**, **infographics**, and **videos**.
- › Continue to **highlight organizations** that are implementing innovative policies and practices to reflect gender equity.



READY TO HELP BUILD A GENDER EQUITABLE FUTURE FOR SPORT AND FOR CANADA?

Reach out to Canadian Women and Sport to get [more tools and resources](#) for supporting you in your journey towards gender equity.

Contact us at info@womenandsport.ca.





**CANADIAN
WOMEN & SPORT**

WHERE TO FIND US

   @WomenandSportCA

 Canadian Women & Sport/ Femmes et sport au Canada

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