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news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Government of Canada invests close to \$1.4 million to increase public knowledge of, and dialogue within, Canada's non-profit and voluntary sector

OTTAWA, – May 18, 2005—Ken Dryden, Minister of Social Development, today announced \$1,399,850 for a national project with Imagine Canada to help Canadians understand the role of the non-profit and voluntary sector in Canadian society.

"The Government of Canada works with the non-profit and voluntary sector to strengthen our communities," said Minister Dryden. "The Community Awareness Project will encourage Canadians to talk about how non-profit and voluntary sector organizations shape their communities. It will help all Canadians gain a better awareness of what the sector means to our country."

"Recent research tells us that 161,000 charities and non-profit organizations in communities across this country, and involving more than 6 million volunteers and 1.3 million staff, help to build society and contribute the equivalent of 8% of the nation's GDP," said Georgina Steinsky-Schwartz, president and CEO of Imagine Canada. "Through the Community Awareness Project, non-profit and voluntary organizations will collaborate to position the sector so that its contribution to our country's way of life is understood by all Canadians."

Under the joint Voluntary Sector Initiative (2000-2005), the Government of Canada and the voluntary sector collaborated on a number of initiatives designed to strengthen the capacity of the voluntary sector. The Community Awareness Project will encourage dialogue among non-profit and voluntary sector organizations to increase awareness of the common issues and challenges that these organizations face.

One hundred "community conversations" will be held across Canada in the fall. Based on these conversations, a cross-Canada awareness and communications campaign with an agreed-upon and shared

message will be implemented. The campaign will be targeted to a wide variety of audiences: the general public, media, government, academia, and the private sector.

Funding for this project has been provided for in the 2005 existing fiscal framework.

This project was funded by the Social Development Partnerships Programs and has been reviewed to ensure compliance with the Department's administration of its grants and contributions program. See the [backgrounder](#) for more details.

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