

**Summary of Findings and Recommendations of the
Report on the Study on Sport for all –
the Participation Patterns of Hong Kong People in Physical Activities**

The report on the Study on Sport for All – the Participation Patterns of Hong Kong People in Physical Activities was prepared by the Consultant, Department of Sports Science and Physical Education of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (Consultant). The report consists of three parts -

- (a) literature review;
- (b) main findings of the Questionnaire Survey; and
- (c) recommendations based on the findings of the Survey.

Literature Review

2. To provide a reference for establishing the definition of “Sport for All” and a set of indicators for measuring the effectiveness of related measures, the Consultant studied documents from eleven study areas, namely: Canada, the European Union, the UK, the USA, Australia, China, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The key results of the literature review are summarised as follows -

- (a) “Sport for All” refers to “creating opportunities and a favourable environment through the collaboration of stakeholders and government support to enable everyone, regardless of gender, age, ability, socio-economic status or ethnicity to participate freely in physical activities and sport.” In most of the study areas, the term “Sport” in Sport for All generally refers to any physical activities that consume energy, including sport and daily activities.
- (b) All the study areas recognise the importance and benefits of sport to the community as well as individuals. To achieve health benefits for individuals, participation in physical activity is generally measured by frequency and intensity. Each study area puts a different emphasis on the promotion of “Sport for All”. Most accept that education systems and school environments are effective channels through which to promote sport among young people.
- (c) With reference to the study areas, the consultant proposed that Hong Kong should adopt “participation in physical activity of a moderate or vigorous intensity for at least three days a week with an accumulation of at least 30 minutes a day (each bout should last at least ten minutes)” as the indicator (**Baseline Indicator**). The Consultant also made reference to the following indicator set for different age groups by the

National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and US Centre for Disease Control (USCDC)/US Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) (**US Indicators**) -

- (i) children (aged 7 to 12): engaged in five days a week of at least 60 minutes (accumulated) of age-appropriate and developmental appropriate physical activity (recommended to be of moderate or vigorous intensity);
 - (ii) youngsters (aged 13 to 19): to engage in at least three days a week of physical activity that lasts at least 20 minutes at a time that require moderate to vigorous intensity of exertion; and
 - (iii) adult (aged 20 or above): to engage in moderately intense physical activity at least five times a week and for at least 30 minutes (accumulated) per day.
- (d) In addition to participation in physical activity, the importance of “education” and “services” as well as indirect participation in physical activity, including being sports volunteers and sports attendees should also be emphasised when promoting “Sport for All”.

Main Findings of the Questionnaire Survey

3. A household survey was designed to collect information on the participation patterns of Hong Kong People in Physical Activity. A total of 5 091 respondents aged seven or above were successfully interviewed. The main findings of the survey are listed below -

Sports Participation

- (a) 65.5% of Hong Kong citizens indicated that they participate in sports at least once in the past three months. Among them, 41.2% (27.0% of Hong Kong citizens) participate in sport at least three times a week, and 80.4% (52.6% of Hong Kong citizens) at least once a week. When compared with the survey conducted by the then Hong Kong Sports Development Board in 2001, this study indicates that the sports participation rate for people aged 15 or above has increased from 48% in 2001 to 63.1% in 2008.
- (b) The top three most popular sports are jogging (13.8%), swimming (13.2%) and badminton (10.1%).
- (c) More than half of the respondents (60.6%) use mainly the leisure facilities of the LCSD or other government departments. Most of the activities are organised by themselves or by friends (85.6%); by schools

or the school sector (9.4%); and by LCSD (5.0%).

- (d) About half of the respondents (46.9%) usually play sport with friends or neighbours, 40.8% play sport alone; and 13.1% play with classmates.
- (e) Hong Kong citizens usually participate more frequently in sport in the morning (35.3%), then in the evening (27.6%) and in the afternoon (20.2%) on weekdays.
- (f) The sports that people most wish to learn are swimming (14.7%), Tai Chi (10.3%) and badminton (8.8%).

Participation in Physical Activity

- (g) According to the study, 48.6% of Hong Kong citizens meet the level of the “baseline indicator” for physical activity (including attending PE lessons). Among those who do not meet this level, 25.6% do only an average of 30 minutes of low intensity physical activity per week on average, whilst 3.1% do less than 30 minutes of low intensity physical activity per week.
- (h) When adopting the “US Indicators” based on age groups, 33.3% of Hong Kong citizens reach the standard level (including attending PE lessons), whilst the percentage of citizens who are inactive is as high as 29.4%.
- (i) Many people (57.4%) in different age groups perceive themselves to be doing enough physical activity when in fact they are not. There is a significant gap between self-evaluation on the sufficient level of physical activity and objective assessment.
- (j) The primary reasons for Hong Kong citizens to participate in physical activity included “keeping fit and healthy” (35.9%), “interest” (12.9%), and “physical activity or sport is a habit in daily life” (11.6%). Primary reasons for not participating in physical activity include “no spare time due to work or study” (30.7%), “tiredness” (17.5%) and “laziness” (14.6%).
- (k) For Hong Kong citizens aged 13 or above, most consider that “strengthening media publicity” (42.1%) and “increasing community sports facilities” (25.7%) could help promote “Sport for All”. 48.8% consider the current sports facilities sufficient and 39.1% of them think otherwise. Those who consider sports facilities in Hong Kong insufficient see the need for more badminton courts (23.1%), swimming pools (20.6%) and sports centres (14.1%).
- (l) People regarded as inactive spend more time watching television or on

computers and less time walking; they prefer to participate in sport alone and most often do fitness exercises or stretching of relatively low intensity.

Recommendations based on the findings of the Survey

4. Based on the survey findings, the Consultant has made the following suggestions -

- (a) The findings and recommendations of the Study should be brought to the attention of stakeholders such as the Government, non-governmental organisations, the National Sports Associations, district sports organisations and schools with a view to enlisting their support in the future development of community sport. Stakeholders should provide more opportunities to their clients to participate in physical activity and sport.
- (b) To encourage more people to participate in physical activity regularly, a more attainable and encouraging indicator suitable for all age groups should be adopted as the starting point for promoting physical activity. This would help encourage in particular members of the public who do not participate in sufficient physical activity to raise their activity levels. As only 48.6% of the respondents meet the standard of the baseline indicator and more than half of Hong Kong citizens (51.4%) cannot meet the indicator, the indicator should be extensively publicised so that the public can be aware of the basic physical activities level required. Inactive and slightly active people should be advised to participate in moderate or vigorous activity for at least 30 minutes (accumulated) per day and three days per week.
- (c) Physical activity and sports strategies should be tailor-made to promote “Sport for All” among three specific levels of sport population groups. At the first level, those who do not do exercise should be made aware of the enjoyment and importance of participation in sport and encouraged to start participating in sport. At the second level, those who do only a low level of physical activity should be encouraged to cultivate a habit of doing sufficient exercise regularly. At the third level those who do regular exercise should be encouraged to maintain their current levels to maintain physical fitness and enjoy exercise.
- (d) The Government should produce Announcements of Public Interest promoting the benefits and importance of regular participation in physical activity and sports and broadcast these in prime-time slots on television, through roadshows and on radio. Simple and easy-to-remember slogans should be drawn up to publicise the benefits of participation in physical activity and sports. Furthermore, relevant

posters should be installed at spots with high pedestrian flow, e.g., MTR stations, bus stops, minibus stands and entrances to public housing estates.

- (e) Members of the public should be encouraged to participate in sports events as spectators or volunteers. Education on various ways to participate in sport should also be further enhanced.
- (f) Diverse activity in different combinations should be provided for different age groups. For example, more activities should be organised for joint participation of parents and children, and more team-based activities should be available to youngsters. In addition, more sport and physical activity for individual participation should be made available to the middle-aged and the elderly. A summary of characteristics of different age groups and the proposed follow up action is at the Appendix.
- (g) Noting that common reasons for not participating in physical activity and sport are because people are “too busy” and “tired”, simple activity that can be done at home or at the workplaces should be designed. In the long run, more opportunities should be provided for different sectors of the community to allow them to have more leisure time and space to participate in physical activity and sports. For example, the implementation of five-day week, making good use of working environments and adding suitable facilities or equipment at the workplace could motivate staff to participate in physical activity and sport. The education authorities should also maximise the use of school resources and through various means encourage students to participate in more physical activity and sports to make this a habit.
- (h) In order to gauge the public’s sports and physical activity participation rate and assess the extent to which strategies to promote “Sport for All” need strengthening or adjusting, a survey on the participation patterns of Hong Kong people in physical activity should be conducted every five years.
- (i) Other relevant studies related to “Sport for All”, for example, on the relationship between participation in physical activity and quality of life, or on the participation levels of sports volunteers and sports spectators should be conducted.
