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Second, improvement of access, to support the development of community-based mechanisms aimed at addressing attitudinal, institutional and informational barriers excluding persons with disabilities from participation in Canadian society.

Third, to create new solutions, that is to facilitate the development by people with disabilities of innovative approaches to participate fully in the social and economic life of Canada.

The achievement of full participation on the part of persons with disabilities will occur only if their concerns are taken into consideration by all sectors of society: business, labour, governments and other organizations. To ensure this happens, groups of persons with disabilities must be able to effectively represent their membership and their issues. This requires groups to be well organized, informed and functionally able to work on behalf of their members. For example, a disability group could bring its membership together to conduct leadership development training workshops, or in collaboration with native band councils, address the needs of persons with disabilities on reserves.

Improvement of access means improving access to education, housing, information and other goods and services in our communities. For example, what are the particular needs of students with disabilities? How can we improve access to services for people living in rural communities?

Your project should address specific, concrete issues and have the potential to initiate change. For example, one could establish a community coalition on transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities to identify issues and present them to the local transportation authority. Or one could share information and ideas with the media about how terminology shapes the way in which persons with disabilities are perceived and could identify current accepted terminology that portrays them in a positive light.

In some cases there are no readily apparent solutions to the issues facing persons with disabilities. In these instances, organizations have to come up with innovative ideas to enable them to take part in all aspects of Canada's social and economic life.

These initiatives could show businesses the capabilities of persons with disabilities and demonstrate that there

are different ways to do tasks on the job. Examples of innovative approaches are the establishment of an independent living resource centre to address cross-disability information and community participation needs in a particular community, or the development of a transitional education training program for use with the disabilities.

As well, the government has the race relations and cross-cultural understanding program. Multiculturalism in the 1990s is about removing the barriers to full participation, full contribution and full citizenship of all Canadians, regardless of their background or cultural heritage.

Canada's multiculturalism policy plays a role in helping to adjust to Canada's growing cultural diversity, in promoting Canadian unity and in ensuring that all Canadians participate actively in the social, cultural, economic and political life of Canada.

Canada's approach, integration through effective multiculturalism, is preferable to assimilation and other means of dealing with a diverse mix of ethnocultural backgrounds.

Despite recent well publicized concerns about multiculturalism, we now have reason to believe that the majority of Canadians understand the importance of having a multiculturalism policy and programs.

In July 1991 an Angus Reid national survey found that 76 per cent of Canadians understand that multiculturalism refers to Canadians of every ancestry. Seventy-seven per cent of Canadians feel that our multiculturalism policy enshrines Canada's culture and an overwhelming 85 per cent strongly supports equality among all Canadians as an objective of multiculturalism policy.

Support for the policy's integration objectives is at a level of 73 per cent, and support for its role in helping Canadian society to deal with cultural diversity is at 74 per cent.

Racism and racial discrimination affect the lives of all Canadians, regardless of their age. There can be no doubt that we all want to enjoy a fair and friendlier Canada, not a land divided by racial tensions. We share the responsibility of supporting each other in building a dynamic and forward looking multicultural society of which we can all be proud, and which includes us all.